

Council Agenda

Date: Tuesday, 27th February, 2024
Time: 11.00 am
Venue: The Assembly Room - Town Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

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

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

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

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

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

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 5 - 28)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 13 December 2023.

4. **Mayor's Announcements**

To receive such announcements as may be made by the Mayor.

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

In accordance the Council Procedural Rules, a total period of 30 minutes is allocated for members of the public to speak at Council meetings. Individual members of the public may speak for up to 2 minutes, but the Chair will have discretion to vary this requirement 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 and should include the question with that notice. Questions should be submitted to: katie.small@cheshireeast.gov.uk or brian.reed@cheshireeast.gov.uk.

6. **Leader's and Deputy Leader's Announcements**

To receive such announcements as may be made by the Leader and Deputy Leader.

7. **Election of Deputy Leader of the Council** (Pages 29 - 32)

To elect a Deputy Leader of the Council.

8. **Recommendations from Corporate Policy Committee: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25-2027/28** (Pages 33 - 642)

To consider the recommendations of the Corporate Policy Committee.

9. **Council Tax Statutory Resolution** (Pages 643 - 660)

To set the Council Tax for Cheshire East for the financial year 2024/25.

10. **Recommendations from Corporate Policy Committee: Pay Policy Statement 2024/25** (Pages 661 - 676)

To consider the recommendations of the Corporate Policy Committee.

11. **Recommendations from Corporate Policy Committee: Transfer of Local Enterprise Partnership Functions to Local Authority Control** (Pages 677 - 766)

To consider the recommendations of the Corporate Policy Committee.

12. **Recommendations from Corporate Policy Committee: Cheshire East Electoral Review - Warding Proposals** (Pages 767 - 966)

To consider the recommendations of the Corporate Policy Committee.

13. **Recommendations from Corporate Policy Committee: Calendar of Meetings 2024-2025** (Pages 967 - 978)

To consider the recommendations of the Corporate Policy Committee.

14. **Recommendations from Corporate Policy Committee: Targeted Review of Members' Allowances** (Pages 979 - 998)

To consider the recommendations of the Corporate Policy Committee.

15. **Recommendation from Audit and Governance Committee: Proposed Terms of Reference** (Pages 999 - 1018)

To consider the recommendations of the Audit and Governance Committee.

16. **Political Representation on the Council's Committees** (Pages 1019 - 1024)

To determine the political representation on the Council's Committees and to appoint those Committees.

17. **Nomination of Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the 2024-25 Civic Year**
(Pages 1025 - 1028)

To consider making a nomination for Mayor for 2024/25, who will also act as Chair of the Council, and a nomination for Deputy Mayor for 2024/25.

18. **Questions**

In accordance the Council Procedure Rules, opportunity is provided for Members of the Council to ask the Mayor or the Chair of a Committee any question about a matter which the Council, or the Committee has powers, duties or responsibilities.

At Council meeting, there will be a maximum question time period of 30 minutes. A period of two minutes will be allowed for each Councillor wishing to ask a question. The Mayor will have the discretion to vary this requirement where they consider it appropriate.

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**Minutes of a meeting of the Council**

held on Wednesday, 13th December, 2023 in the Council Chamber, SKA
Observatory, Jodrell Bank, Lower Withington, SK11 9FT

PRESENT

Councillor R Fletcher (Mayor/Chair)

Councillor M Houston (Deputy Mayor/Vice-Chair)

Councillors S Adams, L Anderson, M Beanland, S Bennett-Wake, J Bird, L Braithwaite, J Bratherton, M Brooks, D Brown, C Browne, L Buchanan, C Bulman, A Burton, R Chadwick, C Chapman, D Clark, J Clowes, P Coan, A Coiley, N Cook, S Corcoran, L Crane, T Dean, B Drake, S Edgar, D Edwardes, K Edwards, M Edwards, H Faddes, A Farrall, A Gage, S Gardiner, E Gilman, M Goldsmith, M Gorman, E Hall, A Harrison, K Hague, A Heler, C Hilliard, S Holland, T Jackson, D Jefferay, R Kain, A Kolker, N Mannion, G Marshall, A Moran, R Moreton, H Moss, M Muldoon, C Naismith, C O'Leary, J Pearson, J Place, B Posnett, J Pratt, J Priest, B Puddicombe, P Redstone, J Rhodes, J Saunders, H Seddon, M Sewart, M Simon, L Smetham, G Smith, J Smith, J Smith, J Snowball, L Wardlaw, M Warren, H Whitaker, F Wilson and J Wray

49 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors R Bailey, G Hayes, L Smith and R Vernon.

50 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Item 7 - Appointment of the Chief Executive – Mr R Polkinghorne declared an interest and would leave the chamber during consideration of the matter.

51 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

52 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor, in summary:

- 1 thanked his Chaplin, Reverend Rob Hilton, for the prayers before the meeting, and for hosting his Civic Services on 5 November 2023 at the Wesley Place Methodist Church in Alsager.

- 2 reported that on 19 November 2023 he had attended the annual STAR celebration event at Macclesfield Town Hall. The event recognised and celebrated the achievements of cared for children and care leavers.
- 3 reported he had attended the Safeguarding and Dignity Awards held in November at the Holmes Chapel Community Centre and stated he was impressed by the professionalism, dedication, passion and commitment of all those who were nominated for awards.
- 4 reminded Members that in 2016 that trampolinist Bryony Page, who grew up in Nantwich and attended Malbank School, was appointed as a Freewoman of the Borough following her success at the Rio Olympics, and reported that Bryony had won a gold medal at the trampolining world championships held recently in Birmingham, and was now a world champion.
- 5 referred to the item 7 on the agenda - the Appointment of Chief Executive, and reported that the preferred candidate - Mr Rob Polkinghorne was in attendance at the meeting and that there would be an opportunity for Members to meet with him later in the day.

53 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

Sandbach Town Councillor Tim Wheatcroft stated that any introduction or increase in car parking charges would discourage lower paid workers from taking town centre jobs, and any volume employer without adequate parking considering locating in the town was discouraged from setting up due to the additional cost and difficulty in attracting staff. He asked what sort of businesses did Cheshire East see moving into the towns to grow the local economy, given the economic obstacles the Council were implementing with their car park proposals, and how would existing town and village centre businesses benefit and produce the growth the country needs to happen by the introduction and increase in parking charges?

In response Cllr C Browne, Chair of Highways and Transport Committee stated that when developing the parking plans, which had recently been out to public consultation, the Council had aimed to ensure that the parking offer in each town met the needs of businesses, shoppers, and visitors. The Council had tried to reflect the range of different needs when establishing tariffs; zoning parking between short stay and long stay and making seasonal permits available to users. The proposals for car parking would be considered in detail at the Highways and Transport Committee in January but he was sure that the parking tariffs would remain competitive compared to the neighbouring councils. These considerations had to be balanced against the Council's prevailing financial circumstances and the inconsistency and unfairness of the legacy arrangements for parking

charges, where some towns pay whilst others were subsidised to provide free parking. All 111 car parks operated by the Council incurred costs in the form of maintenance, enforcement patrols and business rates. As parking was a discretionary service, the Council's policy was clear that parking was provided on a "user-pays" basis. Any surplus revenues from the parking service were used to provide other transport projects including supported bus services, which were essential for those residents, including workers, who did not own a car.

Holmes Chapel Parish Councillor Diane Tams asked whether the Council had considered the concerns expressed by health professionals in Holmes Chapel on their ability to deliver services to their patients if parking charges were introduced?

In response Cllr C Browne, Chair of Highways and Transport Committee, stated that all responses received by the Council during the 6-week statutory consultation on the proposals for car parking in the Borough were being carefully analysed to inform the next steps. The Medical Centre had its own car park, which was already reserved for use by patients and staff. This would not be affected by the Council's proposals for Cheshire East operated car parks. The Council's proposals for its car parks in Holmes Chapel intended to retain a balance between long-stay and short stay parking places, whilst ensuring that the costs of maintaining and operating these car parks were met by the users rather than the general council taxpayer. Since the last time Cheshire East Council reviewed its car park charging strategy, which was in 2018, inflation had risen by over 25% whilst interest rates were also five times higher now than they had been then. Both factors had contributed to the increase in the costs of running the car parks over the intervening period. If the Council was not able to recover its costs, then this would impact on the Council's ability to deliver its services including things such as Flexi Link or other supported bus services.

Congleton Town Councillor Suzy Firkin stated that Congleton had long been a net contributor to Cheshire East car parking income having lost the free car parking many years ago and shared the concerns of many about the loss of free car parking and the impact it had on small towns and villages on the footfall and town centre economy. She said that Congleton had attracted investment into the town centre and the high street had started to take on a different feel, this being the reason why the Town Council strongly opposed to the huge increase in parking charges that were being proposed for Congleton. The charges would have a significant impact on those businesses who based their business case on staff and customers being able to park at reasonable prices. She urged the Council to heed Congleton Town Council's detailed response to the consultation and compromise on a modest price increase rather than a huge hike in fees that jeopardised the hard work of many seeking to revitalise Congleton town centre.

In response Cllr C Browne, Chair of Highways and Transport Committee stated that the Council's approach to its current review of car parking provision and tariffs in towns aimed to make arrangements more consistent and equitable across all of our towns. The Council had aimed to ensure that the parking offer in each town met the needs of business, shoppers, and visitors. The Council had tried to reflect this range of different needs when establishing tariffs; zoning parking between short stay and long stay, and making seasonal permits available to users. There were a large number of attractive town centres with growing businesses, situated in centres with parking charges. Recently there had been business growth in the local towns, with Congleton as an example, where 8 new businesses had located into Congleton Market Quarter this year. The market quarter had received another 150 enquiries for space with the Council working with employers to consider transport and parking needs for staff. Parking was one of many factors that influenced town centre attractiveness and business viability. The Council aimed to strike the right balance to make businesses in Congleton, as well as other towns, successful for business.

Mr Brian Bugeja asked how, what and when would Cheshire East respond to the objections raised by the residents of the Audlem village, ward and the surrounding hamlets, in response to the consultation about the Audlem Community car park and the addition of yellow lines on two of the adjacent roads. He asked whether the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee would agree to visit Audlem so that they could see for themselves the logistics of the car park to the village, how the car park operated, the importance of the car park and the impact of the charges would have on the community?

In response Cllr C Browne, Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, stated that all responses received by the Council during the 6-week statutory consultation on the proposals for car parking in the Borough were being carefully analysed to inform the next steps. At the Highways and Transport Committee in January 2024, a series of recommendations setting out the proposed responses to the consultation would be considered by Councillors. The information available for councillors would include options to respond to the consultation outcomes, analysis of costs and benefits arising from the proposals and consideration of mitigation measures that may be necessary to support the introduction of any new parking arrangements. He was sure that the Committee would decide the way forward mindful of the consultation responses, the Council's budget position and the Council's strategic priorities. The Council needed to ensure that the parking service was fair, financially sustainable and contributing to the wider integrated transport strategy for the whole Borough.

Mr Thomas Eccles asked that, in full knowledge of the vast scale and urgency of our task to survive climate change and biodiversity collapse,

would the Council commit to urgently introducing local planning policies to ban future developments on peatlands?

In response Cllr M Warren, Chair of the Environment and Communities Committee stated that the Council had committed to preparing a new Local Plan which, once adopted, would replace the current Local Plan Strategy and Site Allocations and Development Policies Document. It would take several years to complete, and it would be a new style Plan prepared under emerging national planning reforms. The urgent need to tackle the climate crisis and the need to enhance biodiversity would be key drivers for the new Plan. To pass independent examination, policies and proposals in the Plan would also need to be consistent with national planning policy, which was expected to be comprehensively updated over the coming months. As the new Local Plan was prepared there would be several opportunities to feedback views on emerging policies and proposals and he would encourage residents and organisations to get involved in helping to shape these. In the shorter term, as required by law, any planning applications would continue to be determined in accordance with the adopted Local Plan, which was the statutory development plan, unless there were material planning considerations which indicated otherwise. Other material considerations could include national planning policy. The development plan already contained a range of policies designed to address climate change and promote biodiversity enhancement. From next year it would also become mandatory, with some limited exceptions, for development schemes to provide at least a 10 percent net gain in biodiversity. In terms of major road schemes, these were being delivered for several reasons including to support regeneration, enable the development of new homes and employment opportunities, so were integral to the current Local Plan and its policies. Potential changes to policy would, similarly, be considered as part of the preparation of the new Local Plan. Over 10% of land in the UK was peatland and there were ongoing activities to re-wet some peat areas at Pastures Farm near Gawsorth. Currently the Biodiversity Net Gain Supplementary Planning document was out for consultation which closed on Friday 22 December 2023. At the same time an Environmental Supplementary Planning document was also out for consultation which closed on Friday 15 December 2023. These documents would put Cheshire East Council at the forefront of action in this field.

Mr Stuart Redgard asked the following questions:

- 1) Why was the Dean Row Community Centre closed?
- 2) How many bids did the Council receive when they offered it for open tender?
- 3) Who where they from?
- 4) Why hasn't a decision been made yet as to which tender was acceptable?
- 5) When would a decision be made?

In response Cllr M Goldsmith, Chair of Economy and Growth Committee, stated that the Dean Row community centre had been successfully

operated by a community group since the 1990s. Unfortunately, the last remaining member of the group recently passed away and as a result, the entity managing the building ceased to exist. Cllr Goldsmith reported that four bids had been received when offered for open tender, but could not share who they were from as this was commercially sensitive information. The decision on the tender had been made on 15 November 2023 with all parties being informed of the final decision shortly.

Wilmslow Town Councillor Elaine Evans stated that the Wilmslow neighbourhood plan recognised the importance of trees to health and wellbeing in an urban environment. She referred to the decision on 2 March 2023 by the Highways and Transport Committee to unanimously approve a Notice of Motion regarding a report on tree planting, a report on the adoption of a new policy for highway tree maintenance inspections and a code of practice for highway tree safety inspections. She said that the Highway Tree Safety Inspection Policy stated that tree planting would rely on 13 stringent criteria. The Town Council had checked existing highway trees in the main green corridors of Wilmslow against 2 of the criteria and found that 86% of over the 400 planted trees did not meet these 2 criteria and if the other 11 criteria were also audited it wouldn't be surprising to find that almost all trees standing in Wilmslow today did not comply with the proposed new inspection policy. On behalf of Wilmslow Town Council, she requested that the Highways and Transport Committee make an amendment to the stringent criteria, to reflect where they did not apply to replacement of existing trees. In the case of replacement, the Town Council requested that a new tree of suitable species be planted at the same location as the tree to be replaced or that the Town or Parish Council were consulted on the new placement.

In response Cllr C Browne, Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, stated that Cheshire East Council fully recognised and supported the important role that tree planting had to play in both place-making and addressing climate change. The highways network had developed and evolved over time. Many highway trees had either self-set or were planted before current highway design standards and would not be installed under current standards. In such circumstances, the Council therefore consider new installations with reference to current standards and practices. This was not unique to trees as an asset; it applied equally to other assets. When considering tree planting, a number of factors must be considered. These factors ensured the longevity of the trees planted and the safe operation of the highway network and were necessary to support the Council's statutory role in managing highway infrastructure assets. It was important to note that saplings must be provided with sufficient space to develop and thrive. Cheshire East Council was keen to work with 3rd parties, such as Wilmslow Town Council, to encourage appropriate tree planting on its land. It did however have to be recognised that Cheshire East Council holds certain statutory duties and responsibilities for assets that it was required to consider when reviewing such requests. As noted, the Council would be developing a highway tree planting policy during 2024 which would provide further clarity.

Congleton Town Councillor Robert Douglas stated that the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee had stated that “healthy rivers are vital for biodiversity and to human health and well-being.” Furthermore, it stated that “rivers provide habitats for a range of wildlife, protect against flooding and provide beautiful places for recreation and reflection.” Yet in figures provided by the Environmental Agency, the House of Commons committee report stated that only 14% of English rivers met good ecological status and no river met good chemical status. The Wildlife and Countryside Link had warned that the water quality of rivers in England was the worst in Europe. Yet the Government had been putting forward proposals to weaken the pollution regulations in order to build additional homes under what was termed as a “Brexit Bonus”. He asked if the Leader of Cheshire East Council could confirm that the Council would take every step within its powers to ensure that the quality of water courses would not be adversely impacted by any new developments whether it be for housing, commercial, industrial or silica sand quarries?

In response, Cllr M Warren, Chair of Environment and Communities Committee, stated that the effect of new development on water quality could be an important material planning consideration. The Council had put in place robust policies within its up-to-date statutory development plan to make sure that this matter was carefully considered when planning applications or planning appeals were decided. Policy SE13 (Flood Risk and Water Management) of the Local Plan Strategy required development of all types to avoid an adverse impact on water quality. This was reinforced in Policy ENV17(Protecting Water Resources) of the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document which underlined that development proposals would not be permitted that were likely to have a detrimental impact on the quality of surface water. Designated nature conservation sites were also afforded appropriate protection relative to their significance through Policy SE3 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Local Plan Strategy, including sites of national and international importance. The Habitats Regulations provide additional legal protections to RAMSAR and other designated sites of international importance.

Mr Stephen McDermott stated that before anything was put out to survey, please could the Council ensure the information contained within it was accurate. In many cases he was finding it was not. He did not believe this would stand up to external scrutiny.

54 LEADER'S AND DEPUTY LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader, in summary:

- 1 reported that Nottingham was the latest council to issue a section 114 notice, effectively declaring its self-bankrupt. The Leader noted that all councils were under severe financial pressure. He stated that this Council was in a better position than many because it had a fully balanced four-year financial strategy and a good record in

recent years of financial discipline. However, the Council currently had a forecast deficit for the current year of £13m, so financial saving needed to be made.

- 2 stated that over two thirds of the Council's budget was on adults and children's social care and that there had been significant cost increases in both areas. The increase in costs for children's social care was linked to the Children and Families Act 2014 which had led to an increased demand without central government providing the necessary funding or providing increase capacity. There was a shortage of places which had led to an increase in cost and an increase in travel costs with children being placed out of the Borough. The excess costs had been put into a negative reserve until 2026.
- 3 stated that he would like to see improved special education needs and disability provision in schools and more specialist provision in Cheshire East. However, the Council could not set up a new school on its own and had to work with external partners to set up so called free schools, which added further complexity and time. These were statutory services, and this left non statutory services at risk of further cuts.
- 4 stated that the Chancellor would be announcing shortly the funding settlements for Councils. If there was no extra money, there would be little choice but to make further cuts in services to balance the books. He thanked staff who were working to address these challenges.
- 5 stated that tackling climate change had been a key theme since he had become Leader of the Council and the sub region. He had co-chaired the Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission and encouraged all to read their report. He had spoken on climate change at the Northwest Route to Net Zero conference in Liverpool, the Northwest Regional Leaders' Board and at the County Council's Network Conference.
- 6 stated that he was pleased to see that the Solar Together Scheme had won a Green Expo Award for Innovation in Energy. He stated that one reason people were reluctant to install solar panels and batteries was caution about the reputed reliability of the supplier. The Council was addressing this by partnering with IChoosr Ltd to bring Solar Together to Cheshire East's homeowners and encouraged all elected members to promote the Solar Together scheme.

The Deputy Leader, in summary:

- 1 reported that following the decision to cancel HS2, the Government was intending to allocate additional Locally Integrated Transport

Settlement funding for Cheshire East. Further details on how much funding the Council would be allocated and supporting guidance were expected early in the New Year.

- 2 stated that Cheshire East sat at the heart of a region which had one of the strongest science and technology clusters in the UK and within this region were a number of major employers including Manchester Airport, Barclays Radbroke Campus, Astra Zeneca Macclesfield Campus, and Alderley Park. This area, which bordered Greater Manchester, had limited public transport options to service these businesses and local communities. The additional funding allocation of Locally Integrated Transport Settlements could be used as part of a public/private partnership to introduce an electric tram bus service, which would provide a sustainable, integrated network to connect these areas, unlocking growth, supporting sustainable travel and reducing congestion.
- 3 reported that last month he, together with officers from Cheshire East Council, had met with the Commissioner of Transport for Greater Manchester (TFGM) to explore ways of working together. TFGM had confirmed that TFGM System One travel cards could be used for a number of bus services which also serviced Cheshire East. Further details about eligible services would be provided shortly. TFGM were also supportive on Cheshire East's position following the Government's decision to cancel HS2 north and that any future development works on HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail should ensure that Crewe Station is included.
- 4 reported that the full business case and accompanying technical documents for the Middlewich Eastern Bypass scheme were submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) on 11 October 2023 for their approval. The Council had since been informed by DfT that their final decision would not be made until the New Year, rather than in December as originally anticipated, and with this in mind the Council was currently assessing options that would enable the scheme to keep to its original programme of a start on site in early 2024.
- 5 reported that the Council had hosted its first Bus Partnership Forum at Alderley Park Conference Centre on 26th October 2023. This Forum was a key part of the arrangements that have been put in place to improve local bus services in Cheshire East, by working in partnership with the local bus operators. The need for a stronger dialogue and closer partnership working had been emphasised more than ever this year as the network faced challenges of passenger numbers still recovering after the pandemic, cost inflation and, in April, the complete withdrawal of services by Arriva North-West. The Forum meeting had brought together representatives of local bus companies, passenger groups including Transport Focus, major employers and elected members and

officers of the Council. Workshop events considered what could be done to improve bus services in the Borough, including services, ticketing, vehicles, passenger facilities and passenger information. The outcomes of the Forum would help to guide the planning for use of Bus Service Improvement Plan funds that were made available to the Council.

- 6 reported that the Council was progressing a package of schemes in the north of the Borough, as identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, with the Council allocating £1.2m towards the northern part of the scheme on Manchester Road. The Council had been invited to apply for funding from the Active Travel scheme for the southern part of the scheme.

**55 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE:
APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Having previously declared an interest, Mr Rob Polkinghorne left the Chamber for this item.

Consideration was given to a report relating to the appointment of a Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer.

RESOLVED: That

- 1 the preferred candidate, Rob Polkinghorne, be appointed as the Chief Executive.
2. the salary of £180,000, with the option for Council to increase in line with the pay scale agreed by Council, be approved
3. the preferred candidate, Rob Polkinghorne, be appointed as the Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer.

Mr Polkinghorne returned to the Chamber. The political group leaders spoke to welcome Mr Polkinghorne as the Chief Executive.

**56 DEFERRED REPORT: ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE
SYSTEM (IN RELATION TO PLANNING COMMITTEES)**

Consideration was given to the deferred report on the Annual Review of the Committee System

Council, at its meeting in July 2023, had agreed to defer consideration of the realignment of the Planning Committees from 3 to 2 to the December meeting of Council to allow further consultation to take place, including with the Planning Committee Chairs.

The deferred recommendations were proposed and seconded, and during the debate an amendment was proposed.

Amendment

“Following the consultation on the realignment of planning committees agreed by Council in July it is agreed that:

The optimum way forward is to continue with 3 planning committees meeting less frequently. This will ensure that major applications are given due scrutiny on a consistent basis and the geographical committees ensure that applicants and members of the public concerned with smaller developments do not have to travel excessive distances to hear applications decided.

Being aware of the savings needed, and to reflect the number of applications coming through, it is agreed that Northern and Southern Planning Committees will meet 8 times a year, around every 6 weeks and that Strategic Planning Board will meet bi-monthly. This would reduce the number of scheduled meetings by over a third to 22, resulting in a better outcome than reducing the number of committees by one, with subsequent savings in resource and officer time. This would not preclude the holding of additional meetings if necessary or cancelling meetings if no applications are ready as is currently the case.”

Following debate, the amendment was put to the vote and declared carried.

RESOLVED:

That the three planning committees continue, meeting on a less frequently with the Strategic Planning Board meeting bi-monthly, and Southern Planning Committee and Northern Planning Committee meeting around every 6 weeks.

**57 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE:
REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM AND MEDIUM-TERM
FINANCIAL STRATEGY SAVING**

Consideration was given to the recommendations of Corporate Policy Committee on 30 November 2023 in relation to the Review of the Committee System and Medium-Term Financial Strategy savings.

The recommendations were proposed and seconded. The Mayor announced that he intended to take the vote on recommendations 1-3 and 5-6 together, with a separate vote on recommendation 4.

Recommendations 1-3 and 5-6 were put to the vote and declared carried.

During the debate on recommendation 4 an amendment was proposed and seconded.

Amendment 1

“That recommendation 4 be amended to read “the functions of the Scrutiny Committee, Audit and Governance Committee and any other committee, sub-committee, panel or working group are reviewed to consider opportunities for streamlining and efficacy of delivery. The outcome of the review is presented to an all-member briefing in February 2024 and presented to Council as set out in recommendation 5.”

The proposer and seconder of the recommendations from the Corporate Policy Committee to Council agreed to accept the amendment and therefore the amendment became the substantive motion.

During debate on the substantive motion an amendment was proposed and seconded.

Amendment 2

“It is proposed that the following recommendations are adopted, subject to due process, to be overseen by the Corporate Policy Committee;

Committees will be either removed, modified or amalgamated and their functions re-distributed to alternative committees in a logical extension of the related functions of those alternative receiving committees.

A1) Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee: to be amalgamated into the Children and Families Committee.

A.2.) Governor Nomination Panel: to be amalgamated into the Children’s and Families Committee

A.3.) General Appeals Sub-Committee: The roles and responsibilities of this Sub Committee (as identified below), will be disaggregated and allocated to be heard by the relevant service committees as and when required:

- hearing and determining appeals lodged under the various Marriage and Civil Partnership Acts;*

CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE

- hearing and determining any appeals lodged with the Council for determination, as authorised under all relevant education legislation, excluding those duties falling to the Independent Appeals Panel (school admissions and exclusions).*

CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMITTEE

- hearing and determining any appeals lodged with the Council in respect of school transport or school organisation;*

CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMITTEE

- hearing and determining appeals from bus contractors in accordance with contract procedures;*

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

- *hearing and determining any appeals lodged with the Council as Social Services Authority, and as authorised under all relevant social services legislation;*

ADULTS & HEALTH COMMITTEE

- *hearing and determining any other appeals (other than staffing matters).*

COMMITTEE TO BE DETERMINED BY THE MONITORING OFFICER AS APPROPRIATE.

A.4.) General Licensing Sub-Committee and Licensing Act Sub-Committee:

These will be amalgamated into a single Committee reflecting the intermittent nature of their requirements.

In addition, the new “General Licensing and Licensing Act Sub-Committee” will be scheduled either before or after the Licensing Committee wherever possible.

This will maximise best use of officer and member time and reduce the chronic difficulties currently experienced in terms of member availability from the recruitment ‘pool’.

A.5.) Where appropriate, only the regulatory or statutory Officers (as required by good practice) need attend committee meetings. Other officer attendance is to be rationalised and mitigated by their virtual attendance at meetings if needed.”

The proposer and seconder of the recommendations from the Corporate Policy Committee to Council agreed to accept the amendment and therefore the amendment became part of the substantive motion.

The substantive motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

RESOLVED: That

- 1 Council note its agreed MTFs saving of £135,000 to reduce the costs of democracy.
- 2 the Finance Sub-Committee be retained as a Sub-Committee of the Corporate Policy Committee.
- 3 the three Place service committees be retained.
- 4 the functions of the Scrutiny Committee, Audit and Governance Committee and any other committee, sub-committee, panel or working group are reviewed to consider opportunities for streamlining and efficacy of delivery. The outcome of the review is presented to an all-member briefing in February 2024 and presented to Council as set out in recommendation 5. The following recommendations be adopted, subject to due process, to

be overseen by the Corporate Policy Committee, committees will be either removed, modified or amalgamated and their functions re-distributed to alternative committees in a logical extension of the related functions of those alternative receiving committees.

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CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE

- hearing and determining any appeals lodged with the Council for determination, as authorised under all relevant education legislation, excluding those duties falling to the Independent Appeals Panel (school admissions and exclusions).

CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMITTEE

- hearing and determining any appeals lodged with the Council in respect of school transport or school organisation;

CHILDREN & FAMILIES COMMITTEE

- hearing and determining appeals from bus contractors in accordance with contract procedures;

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

- hearing and determining any appeals lodged with the Council as Social Services Authority, and as authorised under all relevant social services legislation;

ADULTS & HEALTH COMMITTEE

- hearing and determining any other appeals (other than staffing matters).

COMMITTEE TO BE DETERMINED BY THE MONITORING OFFICER AS APPROPRIATE.

A.4.) General Licensing Sub-Committee and Licensing Act Sub-Committee:

These will be amalgamated into a single Committee reflecting the intermittent nature of their requirements.

In addition, the new “General Licensing and Licensing Act Sub-Committee” will be scheduled either before or after the Licensing Committee wherever possible.

This will maximise best use of officer and member time and reduce the chronic difficulties currently experienced in terms of member availability from the recruitment ‘pool’.

A.5.) Where appropriate, only the regulatory or statutory Officers (as required by good practice) need attend committee meetings. Other officer attendance is to be rationalised and mitigated by their virtual attendance at meetings if needed

- 5 a further annual review of the committee system be undertaken and a report on its findings be presented to the first scheduled meeting held after the Council AGM in 2024; and
- 6 the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make such consequential changes to the Council’s Constitution as he deems necessary to give effect to the decision(s) of Council.

58 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE: CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL ELECTORAL REVIEW

Consideration was given to the recommendations of Corporate Policy Committee on 30 November 2023 in relation to the Cheshire East Electoral Review submission.

During the debate, a small number of minor changes to the submission were suggested by Council members, which were acceptable to the meeting. These changes will be made to the Council submission prior to this being submitted to the Boundary Commission.

RESOLVED: That

- 1 subject to the minor amendments, the council size submission, attached as an appendix to the report, be approved for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England; and
- 2 authority be delegated to the Electoral Review Sub-Committee to make any final changes to the council size submission and related documentation which may be required following Council approval, prior to submission to the Boundary Commission.

**59 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE:
PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Consideration was given to the recommendations of Corporate Policy Committee on 30 November 2023 in relation to proposed changes to the Constitution.

RECOMMENDED: That Council approve

- 1 the changes to the Council's Constitution in relation to Officer Delegations and Staffing as set out in paragraph 8 - a) of the report subject to an amendment to the revised paragraph 36 to require that any decisions taken under these delegations are taken in consultation with the chair and vice-chair of the relevant service committee;
- 2 the changes to the Council's Constitution in relation to Officer Delegations to Executive Directors only and settlement agreements as set out in paragraph 8 - b) of the report;
- 3 the changes to the Council's Constitution in relation to decision-making with regard to early retirement and severance packages as set out in paragraphs 8 -c) of the report;
- 4 the changes to the Council's Constitution to allow the inclusion of provisions to allow for electronic signing and sealing of documents as set out in paragraph 8 – d) of the report; and
- 5 the changes to the Council's Constitution to the provisions regarding approvals of grants schemes as set out in paragraph 8 – e) of the report.

**60 RECOMMENDATION FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE:
COUNCIL TAX BASE 2024/25**

Consideration was given to the recommendations of Corporate Policy Committee on 30 November 2023 in relation to the domestic tax base 2024/25.

RESOLVED: That

- 1 in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the amount to be calculated by Cheshire East Council as its Council tax base for the year 2024/25 is 160,151.52 for the whole area; and
- 2 the Council Tax Landlord discount previously applied to empty rental properties be removed.

61 SUPPLEMENTARY REVENUE ESTIMATES (SECOND FINANCIAL REVIEW 2023/24)

Consideration was given to the report seeking approval of supplementary revenue estimates.

RESOLVED: That Council approve

- 1 supplementary revenue estimates over £1,000,000, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report:
Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund - Workforce Element £2,206m
Shared Prosperity Fund - £2,412m

62 HS2 CANCELLATION AND NETWORK NORTH - IMPLICATIONS FOR CHESHIRE EAST

Consideration was given to a report on the HS2 Cancellation and Network North.

The report outlined the implications to Cheshire East from the recent cancellation of HS2 Phases 2a and 2b, and the proposals included in the published Network North document, which committed to invest £36bn in alternative transport schemes across the country.

RESOLVED: That Council

- 1 note the implications of the HS2 cancellation and introduction of Network North for Cheshire East.
- 2 continue to support the principles of HS2 as a catalyst for growth across the North.
- 3 authorise the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the HS2 Member Reference Group, to negotiate with central government for an appropriate compensation and alternative investment package for Cheshire East to deliver transport improvements and unlock regeneration across the Borough.
- 4 approve the amendments to the remit of the HS2 Member Reference Group proposed in the report.

63 NOTICES OF MOTION

Consideration was given to the following Notice of Motion which had been submitted in accordance with the Council's Procedural Rules.

Cheshire East Council should embrace an urgent Peer Review to investigate its in year overspend of £18.7 million

Proposed by Cllr R Bailey and Seconded by Cllr R Chadwick

“Cheshire East conducted a Corporate Peer Challenge in January 2020. The report, approved by Cabinet in June 2020, clearly evidenced an emerging pattern of budgetary overspend and advised that whilst, ‘this reflects challenges which are faced by many organisations, the council should consider their approach towards savings across the organisation, to share ownership and encourage informed approaches to financial risk’.

The benefits of the Local Government Association’s Peer support are well known to those councils who embrace it and in view of ‘our Council’s’ recently announced ‘in year’ overspend of £18.7 million pounds, I propose that this Council immediately engages with the LGA to seek guidance via an urgent Financial Peer Review or Corporate Peer Challenge.”

RESOLVED:

That the Notice of Motion be referred to the Corporate Policy Committee.

64 QUESTIONS

Cllr L Smetham referred to the recent planning training session for Councillors which included an informative session regarding enforcement, and asked how this work could be strengthened to curtail the lengths people went to, to try to contravene the planning system and how the Council could increase protection for residents and our environment.

In response Cllr M Warren, Chair of Environment and Communities Committee, stated that a balance had to be achieved between such protection, the amount of resources dedicated to the Planning Enforcement Team, and the many other competing pressures across not just the Planning Service but also the Council as a whole. Enforcement cases were prioritised as to their level of harm and some minor cases would be deemed not sufficient to warrant any further action. It was also notable that well over 50% of enforcement complaints investigated were found not to involve any breach of planning control. Certain notable enforcement cases required a significant amount of time and resource from the Enforcement Team to achieve the desired outcomes. Some cases would also get resolved more quickly than others as negotiated solutions were always deemed to be the most appropriate course of action, even though they can take considerable time. Cllr Warren reported that the Enforcement Team had recently recruited two more enforcement officers and that the number of notices served over the last 12 months had been the highest for some time including the servicing of 21 Enforcement Notices, 1 Stop Notice and 5 Temporary Stop Notices, which he hoped sent out a clear message that the Council did take enforcement action where appropriate.

Cllr B Puddicombe stated that the entrance and exit for cars going to the retail park at Barracks Mill in Macclesfield came straight off, and goes on, to the Silk Road where the national speed limit applied. Macclesfield Councillors had been contacted by local residents concerned that this was an accident waiting to happen due to the speed of cars along this road. He asked if the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee could use his officers to ensure a speed review as conducted as a matter of urgency to ensure that restrictions were put in place so that an accident did not take place.

In response Cllr C Browne, Chair of Highways and Transport Committee, stated that perception did not always necessarily reflect reality. Cllr Browne confirmed that a road safety audit stage 4 had been completed back in September, and that audit did review the operational safety of the junction. As a result, some additional warning signs were due to be installed early in the new year at the junction and Highways would continue to monitor the performance of the junction to assess whether any further action was necessary to improve road safety.

Cllr S Gardiner asked, following the decision to progress with the closure of the Stanley Centre, what work has been undertaken to liaise with the current clients of that Centre and how far had the Council progressed in securing them with alternative service provision, and whether or not Councillors would be receiving an update on that matter at the Adults and Health Committee in the New Year?

In response Cllr J Rhodes, Chair of Adults and Health Committee, stated that as dealing with individuals created elements of confidentiality, so a written response would be more appropriate. Cllr Rhodes stated that as far as she understood a report would not be brought back to the Committee but was sure that the Executive Director for Adults, Health and Integration could provide Cllr Gardiner with any details necessary.

Cllr R Moreton asked if residents in Congleton and the surrounding areas could be assured that the consultation regarding car parking charges was listened to. In Congleton there were over 600 responses, with more than half mentioning the Roe Street car park which was mainly used by residents visiting Lawton House Surgery. He stated that increases of over 150% on our car park charges was unacceptable, an increase in line with inflation would be more acceptable. Resident views were important so please listen to them.

In response Cllr C Browne, Chair of Highways and Transport Committee, stated that officers were currently collating the responses to the consultation, and these would then be shared with the Highways and Transport Committee members ahead of the meeting in January. The feedback would be used to help inform the Committee's views, not only in relation to proposed charging but also in relation to potential mitigations as well as the extension of initiatives such as 'Free after 3' but this did not

mean that the Council would necessarily be able to implement or not implement every suggestion made by members of the public.

Cllr C Chapman asked for an update on the North-West Crewe package and completion timescales.

In response Cllr C Browne, Chair of Highways and Transport Committee, stated that the North-West Crewe Package highway scheme was due to complete in mid-2024. The scheme would enable the delivery of large strategic housing sites near Leighton hospital. The site would close on Friday 22 December 2023 at 4.00pm and then re-open on Monday 8 January 2024. All traffic management that relates to the scheme would be removed over the Christmas period. Early in the New Year there would be some daytime closures of the A530 Middlewich Road from the entrance of the hospital to the Eardswick junction and these would apply from Monday 8 January 2024 through to Friday 9 February 2024. The daytime closures of the A530 were needed in order to install the permanent road signage, to plant the landscaping, to install the boundary fences and to carry out remedial work to bring the junction up to the Council's required standards.

Cllr C Naismith referred to the Government talking about discontinuing the Household Support fund from March and asked what impact would that decision have on struggling families in Cheshire East and where in Cheshire East this support was currently going?

In response Cllr C Bulman, Chair of Children and Families Committee, stated that the Household Support fund was really useful at the moment with the cost-of-living crisis and there was a big demand for it. People could self-refer or be referred by others. The Council had not yet heard whether it would be continued as of March 2024. This year the Council had £4.4 million in funding, and supported 20,000 residents altogether, distributed across 12,000 children, usually those who receive free school meals but also 8,000 pensioners and within that there are also some other vulnerable groups. Of the inquiry forms, there had been 4632 referrals and mostly cash for energy support but also 3167 for food poverty. The way it was distributed was through a tranche of release of vouchers and whenever that happened, it was known that the foodbanks see fewer visitors, so people were not relying on charity so much as they've got income support.

Cllr S Bennett-Wake asked if it was right that residents who were older or used wheelchairs were prevented from leaving their homes in Nicholson Close, Macclesfield, because of the mess made by inconsiderate developers? Large vehicles had systematically driven over verges for a whole year, damaging dropped kerbs, knocking down road signs, damaging manholes in the road and blocking gullies with mud. One lady had fallen out of her wheelchair trying to get off the kerb. Despite the Highways team making several fixes to the roads, pavements and kerbs, the whole area was now impassable because of the amount of mud and damage caused by lorries going to and from the Hollins Homes

development. Hollins Homes had agreed to put boards down earlier in the year but that had never happened, so Highways made a temporary fix. Cllr Bennett-Wake asked if the Council could use the various sections of the Highways Act 1980 to make sure the developers cleaned up their mess.

In response Cllr C Browne, Chair of Highways and Transport Committee stated that it was not right and not fair either. However, as the issue would appear to cross not only the Highways service area but also Planning Enforcement as well, and that some of the questions were quite complex, Cllr Browne feel it would be appropriate for the two service areas to work together and provide a collective written response.

Cllr L Buchanan asked if the Chair of the Environment and Communities Committee could provide an update on the Everybody Health and Leisure recycling initiative being trialled at Nantwich Leisure Centre?

In response, Cllr Warren, Chair of Environment and Communities Committee, stated he did not know the granular detail around the scheme but did know there was a trial scheme being run at Nantwich pool which he also understood was part of a national scheme for the 3668 pools that was estimated to send 220 tonnes of rubbish to landfill each year. The rubbish being made up of items such as arm bands, goggles, flip flops, plastic toys etc – these items were currently discarded at the Centres. These items were being recycled to produce flip flops which the pools would then be able to sell back to customers to recover the cost of the scheme, and the additional benefit of encouraging more hygiene around the pool side and changing areas at their sites.

Cllr R Kain stated that in Liverpool in pre-Covid times an increase in car parking charges resulted in a 20% drop in trade for small and medium businesses and in Asthon-under-Lyne a report from the BBC 14 days ago highlighted a 150% increase in car park charges, similar to Congleton, resulted in a 22% drop in car park time, causing a 20% drop in footfall, and in some cases a 50% drop in takings. Cllr Kain stated that no two towns were the same and the proposals would not deliver the predicted income. He asked how could the car parking policy reconciled with the Council's revitalisation plans for town centres?

In response Cllr C Browne, Chair of Highways and Transport Committee, stated that he was not familiar with the statistics stated but would repeat something that he had said earlier in the meeting during the public questions which was that car parking and parking charges are one of 237 factors in town centre vitality. He did not wish to prejudice the Committee's decision. Cllr Browne stated that officers were currently collating the feedback from the consultation and members of the Committee would need to consider the feedback, key points made and strength of feeling, and balance those against the Council's financial responsibilities. Cllr Browne stated that he was a strong believer in fairness and equity and therefore the status quo, the legacy issue whereby certain places in Cheshire East pay for parking whilst other parts of the Borough did not pay

was neither fair nor equitable. Either everybody had to pay, or nobody had to pay and that the nobody having to pay was not a sustainable option financially therefore the Council had to look at charging.

Cllr A Gage referred to a report recently published by the Tax Payers Alliance which showed that in the last financial year, Cheshire East Council was in the top 5% of local authorities granting permission for employees to so called 'work from beach' – that is working from abroad. Cllr Gage asked if the Leader of the Council was aware of the practice happening in Cheshire East and whether the Leader personally authorised staff to work from abroad?

In response Cllr Corcoran stated that he did not follow the Tax Payers Alliance and thought that all Councillors should look into who financed them before putting too much credence on what they suggested. In terms of the issue of working from home, the Council had moved to adopt working from home. It did save the Council money and saved the time of officers who did not need to travel and therefore saved carbon emissions in reducing travel. It was something he thought should continue. It expanded significantly during Covid. In terms of what the correct balance was, that was still being worked out – not just at Cheshire East Council but across the world. Cllr Corcoran asked Cllr Gage to send him the details of the report and a written response would be provided.

Cllr J Snowball asked if the Leader could give the Council an assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of a Corporate Peer challenge?

In response, Cllr S Corcoran, stated that he was a great advocate for the Local Government Association peer challenge system where a team of council leaders and senior officers from other authorities visit a Council for 3 days and write a report on what they find. He had acted as a peer reviewer of other Councils and knew that Cllr Browne had as well. He believed it was better and easier to receive constructive criticism and challenge from your peers than from a central government inspectorate. The LGA recommended a peer challenge at least once every 5 years, but Cheshire East did not have a peer challenge at all during the period from its formation in 2009 until after he became Leader. He could understand the reason why a Leader may not want to have a peer challenge – some of the LGA reports were highly critical. Cheshire East did receive an independent LGA report in 2018 which exposed a bullying culture – that was not a full peer challenge but a very specific review by one person, Sarah Messenger. The Council could have requested a full peer challenge following that visit to show how much the Council had changed but that would have run the risk of a negative report just before an election. When he became Leader in 2019, the idea of a peer challenge was discussed and it was decided to wait until 2020 to have a peer challenge to give the new administration an opportunity to make a difference. It was with some trepidation that a peer challenge was requested, and he specifically requested Sarah Messenger to be part of the team. The peer challenge report in 2020 was glowing, reporting on a transformed culture. He

recommended that Members read that report which was available on the Council website. He stated he was pleased that the former Conservative Leader, having not requested a peer review during her tenure as Leader, now recognised the value of the LGA peer reviews. As the last review was in 2020, he strongly supported the idea of a challenge in the next 2 years but would suggest this took place when the new Chief Executive had a chance to get their “feet under the table”. He looked forward to discussing the timing of a peer review with the new Chief Executive and working with him to help Cheshire East Council continue its improvement journey.

Cllr Clowes raised a point of personal explanation and stated she would like to take issue with some information. She stated that a peer review challenge had been requested by the last Administration. It had been delayed by the Chief Executive at that time due to officer availability and the belief that it would be better met by the new administration, whatever that might be. That Administration was also very clear of LGA availability and pressure on demand because they had a very high demand for peer reviews at that time. Cllr Clowes thought it was very unfair to say that the former Conservative Leader was not interested, as they did actually request it and had gone on to actually serve on the LGA peer service herself. So, in their absence Cllr Clowes wanted to make that very, very clear and that it was documented.

Cllr F Wilson referred to inclement weather coming forward and the festive season that was coming. She asked if Cllr Mannion could outline what arrangements were in place for people who were homeless and people who were sleeping rough over Christmas?

In response Cllr N Mannion stated that final preparations were being made to a briefing note for all elected members for what the Council’s homelessness service would be over the Christmas and New Year period - there would be a 24/7 phone number for members of the public and elected members to use to contact if someone is homeless or threatened with homelessness. In addition to that there was a severe weather emergency protocol – if the weather turned colder the Council had an offer to anybody in Cheshire East who was living rough on the streets and would offer them accommodation for the duration of the severe weather. Elected Members were encouraged to inform the Team when they observed people sleeping rough so those individuals could be contacted and offered accommodation. All Elected Members would be given a briefing note in addition to the information available on the Council website.

Cllr N Cook stated that the use of the word ‘housewife’ was rightly no longer seen as a word which reflected the community and in the Chamber that word had been used in a debate around Agenda Item 9. She stated that to many of the Councillors across the Chamber this word was insulting, as not only did it define an occupation in terms of a woman’s relationship with her partner but implied that a woman’s primary role was to manage the household and support her partner. As councillors they had

the requirement to be the very best version of themselves and to ensure represented the rich diversity of the community and to recognise that women still did not have equality. As councillors they had a responsibility to ensure that did all could to promote gender equality and the use of language was important. Cllr Cook asked as part of the very comprehensive induction programme what plans were there to expand the equality and diversity training to support councillors so that they could continue to promote and advocate for gender equality?

In response Cllr S Corcoran stated that he fully supported the comments that had been made and thought that it was wrong to refer to housewives in the way that was referred to. In response Cllr J Rhodes stated that the point about gender equality training needed to be taken away by officers.

The meeting commenced at 11.00 am and concluded at 3.25 pm

Councillor R Fletcher (Mayor/Chair)

OPEN

Council

27 February 2024

Election of Deputy Leader of the Council

Report of: Director of Governance and Compliance (Monitoring Officer)

Report Reference No: C/15/23-24

Ward(s) Affected: All Wards

Purpose of Report

- 1 To secure a resolution of Council to elect a Deputy Leader of the Council.

Executive Summary

- 2 The Constitution confirms, in Chapter 2 Part 3 that one of the functions of full Council is to elect the Deputy Leader of the Council.
- 3 Following the announcement by Councillor Craig Browne that he will be standing down as the Deputy Leader of the Council, full Council is required to elect a new Deputy Leader of the Council, this to take effect from 1 March 2023.

<p style="text-align: center;">RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>(1) That Council elects a Deputy Leader of the Council.</p>
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Background

- 4 Council is required to elect a Councillor to be the Deputy Leader of the Council following the announcement by Councillor Craig Browne that he will be standing down as the Deputy Leader of the Council.

- 5 The Councillor appointed will hold this office until:
 - (a) The next Annual Meeting of the Council; or
 - (b) The Deputy Leader resigns from the office; or
 - (c) The Deputy Leader is no longer a Councillor; or
 - (d) The Deputy Leader is removed from the office by resolution of the Council.
- 6 The Deputy Leader may be appointed as the Vice Chair of the Corporate Policy Committee of the Council.
- 7 The Deputy Leader is empowered to act in place of the Leader.
- 8 The Deputy Leader is empowered to represent the Council on any external body, as agreed with the Leader, and to make decisions and vote on behalf of the Council at meetings of such bodies.
- 9 Involvement in Major Emergencies: the Leader and Deputy Leader must be informed if an emergency is likely or has been declared under the Council's emergency planning or business continuity procedures.
- 10 Chapter 2, Part 3 of the Council's Constitution states that: *Nominations to the Council's Committees, Sub-Committees and decision-making bodies, and changes to such nominations, including nominations to Chairs and Vice-Chairs, shall be notified by the Council's Group Leaders or Group Administrators in writing or by email to the Head of Democratic Services and Governance and shall thereafter be published on the Council's website.*
- 11 Therefore, any changes to Chairs, Vice Chairs and nominations to committees which might be associated with the Deputy Leader's decision to stand-down from that office, will be subject to separate notification to officers. A separate process also applies to appointments to outside organisations etc.

Consultation and Engagement

- 12 No consultation has taken place.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 13 To ensure that the Council elects a Deputy Leader.

Other Options Considered

- 14 No other options considered.

- 15 A Deputy Leader of the Council is required to be appointed in case anything happens which would prevent the Leader of the Council from performing their duties as Leader.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 16 As the Council operates a committee system, the Deputy Leader of the Council has no formal legal powers and duties vested in them under the Local Government Act 1972, or the Local Government Act 2000.
- 17 However, in practice, all local authorities need to appoint to this office, and the appointee will hold one of the significant elected Member roles within the Council.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 18 There are no direct financial implications. The position of Deputy Leader of the Council receives a special responsibly allowance.

Policy

- 19 There are no direct policy implications.

An open and enabling organisation.

Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 20 There are no direct implications for equality.

Human Resources

- 21 There are no direct human resources implications.

Risk Management

- 22 Failure to comply with legislation would leave the Council open to legal challenge.

Rural Communities

- 23 There are no direct implications for rural communities.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

24 There are no direct implications for children and young people.

Public Health

25 There are no direct implications for public health.

Climate Change

26 There are no implications relating to climate change.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance brian.reed@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	Role-of-Leader-and-Deputy-Leader-Council

COUNCIL MEETING – 27 FEBRUARY 2024**RECOMMENDATION FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE: MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024/25-2027/28****RECOMMENDATION**

That Council approve the items recommended at Appendix A to the report.

Extract from the Minutes of the Corporate Policy Committee meeting on 13 February 2024

6 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2024/25-2027/28

The Committee received the report which presented the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for Cheshire East Council for the four years 2024/25 to 2027/28. The Committee considered the feedback from the budget consultation and proposals recommending a balanced budget for 2024/25 to the full Council meeting on 27 February 2024.

Councillor Ken Edwards addressed the committee as a visiting member and asked the Committee to consider an amendment to the proposals that stated “where a parish or town council expresses an interest in the devolution of a car park, that negotiations are undertaken according to Cheshire East devolution policy in order to protect both Cheshire East and local town and parish council interests”.

The committee acknowledged the extremely difficult financial challenges facing the local authority, particularly in relation to inflation, HS2 programme costs and DSG. Members raised concerns in relation to the inadequate council reserves. Officers confirmed that the MTFS included several proposals that had not yet been costed which could result in additional savings but highlighted that more needed to be done to recover reserves. Members requested that each proposal be worked up fully and subsequently added to the relevant committee work programme to ensure scrutiny and oversight.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That Corporate Policy Committee:

1. Notes the year-end forecast outturn position for 2023/24 (Appendix C, Section 2).
2. Notes the summary results of the Budget Consultation and Engagement exercise undertaken by the Council, as set out in the attached (Appendix C, Annex 2a and 2b).
3. Notes the report of the Council’s Section 151 Officer, contained within the MTFS report, regarding the robustness of estimates and level of reserves held by the

Council based on these budget proposals (Appendix C, Report from the Director of Finance and Customer Services (Chief Finance Officer)).

4. Notes the Council's Finance Procedure Rules remain unchanged and will always apply to ensure proper approval should any changes in spending requirements be identified (Appendix C, Annex 14).
5. **Recommends to full Council the items at Appendix A.**

OPEN

Corporate Policy Committee

Tuesday, 13 February 2024

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25-2027/28

Report of: Alex Thompson, Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)

Report Reference No: CP/39/23-24

Ward(s) Affected: (All Wards);

Purpose of Report

- 1 This report presents the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for Cheshire East Council for the four years 2024/25 to 2027/28. The Corporate Policy Committee is asked to consider the feedback from the budget consultation and recommend a balanced budget for 2024/25 to the full Council meeting on 27 February 2024.

Executive Summary

- 2 Financial strategies underpin how Cheshire East Council will allocate resources, achieve the Corporate Plan and provide in the region of 500 local services every day. The strategies must be affordable, based on robust estimates and balanced against adequate reserves.
- 3 In February 2021 the Council approved the Corporate Plan 2021-2025 which articulates the vision of how these services will make Cheshire East an Open, Fair and Green borough:
- 4 Open - We will provide strong community leadership and work transparently with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambition in Cheshire East.
- 5 Fair - We aim to reduce inequalities, promote fairness and opportunity for all and support our most vulnerable residents.

- 6 Green - We will lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development.
- 7 **Appendix B** summarises the Corporate Plan 2021-2025 on one page. The plan is due to be refreshed during 2024.
- 8 The Council operates a three-stage cycle to support its financial strategies, the stages are Plan, Monitor and Report. Progress against each element of this cycle is crucial to maintain sustainable services:

Plan

- 9 The Council presented a four-year balanced strategy in February 2023. In-year performance identified inflation factors and service growth that exceeded the budget, putting pressure on reserves.
- 10 The issues were also forecast to continue into the following financial year and beyond; therefore significant work had to be undertaken to mitigate these pressures as far as possible.
- 11 Finance Sub-Committee approved indicative 2024/25 budget envelopes to assist with reallocating additional budget to the highest pressure area of Children's Social Care. The reports were received by committees in November 2023 and recommended that officers work with Members to develop further proposals to enable budgets to be managed within each envelope for 2024/25.
- 12 This delayed the start of the local consultation on the Council's proposed budget. Following further in-year analysis and the provisional government funding announcements the Council launched the local consultation on 8 January 2024.
- 13 Following consultation on the draft revenue budget for 2024/25 via all service committees and other stakeholders, and including additional funding estimates as announced by the government in late January 2024, the net revenue spending budget is proposed at **£375.7m**.
- 14 Total capital investment of £0.6bn, including the associated borrowing requirements, is identified over the next four financial years; but all schemes that are not fully funded by grants and / or external contributions are to be subject to a detailed review, as the current proposals are now not affordable.

Monitor

- 15 The outturn position for 2023/24 is currently forecast to be an overspend of £13.0m at the Third Financial Review position. The third

review forecast has been reported to each service committee, where action plans were presented to show intended mitigating responses.

- 16 In October 2023, the Cheshire East Budget Emergency Response Team (CEBERT) was set up to lead on coordinating work across the organisation to address the financial challenge and rebalance the Council's spending forecasts.
- 17 Weekly meetings are chaired by the Chief Executive with updates relating to the workstreams identified in the review. These workstreams include Establishment Management, Spending Control Panel, Pricing Strategies and Capital Spending.
- 18 Following the approach in 2022/23, the in-year forecast overspend of £13.0m for 2023/24 will be funded through the use of reserves. The previously capitalised spend on the now cancelled HS2 scheme (£8.7m) will also now be funded through revenue this financial year as the scheme can no longer be classified as capital spend. This will be funded through the use of the Capital Financing and Collection Fund earmarked reserves.
- 19 The cycle of special committee meetings in January and February focused on consultation on the MTFS proposals. Members requested that, throughout 2024/25, service committees have effective oversight and scrutiny of the implementation of the MTFS and its approved change items. As a result, the Council's reporting 'masterplan' and committee work programmes will be updated to include reporting on the monitoring and delivery of all MTFS change items, including matters requiring consultation and / or decisions. This will ensure regular reporting to Corporate Leadership Team and all service committees on implementation of the MTFS and achievement of savings, throughout the coming year.
- 20 In addition to reporting at the formal 'financial review' points in the year, other progress reports will be scheduled for reporting to particular service committees, on their items as appropriate; by way of example, this will include (but not be limited to) reports on: high cost care packages in Adults and Children's Services; work between directorates to enhance the transition process from child to adult social care; safer walking routes for school children; libraries strategy; asset transfers and devolving services to town and parish councils; car parking; and the use of assets to support transformation of services (including for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and Extra Care Housing).

Report

- 21 Financial performance has been reported regularly to committees throughout 2023/24. The statutory accounts for 2022/23 were closed

within the national deadline and presented in May 2023. The financial outturn was presented in July 2023, and in-year financial reviews reported in October, November and January.

Budget 2024/25

- 22 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy contains the following headlines for the 2024/25 financial year:
- 23 Overall net revenue spending on services is being increased by £22.6m to £375.7m in 2024/25, split as follows:
- | | |
|---|----------------|
| Adults (incl. Social Care / Public Health) | £137.5m |
| Children (incl. Social Care / Education) | £89.0m |
| Place (incl. Highways / Regeneration / Waste) | £92.5m |
| Corporate (incl. ICT / Customer Services) | £41.5m |
| Central (incl. Capital Financing) | £15.2m |
| Total Net Revenue Budget | £375.7m |
- 24 Central government unringfenced grants (including Revenue Support Grant) will increase by £5.2m overall to £32.0m.
- 25 Funding from Council Tax will need to increase by £16.0m, to £287.1m. To provide this essential funding for local services it will require a proposed Council Tax increase of 4.99% from £1,707.39 to £1,792.59 for a Band D property. 2% (£5.4m) of the total Council Tax increase relates to Adult Social Care and partially supports the forecast growth in demand.
- 26 Capital spending is forecast at £592.3m for the period 2024/25 to 2027/28 including £270m on Highways, £176m on Economy and Growth and £86m on Education and Children's Social Care.
- 27 There is an on-going review of the whole capital programme, in particular schemes that require financial contributions from Cheshire East as all or part of their funding. The programme will need to be reduced for it to be affordable and sustainable in future years.
- 28 The 2023/24 forecast in-year overspend, funding of the HS2 capitalised spend, plus the in-year planned drawdowns from earmarked reserves, total a movement of £50.3m for 2023/24.
- 29 Net expenditure in 2024/25 is expected to increase by £34.3m, however income from additional funding is only forecast to increase by £22.6m, creating a budget deficit of £11.7m, which will have to be taken from reserves if further transformational activity does not take place by the end of 2024/25. Once the planned drawdowns from reserves for next year are added in, this results in a further estimated £21.6m being

utilised. This rapid use of reserves is unsustainable and effectively leaves the Authority with only £3.8m of reserves in total by the end of the 2024/25.

- 30 The forecast balance in the General Reserve will be £2.1m by the end of 2024/25.
- 31 The forecast balance in the ringfenced earmarked reserves will be £1.7m by the end of 2024/25.
- 32 Further details are included in the Reserves Strategy included at **Appendix C: Annex 13**.
- 33 The Report from the Director of Finance and Customer Services (Chief Finance Officer) on page 16 of the MTFs (**Appendix C**) sets out the planned response to the 2024/25 budget and reserves position and the transformational activity that needs to take place during 2024/25 to address the financial crisis the Council is facing.

Budget Consultation

- 34 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been developed during 2023 and the budget consultation was published on 9 January 2024 for engagement with all stakeholders, following the launch to Members on 8 January.
- 35 During the consultation there were 2,829 engagements, with additional feedback being provided by the Council's committees. This is the largest response to any budget consultation that the Council has received. **Annex 2b**, within **Appendix C**, provides information on the responses. The most significant headlines from the feedback are summarised as follows:
- 36 23 of the 29 proposals received net support, with details of these presented in the table below. Although these proposals had net support, feedback suggests they are complex and potentially impact on some of the most vulnerable residents in Cheshire East. More detail about respondent concerns for each proposal can be found in the main report at **Appendix C: Annex 2b**.

Budget proposal that received net support	Net Support
CP1: Reduce leadership and management costs	87%
CP7: Reduce spending on staffing and agency costs	76%
CP5: Improved debt recovery and increased charges of costs	73%
CP3: Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible	70%
EC1: Refresh wholly owned company overheads and contributions	66%
CF7: Reduce growth in expenditure	66%

CF6: Other service reviews	66%
CF3: Review of structure to further integrate children and families services	65%
CP6: Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services	65%
CF5: Achieve the Family Hub model	59%
CP4: Accelerate digital and other ICT transformation	50%
EG1: Service restructures within place based services	48%
EC6: Reduce revenue impact of carbon reduction capital schemes	45%
AH3: Working age adults - Prevent, reduce, delay	44%
EG2: Reduce opening hours for main offices	36%
AH4: Older people – Prevent, reduce, delay	32%
CF1: Discretionary offer to children with disabilities	31%
CF2: Remove school catering subsidy	25%
EC4: Fund libraries a different way	24%
AH2: Client contributions increase	17%
EC2: Strategic Leisure Review (Stage 2)	14%
AH1: Fees and charges	10%
CF4: Reduce discretionary post-16 travel support	7%

37 The 6 proposals that received net opposition included:

Budget proposal that received net opposition	Net Opposition
HT1: Highway maintenance savings	-45%
CP2: Close the Emergency Assistance scheme	-30%
EC7: Increase garden waste charges to recover costs	-28%
EC5: Reduce costs of street cleansing operations	-20%
EC3: Reduce costs of waste disposal and number of HWRCs	-20%
HT2: Introduce annual increases to car parking charges	-13%

38 Details of these proposals and all the feedback can be found in the full Budget Consultation report (**Appendix C, Annex 2b**).

39 Changes made during the consultation period include:

40 **Removal of proposal CP7: Reduce additional spending on staffing and agency costs (£3.2m)** – this was removed due to the proposal being unachievable in its current form, including the risk of duplication of initiatives. Significant work has already taken place by CEBERT to review and reduce the use of agency staff; and going forward it will remain a requirement on senior management to ensure that staffing resources are employed in ways that achieve best value (which in particular cases may be realised through the use of agency staff, or from overtime / additional hours of current employees).

- 41 **Additional unringfenced funding announced estimated at £3m** – on 24 January there was further “exceptional provision” to be made available to support councils facing soaring costs in social care as a result of 46 MPs lobbying the Prime Minister to go further than the provisional settlement allocations. This had the result of increasing the forecast funding envelope from £372.7m to £375.7m.
- 42 This report summarises the resolutions that Corporate Policy Committee are requested to recommend to Council at **Appendix A**.
- 43 This report also provides the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Report (containing the Budget for 2024/25 that will be part of the recommendations) for the period 2024/25 to 2027/28 at **Appendix C**.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Corporate Policy Committee notes:

1. The year-end forecast outturn position for 2023/24 (**Appendix C, Section 2**).
2. The summary results of the Budget Consultation and Engagement exercise undertaken by the Council, as set out in the attached (**Appendix C, Annex 2a and 2b**).
3. The report of the Council’s Section 151 Officer, contained within the MTFS Report, regarding the robustness of estimates and level of reserves held by the Council based on these budget proposals (**Appendix C, Report from the Director of Finance and Customer Services (Chief Finance Officer)**).
4. The Council’s Finance Procedure Rules remain unchanged and will always apply to ensure proper approval should any changes in spending requirements be identified (**Appendix C, Annex 14**).

That Corporate Policy Committee recommends to Council:

5. The items at **Appendix A**

Background

- 44 The Council’s financial resources are provided from a combination of local taxes, government grants, investment returns on assets and other

direct contributions from individuals or organisations. Financial plans are based on estimated spending and income over the next four years and the report of the Chief Finance Officer brings Members' attention to the processes and risks associated with developing these estimates.

- 45 The Council aims to achieve value for money based on Economy (how much we pay for things), Efficiency (how well we use things) and Effectiveness (how we use things to achieve outcomes). Public feedback and internal and external scrutiny create the necessary framework to hold the Council to account for achieving these aims.
- 46 All councils are legally required to set a balanced budget each year.
- 47 The budget setting process for 2024/25 has enabled a set of proposals to be developed and challenged through a managed process that considered service changes, the Capital Programme and the supporting financial planning assumptions relating to funding levels.
- 48 There have been a series of distinct stages of the Budget Setting Process with reports in relation to the Council's financial position being taken to Corporate Leadership Team and all committees throughout 2023/24. See **Appendix C, Annex 2** for further details of the process undertaken.
- 49 The MTFS Report provides financial background as well as setting out further details of the ongoing approach to funding the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan. It highlights the spending plans and income targets for the financial year starting 1 April 2024, as well as forecast estimates up to the 2027/28 financial year.
- 50 The Corporate Plan is a key strategic document for the Council, setting the vision and objectives for the whole organisation. It is a vital part of the Council's performance management framework and how the Medium-Term Financial Strategy is delivered. The MTFS aligns resources to manage the costs associated with achieving the Council's vision.
- 51 The Corporate Plan is regularly reviewed by the Corporate Policy Committee where progress and achievements are noted. The current Corporate Plan 2021-25 will continue to drive the Council's ambitions and priorities. A refreshed plan is due to be launched later in 2024.
- 52 The MTFS Report is based on the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25. This was released on 18 December 2023. On 24 January 2024 there was an additional "exceptional provision" allocation of funding announced for local authorities to assist with the well-documented budget pressures felt across the sector, following the provisional settlement announcements. The final

settlement is expected in early February 2024 with a debate by Members of Parliament in the House of Commons expected in mid-February (after the publication date of this report to Committee) to agree the position.

- 53 The MTFS Report continues to include estimated grant allocations in relation to several Specific Grants (**Appendix C, Annex 7**). These will be refined as appropriate in due course.
- 54 Any further changes made as a result of the engagement process and further debate will be reported to Members at the Council meeting on 27 February 2024.

Consultation and Engagement

- 55 The business planning process involved a series of events during 2023. Details of how this process was managed is included within **Appendix C, Annex 2**.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 56 In accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Rules of Procedure, Corporate Policy Committee has responsibility to recommend the Medium-Term Financial Strategy to Council for approval.
- 57 The recommended MTFS should be balanced to support the Council in its statutory duty.
- 58 The Council's Section 151 Officer report, in accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 and Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, is included within the MTFS and provides commentary on the robustness of the estimates making up the Council Tax Requirement of £287,086,013. This is based on a total 4.99% Band D increase, which includes a 2% precept ringfenced specifically for Adult Social Care services. Additionally, the report comments on the adequacy of the financial reserves for the Council. The S.25 statement of the Council's s.151 Officer is included on Page 16 of **Appendix C** and Members should have due regard of this report in making their recommendations to Council or giving approval to recommendations at Council.
- 59 Further to the above statement it can be reported that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Report 2024/25 to 2027/28 (**Appendix C**) is based on sound financial principles and reflects sufficiently detailed plans that can maintain the financial resilience and viability of the Council in the medium term.

Other Options Considered

- 60 The Council has a legal duty to set a balanced annual budget taking regard of the report from the Chief Finance Officer. Options cannot therefore be considered that would breach this duty. Any decision of the Committee must still recognise the requirement for the Council to fulfil this duty.
- 61 There is no option to “do nothing” to support spending plans for the Council in 2024/25. The Council has statutory obligations to provide certain services, which would be unaffordable based on the latest forecasts if the Council failed to levy an appropriate Council Tax.
- 62 The Council will continue to explore options to provide financial benefits through efficiencies, enhanced digital services, process reviews and sale, transfer or leasing of surplus assets.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 63 The Council should have robust processes so that it can meet statutory requirements and fulfil its fiduciary duty.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 64 Please see all Sections of this report.
- 65 The Section 25 Statement of the Section 151 Officer provides information on the process and professional judgement of the Budget 2024/25. This is provided on page 16 of **Appendix C**.

Policy

- 66 The MTFS report outlines policy and budget proposals which will impact on service delivery arrangements.
- 67 The Corporate Plan will drive and inform Council policy and priorities for service delivery. The priorities and actions listed may have direct policy implications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 68 Under the Equality Act 2010, decision makers must show ‘due regard’ to the need to:
- 69 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- 70 - Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it; and

- 71 - Foster good relations between those groups.
- 72 The protected characteristics are age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership.
- 73 Having “due regard” is a legal term which requires the Council to consider what is proportionate and relevant in terms of the decisions they take.
- 74 The Council needs to ensure that in taking decisions on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Budget that the impacts on those with protected characteristics are considered. The Council undertakes equality impact assessments where necessary and continues to do so as proposals and projects develop across the lifetime of the Corporate Plan. The process assists us to consider what actions could mitigate any adverse impacts identified. Completed equality impact assessments form part of any detailed Business Cases.
- 75 The proposals within the MTFS include positive and negative impacts. A separate Equality Impact Assessment has been produced and is included in **Appendix C, Annex 3**.
- 76 Positive impacts include significant investment in services for children and adults (protected characteristics primarily age and disability). There is growth of £9m in Adult Services to protect current spending requirements to support individuals accessing care and provide new funding to manage the local impact of rising prices and an ageing population. There is also growth of almost £14.3m per year in Children’s Social Care to provide protection and opportunities for younger people who need it.
- 77 There are a number of savings proposals which could have a negative impact on those with protected characteristics. Where this is the case, more detailed work on mitigation and consultation will take place before any decisions are made.
- 78 The Corporate Plan’s vision reinforces the Council’s commitment to meeting its equalities duties, promoting fairness and working openly for everyone. Cheshire East is a diverse place and we want to make sure that people are able to live, work and enjoy Cheshire East regardless of their background, needs or characteristics.

Human Resources

- 79 A number of the proposals will impact on staff. See **Appendix C, Section 1** for full list of change proposals.

- 80 Any restructures will follow the Council's established processes and will include consultation and engagement with staff and Trade Unions.

Risk Management

- 81 The steps outlined in this report mitigate the four main legal and financial risks to the Council's financial management arrangements:
- 82 The Council must set a balanced Budget.
- 83 Setting the Council Tax for 2024/25 must follow a compliant process.
- 84 The Council should provide high quality evidence to support submissions for external assessment.
- 85 That Council borrowing will comply with the Treasury Management Strategy which is underpinned by the Prudential Code.
- 86 A risk assessment of the significant proposals being put forward has been carried out by each service and is included as part of the planning process.
- 87 It is important to note that the Council faces significant financial challenges in achieving its desired outcomes. Management of risk is embedded within the organisation to ensure the Council can seize opportunities, introduce new, innovative models of service delivery, focus on improving outcomes for residents and review its range of services whilst identifying and controlling any resulting risks. The approach to risk management will continue to be assessed as the Council's plans and financial strategy are implemented.
- 88 See **Appendix C, Annex 4** for further information.

Rural Communities

- 89 The Corporate Plan, along with the 'Green' aim and supporting priorities will have direct and indirect implications for our rural communities across Cheshire East. These impacts will be considered and reported through individual work programmes as they are developed.
- 90 The MTFS report provides details of service provision across the borough. See **Appendix C, Section 1**.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

- 91 The Corporate Plan, along with the 'Fair' aim and supporting priorities will have direct and indirect implications for children and young people and cared for children which will be considered individually and in line

with the actions required. These impacts will be considered and reported through individual work programmes as they are developed.

92 See **Appendix C, Section 1**.

Public Health

93 The Corporate Plan, along with the 'Fair' aim and supporting priorities will have direct and indirect implications for public health which will be considered individually and in line with the actions required. These impacts will be considered and reported through individual work programmes as they are developed.

94 See **Appendix C, Section 1**.

Climate Change

95 The Corporate Plan has a very strong environmental thread throughout with a specific aim for the Council to be 'Greener'.

96 A number of priorities and activities are listed which will support the Council's commitment of being carbon neutral, including the ongoing delivery of an Environmental Strategy and a Carbon Action Plan.

97 Also see **Appendix C, Annex 3** for further information.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Paul Goodwin, Honor Field honor.field@cheshireeast.gov.uk, paul.goodwin@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix A - Recommendations Appendix B – Corporate Plan (summary) Appendix C – Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-2028 Appendix C – Annex 2b: Budget Consultation Report
Background Papers:	Outturn Report 2022/23

	<u>Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-27</u> <u>First Financial Review 2023/24</u> <u>Second Financial Review 2023/24</u> <u>Third Financial Review 2023/24</u> <u>Domestic Taxbase Report 2024/25</u> <u>Budget Consultation 2024/25</u>
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Appendix A

Recommendations to Council from Corporate Policy Committee: February 2024

That Council notes:

- 1 The Report of the Council's Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer), contained within the MTFS Report, regarding the robustness of estimates and level of reserves held by the Council based on these budget proposals (**Appendix C, Report from the Section 151 Officer**).

That Council, having given due regard to the report of the Chief Finance Officer, approves:

- 2 The Revenue estimates for the 2024/25 budget and the medium-term Capital Programme estimates 2024-2028, as detailed in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Report (MTFS) 2024-2028 (**Appendix C**).
- 3 Band D Council Tax of £1,792.59 representing an increase of 4.99%. This is below the referendum limit (including 2% ringfenced for Adult Social Care) and arises from the provisional finance settlement (**Appendix C, Section 2**).
- 4 The 2023/24 planned use of Flexible Capital Receipts is increased to £3.414m, an increase of £2.414m from the £1m approved in the 2023-27 Medium-Term Financial Strategy Report to fund transformational projects within the Council (**Appendix C, Section 2**).
- 5 The 2024/25 planned use of Flexible Capital Receipts is £1.0m (**Appendix C, Section 10**).
- 6 The allocation of Revenue Grant Funding for 2024/25 of £359.868m (**Appendix C, Annex 7**), and delegates authority to the Chief Finance Officer, to approve supplementary estimates if the value of any named grant changes from the figures contained within Appendix C, Annex 7 (noting that all such variations will subsequently be reported to the appropriate Committee, and that any new, previously unnamed, grants are subject to approval in-line with the Constitution)
- 7 The allocation of Capital Grant Funding for 2024/25 of £95.831m (**Appendix C, Annex 8**), and delegates authority to the Chief Finance Officer, to approve supplementary estimates if the value of any named grant changes from the figures contained within Appendix C, Annex 8 (noting that all such variations will subsequently be reported to the appropriate Committee, and that any new, previously unnamed, grants are subject to approval in-line with the Constitution)
- 8 The Fees and Charges schedule for 2024/25 (**Appendix C, Annex 9**).

- 9 The Capital Strategy, this shows total proposed capital expenditure of £592.3m including £9.3m for Managing & Maintaining Highways (**Appendix C, Annex 10**).
- 10 The Prudential Indicators for Capital Financing (**Appendix C, Annex 10**).
- 11 The Treasury Management Strategy (**Appendix C, Annex 11**).
- 12 The Investment Strategy; including the financial limits for various classifications of investment, and the investment decision making process set out in the Strategy (**Appendix C, Annex 12**).
- 13 The Reserves Strategy (**Appendix C, Annex 13**), which includes proposed movements to and from reserves.
- 14 The amendment to Key Decisions as defined in the Constitution and the financial limits to be included within the Council's Finance Procedure Rules (**Appendix C, Annex 14**).
- 15 Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) – to implement emergency closures of sites at Bollington, Middlewich and Poynton from 1 April 2024 until the outcomes of the review of the long-term provision of HWRCs for Cheshire East has been presented to and approved by the Environment and Communities Committee.
- 16 Garden Waste Subscription Scheme - to approve the increase in the annual subscription charge to £59, payable from October 2024 onwards for collections commencing in January 2025.
- 17 That the Council's Carbon Neutral ambition target is amended to 2027 and the capital projects that have been designed to achieve that target have also been deferred and should be delivered by 2027. The capital programme is currently under a review as shown in the Capital Strategy (**Appendix C, Annex 10**).
- 18 To approve a Supplementary Capital Estimate (SCE) for Northwest Crewe Package for £9.015m. The request is fully funded by external contributions, however there will be a need to forward fund the income whilst the Council awaits payment. This could cost the Council an additional £243,000 in interest costs per annum which would need to be funded by the Strategic Highways Service.

That Council recognises that Corporate Policy Committee noted:

- 19 The year-end outturn forecast position for 2023/24 (**Appendix C, Section 2**).
- 20 The Budget Engagement exercise undertaken by the Council, as set out in the attached (**Appendix C, Annex 2a**).
- 21 The results of the Budget Consultation (**Appendix C, Annex 2b**).

- 22 The Adult Social Care Charging consultation results (**Appendix C, Section 1 – Adults and Health Committee: Narrative and proposal number 1**).

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Appendix B

Our Vision An open, fairer, greener Cheshire East

Open

We will provide strong community leadership and work transparently with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambition in Cheshire East

Fair

We aim to reduce inequalities, promote fairness and opportunity for all and support our most vulnerable residents

Green

We will lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development

Our Priorities

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

Our Values

We are
flexible

We
innovate

We take
responsibility

We deliver
the **service**
that customers
need

We use
effective
teamwork

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Cheshire East Council Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-28 Executive Summary

February 2024

An Open, Fairer, Greener Cheshire East

This document is available to download on the [Cheshire East Council](#) website. It formed part of the 13 February 2024 Corporate Policy Committee Agenda and then went on to be approved as part of the 27 February 2024 Council Agenda.

You can continue to provide feedback on the proposals in this report by speaking to your local Councillor
– visit [Find Your Local Councillor](#) on the Cheshire East Council website for contact details.

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Executive Summary – Delivering Our Corporate Plan

Overview

The vision for Cheshire East Council is to create a borough that is Open, Fairer and Greener. The Council provides essential services such as Social Care, Education, Highways, Economic Development and Waste that lead the way in achieving this vision for local people. Council services are funded mostly from Council Tax, with additional contributions from business rates and government grants and managing these resources appropriately enables our plans to be sustainable over the medium-term.

The vision will be achieved by being a transparent organisation that cares for the people who need our support as we develop a locally sustainable place. The Corporate Plan that articulates the vision was approved by Council in February 2021. During the Autumn of 2023 the Council engaged with residents on proposals to update the Council's current Corporate Plan and this work continues to be analysed to ensure a revised plan can align with local ambition. Revised plans must be affordable though.

The Council's Committees receive regular updates on the measures that highlight achievement of the Corporate Plan. It is clear from these updates that the Council continues to provide vital, innovative services that improve quality of life for residents.

The Council's financial strategies focus on affordability, where expenditure can be matched to available funds. Population growth and inflation cause costs to increase, and this leads to routine prioritisation of the Council's resources.

Cheshire East is the third largest Council in the Northwest of England, responsible for approximately 500 services and with a population of nearly 400,000. Our gross annual spending is normally in the region of £700m and includes capital spending and costs funded direct from government grants such as Dedicated

Schools Grant. Net spending reflects spending that is only funded from Council Tax, Business Rates and unring-fenced government grants and is approximately £350m.

Impact of National Economic Factors

Increasing numbers of councils across England are warning they face unprecedented financial pressures amid soaring costs and rising pressure on services. This is a financial situation compounded by years of austerity-driven cuts. The Council is significantly exposed to the national economic changes. Increasing prices impact the Council's contracts and bills, increasing complexity in demand also contributes to driving up costs. Once the annual budget is set the Council must rely on achieving financial targets or using reserves to manage risks. The Council has historically had limited reserves due to the level of spending required on front line services, as such the national financial challenges are causing significant financial stress on our ability to deliver services without fundamental change.

All council services are under pressure to find savings as costs and demand pressures continue to rise. Analysis from the Local Government Association (LGA) found that councils in England face a funding gap of £4 billion over the next two years, which is a £1 billion increase since the LGA's initial analysis in July 2023. It also shows that by 2024/25 cost and demand pressures will have added £15 billion (almost 29 per cent) to the cost of delivering council services since 2021/22.

The MTFs approved in February 2023 matched income to expenditure over a four-year period. These forecasts recognised emerging risks inherent with demand led services. The forecasts allowed for growth in essential services such as Social Care and

Waste Services. But the forecasts were significantly understated and during the monitoring cycle for 2023/24 it was clear that overspending was occurring and that this would impact on medium-term forecasts.

To deal with revised spending forecasts the Council must increase income from taxation and charges as well as making significant savings right across all services, even in statutory services. Although this is an extremely challenging and unpalatable scenario the Council must legally produce a balanced budget whilst protecting vulnerable residents as a priority.

The Council had highly ambitious plans to regenerate the area and provide improved infrastructure that supports economic wellbeing. These plans align to the Council's ambition to be greener and promote sustainable development. But spending on major road and town centre projects is also subject to high inflation and increased borrowing costs so too will have to be prioritised in-line with future affordable funding available to service the debt costs that arise from unfunded capital expenditure.

Medium-Term Financial Pressure

Over 60% of the Council's net budget is spent on providing support for Adults and Children based services. Although there are relatively low numbers of service users, compared to the population of Cheshire East, the Council has statutory responsibilities linked to providing care and support for eligible residents. Such services are therefore demand-led and continue to be increasingly complex

Housing and population growth also brings additional challenges for our key services such as increased education requirements, waste collection and disposal and highway maintenance. There is also inflation in the Council's contracts and nationally negotiated annual pay costs which have been higher in recent years than forecast adding additional strain to already stretched budgets.

Almost 95% of the Council's net budget is funded from local taxation due to very low levels of Central Government support. Central Government support for social care has been increased, recognising the crucial role of these services. However, future settlements from Government seem highly unlikely to provide increases that can match growth and inflation.

Government expects increasing costs, from growth in demand for services, and that this must be funded locally to achieve national core spending power forecasts. This creates pressure to continue to increase Council Tax levels. In recent years the Council has increased Council Tax specifically to fund the pressures in Adults' and Children's Social Care and will continue to do so where the flexibility allows. The Local Government Association are clear that Council Tax is not the long-term solution to funding.

Achieving Financial stability

To support the ongoing achievement of the Corporate Plan the Council presented a four-year balanced budget in February 2023. Due to the unprecedented financial circumstances that the council finds itself in since that time it has not been possible to present a fully balanced budget for the medium term this time around. The focus has been wholly on the coming financial year 2024/25 to ensure that enough scrutiny could be achieved in every area to work towards a balanced position.

The headlines of the 2024/25 budget are:

- Continuing increased support for social care, to match rising prices and complexity, and continue with our safeguarding responsibilities:
- **growth of £9.0m in Adult Services** to protect current spending requirements to support individuals accessing care and provide sufficient funding to manage the local impact of rising prices and an ageing population.

- **growth of £14.3m in Children's Social Care** to fund the rapidly growing costs in this vital budget area to provide protection and opportunities for younger people who need it.
- **growth of £11.3m** to cover inflation costs including waste and pay costs.
- **growth of £9.5m** for increased interest costs on borrowing.
- Supporting this essential growth by **managing changes to services worth -£30m**, including:
 - Increased fees and charges to keep up with inflation and remove subsidies via Council Tax where possible.
 - Removal of some discretionary services to allow statutory key services to be prioritised.
 - Reduce leadership and management costs.
 - Realign service area resources to maximise what can be offered.
 - Improve efficiencies or do things differently where possible.
- Responding to the expectation from government of additional income from Council Tax in 2024/25 that will increase Core Spending Power for the Council by 6.8% based on the Spending Review 2023 (England average +6.5%).
- **Council Tax will increase by 4.99% in 2024/25** 2% (£5.4m) of the increase will be solely utilised to fund increasing costs within Adult Social Care. Forecasts include increases of a further 2.99% in each of the following years (with 1% being related to Adult Social Care).
- **Council Tax Support will continue to protect families on low incomes** from Council Tax increases. The scheme for 2024/25 still allows households on low incomes to receive 100% in support.

- **Increasing the annual Capital Financing Budget from £19m to £28.5m** to support increased interest rates and borrowing costs. £6.1m of this increase is required to deal solely with the interest payments attributable to the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit that continues to rise year on year. As the General Fund Reserve is being used to increase the budget for 2024/25, the need to borrow to fund the capital programme continues into 2025/26 and beyond at a level that is not sustainable for the Council. The capital programme is still under review and will have to be brought into line with the original MTFS budget allocation of £20.0m.
- **Investing Capital Receipts of £1m** to support transformation activity.

Table 1 shows the impact of the above changes on the annual Revenue and Capital Budgets. Revenue spending on day-to-day services such as care and waste collection will increase by £22.6m. Current capital spending forecasts on building and maintaining assets such as regeneration projects and roads are forecast to increase by £44.3m. This increase does include grant funding expected as part of the annual funding of Highways and Schools.

Table 1: Running costs (Revenue) and Investment in assets (Capital) are both increasing in 2024/25

Table 1	2023/24* Budget £m	2024/25 Budget £m	Change £m
Revenue Budget	353.1	375.7	+22.6
Capital Budget	171.1	215.8	+44.3

* Approved Permanent Budget as at Third Financial Update 2023/24

Net Revenue Budget 2024/25

- Funding for these changes comes from a combination of local and national income sources. Income is estimated to vary from 2023/24 as follows:
 - Increase in Council Tax levels (+£13.5m)
 - Increase in Business Rates income (+£1.3m)
 - Growth in Council Taxbase (+£2.5m)
 - Increase in Social Care grants (+£6.2m)
 - Increase in New Homes Bonus Grant (+£0.3m)
 - Reduction in other Specific grants (-£1.2m)
- Additional funding is being utilised to support each of the Council's three priorities to be Open, Fairer and Greener.

Table 2 shows how the extra funding is allocated across the Council's committees. More funding is being targeted at demand-led care services.

Table 2	Change from 2023/24 Budget £m	2024/25 Budget £m
Adults and Health	+1.2	
Children and Families	+9.9	
Corporate Policy	+0.5	
Economy and Growth	+3.3	
Environment and Communities	-0.1	
Highways and Transport	+4.9	
Total Service Budget		360.5
Central Budgets including: Capital Financing, Bad debt provision change, Capital Receipts, Use of reserves	+2.9	
Total Central Budgets		15.2
Total Net Revenue Budget	+22.6	375.7

Capital Budget 2024/25 to 2027/28

The four-year capital programme includes investment plans of around £0.6bn. It is proposed that it will be funded through a mixture of Government grants, contributions from other external partners and Council resources. At present this programme is not affordable, with interest rates for borrowing at an average for the Council of 5.6% and a continuing need to borrow, the capital programme needs to be reduced dramatically in order for the Council to be able to fund the schemes solely or partly funded by Council resources.

- The forecasted funding sources are:
 - Government Grants (£283m / 48%)
 - Other external contributions (£106m / 18%)
 - Receipts from Council Assets (£35m / 6%)
 - Borrowing or Revenue Contributions (£162m / 28%)
- Expenditure is estimated in the following areas:
 - Strategic Highways Schemes (£270m)
 - Growth & Enterprise (£170m)
 - Children & Families (including Schools) (£87m)
 - Finance & Customer Services (£6m)
 - Environment & Neighbourhoods (£39m)
 - ICT (£13m)
 - Adults Social Care (£1m)

Strategic Management of Reserves

The Council holds extremely low levels of reserves as funding has been utilised in recent years to maintain services and repay the overspend from 2022/23. There is also the requirement to fund the predicted overspend for 2023/24 and the forecast to do the same for the shortfall in the 2024/25 budget, as inflation and demand outstrip the funding envelope available or the likelihood of service transformation not being fast enough to bring spending in-line with demand in time for 2024/25. Reserves are vital to enable the Council to invest in opportunities and to manage exposure to financial risk over time, so this places increased risk as overall reserves are depleted.

The Council's Corporate Plan includes a priority to increase reserves, but the impact of continuing high inflation and demand levels is forecast to significantly reduce reserves levels instead. There are still significant risks related to High Needs spending and the Private Finance Initiative that do not have financial cover. This position is unsustainable, and the Council will seek to increase

reserves by developing a transformation programme to reduce expenditure and redesign services as quickly as possible. The Government's decision to cancel HS2 Phase 2 has also meant costs associated with that project, which were expected to be funded from future income, are now expected to be funded from existing reserves. With no prospect of future income from the anticipated new business rates or development and commercial opportunities, £8.7m of project expenditure will now have to be funded from the revenue budget in 2023/24.

The forecast in-year overspend, of £13m, along with this additional pressure, plus the in-year planned drawdowns from earmarked reserves, total a movement of £50.3m for 2023/24. The forecast shortfall in funding compared to spending in 2024/25 is estimated to be £11.7m. Transfers of earmarked reserves to support this shortfall and other budgeted drawdowns total a movement of £21.6m in 2024/25.

This rapid use of reserves is unsustainable and leaves the Authority with inadequate reserves by the end of 2024/25, as shown in Table 3 overleaf. The Reserves Strategy (**Annex 13**) provides further detail on the current position.

Continuing financial pressure from inflation, interest rates, high demand on statutory services, and exceptional one-off costs will reduce reserves significantly in 2023/24

Table 3	Opening Balance 2023/24 £m	Forecast Closing Balance 2023/24 £m	Forecast Closing Balance 2024/25 £m	Change from closing 2023/24 balance £m
General Reserves	14.1	1.1*	2.1*	+1.0
Earmarked Reserves**	61.6	24.3	1.7	(22.6)
Total Revenue Reserves	75.7	25.4	3.8	(21.6)

* Closing and Opening balances are dependent on outturn at 31 March 2024 (see Section 2: Forecast Outturn 2023/24).

** All remaining Earmarked reserves excluding those held for ring-fenced purposes are being transferred into the General Fund reserve during 2024/25 to support the forecast deficit position.

The Council is also managing a negative Dedicated Schools Grant reserve, based on a national override of recommended accounting practice. This approach protects general Council reserves but is not a long-term solution. An unfavourable resolution to this temporary position could present significant risk to the Council's financial stability. The Council took part in the Department for Education (DfE) led Delivering Better Value (DBV) scheme, which considered the approach to High Needs services. But this scheme did not address existing deficits. Due to the magnitude of the DSG deficit the council has been meeting with the DfE after being invited to join the Safety Valve Programme. During this time the DSG management plan has been revised to include planned changes

required as part of the recovery plan. This plan is being considered by the DfE and will form their decision on whether we will be accepted on to the programme. Any emerging guidance on this will be reported to Members along with ongoing local mitigation measures.

The Council must react to the financial projections and estimated reserves balances set out in this budget. Change and transformation is particularly important as overspending occurred in 2022/23 and is forecast again in 2023/24. This is a trend that cannot be sustained. The Cheshire East Budget Emergency Response Team (CEBERT) that was set up in 2023/24 will continue throughout 2024/25 to focus on budget scrutiny and a clear transformation programme will be undertaken to produce sound future budget strategies and return the Council to a more stable financial position for the longer term.

A Listening Council

The budget report reflects the Council's ongoing commitment to transparency, engagement and consultation. The process to develop the MTFS reflects a priority to listen to residents and stakeholders. **Annex 2** provides further details on the process.

The stakeholder engagement process includes:

- Appropriate timescale that allows adequate engagement and sharing of Budget proposals.
- Regular elected Member involvement through committee meetings and virtual briefings.
- Stakeholder engagement via social media and an on-line consultation survey to gather feedback.
- Effective internal challenge processes including staff and trade union briefings.

In November 2023 the Council received headline details via the Autumn Statement of the Government's spending plan, which was then followed up by the Provisional Local Government Settlement in December 2023. This late notification, coupled with rising inflation and interest rates causing in-year budgets to be overspent, resulted in delays in developing spending plans for the future. The Council's consultation process was therefore delayed until detailed change proposals could be developed.

The detail of the settlement received on 18 December confirmed the provisional funding allocations for 2024/25. There was then a further announcement on 24 January of further "exceptional provision" to be made available to support councils facing soaring costs in social care as a result of 46 MPs lobbying the Prime Minister to go further than the provisional settlement allocations.

The Settlement and additional estimated allocations resulted in changes to the funding envelope for 2024/25 as follows:

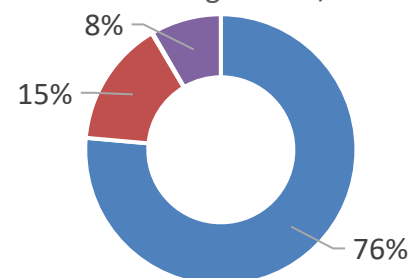
- Unring-fenced Social Care Grant is £25.6m for 2024/25, an increase of £5.2 on 2023/24 levels).
- A further one-year allocation of New Homes Bonus Funding (£4.1m for 2024/25).
- New powers to de-couple the business rates multipliers will be used from 2024/25. The small business rates multiplier will be frozen (usual compensation will be provided), and the standard multiplier indexed (to 54.6p based on Sept CPI).
- Services Grant reduced by 70% resulting in a much lower allocation of £0.3m (£1.7m in 2023/24).
- RSG was uplifted by 6.7% in line with CPI, but still only provides 0.1% (£414,000) of the Council's annual funding.

The Council sought stakeholder feedback during January 2024 to inform the recommendations to the Council in setting the revised budget for 2024/25.

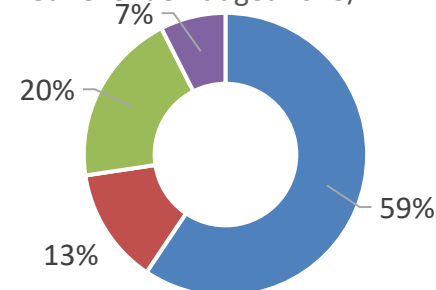
The proposals within the MTFs are based on a Council Tax increase of 4.99% in 2024/25 and 2.99% thereafter, which is in-line with Government expectations. The Council is not proposing to exceed the referendum limit set by the Secretary of State.

Funding for the Council's Budget has changed a lot since 2013/14. Council Tax used to fund less than 60% of spending, but due to the loss of Revenue Support Grant it now funds over 75%.

Net Revenue Budget 2024/25 - £375.7m



Net Revenue Budget 2013/14 £280.8m



■ Council Tax ■ Business Rates ■ Revenue Support Grant ■ Specific Grants

Note: If the Council had increased spending in line with CPI inflation, and adjusted for population growth, the net budget in 2024/25 would be in excess of £430m, almost £55m higher than the current forecast.

Cheshire East Council Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-28

February 2024

An Open, Fairer, Greener Cheshire East

Report from the Director of Finance and Customer Services (Chief Finance Officer)

Under Section 25(1) of the Local Government Act 2003, I am required to report on the robustness of the estimates in the budget and the adequacy of the proposed reserves. Council must have regard to this report when making decisions on the budget.

The Council must react to the financial deficit in this budget. Change and transformation is particularly important as overspending occurred in 2022/23 and is forecast in 2023/24. This is a trend that cannot be sustained or managed through reserves.

Expenditure on services exceeded budget by £6m in 2022/23, despite an overall increase of £16.6m in net budget. In 2023/24 the increase in net budget was £25.4m, with a forecast overspend currently at £13m. The planned spending increase of 7.2% was not excessive compared to national inflation. This is further explained when local government spending is influenced by increased population, demands and complexity, and not just increased prices. But the pattern of spending in excess of budget must be addressed.

Net expenditure in 2024/25 is expected to increase by a further £34.3m, however income from increased funding is only forecast to increase by £22.6m, creating a budget deficit of £11.7m. The Council must therefore use reserves to fund this deficit in 2024/25.

The Section 25 report supporting the 2023/24 budget stated that *“The balanced position relies on achieving each proposal within the strategy without delays. Low levels of reserves present limited scope to manage any unforeseen financial difficulties in the medium-term.”* Savings targets were achieved by the Council, although some were realised later than planned. But the level of growth materially exceeded forecasts and created in-year

overspending. The issue of having low levels of reserves must be addressed within the next 12 months.

Cheshire East Council is not alone in facing such a material financial challenge, but this fact does nothing to mitigate the issues. There are several reasons for increasing costs, and these can be summarised under three main headings:

1. **Inflation:** This is caused by demand and supply issues from an increasing population with increasingly complex needs, as well as price inflation in contracts and supplies and services.
2. **Interest Rates:** The Council has debts of £284m accumulated from the spending profile of large-scale infrastructure projects, overspending of budgets and the increasing deficit in high needs (SEND) education expenditure. Repayment of interest on these debts has become a material problem following the rapid rise in interest rates in 2022 and 2023.
3. **Other:** The recent pressures on budgets, aligned to national uncertainty, over economic factors and policies, forces short term reactive thinking. This limits the opportunity for longer term strategic planning. The Government’s decision to cancel HS2 Phase 2 has also meant costs associated with that project, that were expected to be funded from future income, are now expected to be funded from existing reserves, with no prospect of future income.

The Council must transform to create sustainable services and support infrastructure projects that reflect ‘whole life’ costs. This must cover the medium to long term and be backed by reserves that can manage any emerging risks. This is crucial if the Council is

to maintain the value that local decision making can bring to local services.

The Chief Executive has taken the initiative to engage senior officers in self-assessment of the Council against the Local Government Association – Transformation Capability Framework. The results will inform a programme of activity across the Council. This will include reviewing how senior officers can work more collaboratively within a management board operating model. The intention being to provide more opportunities to focus on strategic outcomes and manage change.

The transformation programme, needed to help address the financial deficit, will focus on:

- Reprioritisation to create an opportunity to invest in critical areas but also disinvest from areas.
- Customer engagement and experience through using technology to streamline service delivery enabling self-service available 24/7 whilst ensuring specialised support and guidance is given to those that need it.
- Achieving value for money in, and across all services, by reducing manual, repetitive tasks through automation of systems and processes.
- Reviewing organisational structures and operating models to maximise performance and outcomes.
- Developing the right skills and behaviours across the entire workforce to achieve high productivity levels.
- Achieving financial targets through the effective implementation of well informed and clear decisions informed by data and insight.
- Developing the Asset Management Plan to align it to service requirements and dispose of surplus assets.

It is highly likely that the Council will require additional capacity to manage this programme, in a way that is yet to be determined, but it will inevitably require additional funding, which will need to be met

from within existing resources. The structure and scale of ambition of the programme should be brought to the Corporate Policy Committee as early as March 2024. This approach should present adequate opportunity to establish the programme as part of the next financial cycle.

Members have also discussed options related to LGA Peer Review which will input into the Council's transformation ambitions.

In-year financial performance has highlighted that the most significant financial pressures are being seen within social care. In January 2024, the Secretary of State for Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities increased social care funding, within the Local Government Financial Settlement, following consultation feedback. This is an unusual response but reflects the ongoing strain on council budgets. The financial settlement was otherwise largely unchanged and evidence suggests that several councils continue to face severe financial stress.

Without financial support from central government the Council must take the responsible step of ensuring local income is increased and costs reduced to support essential services. Income from service users is particularly important to sustain discretionary services.

Several councils have issued Section 114 notices in the last two years. The Secretary of State is maintaining a clear narrative that councils must demonstrate strong financial management and control, and that councils should not take unnecessary risks. Cheshire East Council has taken positive steps in 2023/24 to demonstrate compliance with the Financial Management Code and this work must continue as part of the wider transformation programme.

The all-out elections in May 2023 did not change the overall political structure of the Council but did introduce a large cohort of new members. The induction process has been comprehensive and presented several opportunities to enhance the quality and timeliness of information for decision makers.

Financial performance has been reported regularly to committees throughout 2023/24. The statutory accounts for 2022/23 were closed on time and presented in May 2023. The financial outturn was presented in July 2023 with in-year financial reviews in October, November and January. Throughout 2024/25, committee chairs and committee members will want to assure themselves that the Council is achieving not only the in-year financial targets, but also developing a sound MTFS as part of the transformation programme.

Producing Robust Estimates

The level of Council funding available for the 2024/25 budget was estimated and published as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy in February 2023. The Finance Sub-Committee reviewed, and subsequently approved the funding assumptions in July 2023. This included a detailed review by a Sub-Committee Working Group. The allocation of overall funding between the six service committees was reviewed following the publication of the in-year financial review. This process produced revised targets for each committee specifically reflecting the prevailing financial pressure in the Children and Families budget. The funding envelope has been further extended to reflect an estimate of the additional grants announced by the Secretary of State in January.

The level of Council funding for 2024/25 has therefore been subject to adequate scrutiny and allocations have been approved by members based on appropriate advice.

The process to consult on the Council's budget was again appropriately delayed and condensed. Stakeholders were engaged within similar timelines to last year. The consultation material took account of up-to-date forecasts and near-final government settlement proposals. The quality of the information provided for consultation was therefore deemed adequate. The number of responses has been high once again which gives a further

indication that the process and supporting material was adequate to provide meaningful consultation.

The process to develop the MTFS includes engagement with a wide array of stakeholders. The process included public committee meetings as well as virtual briefings with elected members and employees of the Council. There have been presentations to businesses, Trade unions and partners alongside the on-line public consultation. Responses have been coordinated and are presented to members in advance of the February Council meeting. Changes proposed for the budget are supported by business cases and equality impact assessments which are available if required. Changes following consultation are reported to members, along with suitable assurances.

The MTFS strategy relies on the closing balances and performance within the 2023/24 financial year. In-year reporting to members has identified the service areas that require the most urgent financial support to create a robust set of estimates for 2024/25 and beyond.

Children's services are experiencing ongoing additional demand and complexity. Social care placements and home-to-school transport services have seen the highest increases from inflation and demand. Overall Children and Families budgets will increase by a net £9.9m in 2024/25. Savings are provided from a mixture of initiatives, including work on the Enhance scheme that was funded by Central Government grant.

Growth in Adult Services of £9.0m is being enabled by increased government grants and a combination of efficiencies, service changes and increased charges. This programme of change has been enabled following the engagement of external consultants in early 2023. Despite the growth in the Adult Services budget there is still material risk from the impact on prices related to increases in the National Living Wage.

Place based services are severely impacted by inflation in utilities and fuel prices and by the increasing number of houses in the

borough. Proposed changes to place-based services may impact on large numbers of services users. Both waste collection services and highways functions, including car parking facilities, require net reductions in expenditure. Proportionate reductions or revised charges are in evidence nationally and the Council must consider the local approach to creating sustainable services in this way.

The Council must revise ways of working across all services, via the transformation programme, to ensure they remain affordable. This may impact on service users, meaning appropriate engagement will continue to be required. It is important to provide an early assessment of performance to ensure changes are achieved in a timely way.

All services are impacted by pay inflation and contract inflation. Government target inflation levels, of 2%, still seem inappropriate when budgeting for 2024/25 although recent Bank of England forecasts suggest inflation could reduce to 3% in 2024 and 2% by the end of 2025. Pay inflation at 3% is therefore included within the 2024/25 budget, which I believe is robust. Contract inflation, unless isolated within specific budget proposals, must be controlled through contract and demand management. Ongoing spending control, particularly related to vacancies and contract renewals, is important to minimise the impact of inflation in the short term.

The Capital Programme remains ambitious with £0.6bn forecast expenditure in the next four years. If spent evenly this would equal over £140m expenditure in each of the next four years. At the Third Financial Review, the Council was forecasting capital spending of £171.1m in 2023/24, but the final Outturn position is likely to be far less than that figure at £120m based on current spending levels. The Council must refine this profile of spending to ensure it is reduced or delayed to ease the pressure on the capital financing budget and avoid the risk of over-borrowing.

Annual asset sales of £1m are forecast within the MTFS to support the costs of transformation. The Department for Levelling Up

Housing and Communities issued a consultation in December 2023 (closing date 31 January 2024) to local authorities on options for extending the flexibilities on using capital receipts for the local management of budget pressures, allowing councils to borrow for transformational projects and providing the option to dis-invest from investment properties to fund revenue pressures, increase reserve balances or repay Public Works Loan Board loans without the premium. The Council must review its Asset Management Plan as part of its approach to transformation. This review must take into account the requirements and financial benefits of all property assets. The intent must be to repurpose or dispose of assets that do not achieve appropriate short-term financial returns.

Net revenue budget gross growth is forecast at £64m (+18% on the 2023/24 net budget of £353.1m). £23.3m relates to social care, with £9.5m relating to MRP and interest payments. Additional growth is forecast in waste collection, asset maintenance, highway maintenance and local buses. This level of growth is consistent with a robust approach to reflecting potential costs, rather than taking a risky approach of simply reflecting affordable growth.

This level of growth necessitates Council Tax increases in-line with government expectations on Core Spending Power. Continued uncertainty in local government funding structures presents a risk to the forecasts within the MTFS. Business Rate Retention, Fairer Funding, and changes to the Environmental Act are all outstanding issues with potentially material implications for the Council's finances.

Changes to service levels are therefore appropriate to retain local sustainability during this period of national uncertainty. £30m of savings and mitigation are planned in 2024/25. Implementing this level of savings will be challenging but based on professional judgement they are feasible and achievable. Such changes will rely on appropriate governance, as well as clear and timely decision making. The transformation programme must not detract from the achievement of savings already included in the budget.

The assumptions within the MTFS are based on appropriate up to date information and have been subject to stakeholder engagement and professional assessment. As such they present a robust set of financial proposals, but the recent track record of over-spending must be addressed.

Adequate Reserves

The Reserves Strategy sets out the impact of the budget on the Council's reserves. When considering if reserves are adequate, I have reflected on ongoing work by CIPFA to produce a resilience index as well as considering local and national risks.

Inflation has again caused overspending in Adults and Children's services and interest payments have caused further financial pressures on borrowing. The 2023/24 budget was designed to deal with some inflationary pressures, but not enough, and inflation and interest rates continue to be issues.

General reserves were increased in 2022 from £11.5m to £12.6m. Further increases were achieved to bring this reserve up to £14.1m (4% of the net revenue budget). This was positive progress towards a Corporate Plan target of £20m and a frequently stated benchmark of 5%. This strategy was linked to sound financial management of earmarked reserves to manage specific risks and plan for future opportunities and liabilities.

However, spending in 2022/23 alongside forecasts for 2023/24 and 2024/25, are reducing total reserves to an inadequate level.

In 2023/24 net spending is forecast at £366.1m against net funding of £353.1m. This £13m forecast deficit reduces General Reserves to £1.1m. Earmarked Reserves are expected to close at £32.9m, leaving total reserves of £34.0m. The requirement to treat £8.7m of spending on HS2 as revenue further reduces total reserves to £25.3m.

In 2024/25 net spending is forecast at £387.4m against net funding of £375.7m. This £11.7m deficit further reduces total reserves to just £13.6m. Of the total remaining reserves, several are ringfenced or already included in the spending forecast to be utilised, leaving just £3.8m (1% of net expenditure). This position is clearly unsustainable as a 1% variance in spending could trigger the requirement for a s.114 report.

Previous financial strategies to manage risks associated with capital financing, PFI, insurance, investment assets, variations in the Collection Fund and annual MTFS variations are all essentially redundant and no longer capable of being supported.

There are ongoing financial risks associated with High Needs grant (SEND) and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) that the Council may have to address in the medium-term.

Supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities (High Needs) is a statutory responsibility, but expenditure is exceeding grant income and is currently creating a negative reserve. This is only allowable due to an accounting override by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The department may remove this override in as little as two years and the Council would have to manage the financial consequences locally. This change will be dependent on negotiation with DfE about future funding levels, but the risk is material, already forecast at almost £90m.

Negotiations continue with providers and relevant government departments in relation to the impact of the fire at the Beechmere Extra Care Housing facility in Crewe. There are no additional financial implications identified in relation to the PFI at this point. Although any transfer of costs or risks to the Council is not in keeping with PFI schemes the current contract is not running at full capacity due to the fire in 2019.

Members must recognise that risks to all proposals within the MTFS must be mitigated. Delays or changes in proposals being

implemented will not have adequate financial cover from reserves. In which case such changes would be considered outside of the budgetary framework requiring further decisions to restore the balanced budget that is a legal requirement.

Conclusion and Exceptional Financial Support

The Council is required to produce a balanced budget and must demonstrate adequate levels of financial management to maintain this position. Several councils in England have been subject to s.114 notices, particularly where financial controls have been inadequate. Such action restricts spending and usually requires government intervention and associated reductions in local decision making. This is an indication of the financial challenges being faced by local authorities. Achieving the proposals within this budget would provide ongoing evidence that the required levels of financial management are in place at Cheshire East Council.

Based on my engagement and observations of the process to manage in-year spending and determine a balanced budget for 2024/25 I can report that the budget presents a robust set of forecasts, but that the Council must address the current trend of overspending. This requires further engagement of the Committees alongside enhanced controls associated with adherence to the CIPFA Financial Management Code.

Based on my assessment of the risks that the Council can currently value I am not satisfied that the Reserves Strategy presents an adequate level of reserves to support the MTFS.

To mitigate the risk of financial failure, and the consequential impact on local services, I have been in regular contact with the Exceptional Financial Support Team of DLUHC, alongside the Council's Chief Executive. Cheshire East Council is not an isolated case in this regard.

The process has required analysis of the causes of financial stress on Cheshire East Council, including the impact of HS2, High Needs

expenditure and wider general fund issues with inflation and interest. I will continue to explore options with DLUHC, DfE and DfT to resolve these material issues. If HS2 spending and High Needs related interest costs were resolved, even if only in the short term, this could increase the overall reserves levels by as much as £18m. Addressing short term overspending could release further resources and thereby provide the ability to manage local risks and provide essential funding to support a comprehensive transformation programme.

Any final decision on exceptional financial support, by the Secretary of State is likely to be made after the Council has agreed its financial plans for 2024/25. However, DLUHC have provided assurance that government will continue to work closely with Council officers to find a way forward.

I will monitor the impact of ongoing financial controls and work with the Chief Executive to assess the achieve of in-year financial performance. Achievement of the proposals in the MTFS is crucial to avoid potentially significant future changes to service levels.

Alex Thompson

Alex Thompson FCPFA, IRRV(Hons)

Director of Finance and Customer Services

(Chief Finance Officer - Section 151 Officer)

Table 1 – Four Year Summary Position

Estimated Budget and funding for Cheshire East Council 2024/25 to 2027/28 (excluding ring-fenced grants)

Summary position for 2024/25 to 2027/28	Revised Budget 2023/24 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2024/25 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2025/26 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2026/27 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2027/28 £m
Childrens	79.1	89.0	95.5	103.2	110.6
Adults	136.3	137.5	147.3	152.5	157.6
Place	84.4	92.5	97.3	102.4	106.9
Corporate	41.0	41.5	40.1	41.1	42.0
Total Service Budgets	340.8	360.5	380.2	399.1	417.1
<i>CENTRAL BUDGETS:</i>					
Capital Financing	19.0	28.5	43.0	57.1	69.8
Income from Capital Receipts	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0
Bad Debt Provision increase	-0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Use of Reserves	-5.0	-12.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Central Budgets	12.3	15.2	42.0	56.0	68.7
TOTAL: SERVICE + CENTRAL BUDGETS	353.1	375.7	422.2	455.2	485.9
<i>FUNDED BY:</i>					
Council Tax	-271.1	-287.1	-298.8	-310.6	-322.9
Business Rate Retention Scheme	-55.3	-56.6	-56.6	-56.6	-56.6
Revenue Support Grant	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4
Specific Unring-fenced Grants	-26.4	-31.6	-24.5	-24.5	-24.5
TOTAL: FUNDED BY	-353.1	-375.7	-380.3	-392.2	-404.4
Funding Position	0.0	0.0	41.9	63.0	81.5

Section 1 – Context & Budget Proposals

Cheshire East Council is responsible for providing approximately 500 local public services across an area of over 1,100km² for over 398,800 residents.

As a place we have a fantastic mix of rural and urban environments. However, the most important element of Cheshire East is its people, and we will strive to make sure we have a Council that serves its diverse communities well and delivers value for money. We want to see Cheshire East Council build a national reputation for customer services and partnership working, and to build a clear programme that continually delivers successful outcomes for all of its residents.

For further information please see our [borough profile](#).

The population of Cheshire East – Now and future

Population now



At the time of the 2021 Census the population of Cheshire East was **398,800** - an increase of 28,700 from 2011

Cheshire East is the third largest local authority in the North West and 15th largest in England by population. The population has a nearly even gender split at 51% female and 49% male.

Households



There are currently an estimated **174,856** households at the time of the 2021 census.



By 2038 the number of households based on demographic trends will increase to **188,688** an increase of 13,832 or 8%.

By 2043 households in Cheshire East will look like...

Older (65+) Households



83,860

Single Occupant Households



29,111

Male

Two or more dependent children



37,073

Female

21,527

Population in 2038

0 to 14
62,487 ↓ -4%

15 to 64
226,440 ↓ -7.4%

65+
124,098 ↑ 39%

Cheshire East 15%

Cheshire East 55%

Cheshire East 30%

North West 16%

North West 60%

North West 23%

England 16%

England 60%

England 24%

The population of Cheshire East by 2038 is projected to be **413,025**

Biggest areas of growth are in the older population with the number of residents aged **70 plus** increasing to **94,918** a 48% increase from now and those aged **85 plus** to **22,016** an 83% increase from now.

Cheshire East will need to prepare to face the challenges presented by an ageing population, above the rate of the North West and England as well as dealing with a slowly reducing population that is of working age.

Our Residents



51%
are female



49%
are male.

17%

of Cheshire East residents have a long-term health problem / disability.



34,456

residents are 'unpaid carers', with 9615 providing at least 50 hours per week.



Between the 2011 and 2021 Census, the average age of residents has increased from 41.9 years to

43.5 years

By 2030, the average age of residents is expected to further increase to approximately 47 years.



The proportion of Cheshire East residents who classed themselves as White British is

90%



We know that our population, when compared to the region and the UK has an older demographic profile.



8.3%

of Cheshire East residents were born outside the British Isles, with 4 % born outside the EU.



The most common non-British Isles countries for residents to have been born in are Poland and Romania



We have fewer 'working age' and under 16s living in our area compared to North West and national averages. However, our 65+ population is larger than average. This brings additional pressures for us in ensuring we have the capacity to deliver services to our residents as they need them.



5%

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.



Whilst we have a smaller than average 'working age' population, more people are in work with a low unemployment rate (2.9%) - lower than regional and national averages and with a lower number of 'workless' households. Those who are employed earn higher than average earnings.

Budget Changes for the Period 2024/25 to 2027/28

The tables below present a list of changes to the Council's 2023/24 Budget, and then further estimated changes through to the 2027/28 financial year. The list shows the proposals related to each of the Council's committees, which ensures ongoing transparency for monitoring and reporting of progress against each proposal. These items are described in more detail on pages 39 to 119. Figures represent the change in base budget in each financial year compared to the previous year.

Summary of Proposed Budget Changes – Committee Budgets	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
Adults and Health Committee	+1.136	+9.868	+5.116	+5.116
Children and Families Committee	+9.909	+6.470	+7.660	+7.447
Corporate Policy Committee	+0.489	-1.389	+1.015	+0.915
Economy and Growth Committee	+3.316	+1.184	+1.764	+0.440
Environment and Communities Committee	-0.052	+2.122	+1.386	+1.699
Highways and Transport Committee	+4.869	+1.457	+1.976	+2.404
Total Proposed Service Budget Change	19.667	19.712	18.917	18.021
Finance Sub-Committee	-19.667	+22.141	+2.232	+0.432
Funding Position (Cumulative)	0.000	-41.853	-63.002	-81.455

MTFS Section 1 Ref No	Detailed List of Proposed Budget Changes – Service Budgets	Budget Consultation Reference	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
	Adults and Health Committee		+1.136	+9.868	+5.116	+5.116
1	Fees and Charges	AH1	-1.800	-	-	-
2	Client Contributions Increase	AH2	-0.800	-0.800	-	-
3	Working Age Adults - Prevent, Reduce, Delay	AH3	-1.467	-1.053	-	-
4	Older People – Prevent, Reduce, Delay	AH4	-1.566	-2.010	-	-
5	Market Sustainability and Workforce grant		-1.100	+1.100	-	-
6	Revenue grants for Adult Social Care		-2.480	+7.080	-	-
7	Pension Costs Adjustment		-0.493	-0.517	-	-
8	Investment in Adult Social Care		+7.600	+4.000	+4.000	+4.000
9	Pay Inflation		+1.892	+1.089	+1.116	+1.116
10	Resettlement Revenue Grants – reversal of 2023/24 use		+0.850*	-	-	-
11	Adult Social Care Transformation Earmarked Reserve Release – reversal of 2023/24 use		+0.500*	-	-	-
12	Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care – Removal of Grant Income		-	+0.979	-	-
13	Asset Management	NEW	TBC			
14	Investigate potential agency creation	NEW	TBC			

* Item represented a one-off spend in 2023/24. As it is not a permanent part of the budget, the value of the proposal is reversed in 2024/25.

MTFS Section 1 Ref No	Detailed List of Proposed Budget Changes – Service Budgets	Budget Consultation Reference	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
	Children and Families Committee		+9.909	+6.470	+7.660	+7.447
15	Discretionary offer to children with disabilities	CF1	-0.900	-	-	-
16	Remove school catering subsidy	CF2	-0.516	-	-	-
17	Review of structure to further integrate children and families services	CF3	-1.000	-0.200	-0.200	-
18	Reduce discretionary Post-16 Travel Support	CF4	-0.400	-	-	-
19	Achieve the Family Hub model	CF5	-0.250	-	-	-
20	Other Service Reviews	CF6	-0.250	-	-	-
21	Reduce Growth in expenditure	CF7	-1.900	-	-	-
22	Pension Costs Adjustment		-0.515	-0.537	-	-
23	Growth to deliver statutory Youth Justice service, and growth to ensure budget is sufficient to meet Safeguarding Partnership duties		+0.170	+0.005	-	-
24	Growth to provide capacity to deliver transformation for SEND		+0.500	-	-	-
25	Wraparound Childcare Programme (funded)		+0.587	-0.309	-0.278	-
25	Wraparound Childcare Programme (funded)		-0.587	+0.309	+0.278	-
26	Legal Proceeding - Child Protection		+0.770	-	-	-
27	Growth in School Transport budget		+0.936	+1.501	+1.548	+0.476
28	Pay Inflation		+1.374	+1.056	+1.082	+1.082
29	Use of Children & Families Transformation Reserve – reversal of 2023/24 use		+1.065*	-	-	-

MTFS Section 1 Ref No	Detailed List of Proposed Budget Changes – Service Budgets	Budget Consultation Reference	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
30	Growth in Childrens Placement costs		+10.825	+4.645	+5.230	+5.889
31	Revenue costs for the Crewe Youth Zone (as above) aligned to Supporting Families Funding		-	+0.400	-	-
31	Early Help budget to support funding towards the Crewe Youth Zone		-	-0.400	-	-
32	SEND Capital Modification	NEW	TBC			
33	Childrens Social Work Bank	NEW	TBC			
34	Safe Walking Routes to School	NEW	TBC			
35	Withdrawal of the CEC School Meals Service	NEW	TBC			

* Item represented a one-off spend in 2023/24. As it is not a permanent part of the budget, the value of the proposal is reversed in 2024/25.

MTFS Section 1 Ref No	Detailed List of Proposed Budget Changes – Service Budgets	Budget Consultation Reference	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
	Corporate Policy Committee		+0.489	-1.389	+1.015	+0.915
36	Reduce leadership and management costs	CP1	-0.540	-	-	-
37	Close the Emergency Assistance Scheme	CP2	-0.220	-	-	-
38	Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible	CP3	-0.150	+0.150	-	-
39	Accelerate Digital and other ICT Transformation	CP4	-0.250	+0.250	+0.100	-
40	Enforce prompt debt recovery and increase charges for costs	CP5	-0.150	-0.077	-	-
41	Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services	CP6	-0.310	-0.010	-	-
	<i>Reduce additional spending on staffing and agency costs</i>	<i>CP7 - original</i>	<i>-3.200</i>			
	<i>Reduce additional spending on staffing and agency costs</i> • <i>Item removed - risk of non-achievement in short term</i>	<i>CP7 – Removed post consultation</i>	<i>+3.200</i>			
42	Pension Costs Adjustment		-0.378	-0.396	-	-
43	Mitigation of reduction in the Dedicated Schools Grant		+0.136	-	-	-
44	Pay Inflation		+1.446	+0.893	+0.915	+0.915
45	Legal Services Capacity		+0.455	-	-	-
46	ICT Review 1		+0.450	-2.199	-	-
47	Workforce Strategy Review	NEW	TBC			
48	Parish Compacts	NEW	TBC			

MTFS Section 1 Ref No	Detailed List of Proposed Budget Changes – Service Budgets	Budget Consultation Reference	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
	Economy and Growth Committee		+3.316	+1.184	+1.764	+0.440
49	Service Restructures within Place based Services	EG1	-0.787	-	-	-
50	Reduce opening hours for main offices	EG2	-0.050	-	-	-
51	Office estate rationalisation		-0.550	-0.150	-	-
52	Tatton Park		-0.046	-	-	-
53	Transfer of Congleton Visitor Information Centre		-0.020	-	-	-
54	Pension costs adjustment		-0.157	-0.164	-	-
55	Tatton Park ticketing and electronic point of sale (EPOS) upgrade		+0.005	+0.001	+0.001	+0.001
56	Cultural		+0.020	+0.089	-	-
57	Property Information and Management System - Estates – Revenue Adjustment		+0.030	-	-	-
58	Housing		+0.035	-	-	-
59	Environmental Hub Waste Transfer Station		+0.040	-	-	-
60	Rural and Visitor Economy		+0.045	-0.021	-	-
61	Minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) - Estates - Revenue Adjustment		+0.079	+0.023	-0.047	-0.055
62	Public Rights of Way Income Realignment		+0.115	-	-	-
	Pay Inflation	Original	+0.732	+0.418	+0.428	+0.428
63	Pay inflation	Revised post consultation	+0.788	+0.418	+0.428	+0.428

MTFS Section 1 Ref No	Detailed List of Proposed Budget Changes – Service Budgets	Budget Consultation Reference	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
64	Crewe town centre maintenance and operation		+0.650	+0.352	+0.089	+0.066
65	Assets - Buildings and Operational		+3.119	+0.423	+1.481	-
66	Landfill Site Assessments revenue adjustment - Estates – CE Owned Landfill sites (53 sites) Review and Risk Assessment completions		-	+0.010	-	-
67	Tatton Park Estate Dwellings Refurbishment		-	+0.015	-	-
68	Improving Crewe Rented Housing Standards		-	+0.188	-0.188	-

MTFS Section 1 Ref No	Detailed List of Proposed Budget Changes – Service Budgets	Budget Consultation Reference	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
	Environment and Communities Committee		-0.052	+2.122	+1.386	+1.699
69	Refresh wholly owned company overheads and contributions	EC1	-1.000	+0.800	-	-
70	Strategic Leisure Review (Stage 2)	EC2	-1.305	+0.403	-0.203	-0.166
71	Mitigate the impact of contract inflation and tonnage growth	EC3a (split)	-0.490	-	-	-
72	Emergency reduction of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) to four core sites	EC3b (split)	-0.263	+0.263		
73	Libraries Strategy	EC4	-0.365	-0.250	-	-
74	Reduce costs of street cleansing operations	EC5	-0.200	-	-	-
75	Reduce revenue impact of carbon reduction capital schemes	EC6	-0.336	-0.419	-	-
76	Increase Garden Waste charges to recover costs	EC7	-0.045	-0.134	-	-
77	MTFS 80 (Feb 23) - Waste Disposal - Contract Inflation and Tonnage Growth (updated forecast)		+3.577	+0.864	+0.577	+0.903
	Pay Inflation – CEC & ASDV	Original	+1.944	+0.938	+0.962	+0.962
78	Pay Inflation – CEC & ASDV	Revised post consultation	+1.861	+0.938	+0.962	+0.962
79	Pension Costs Adjustment		-0.151	-0.159	-	-
80	MTFS 90 (Feb 23) Strategic Leisure Review		+1.250	-	-	-
81	MTFS 91 (Feb 23) – Green Spaces Maintenance Review		-0.200	-	-	-
82	MTFS 92 (Feb 23) - Review Waste Collection Service - Green Waste		-3.150	-	-	-

MTFS Section 1 Ref No	Detailed List of Proposed Budget Changes – Service Budgets	Budget Consultation Reference	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
83	Review MTFS 92 (Feb 23) Garden waste subscription financial model in line with latest subscription levels and with actual observed position on any waste migration		-0.429	-	-	-
84	MTFS 93 (Feb 23) Libraries - Service Review		-0.200	-	-	-
85	Explore a Trust delivery model for Libraries and other services		+0.150	-0.350	-	-
86	CCTV		-0.030	-	-	-
87	Congleton Town Council Collaboration Agreement – Grounds Maintenance		-0.062	-	-	-
88	Closed Cemeteries		+0.005	+0.005	+0.005	-
89	Environmental Hub maintenance		+0.023	+0.018	+0.012	-
90	Review Closed Landfill Sites		+0.300*	-	-	-
91	Land Charge Income Adjustment		+0.050	+0.147	-	-
92	Building Control Income Alignment		+0.203	-	-	-
93	Local Plan Review		+0.255	-0.160	+0.033	-
94	Planning income		+0.400	-	-	-
95	Planning Service Restructure		-	+0.300	-	-
	Review of Household Waste Recycling Centres	Original	-	-0.244		
96	Review of Household Waste Recycling Centres	Revised post consultation	+0.100	-0.144	-	-

* Item represented a one-off saving in 2023/24. As it is not a permanent part of the budget, the value of the proposal is reversed in 2024/25.

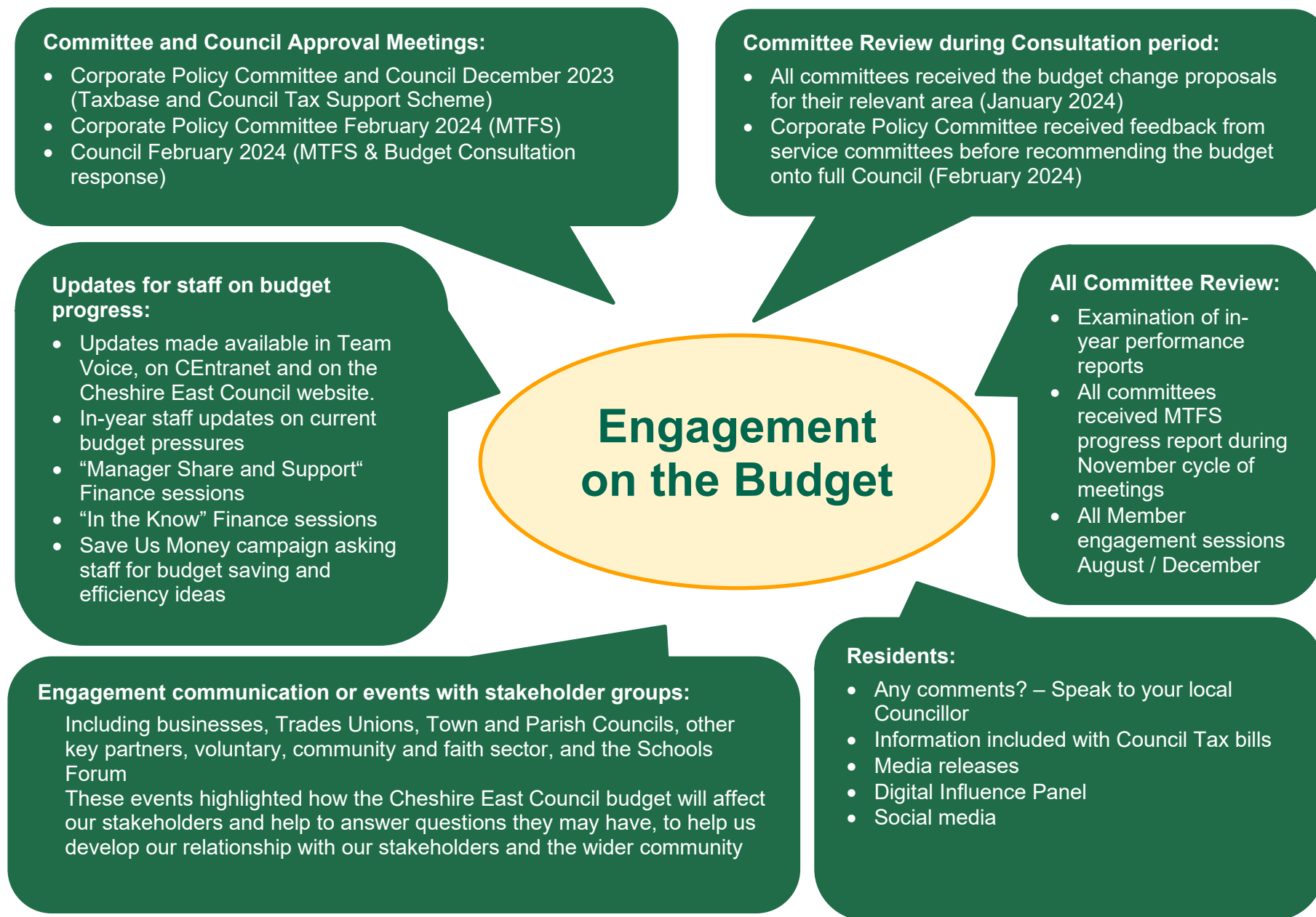
MTFS Section 1 Ref No	Detailed List of Proposed Budget Changes – Service Budgets	Budget Consultation Reference	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
	Highways and Transport Committee		+4.869	+1.457	+1.976	+2.404
97	Highway maintenance savings	HT1	-0.750	-	-	-
98	Introduce annual increases to car parking charges	HT2	-0.150	-0.450	-	-
99	Pension Costs Adjustment		-0.052	-0.055	-	-
100	Highways		-0.031	-	-	-
101	Safe Haven outside schools (Parking)		-0.023	+0.010	-	-
102	Transport and Infrastructure Strategy Team - Restructure		+0.120	-	-	-
	Pay Inflation	Original	+0.312	+0.152	+0.156	+0.156
103	Pay Inflation	Revised post consultation	+0.339	+0.152	+0.156	+0.156
104	Parking - PDA / Back Office System contract		+0.100	-0.030	-	-
105	Flood and Water Management Act 2010 SuDS & SABs Schedule 3 Implementation		+0.100	-0.050	+0.050	+0.050
106	Energy saving measures from streetlights		+0.242	-	-	-
107	Parking		+0.245	-0.970	-	-
108	Highways Revenue Services		+2.479	+2.654	+2.118	+2.329
109	Local Bus		+2.250	-	-	-
110	FlexiLink Service Improvement Plan		-	+0.296	-0.298	-0.131
111	Highways Depot Improvements		-	-0.050	-0.050	-
112	Bus Stop Advertising Revenue Generation		-	-0.050	-	-
	Total Proposed Service Budget Change		19.667	19.712	18.917	18.021

MTFS Section 1 Ref No	Detailed List of Proposed Budget Changes – Central + Funding Budgets	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
	Finance Sub-Committee	-19.667	22.141	2.232	0.432
113	Capital Financing - Minimum Revenue Provision	+9.508	+14.528	+14.058	+12.698
114	Central Bad Debt Provision adjustment	+0.600	-	-	-
115	Use of Earmarked Reserves – MTFS Reserve*	+0.255	-0.255	-	-
115	MTFS Reserve – reversal of 2023/24 use**	+1.536			
116	Collection Fund Reserve - Use of Earmarked Reserves*	-0.834	+0.834	-	-
116	Collection Fund Reserve – reversal of 2023/24 use of reserves**	+2.234			
117	Brighter Futures Transformation – reversal of 2023/24 use of reserves**	+1.271	-	-	-
118	Use of General Reserves – Fund in-year budget shortfall [NEW]	-11.654	+11.654	-	-
119	Council Tax - % increase	-13.527	-8.542	-8.891	-9.287
120	Council Tax – Base increase	-2.461	-3.162	-2.935	-2.979
121	Business Rates Retention Scheme – use of S31 compensation grants	-1.350	-	-	-
122	Unring-fenced Grants + Revenue Support Grant	-5.245	7.084	-	-
123	Council Tax and Business Rates Collection [NEW]	TBC			
124	Council Tax Support [NEW]		TBC		
	Total Proposed Central + Funding Budget Items	-19.667	22.141	2.232	0.432

Funding Position (Cumulative)	0.000	-41.853	-63.002	-81.455
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*Planned future movements in the named earmarked reserves for 2024/25 will now come from the General Reserve as all non-ringfenced earmarked reserves are to be transferred to the General Fund Reserve at the end of 2023/24.

**One-off drawdowns from reserves are reversed in the following year as they do not form part of the permanent budget.



Understanding the financial tables in this document

Budget changes in this document are expressed as **incremental changes** to the Council's Approved Budget for 2023/24.

Each proposed change is included in a table as described below:

Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[x] Number and Title of Budget change [reference from the Budget Consultation survey]				
A narrative to describe what the proposal is				
Impact on service budget =	-X.XXX	-X.XXX	-X.XXX	-X.XXX
*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year				

Some proposals were named specifically in the Budget Consultation for 2024/25 in January 2024. These have been referenced as such. All proposals are sequentially numbered for ease of reference.

Revenue expenditure is incurred on the day-to-day running of the Council. Examples include salaries, energy costs, and consumable supplies and materials.

Capital expenditure is incurred on the acquisition of an asset, or expenditure which enhances the value of an asset.

Current budgets are detailed in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Changes to Capital budgets are split by the year in which expenditure is incurred.

Figures here represent an increase or decrease in spending compared to the 2023/24 Approved Budget.

Each subsequent year then represents a change from the previous year.

Negative numbers represent a budget saving or additional income. Positive numbers represent budget growth or reduced income.

Adults and Health Committee

Responsibilities of the Committee:

Membership: 13 Councillors

Functions

The Adults and Health Committee will be responsible for community welfare, public health and adult social care services with a view to enabling all people to live fulfilling lives and to retain their independence. When discharging its functions the Committee shall recognise the necessity of promoting choice and independence.

The Committee's responsibilities include:

- Promotion of the health and well-being of residents and others.
- Determination of policies and making decisions in relation to people aged 18 and over (some young people up to the age of 25 may still be within Children's services as care leavers or with a Special Educational Needs and Disability) with eligible social care needs and their carers including:
 - Adult safeguarding, adult mental health, physical health, older people and learning disabilities and lifelong learning.
 - Determination of policies and making decisions in relation to Public Health in co-ordination with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Scrutiny Committee.
 - Oversight of the Communities Strategy.
 - Provision and commissioning of domestic violence support services and quality assurance.
 - Prevent reporting and Channel Panel counter terrorism oversight.

Oversight, scrutiny, reviewing outcomes, performance, budget monitoring and risk management of the Directorates of Adult Social Care Operations; Commissioning and Public Health including:

Public Health, lifelong learning, health improvement and intelligence, Adult social care and safeguarding, Adult Mental Health and Learning Disability, Adult social care operations, Care4CE and commissioning of support for adults.

(Extract from Cheshire East Council Constitution – Dec 2023)

Executive Director Commentary:

In 2023/24 the MTFS set out a series of short-term measures to address the immediate need for savings, and a set of proposed medium-term changes and transformation, to support the strategic aim of ensuring people who draw on care and support are able to live independently in their own home. However, 2023/24 has been significantly more difficult than originally anticipated and has seen greater than expected growth in both cost and demand pressures, as seen nationally and the department will end the year with an unplanned deficit of £5.0m, split between commissioning costs and employed staffing costs, despite the department delivering almost all of its planned savings as set out in the MTFS.

In preparing the 2024/25, budget growth of £7.6m has been provided, being funded through a mix of additional grant income, the increase in the adult social care precept and core Council Tax, However, this will need to fund the 2023/24 pressures of £5m which means that most of the growth is already committed. Additional inflationary pressures in 2024/25, will need to be managed within the budget, which based on current estimates could add a further £6.5m pressure in 2024/25.

The strategy set out in last year's report, the budget strategy for 2024 to 2028, remains to deliver cash savings and improve productivity to ensure a long-term sustainable service by focusing on:

- investing in the employed and commissioned workforce to attract people to social care and create the opportunities for fulfilling careers in the sector;
- supporting people to be independent through investment in extra care and specialist housing to support people at all phases of their lives;
- increasing the use of technology and exploring the opportunities presented by the development of artificial intelligence to improve efficiency and productivity to free the people who work in health and care services to do the work only they can do;
- working in partnership with people who use services, carers, and colleagues in the NHS, voluntary sector, and commissioned provider services to develop new ways of working and new models of care; and
- ensuring that we understand the impact and benefit of what we do so that we invest in services that deliver the outcomes people need in the most cost-effective way possible.

Progress has been made in meeting these aims including:

- £6.6m has been invested in prices, including £4.6m in the development of a tiered pricing structure to encourage growth in the domiciliary care market, has been successful in creating additional capacity;
- Adults and Health Committee have approved a new Extra Care Strategy to expand the availability of extra care;

- some increase in the use of technology alongside improved support to carers has assisted with the improving hospital discharges, although there is much more to do in the development of the use of technology across all aspects of the service;
- Committee has approved the Adult Learning Disability and the Mental Health strategies, both co-produced through the partnership boards with people who draw on care and support, their families and voluntary sector partners;
- we are working with other adult social care teams in local authorities in Cheshire and Merseyside to develop new performance reporting to support decision making.

However, there is more work to do across all elements and the savings proposals contained within this budget focus on core Care Act principles of prevent, reduce, delay for all adults who seek to draw on care and support. There are two programmes of work which will form the core of our transformation strategy over the period of the MTFS, one focusing on the work we do with people aged 18 – 64, and one focused on the work we do with people over the age of 65.

Both will be aimed at delivering the strategies we have already co-produced and have been agreed by the Adults, Health and Integration Committee. Both will be under-pinned by the development of alternative housing arrangements, either in partnership with other organisations or through the alternative use of our own assets and buildings, both will require the increased use of technology, and both will be focussed on these as means to aiding independence.

For people aged between 18 and 64 we aim to improve our services by doing things differently. Building on work done in

2023/24 we will, seek to reduce reliance on one-to-one services, support families to support their adult children, expand the use of direct payments and Shared-Lives arrangements, and work with colleagues in Children's Services, the NHS and provider organisations to better support children and their families as they prepare for adulthood.

For those aged over 65 we will be seeking to expand the use of community equipment and technology enabled care, greater reliance on voluntary sector organisations, and increased involvement of families. We will continue to focus on the delivery of care at home where it is the most cost-effective means of delivering services, and during 2024/25 we will be bringing forward specific extra care development proposals.

In addition, Adult Social Care conducted consultation on a new Adult Social Care Charging Policy between 30th October 2023 and 21st January 2024. The policy is due to be considered at Adult, Health and Integration Committee on 28th March 2024. The last time a review of fees and charges for Adult Social care services took place was in 2015. The purpose of the changes to the Adult Social Care charging policy is to ensure quality services can continue to be provided to the residents of Cheshire East in a financially sustainable manner, recognising the balance to be drawn between the cost of services and the demand for services. The principles of alignment with Government practice, particularly the application of the Department of Work and Pensions Minimum Income Guarantee, the removal of subsidy from those people with income and assets in excess of Government thresholds, and the annual uprating of fees and charges in-line with annual inflation are core elements of the proposed new policy.

There was broadly positive support for the proposed changes. There was net positive support for all proposals except the proposal to apply the Department of Work and Pensions Minimum Income

Guarantee, which has a net negative response of 19%, with 57% opposing and 38% supporting. 62 people responded to this question, of which eight are in receipt of services. This proposal will affect everyone currently paying a contribution to the cost of their care. It will affect older people in receipt of pension credit more than other groups of people.

A core theme across the open comments was concern around finance, especially when looking at large percent increases on fees being paid. There was a general sentiment that mitigation for this should be in place such as smaller annual increases rather than large price hikes. There was great concern from those on a fixed income, with no way to enhance this as it would directly take from the money needed for basics, at a time of a cost-of-living crisis.

After due consideration the Adult, Health and Integration Committee will be recommended to adopt the change in policy as proposed in the consultation, including the adoption of the Minimum Income Guarantee.

This is because, although there is no overall support for this specific change, the Council and Departmental budget position requires all reasonable financial options be implemented and this approach forms part of a balanced set of proposals that seeks to reduce expenditure across all service areas and increase income across all service areas.

To ensure that no individual is unduly adversely affected by this change everyone will receive a full financial reassessment and will be supported to ensure that they are in receipt of their full benefit and pension entitlements and that appropriate disability related expenditure is reflected in their personal assessment. The Department will institute monitoring to ensure that there are no unintended consequences of this proposed policy change.

The charges set out here are at the lowest levels proposed in the consultation.

Other proposals contained in this document are largely technical amendments including the reversal of grant available in prior years.

This proposed budget carries a number of serious and significant risks, including no additional funding to meet the full impact of the increase in the National Living Wage, the costs of which will need to be met through negotiation with providers.

The number of people and costs associated with the transition from childhood to adulthood for those people receiving SEND support is not fully quantified and therefore it is not possible to assess whether the growth allowed for in the Adult Social Care budget is sufficient, notwithstanding the comments made above.

Price and activity growth have both been driven in large part by social care's support for NHS discharge. Although we work well with our partners to support the discharge process the increased level of activity in the NHS converts into increased activity and demand in social care. This is unplanned care in the NHS and its consequential impact on social care is currently not quantified locally or by the Department of Health and Social Care in assessing likely funding requirements for social care specifically or local authorities generally.

In conclusion, it is anticipated that 2024/25 will be more challenging than previous years.

The report setting out the detailed outcome of that consultation is appended at [here](#).

Proposals to vary the Budget in the Adults and Health Budget are focused on these areas:

Adults and Health Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[1] Fees and Charges [AH1] <p>Increase in income from client contributions primarily to remove subsidy from people currently assessed to fund their own care. This is subject to the outcome of a specific separate consultation, on a new social care charging policy, primarily with people who use care services. The consultation analysis can be accessed on the cheshireeast.gov.uk/budget page here.</p> <p><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	-1.800			
[2] Client Contributions Increase [AH2] <p>Increase in income from client contributions arising from the inflation increase for pensions and benefits paid to individuals. Offsets against expenditure growth proposals.</p> <p><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	-0.800	-0.800		
<p>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</p>				

Adults and Health Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[3] Working Age Adults - Prevent, Reduce, Delay [AH3] We aim to improve our services by doing things differently. Building on work done in 2023/24 we will apply the Care Act principles of prevent, reduce, delay, seeking to reduce reliance on one-to-one services, support families to support their adult children through the expansion of direct payments and shared-lives arrangements. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-1.467	-1.053		
[4] Older People – Prevent, Reduce, Delay [AH4] Building on work done in 2023/24 we will apply the Care Act principles of prevent, reduce, delay. This means expansion of community equipment and technology enabled care, greater reliance on voluntary sector organisations, and increased involvement of families. We will continue to focus on the delivery of care at home where it is the most cost-effective means of delivering services. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-1.566	-2.010		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Adults and Health Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[5] Market Sustainability and Workforce grant Grant income - Market Sustainability and Workforce grant for 2024/25 only. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-1.100	+1.100		
[6] Revenue grants for Adult Social Care Increase to current income budget associated with specific grants for social care to address hospital discharge. The corresponding expenditure is reflected in the investment to Adult Social Care proposal. Reversal of the total income budget is reflected in 2025/26 to reflect the latest confirmed funding commitment from the Department of Health and Social Care. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-2.480	+7.080		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Adults and Health Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[7] Pension Costs Adjustment This item relates to pension contributions funded by the Council. Contributions can be reduced from 2023/24. This results from a successful financial strategy to secure stability in the funding of future pension liabilities. The effect is a reduction in overheads in pay cost budgets following a change in the employer's contribution rate confirmed by the Cheshire Pension Fund. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.493	-0.517		
[8] Investment in Adult Social Care Forecast growth, to be funded by the Council, arising from demographic changes including an ageing population and increased levels of need for care and support for adults of a working age. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+7.600	+4.000	+4.000	+4.000
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Adults and Health Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[9] Pay inflation This proposal includes incremental increases for eligible staff and nationally negotiated pay awards. Average increases are forecast at c.3% for 2024/25. This may not apply evenly across pay bands due to implications of the Living Wage. The proposal also recognises the additional impact of the higher than budgeted 2023/24 final pay award. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+1.892	+1.089	+1.116	+1.116
[10] Resettlement Revenue Grants Reversal of grant funding income budget which contributed towards work within the communities team supporting refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan during 2023/24. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.850			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Adults and Health Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[11] Adult Social Care Transformation Earmarked Reserve Release Reversal of budget saving made in 2023/24 associated with releasing the ASC Transformation Earmarked Reserve. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.500			
[12] Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care – Removal of Grant Income Specific grant for Adult Social Care to support market sustainability, reversal of MTFS 22-26 40 as grant now included within the main revenue grants for Adult Social Care. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		+0.979		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Adults and Health Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[13] Asset Management [NEW] Identify and evaluate CEC assets and their potential as short, medium and longer-term care provisions to reduce the Borough's dependency on out of area providers for high-cost adult social care and health provisions. High Level Business Cases (HLBC) should be developed to progress activity for future provision. A clear schedule for the short, medium and longer-term development of appropriate sites must be included in the Work Programme for Economy & Growth and Adult Social Care & Health Committees, with clear KPIs and Project Management oversight throughout the life of the projects. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	TBC			
[14] Investigate potential agency creation [NEW] It is proposed that this Committee requests Corporate Policy Committee work collaboratively with ASC & H Committee to explore the establishment of a CEC Social Workers / Care Workers Agency to be included under the Workforce Strategy (Retention and Recruitment). To provide a cost savings analysis over 2024/25 with a view to bring forward for consideration as part of the 2025/26 MTFS proposals. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	TBC			
*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year				

Children and Families Committee

Responsibilities of the Committee:

Membership: 13 Councillors

Functions

The Children and Families Committee will be responsible for those services which help keep children and young people safe and enable them to achieve their full potential. The responsibility incorporates matters in relation to schools and attainment, early help and family support and social care for children and families. The Committee will oversee the work of the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Committee (formerly the Corporate Parenting Committee), which focuses on those children who are cared for by the local authority and for whom the Council has corporate parenting responsibility.

The Committee's responsibilities include:

- Determining policies and making decisions in relation to the delivery of services to children and young people in relation to their care, well-being, education and health.
- Discharging the Council's functions in relation to children in need and child protection including safeguarding and youth justice.
- Discharging the Council's functions and powers in relation to the provision of education and Schools Forum.
- Support to and maintenance of relationships with schools in relation to raising standards of attainment.
- The Council's role as Corporate Parent.
- Discharging the Council's functions in relation to Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND).
- Discharging the Council's functions in relation to early help and family support;

- Making arrangements for the nomination of school governors.
- Provision and commissioning of domestic violence support services and quality assurance.

Oversight, scrutiny, reviewing outcomes, performance, budget monitoring and risk management of the Directorates of Prevention and Support, Education and 14-19 Skills and Children's Social Care including: Children's mental health, Prevention and early help, Children's transport, Children Service Development and Children's Partnerships, Commissioning of support for children, Cared for Children and Care Leavers, Child in Need and Child Protection, Children with Disabilities and Fostering, Children's Safeguarding, Education Infrastructure and Outcomes, Education Participation and Pupil Support, Inclusion and SEND.

(Extract from Cheshire East Council Constitution - Dec 2023)

Executive Director Commentary:

The 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 that all children have access to high-quality early years' provision, education and learning experience. The directorate is responsible for services and support to children with special educational needs.

These duties are spread across two directors for: Family Help and Children's Social Care, and Education, Strong Start and Integration.

The directorate brings together the council's duties in relation to children identified and assessed to need help, support, protection,

cared for by the council and young people with care experience (leaving care service).

It includes a range of targeted services to support families and help to avoid the need for children to become 'looked after', together with Youth Justice Services and adoption services. Approximately 40% of the overall children's revenue budget is committed to meeting the costs of care for our cared for children linked to the cost of placements.

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 funds services including school admissions, place planning, home to school transport and school improvement.

Transport services make up 19% of the overall children's revenue budget. 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.

Despite growth allocated within the MTFS process, significant in-year pressures are evident. These are primarily a result of unforeseen inflationary impacts and increases 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 a deficit position. All indications are that 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.

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 delivery model and ensure that spend is delivering best outcomes for children and best value.

This includes:

- A review of commissioned services.
- A review of delivery models and buildings in-line with the Family Hub model.
- A review of the leadership and wider 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.
- Ongoing activity to avoid spend and reduce cost and support children to live close to home when they need care.
- Investing in capacity and innovative practice to support this agenda.

In addition to the £80.3m council revenue budget for the Children's Directorate the service also oversees the £354m DSG budget of which £194m is given to academies and £77m is earmarked for council-maintained schools. £83m is used by the council and settings for education services such as admissions, early years education and special educational needs placements. The council spend on High Needs does not match the funding received due to the growth in the number of pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan. This has resulted in a significant deficit DSG reserve which is permitted by a temporary accounting override announced by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This override has been extended to 31 March 2026. The DSG deficit is forecast to be £90m at the end of 2023/24.

Proposals to vary the Budget in the Children and Families Budget are focused on these areas:

Children and Families Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[15] Discretionary offer to children with disabilities [CF1] Review of discretionary and statutory offer to children with disabilities to reduce expenditure without compromising outcomes and align with short breaks and personal budgets and ensure there is a streamlined pathway to support families. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.900			
[16] Remove school catering subsidy [CF2] Over recent years, the school catering service has not generated sufficient income to cover its costs and so the council has been subsidising the service. It is proposing to consider future delivery models for this service, including implementing the findings from an independent review. It is also proposing to introduce an annual increase to schools in relation to the cost of delivering their school meals to generate more income and remove the council's subsidy to the school catering budget. This will not affect free school meals. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.516			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Children and Families Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[17] Review of structure to further integrate children and families services [CF3] This savings proposal is to reduce the establishment and realign service areas to maximise the offer to children and families by reducing duplication and delivering efficiencies in a leaner, integrated structure across the Children and Families Directorate. This will include a review of leadership structures and realising all opportunities including the Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS) and existing vacancies. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-1.000	-0.200	-0.200	
[18] Reduce discretionary Post-16 Travel Support [CF4] Cheshire East provides free or subsidised post-16 travel support to young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). With the increased pressure on the school transport budget, this discretionary transport is being reviewed to consider alternative arrangements. Full consultation on this proposal closed on 20 December 2023, with consultation results to be taken to Children and Families Committee for consideration in the New Year 2024. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.400			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Children and Families Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[19] Achieve the Family Hub model [CF5] This savings proposal is to identify budget reductions within the wider Children's Centre estate and is aligned to delivering the national Family Hub model to target our resources and maximise service impact where need is greatest. This will include a review of buildings and estates and partnership opportunities for income generation. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.250			
[20] Other Service Reviews [CF6] Ensure the service is receiving value for money from targeting our resources to maximise service impact by reviewing all internal, commissioned and voluntary sector services. Cheshire East have been successful in securing temporary external funding for a number of innovative projects. These projects involve the onboarding of frontline colleagues, training, development, support and supervision and access to health and safety equipment which will be drawn down from grant funding. Trade more services with schools (cross council) and promote a cross council coordinated traded model. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.250			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Children and Families Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[21] Reduce Growth in expenditure [CF7] Growth proposals reflect the ongoing budget pressures associated with support to prevent children coming into care and where they need care, finding suitable placements and reflects the significant increase in costs associated with this activity. The service has plans to open residential children's homes in 2024 and are forecasting a gradual reduction in reliance on external placements where they are identified to be high cost with low outcomes for children. The service is also working to improve the commissioning of placements and increasing the number of our own foster carers. The costs associated with court proceedings including the required use of expert assessments and barristers has also increased significantly. The service has a clear plan to reduce the need for spend on counsel expert assessment and this is also central to the targets of the local family justice board. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-1.900			
[22] Pension Costs Adjustment This item relates to pension contributions funded by the Council. Contributions can be reduced from 2023/24. This results from a successful financial strategy to secure stability in the funding of future pension liabilities. The effect is a reduction in overheads in pay cost budgets following a change in the employer's contribution rate confirmed by the Cheshire Pension Fund. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.515	-0.537		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Children and Families Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
<p>[23] Growth to deliver statutory Youth Justice service, and growth to ensure budget is sufficient to meet Safeguarding Partnership duties</p> <p>Statutory safeguarding services are delivered through a partnership approach and include police and health partners. The Joint Targeted Area Inspection identified that the local authority was not sufficiently resourcing the arrangements and an independent review and internal audit recommended that contributions were increased. Similarly, the youth justice, pan- Cheshire arrangements are statutory and similarly there was a funding shortfall in partnership contributions on the part of Cheshire East.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	+0.170	+0.005		
<p>[24] Growth to provide capacity to deliver transformation for SEND</p> <p>The local authority is currently working with the Department of Education to address the significant deficit in the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) budget. This requires fundamental and systemic transformation and 'invest to save' capacity to deliver on the programme of work.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	+0.500			
<p><i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24</i> <i>Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i></p>				

Children and Families Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
<p>[25] Wraparound Childcare Programme (funded)</p> <p>The wraparound programme aims to remove barriers to setting up new provision or expanding current provision, including removing the financial risk of setting up new provision when demand is not yet guaranteed. Parents should expect to see an expansion in the availability of wraparound care from September 2024.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Additional Ring-fenced Grant income =</i></p>	<p>+0.587</p> <p>-0.587</p>	<p>-0.309</p> <p>+0.309</p>	<p>-0.278</p> <p>+0.278</p>	
<p>[26] Legal Proceeding - Child Protection</p> <p>The local authority safeguarding duty for children at risk of harm may require the court to intervene and make legal arrangements for this to happen. The costs associated with court proceedings including the required use of expert assessments and barristers has increased significantly. The service has a clear plan to reduce the need for spend on counsel, expert assessment and this is also central to the targets of the local family justice board.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	<p>+0.770</p>			
<p>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</p>				

Children and Families Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[27] Growth in School Transport budget This growth proposal reflects the increase in special education needs and disabilities (SEND) demand and increasing costs of fuel and contracts. This line includes removal of the temporary £1.2m investment in 2022/23 and factors in savings identified in the external review, the SEND review work and ensures travel support is provided in line with policy and statute. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.936	+1.501	+1.548	+0.476
[28] Pay inflation This proposal includes incremental increases for eligible staff and nationally negotiated pay awards. Average increases are forecast at c.3% for 2024/25. This may not apply evenly across pay bands due to implications of the Living Wage. The proposals recognise the additional impact of the higher than budgeted 2023/24 final pay award. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+1.374	+1.056	+1.082	+1.082
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Children and Families Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[29] Use of Children & Families Transformation Reserve - estimated balance The Children and Families Directorate removed funding allocated for service transformation to achieve a balanced budget for 2023/24. This was a budget reduction for one year only with the budget reduction being reversed in 2024/25. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+1.065			
[30] Growth in Childrens Placement costs This growth proposal reflects the ongoing budget pressures associated with support to prevent children coming into care and where they need care, finding suitable placements and reflects the significant increase in costs associated with this activity. The service has plans to open residential children's homes in 2024 and is forecasting a gradual reduction in reliance on external placements where they are identified to be high cost with low outcomes for children. The service is also working to improve the commissioning of placements and increasing the number of our own foster carers. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+10.825	+4.645	+5.230	+5.889
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Children and Families Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[31] Revenue costs for the Crewe Youth Zone aligned to Supporting Families Funding To develop a new Crewe Youth Zone, including an outdoor satellite site. The Crewe Youth Zone will provide a high-quality new build facility that supports young people to develop new skills and socialise in a safe, positive, and accessible environment, thereby demonstrating our investment in young people as valued citizens and vital users of our town centres. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		+0.400		
[31] Early Help budget to support funding towards the Crewe Youth Zone Revenue funding for the Crewe Youth Zone aligned to and funded from Supporting Families funding. This will ensure we achieve targeted specialist support to our children and young people. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		-0.400		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Children and Families Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[32] SEND Capital Modification [NEW] Linked to planned Safety Valve work, expedite works to bring important planned SEND facilities into operation and realise out of area cost savings. As 'new-build' SEND Capital projects are delayed, the use of existing estates must be considered to realise efficiencies as quickly as possible. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	TBC			
[33] Childrens Social Work Bank [NEW] To address pressures linked to the cost of agency staff, Cheshire East Council is in collaboration with three other local authorities in the Cheshire and Merseyside region to explore the potential of delivering a 'not for profit' alternative to traditional agencies. However, our priority remains to recruit and retain permanent staff with potential for peripatetic colleagues to support continuity of care and relationships for children and families. Link to wider Workforce Strategy recruitment and retention, and Corporate Policy Committee. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	TBC			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Children and Families Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[34] Safe Walking Routes to School [NEW] To continue momentum of the 2023/24 MTFS proposals, identifying a robust portfolio of potential Safe Walking Routes to school and bringing new routes forward for delivery within 2024/25 and future years, (adopting a cross-directorate, coordinated approach and accessing potential grant funding opportunities, if possible, to off-set costs). <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	TBC			
[35] Withdrawal of the CEC School Meals Service [NEW] Following the 2024/25 MTFS modification of this service, and confirmation that children receiving free-school meals will not be impacted by this proposal, further investigation and consideration will be applied to tapering and withdrawing the service altogether. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	TBC			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Corporate Policy Committee

Responsibilities of the Committee:

Membership: 13 Councillors

Functions

The Corporate Policy Committee provide strategic direction to the operation of the Council by developing and recommending the Corporate Plan to full Council and making decisions on policies and practice where such decisions are not reserved to full Council.

The Committee's responsibilities include:

- Formulation, co-ordination and implementation of the Corporate Plan.
- Corporate policies and strategies, alongside the medium-term financial plan (budget) which is the responsibility of the Finance Sub-Committee. In the discharge of those responsibilities the Committee shall determine such matters to the extent that they are not reserved to full Council.
- Human Resources, Organisational Development and Health and Safety matters affecting the Council; including adopting HR policies and practices and assurance in relation to staffing related matters.
- Making recommendations to full Council in relation to the annual Pay Policy Statement and any amendments to such statement.
- Making recommendations to full Council in relation to decisions affecting the remuneration of any new post where the remuneration is or is proposed to be or would become £100,000 p.a. or more.
- Making decisions in relation to proposed severance packages with a value of £95,000 or more as appropriate (excluding contractual and holiday pay), subject to the need to obtain an approval from full Council and Central Government if required.
- Exercising the functions relating to local government pensions, so far as they relate to Regulations made under sections 7, 12, or 24 of the Superannuation Act 1972 or subsequent equivalent legal provisions.
- Determining key cross-cutting policies and key plans that impact on more than one service committee.
- Determining policy matters not otherwise allocated to any other Committee.
- Determining any matter of dispute or difference between any Committees.
- A coordinating role across all other committees and exercising a corporate view of outcomes, performance, budget monitoring and risk management.
- Determining any matter that has a major impact on a number of Council services or the Council as a whole.
- Oversight and monitoring of the Councillors' Allowances budget and keeping under review the scheme for the payment of allowances to Councillors through the appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel to advise full Council on the adoption and any proposed amendments to such scheme.
- Considering amendments to the Council's Constitution and the recommendation of any changes to full Council for approval except where specifically delegated to the Monitoring Officer.
- Considering recommendations and an Annual Report of the Council's involvement in ASDVs.
- Appointing representatives to serve on outside bodies and organisations (including education bodies and establishments) and reviewing the process for considering appointments to outside organisations.

- Appointing Lay Members (who shall not be Councillors) to serve on the Independent Admissions and Exclusion Appeals Panel as required under the relevant legislation.
- Approving the payment of a reasonable and proper allowances and expenses for the work undertaken by the Council's Independent Persons.

Oversight, scrutiny, reviewing outcomes, performance, budget monitoring and risk management of the Directorates of Finance & Customer Services; Governance & Compliance Services and Transformation including the following functions: Legal, Governance and Compliance; Audit and Risk; Transactional Services; Transformation; Business Change; B4B/ERP; Human Resources, ICT; together with Strategic Partnerships and shared services.

The Corporate Policy Committee shall be entitled to exercise: any function of the full Council not otherwise allocated; as well as the functions of all other Committees and Sub-Committees, particularly where plans, strategies or activities straddle a number of committees.

(Extract from Cheshire East Council Constitution - Dec 2023)

Executive Director Commentary:

The proposals seek to address the underlying financial pressures in Corporate Services. These relate primarily to the impact of pay inflation, the ongoing cost and income shortfalls across shared services for ICT and TSC and the increases in demand for enabling support services, that are most notable within Legal Services.

The proposed approach seeks to absorb demand pressures where possible, to offset employee costs through vacancy management,

make further changes through MARS and streamline management and leadership. There will be further across the board efficiencies and reductions in non-essential spending. In some cases, pressures will need to be managed in the short term given the Council's financial position.

There are proposals to remove the emergency support scheme and increase debt recovery charges to ensure associated costs are fully recovered.

The project to achieve a new model for ICT shared services remains on track. This project is jointly run with Cheshire West and Chester Council and regularly reviewed by the Shared Services Committee

Early work in the Revenues and Benefits service has shown the opportunities available through digital transformation, use of robotics and artificial intelligence. There is an invest to save programme seeking to accelerate digital transformation and implement the Council's Digital Strategy.

Proposals to vary the Budget in the Corporate Policy Budget are focused on these areas:

Corporate Policy Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[36] Reduce leadership and management costs [CP1] <p>Reduce expenditure on leadership, supervision and associated support costs within Corporate Services. Savings are being achieved through temporarily leaving senior leadership posts vacant. Due to a reduction in senior employees, this includes removal of under-utilised support service budgets. Budgets associated with employees leaving the Council by mutual resignation will be removed from Corporate Services budgets where practical.</p> <p><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	-0.540			
[37] Close the Emergency Assistance Scheme [CP2] <p>Reduce the amount of money spent on emergency help for people, by closing the emergency assistance scheme and signposting residents to alternative voluntary and charitable support resources. This scheme supports vulnerable members of society but no longer receives direct government funding.</p> <p><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	-0.220			
<p>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</p>				

Corporate Policy Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[38] Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible [CP3] Ensure full cost recovery for all elections carried out by the Council on behalf of other organisations, including charging Parishes for all Parish related election costs. Cut overall election costs through an efficiency review that considers all aspects of the resources required for polling and counting of votes. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.150	+0.150		
[39] Accelerate Digital and other ICT Transformation [CP4] Adopt a series of measures to maximise the use of technology: - Accelerate digital transformation and realise the related savings in staffing, equipment and system costs. - Review the opportunity to introduce commercial advertising on the council website. - Use more artificial intelligence to respond to customers. - Make efficiencies from new ways of working to contribute savings from contracts and staff resource. - Minimise spending on ICT devices and licensing. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.250	+0.250	+0.100	
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Corporate Policy Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[40] Enforce prompt debt recovery and increase charges for costs [CP5] Increase charges to debtors to ensure this reflects actual costs of the debt collection process, thereby further reducing net costs to the Council. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.150	-0.077		
[41] Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services [CP6] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue the review of current provision across workforce and organisational development to deliver differently with reduced costs. - Across the board efficiencies from procurement and income generation including introducing more venues for registrar services. - Cease all external design and printing. - Remove school subsidies through price increases or service reductions. - Savings through additional hybrid working practices. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.310	-0.010		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Corporate Policy Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[42] Pension Costs Adjustment This item relates to pension contributions funded by the Council. Contributions can be reduced from 2023/24. This results from a successful financial strategy to secure stability in the funding of future pension liabilities. The effect is a reduction in overheads in pay cost budgets following a change in the employer's contribution rate confirmed by the Cheshire Pension Fund. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.378	-0.396		
[43] Mitigation of reduction in the Dedicated Schools Grant Mitigation of reduction in the Dedicated Schools Grant received from the DfE. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.136			
[44] Pay inflation This proposal includes incremental increases for eligible staff and nationally negotiated pay awards. Average increases are forecast at c.3% for 2024/25. This may not apply evenly across pay bands due to implications of the Living Wage. The proposal also recognises the additional impact of the higher than budgeted 2023/24 final pay award. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+1.446	+0.893	+0.915	+0.915
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Corporate Policy Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[45] Legal Services Capacity Additional capacity in Legal Services to match increasing demand and manage workloads. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.455			
[46] ICT Review 1 ICT Improvement programme – Delivery of an updated ICT Shared Services working model. This requires joint investment alongside Cheshire West and Chester Council (CEC £343,000). Savings are achieved from reduced resource requirements from 2025/26. Funding is also provided from capital investment. Additional funding of £84,000 is also required for Application Lifecycle Management (ALM). The benefits will be modern business systems that are secure, supportable and compliant. The Infrastructure Investment Programme requires £23,000 of investment to enable modern business architecture, including core infrastructure platforms that underpin and support innovation, frontline services and secure a modern workplace that is protected against increased cyber threats. Operational efficiencies from new ways of working will contribute savings from contracts and staff resource. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.450	-2.199		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Corporate Policy Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[47] Workforce Strategy Review [NEW] Review of the Workforce Strategy, particularly relating to improving recruitment and retention, and including a review of terms relating to evening and weekend working. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	TBC			
[48] Parish Compacts [NEW] Review the potential of the Parish Compact model, with regard enabling operational efficiencies through town and parish councils delivering some local green space and streetscape functions. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	TBC			
*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year				

Economy and Growth Committee

Responsibilities of the Committee:

Membership: 13 Councillors

Functions

The Economy and Growth Committee will be responsible for developing policies and making decisions on matters relating to delivering inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

The Committee's responsibilities include:

- Determination of policies and making of decisions in relation to housing management and delivery.
- Determination of policies and making of decisions in relation to economic development, regeneration, skills and growth.
- Development and delivery of the Council's estates, land and physical assets policies.
- Determination of policies and making decisions in relation to the rural and cultural economy.
- Compulsory purchase of land to support the delivery of schemes and projects promoted by the Committee.

Oversight, scrutiny, reviewing outcomes, performance, budget monitoring and risk management of the Directorate of Growth and Enterprise including: Facilities Management; Assets; Farms; Economic Development; Housing; Rural and Cultural Management; Tatton Park; Public Rights of Way; Cultural Economy; Countryside; and the Visitor Economy.

(Extract from Cheshire East Council Constitution - Dec 2023)

Executive Director Commentary:

The proposals seek to address the continuing and challenging financial pressures in the Place Directorate. These focus on seeking to address and contain increasing prices and cost inflation as much as possible, and by rationalising the property estate, reducing the energy burden and to reduce and control Facilities Management costs including non-essential maintenance throughout the Council's building portfolio.

In response to the impact of pay inflation and continuing the savings made last year to offset it, the focus will continue to address existing employee costs through proactive vacancy management, prioritising statutory services and income generating roles. Going forward there is a clear opportunity to address through a restructure plan to better align the related services and management across all of Place, as well as further continuing to explore and identify core efficiencies and restricting aspects of non-essential spend, and seek to continue to review contracts.

Following the decision made by Committee around the future of the Westfields office, Sandbach, the Directorate will continue to progress consolidation and reprofiling of the Council's core property portfolio, and to engage opportunities for additional income regeneration.

Managing capacity with the prioritisation of resources across all of the Growth and Enterprise department will enable existing capacity to be sustained and seek to provide focus to maximise access to external funding options and programmes such as UK Shared Prosperity Funding.

Proposals to vary the Budget in the Economy and Growth Budget are focused on these areas:

Economy and Growth Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[49] Service Restructures within Place based Services [EG1] Use vacancy management to slow down or not fill posts across Place in non-statutory services and non-income generating posts. Reductions in staffing could result in statutory services responding more slowly where we can. This is a cross cutting proposal across Place Services so actual figures may change from one committee to another. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.787			
[50] Reduce opening hours for main offices [EG2] Close our main offices on a Friday or Monday (option 1) to save energy costs, with staff working remotely instead. Or apply alternate closures, offices operate on a rolling three-day week (for example Crewe Mon-Wed, Macclesfield Wed-Fri) (option 2). Additionally aim to close Council buildings between the hours of 6pm and 8am. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.050			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Economy and Growth Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[51] Office estate rationalisation Rationalisation of the Council's Office space buildings to reflect increased hybrid working, and to secure reduction of business rates and holding costs. Also targeting additional Carbon benefits in retained buildings. Key assets in the North and South of the borough will be retained and invested in to provide modern workplaces for staff, Members and stakeholders. Surplus assets will be considered for alternative use to generate income through rental or a capital receipt. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.550	-0.150		
[52] Tatton Park These planned savings result from income and efficiencies generated through the investment programme in the facilities at Tatton Park, which will improve the visitor experience and reduce the overall subsidy the Council makes to Tatton Park. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.046			
*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year				

Economy and Growth Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[53] Transfer of Congleton Visitor Information Centre Cheshire East Council has agreed a new operating model for Congleton Visitor Information Centre, with Congleton Town Council managing and operating the centre through the transfer of Visitor Information provision. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.020			
[54] Pension costs adjustment This item relates to pension contributions funded by the Council. Contributions can be reduced from 2023/24. This results from a successful financial strategy to secure stability in the funding of future pension liabilities. The effect is a reduction in overheads in pay cost budgets following a change in the employer's contribution rate confirmed by the Cheshire Pension Fund. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.157	-0.164		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Economy and Growth Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[55] Tatton Park ticketing and electronic point of sale (EPOS) upgrade Tatton Park has been operating its current EPOS system since 2017. The contract ends in August 2024 and this is an opportunity to source an alternative maintenance and support contract and a hardware upgrade. It will future proof both revenue collections, management and financial analysis, and provide better customer insight and targeting capabilities. Streamlining customer transactions will better enable us to maximise revenue capture at all customer interaction points. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.005	+0.001	+0.001	+0.001
[56] Cultural Provision of costs to support cultural framework required for regeneration projects across the borough, and safeguarding museum collections. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.020	+0.089		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Economy and Growth Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[57] Property Information and Management System - Estates – Revenue Adjustment Underpinning the management of the Council’s operational and non-operational estate is a property information and management system, which contains all site and tenancy information, provides an interface for managing a responsive repairs service, as well as related revenue and capital programme expenditure, and allows effective case management of the high volume and frequently protracted property transactions and queries. A review of the current contracting framework shows hosting and support costs have increased since the system was last procured. This proposal adjusts the revenue budget to align with these increased costs ready for a new procurement period. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.030			
[58] Housing Resources required to support Government initiative on new support for affordable housing scheme known as First Homes. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.035			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Economy and Growth Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[59] Environmental Hub Waste Transfer Station The replacement of bay 1 in the Residual Waste Transfer Station building with push walls to a new design more likely to provide long-term resilience to wear and tear, to enable the continuation of waste processing at the transfer station. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.040			
[60] Rural and Visitor Economy Provides additional funding to manage increased costs. This reflects inflation in the price of materials and the staffing required to maintain a statutory standard of upkeep to existing public rights of way, and to maintain heritage buildings within Tatton Park. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.045	-0.021		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Economy and Growth Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[61] Minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) - Estates - Revenue Adjustment All the Council's leased out properties will be required to meet new / phased Energy Efficiency Legislation from 1 April 2023 up to 1 April 2030. This means that to continue to lease out properties the Estates Service will need to improve the energy performance certificate (EPC) rating in line with the Government recommendations. After assessment, and in order to obtain a certificate, identified improvements will need carrying out prior to properties being leased out. Cost estimates are based on average current improvement costs, the list of identified properties requiring new EPC certificates, and phasing as determined by the legislation. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.079	+0.023	-0.047	-0.055
[62] Public Rights of Way Income Realignment Current income forecasts within the Public Rights of Way budget are not being met for a number of reasons and are unrealistic. A growth bid is required to revise income budget in line with forecasts to achieve the setting of a balanced budget and meet statutory requirements. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.115			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Economy and Growth Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[63] Pay inflation [Revised] This proposal includes incremental increases for eligible staff and nationally negotiated pay awards. Average increases are forecast at c.3% for 2024/25. This may not apply evenly across pay bands due to implications of the Living Wage. The proposal also recognises the additional impact of the higher than budgeted 2023/24 final pay award. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.788	+0.418	+0.428	+0.428
[64] Crewe town centre maintenance and operation New revenue budgets are required to ensure that new facilities / assets / spaces being created in Crewe town centre can be operated and maintained to a reasonable standard to meet user expectations, ensure compliance with statutory requirements and ensure that they are operable for their expected lifespan without the need for closure / removal / replacement. Without this the new bus station and car park will not be fully operational (no cleaning, no toilets, daytime hours opening only and no response to any faults / issues). <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.650	+0.352	+0.089	+0.066
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Economy and Growth Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[65] Assets - Buildings and Operational The cost of managing and maintaining the Council's buildings is increasing, particularly due to national inflation in utility bills. Cost increases cannot be avoided entirely, but to reduce the impact the Council will only spend on maintenance where there is a specific Health and Safety risk that must be mitigated. A review of occupancy levels will also restrict access to floors of buildings that can be left vacant to achieve further savings. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+3.119	+0.423	+1.481	
[66] Landfill Site Assessments revenue adjustment - Estates – CE Owned Landfill sites (53 sites) Review and Risk Assessment completions The Council must demonstrate safe monitoring and compliance across its Property Portfolio. The CE Contaminated Land Officer has recommended options following risk assessments on c.53 landfill sites owned by the Council. Essential improvements/ monitoring/management works essential to understanding and managing risk and demonstrating compliant management totalling £858,400 have been identified for completion. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		+0.010		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Economy and Growth Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[67] Tatton Park Estate Dwellings Refurbishment The current 5-year quinquennial plan for the conservation of Tatton Park covers the upkeep of the residents' dwellings on site but there is no provision for response maintenance issues. Each of the dwellings (8 in total) are in continuing need of attention to rectify problems and additional funding is critical to ensuring these properties meet standards required as part of tenancy agreements and the National Trust lease. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		+0.015		
[68] Improving Crewe Rented Housing Standards To achieve a well-functioning private rented sector that supports the health and wellbeing of Cheshire East residents through improved living standards, it is necessary to carry out targeted activity to inspect homes and carry out enforcement action. This 12-month project to carry out this targeted activity which will enable us to evidence whether this is sufficient action to avoid the need for a selective licensing scheme. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		+0.188	-0.188	
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Environment and Communities Committee

Responsibilities of the Committee:

Membership: 13 Councillors

Functions

The Environment and Communities Committee is responsible for developing policies and making decisions on matters relating to the delivery of inclusive and sustainable growth, improving the quality of the environment and delivering improvement in key front-line services.

The Committee's responsibilities include:

- Development and delivery of the Council's strategic objectives for Environmental Management, sustainability, renewables and climate change.
- The development and delivery of the Council's Environment Strategy and Carbon Neutral Action Plan.
- Development and delivery of the Local Development Framework including the Local Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents, Neighbourhood Plans, the Brownfield Land Register, Conservation Areas, Locally Listed Buildings, the Community Infrastructure Levy, and Statement of Community Involvement.
- Regulatory functions including external health and safety good practice and enforcement including instituting proceedings and prosecutions.
- Determination of policies and making decisions, in relation to waste collection and disposal, recycling, fly tipping, parks and green spaces, community strategy and community hub, leisure, libraries and sports development, bereavement services, trading standards, environmental health, emergency planning, CCTV, nuisance and anti-social behaviour, public space protection orders, community enforcement, animal

health and welfare, food safety, licensing, pest control, contaminated land and air quality.

- Compulsory purchase of land to support the delivery of schemes and projects promoted by the Committee.

Oversight, scrutiny, reviewing outcomes, performance, budget monitoring and risk management of the Directorate of Environment and Neighbourhood, including: the Planning Service; Environmental Services; Regulatory Services; Neighbourhood Services and Emergency Planning.

(Extract from Cheshire East Council Constitution - Dec 2023)

Executive Director Commentary:

The past year has been one of considerable decision and change in Environment and Communities, where significant pressures are further being experienced in a number of areas across the departmental budget.

Financial pressure continues to be a challenge:

- Waste collection and disposal costs – this is due to inflation across both internal and externally procured prices, uncertainty caused by the lack of clarity around the National Waste Strategy and also the continued high cost of fuel duty which has had a significant impact on fleet running costs.
- Pay inflation – the nationally negotiated pay awards as well as being applicable to Council staff also apply across the wholly owned companies which collectively have large staffing establishments in their own right.
- Planning income – Increased costs of financing development in multiple sectors, has seen an impact on the number of

planning applications generating key income. Of applications that are received each year, currently a high percentage of these are not major applications and therefore this impacts through the shortfall of income against target.

The budget strategy for this area continues to focus on containing prices and cost inflation as much as possible, through amongst other things enhanced financial monitoring, robust procurement activities and alternative ways of working.

There will be continued alignment to other areas of the Place directorate in providing the response to the impact of pay inflation, the focus will be to seek to offset existing employee costs through proactive vacancy management, prioritising statutory services and ensuring that income generation opportunities are maximised. Officers will continue to work with the management teams of the Council's wholly owned companies to undertake the same exercise, with a focus to achieve key savings and efficiencies across their scope of service.

Opportunities through restructuring will continue and seek to address further improvement and alignment of related services and management across all of Place, as well as continuing to explore and identify operational efficiencies in how key frontline services interface.

The key areas of focus for Environment and Communities will be:

- Continuing to deliver on current MTFS budget commitments such as delivery of stage 2 of the Strategic Leisure Review and implementation of the Green Spaces Maintenance policy;
- Development and implementation of a Libraries Strategy;
- Reviewing existing wholly owned companies;
- Rationalising the increasing costs of waste collection, disposal and treatment and;

- Work to continue to expand commercialisation opportunities to generate additional income for the Council.

Where appropriate, advance opportunities to work with communities, and specifically Town and Parish Councils to explore options to support, supplement, and contribute to, the delivery of services at a local level.

Proposals to vary the Budget in the Environment and Communities Budget are focused on these areas:

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
<p>[69] Refresh wholly owned company overheads and contributions [EC1]</p> <p>Review of ANSA Environmental Services and Orbitas Bereavement Services to consider whether a company operating model is achieving its original objectives to increase commercial opportunities that offset increased direct costs, opportunities that could not otherwise be accessed by a Local Authority. The review will consider how the current company financial positions can more directly support the Council's immediate financial requirements.</p> <p><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	-1.000	+0.800		
<p>[70] Strategic Leisure Review (Stage 2) [EC2]</p> <p>The second stage of the Strategic Leisure Review will run from 2024/25 and will focus on the medium-term financial sustainability of the commissioned leisure services. This includes, but is not limited to: reviewing pricing for leisure services across the borough; reduction in corporate landlord costs via asset transfer; exploring potential invest to save capital schemes removing all current programme allocations that cannot be delivered on an invest to save basis; removal of historical subsidies relating to free car parking; use of public health and other one off grants; and partnership working with Town Councils to secure contributions towards safeguarding provisions in their local area.</p> <p><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	-1.305	+0.403	-0.203	-0.166
<p>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</p>				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[71] Mitigate the impact of contract inflation and tonnage growth [EC3a] Mitigate the impact of contract inflation and tonnage growth, through new or revised contracts and review of commissioner contract risk budgets. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.490			
[72] Emergency reduction of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) to four core sites [EC3b] Emergency reduction of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) to four core sites at Alsager, Crewe, Knutsford and Macclesfield from 1 April 2024 in advance of the formal HWRC review being presented to Committee later in 2024. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.263	+0.263		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
<p>[73] Libraries Strategy [EC4]</p> <p>At its meeting in July 2023 the Environment and Communities Committee received a report which set out the intention to develop a Libraries Strategy which will consider the medium to long term future of this service, in particular how it becomes more financially self-sustainable through income generation and the library estate is being considered for other community functions. There is now a need to expedite this work through the first half of 2024/25. The Strategy will look across other comparable comparable local authorities to understand how they have delivered similar initiatives, undertake a review of options utilising available LGA guidance. The Strategy development will consider potential alternative operating models (see related growth item [85]), whilst also considering the views of local communities. All options will consider how to work better in partnership with Town and Parish Councils to maintain service levels and continuing to push forward with new income generation initiatives within the wider library estate, utilising the building assets to offer new third-party services to the public.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	-0.365	-0.250		
<p><i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24</i></p> <p><i>Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i></p>				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[74] Reduce costs of street cleansing operations [EC5] Revise street cleansing operations boroughwide to secure operational efficiencies. Explore opportunities for proportionate, devolved street cleansing and related green spaces services, through an expansion of the parish compact system (or appropriate alternative models), where local parishes and communities may wish to source for themselves. The opportunities will be investigated in terms of cost-benefit analysis to ensure any system offers the Council value for money, prior to bringing forward any realistic savings to Committee for inclusion against the next MTFS. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.200			
[75] Reduce revenue impact of carbon reduction capital schemes [EC6] Capitalisation of the carbon team. Delay council funded capital projects, prioritise securing and delivery of external grant funded carbon reduction initiatives. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.336	-0.419		
[76] Increase Garden Waste charges to recover costs [EC7] Increase garden waste charge for new subscriptions taken out for 2025 collections (payments from October 2024) to £59. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.045	-0.134		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[77] MTFS 80 (Feb 23) - Waste Disposal - Contract Inflation and Tonnage Growth (updated forecast) Waste Disposal - Contract Inflation and Tonnage Growth – additional pressure, which includes changes to legislation around ability for the Council to charge for rubble waste at HWRCs. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+3.577	+0.864	+0.577	+0.903
[78] Pay inflation CEC & ASDV [Revised] This proposal includes incremental increases for eligible staff and nationally negotiated pay awards. Average increases are forecast at c.3% for 2024/25. This may not apply evenly across pay bands due to implications of the Living Wage. The proposal also recognises the additional impact of the higher than budgeted 2023/24 final pay award. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+1.861	+0.938	+0.962	+0.962
*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[79] Pension Costs Adjustment This item relates to pension contributions funded by the Council. Contributions can be reduced from 2023/24. This results from a successful financial strategy to secure stability in the funding of future pension liabilities. The effect is a reduction in overheads in pay cost budgets following a change in the employer's contribution rate confirmed by the Cheshire Pension Fund. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.151	-0.159		
[80] MTFS 90 (Feb 23) Strategic Leisure Review Growth item to replace savings of £1.291m achieved in 2023/24 against stage 1 of the review. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+1.250			
[81] MTFS 91 (Feb 23) – Green Spaces Maintenance Review Year 2 saving associated with an operational review aimed at the reduction of existing maintenance regimes to parks, public open spaces and other green spaces - specifically but not limited to frequency of grass cutting, tree and flower bed planting and other related grounds maintenance activities. Opportunity to allow rewilding of specific areas and promote increase in biodiversity. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.200			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[82] MTFS 92 (Feb 23) - Review Waste Collection Service - Green Waste Year 2 income forecast from subscription charge introduced October 2023. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-3.150			
[83] Review MTFS 92 (Feb 23) Garden waste subscription financial model in line with latest subscription levels and with actual observed position on any waste migration Review of existing scheme business model to make adjustments with intelligence of actual subscription rates and any adverse impacts related to waste migration to other collection streams. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.429			
[84] MTFS 93 (Feb 23) Libraries - Service Review Year 2 of savings associated with recent adjustments to library opening hours, along with initial income generation opportunities. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.200			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[85] Explore a Trust delivery model for Libraries and other services Undertake feasibility works relating to the potential to implement one or more alternative service delivery models for the library service, whilst also considering the potential to include other arts, culture and recreational services within the same alternative delivery vehicle. This is to release savings around both operational costs and also efficiencies across the corporate estate. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.150	-0.350		
[86] CCTV Opportunities for additional income generation – the £30,000 saving in 2024/25 is a current estimate subject to additional service improvements / investment. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.030			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[87] Congleton Town Council Collaboration Agreement – Grounds Maintenance A 20% reduction in grounds maintenance elements of the grant payable to the Town Council, in line with the same level of reduction taken from the Council's own Green Spaces Maintenance Review (MTFS 91). <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.062			
[88] Closed Cemeteries Closed cemeteries will transfer over to CEC as the highest tier authority with a statutory obligation to maintain - revenue implications relate to forecast costs of future annual grounds maintenance activities. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.005	+0.005	+0.005	
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[89] Environmental Hub maintenance This facility is a key operational site used to support the Council's waste services. Since opening the facility, the regular maintenance of this site has been funded from within the Council's Facilities Management budget. This is not a permanent solution for such an important site, so this proposal now fully reflects the ongoing increased costs of operating such a modern waste transfer station facility. This approach also ensures ongoing compliance with statutory environmental permits, specifically relating to the requirement for an odour control system. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.023	+0.018	+0.012	
[90] Review Closed Landfill Sites Growth item to replace the one-off budget reduction in 2023/24 relating to Closed Landfill sites. The Council has responsibility for a number of closed landfill sites across the borough for which it holds a provision. The proposal relates to a risk-based review of these closed landfill sites to understand their residual liability for the coming years. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.300			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[91] Land Charge Income Adjustment Due to national legislative changes where some land charges services will be delivered by HM Land Registry, there will a reduction in income to the Council. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.050	+0.147		
[92] Building Control Income Alignment The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010 authorises recovery of costs associated with Building Regulation applications (Fee Earning Activity) only. CIPFA produced guidance to support these Regulations, isolating costs from other activities. Fee earning activity represents 75% of total costs and income should reflect this hence the adjustment needed. Budget / Income realignment after return to in-house provision. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.203			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[93] Local Plan Review It is a statutory requirement to review the Local Plan within prescribed timescales. This will determine amongst other things the amount and location of future housing and other economic development in the Borough. It is highly complex requiring significant technical evidence, significant public consultation and three stages of formal examination by Government inspectors. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.255	-0.160	+0.033	
[94] Planning income Due to current national downturn in application submissions planning application income is below target. Planning fees are set nationally by the Government and cannot be adjusted locally. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.400			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Environment and Communities Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[95] Planning Service Restructure Following the recent service review and implementation of the planning modernisation plan a full restructure is underway to ensure recommendations of the review and new legislative requirements are addressed. This funding is required in order to support a second phase of restructure once the initial phase has been implemented and income levels have stabilised. It should be noted that even with this investment there is a risk that not all desired outcomes of the review will be achieved. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		+0.300		
[96] Review of Household Waste Recycling Centres [Revised] Permanent rationalisation of HWRC provision within the borough, as identified through the outputs from the now established HWRC Review, the scope of which was confirmed by the Environment and Communities Committee in September 2023. The Review is aligned to the need to procure a new operating contract to be in place by April 2025 at latest. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.100	-0.144		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Highways and Transport Committee

Responsibilities of the Committee:

Membership: 13 Councillors

Functions

The Highways and Transport Committee shall be responsible for developing policies and making decisions on matters relating to highways and transport as they affect the area of the Council taking into account regional and national influences.

The Committee's responsibilities include:

- Formulation, co-ordination and implementation of corporate policies and strategies in connection with all car parking, transport and accessibility matters.
- Determination of any matter affecting the Council's interests in relation to national infrastructure matters, for example HS2, Northern Powerhouse Rail and the National Road Network.
- Discharge of the Council's responsibilities as Highway Authority; local transport authority; parking authority; and lead local flood authority.
- Determination of policies and making decisions in relation to flooding and accessibility, in co-ordination with the Scrutiny Committee.
- Compulsory purchase of land to support the delivery of schemes and projects promoted by the Committee.
- In respect of public rights of way:
 - discharge all the functions of the Council in relation to public rights of way (except the determination of non-contentious Public Path Order applications which has been delegated to the Executive Director – Place);
 - discharge of Commons and Town and Village Greens functions.

- being apprised of, approve, and comment on a range of policies, programmes and practices relating to Rights of Way, Commons, Town and Village Greens and countryside matters including:
 - Progress reports on implementation of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (part of the Annual Progress Review for the Local Transport Plan).
 - Statement of Priorities.
 - Enforcement Protocols.
 - Charging Policy for Public Path Order applications.

Oversight, scrutiny, reviewing outcomes, performance, budget monitoring and risk management of the Directorate of Highways and Infrastructure including: Transport Policy; Transport Commissioning; Carparking; Highways; Infrastructure and HS2.

(Extract from Cheshire East Council Constitution - Dec 2023)

Executive Director Commentary:

The proposals identified in this area provide an ongoing response to seek to address the continuing financial pressures in the Place Directorate.

The Highways and Transport department has responsibility for a number of key service areas with the overall aim of providing a safe, available, integrated and sustainable transport network across Cheshire East and the wider region. Delivering this meets the Council's statutory duties to manage and maintain transport infrastructure, supports the economic growth of the borough and contributes to the Council's net zero climate commitment.

Highway maintenance services are almost entirely either statutory or essential to delivering statutory obligations. The service is

significantly affected by the revenue impact of a shortfall in capital investment; reductions to either revenue or capital will have downstream consequences in revenue costs and may risk statutory compliance. The proposed business cases therefore go towards ensuring that those revenue implications are met.

In response to the impact of pay inflation and continuing the savings made last year to offset it, the focus will continue to address existing employee costs through proactive vacancy management, prioritising statutory services and income generating roles. Going forward there is a clear opportunity to address through a restructure plan to better align the related services and management across all of Place, as well as further continuing to explore and identify core efficiencies and restricting aspects of non-essential spend, and seek to continue to review contracts.

To support the Council's underlying financial pressures a number of cost saving proposals are being consulted upon, which aim to provide the financial base to enable the continued support and retention of core local services.

Proposals to vary the Budget in the Highways and Transport Budget are focused on these areas:

Highways and Transport Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[97] Highway maintenance savings [HT1] Highways will look to deliver savings through revising maintenance practices in winter service, grass cutting, gully emptying and weed treatment, along with the repair of carriageways, footways, highway structures and trees. Savings will be sought through the reduction of service levels. Statutory responsibilities will be considered in these revisions. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.750			
[98] Introduce annual increases to car parking charges [HT2] Running costs of the Council's car parks, such as business rates and maintenance, increases each year because of inflation. Changes are being considered to our car parking strategy. Annual increases could also be introduced to increase income alongside other the potential changes. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.150	-0.450		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Highways and Transport Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[99] Pension Costs Adjustment This item relates to pension contributions funded by the Council. Contributions can be reduced from 2023/24. This results from a successful financial strategy to secure stability in the funding of future pension liabilities. The effect is a reduction in overheads in pay cost budgets following a change in the employer's contribution rate confirmed by the Cheshire Pension Fund. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.052	-0.055		
[100] Highways Increased time to respond to highway safety-critical incidents, allowing fewer response teams to be required. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.031			
[101] Safe Haven outside schools (Parking) Introduction of CCTV systems to ensure that school gate parking restrictions are effectively and continuously enforced to create Safe Haven outside schools. This approach will begin on a trial basis with the scope to roll out more widely if it proves successful in improving road safety and reducing environmental impacts. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	-0.023	+0.010		
*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year				

Highways and Transport Committee Policy Proposals		2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[102] Transport and Infrastructure Strategy Team - Restructure Implementing a revised structure for the Transport and Infrastructure Strategy Team to meet the requirements updated Government guidelines on local transport planning, Bus Improvement Plans, carbon reduction strategies and alternative technologies including Electric Vehicles. The team will also ensure the Council is best placed to secure specific funding opportunities for local projects through the preparation of business cases and bids. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		+0.120			
[103] Pay inflation [Revised] This proposal includes incremental increases for eligible staff and nationally negotiated pay awards. Average increases are forecast at c.3% for 2024/25. This may not apply evenly across pay bands due to implications of the Living Wage. The proposal also recognises the additional impact of the higher than budgeted 2023/24 final pay award. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		+0.339	+0.152	+0.156	+0.156
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>					

Highways and Transport Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[104] Parking - PDA / Back Office System contract New contract for services to provide modernised Back Office System and supporting technology for Parking Enforcement. These systems enable the Council to issue, process and secure payments of fees for car parking. Updating and maintaining these systems is business critical for Parking Services. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.100	-0.030		
[105] Flood and Water Management Act 2010 SuDS & SABs Schedule 3 Implementation Creating a Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Approval Body (SAB) to operate a chargeable pre-application service for planning applications as part of the council's Lead Local Flood Authority duties. The HLBC requires a combination of growth in revenue and capital funding for the required staff to deliver the new statutory duties and deliver any savings eventually identified. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.100	-0.050	+0.050	+0.050
*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year				

Highways and Transport Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[106] Energy saving measures from streetlights Delivering substantial energy savings from street lighting will require significant capital funding that is not available at this stage. Undertaking public consultation on the necessary lighting policy changes at this point is not advised. Options for delivering savings are therefore being reviewed. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.242			
[107] Parking The Council must meet unprecedented and complex challenges with increasing customer expectations to provide a modern, responsive and equitable parking service. The proposals for parking must align operational arrangements and tariffs with corporate priority outcomes for fairness and transparency, including supporting our Town Centres to recover after the pandemic. These proposals will include options for zonal parking charges. The implementation plan will include further consultation. Options are expected to align to an increase in income, or reduction in costs, over the next two years to maintain the ongoing sustainability of the service. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>	+0.245	-0.970		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Highways and Transport Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[108] Highways Revenue Services Increase in costs to address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Safety-related defects (predominantly potholes) required to be addressed under the safety inspection policy; - Safety assessments of highway trees; - Increased gully cleansing to reduce flooding on roads and pavements; - Consequential costs of dealing with complaints and requirements of corporate policy. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	+2.479	+2.654	+2.118	+2.329
[109] Local Bus Forecast cost pressure on local bus services is approximately £3.5m, which was partially mitigated in 2023/24 from Council Reserves. This is unsustainable and the Council cannot afford to fund local bus services at this level. This initiative seeks savings in the level of supported local bus services that must mitigate the impact of inflation and is a direct response to the loss of Central Government grant. These efficiency savings are considered to be achievable but there are expected to be negative impacts on residents and service-users due to a reduction in the extent of revenue-supported services in the Cheshire East bus network. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Impact on service budget =</i></p>	+2.250			
*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year				

Highways and Transport Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[110] FlexiLink Service Improvement Plan The proposal is to improve the hours / days of demand responsive transport operation in line with the Go-Too pilot and provide an equitable boroughwide service. Option 3 (of the HLBC) provides a significant increase in capacity (evening and Saturday service) which will maximise the use of vehicles and provide the greatest value for money with revenue to offset costs. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		+0.296	-0.298	-0.131
[111] Highways Depot Improvements The highways depots are in considerable need of investment to deliver basic maintenance and facilities, providing safe functional depots for a diverse workforce. Investment will enable increased efficiencies, winter service resilience and a reduction in highways depots from 3 to 2, thus reducing revenue burden and delivering a capital receipt. <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		-0.050	-0.050	
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Highways and Transport Committee Policy Proposals	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[112] Bus Stop Advertising Revenue Generation As the existing joint contract held by Cheshire East Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council with Clear Channel is due to expire, the Council intends to re-procure these services. There is an opportunity for the Council to increase advertising revenue and enhance on-street facilities by integrating bus shelters into a wider Place advertising commission. Therefore, the preferred approach is Option 3, which extends current arrangements for a transitional period before the wider contract takes effect. . <i>Impact on service budget =</i>		-0.050		
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Finance Sub-Committee

Responsibilities of the Committee:

Membership: 8 Councillors

Functions

The Finance Sub-Committee will co-ordinate the management and oversight of the Council's finances, performance and corporate risk management arrangements. The Sub-Committee will make recommendations to the Corporate Policy Committee regarding the development of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the setting and monitoring of the Capital and Revenue Budgets in accordance with the Corporate Plan and the Policy Framework.

The Sub-Committee's responsibilities include:

- Determination of finance issues, including but not limited to Treasury Management, Insurance, Procurement, debt write off, settlement payments and virements in line with the constitution.
- Establishment of a Procurement Forward Plan.
- Oversight of the Investment Strategy.
- Grant awards for sums in excess of £50,000.
- Property transactions including buying selling and appropriation of land and property (including compulsory purchase where required).
- Management of the Council's involvement in ASDVs and overseeing the production of an Annual Report on performance.
- Making decisions as Shareholder or owner, reviewing and approving Business plans, including risk registers and commissioning services.

Oversight, scrutiny and budgetary review of the following functions: Land and Property; Central Budgets; Pensions; Grants; Council Tax; Business Rates; Reserves; and Other Funding.

(Extract from Cheshire East Council Constitution - Dec 2023)

Executive Director Commentary:

Central Budgets and general Council funding are not specifically related to services that residents use but are important in resourcing the overall budget. The following proposals relate to Council borrowing, investments and forecast income from general grants and local taxation.

For more information on each item please see the following sections of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy report:

- Council Tax - Section 2: Financial Stability and Local Taxation (The Collection Fund): Annex 5 .
- Business Rates - Section 2: Financial Stability and Local Taxation (The Collection Fund): Annex 5 .
- Unring-fenced Grants - Section 2: Financial Stability and Revenue Grant Funding: Annex 7.
- Capital Financing – Section 2: Financial Stability and Capital Strategy: Annex 10.
- Pension Costs Adjustment – Section 2: Financial Stability (Other Economic Factors section).
- Bad Debt Provision – Section 2: Financial Stability (Other Economic Factors section).
- Capital Receipts Income – Section 2: Financial Stability and Capital Strategy: Annex 10.
- Use of Earmarked Reserves – Reserves Strategy Annex 13.

Proposals to vary the Budget in the Finance Sub-Committee are focused on these areas:

Finance Sub-Committee Policy Proposals (Central Budget items)	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[113] Capital Financing – Minimum Revenue Provision The revenue impact of capital spending also results in annual spending. High inflation, high interest rates on borrowing, including the interest that the Council is paying for holding the Dedicated Schools Grant deficit on the balance sheet (£6.1m) and an ambitious capital programme results in increased need for annual revenue. A Capital Programme Review is ongoing to identify scope to delay, reduce or stop spending on capital projects to improve cashflow. This can save on borrowing costs which are projected to cause a significant budget increase for 2024/25. <i>Impact on central budget =</i>	+9.508	+14.528	+14.058	+12.698
[114] Central Bad Debt Provision adjustment Last year's one-off savings of £0.8m is not a recurring figure, so is being partially reversed by growth in 2024/25. The Council collects approximately c.£80m of debt annually, related to a wide range of services. Bad debt relates to uncollectable income, such as debt with individuals or organisations that enter into administration. It is responsible to reflect the annual impact of bad debt within the Council's revenue budget. The Council will continue to enforce debt payments in an appropriate way taking into account the circumstances of the debtor. <i>Impact on central budget =</i>	+0.600			
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Finance Sub-Committee Policy Proposals (Central Budget and Funding items) The Reserves Strategy (Annex 13) identifies the approach to managing reserves over the medium-term, which also covers items 115-118 below				
	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[115] Use of Earmarked Reserves – MTFS reserve This reserve manages annual changes in the MTFS. It minimises short-term decision making. <i>Reversal of 2023/24 one-year budget change - Impact on central budget =</i> <i>Use of reserve for 2024/25 one-year budget change - Impact on central budget =</i>	 +1.536 +0.255	 -0.255		
[116] Use of Earmarked Reserves – Collection Fund reserve The Collection Fund records local taxation transactions in excess of £400m per year. This reserve manages in-year variations to avoid disruption to services. <i>Reversal of 2023/24 one-year budget change - Impact on central budget =</i> <i>Use of reserve for 2024/25 one-year budget change - Impact on central budget =</i>	 +2.234 -0.834	 +0.834		
[117] Brighter Futures Transformation reserve Reversal of the 2023/24 contributions from this reserve as Brighter Futures Activity either completed or now absorbed within other existing budgets. <i>Reversal of 2023/24 one year budget change - Impact on central budget =</i>	 +1.271			
*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year				

Finance Sub-Committee Policy Proposals (Central Budget and Funding items)	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[118] Use of General Reserve [NEW] Fund in-year shortfall for 2024/25 <i>Impact on central budget =</i>	-11.654	+11.654		
[119] Council Tax - % increase Council Tax currently provides 77% of the net funding for Council services and is paid by occupiers and owners of domestic property within the borough. The MTFS includes increases of 4.99% in 2024/25 and 2.99% each year after that. <i>Impact on funding budget =</i>	-13.527	-8.542	-8.891	-9.287
[120] Council Tax – Base increase The Council Taxbase is increasing each year due to ongoing housing development. The calculation of additional Council Tax from the growth in the taxbase also reflects any changes in discounts, exemptions, premiums and Council Tax Support. The increase in housing numbers in the MTFS is currently forecast to be 2,200 in 2024/25, 2,000 in 2025/26, and 1,800 each year thereafter to fall back in line with the Local Plan estimates. <i>Impact on funding budget =</i>	-2.461	-3.162	-2.934	-2.979
*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year				

Finance Sub-Committee Policy Proposals (Central Budget and Funding items)	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[121] Business Rates Retention Scheme – use of S31 compensation grants Due to the Provisional Local Government Settlement being less than expected, additional business rates compensation grant funding is proposed to be utilised to maintain the funding envelope at the planned level for 2024/25. <i>Impact on funding budget =</i>	-1.350	-	-	-
[122] Unring-fenced Grants + Revenue Support Grant Grant income is set out in detail within Annex 7 . <i>Impact on funding budget =</i>	-5.245	7.084	-	-
<i>*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year</i>				

Finance Sub-Committee Policy Proposals (Central Budget and Funding items)	2024/25 £m*	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m
[123] Council Tax and Business Rates Collection [NEW] Review current practices with regard to debt collection and recovery, with Member engagement via establishment of a working group of the Finance Sub-Committee to consider any options for change. <i>Impact on funding budget =</i>	TBC			
[124] Council Tax Support [NEW] Consider a reduction in the level of council tax support, whilst continuing to protect the most vulnerable, informed by a review of take-up, and conducting the required consultation during the 2024/25 financial year. <i>Impact on funding budget =</i>		TBC		
*Values represent a +/- variation to the Cheshire East Council approved budget for 2023/24 Subsequent years are the incremental change from the previous year				

Section 2 - Financial Stability

Introduction

1. The 2024 to 2028 MTFS is Cheshire East Council's next four-year forecast but due to the significant financial stress being experienced by the majority of local authorities, it is only focused on the 2024/25 financial year rather than for all four years as was the case in last year's MTFS.
2. In November 2023, the Chancellor presented the Autumn Statement. There were no direct announcements on funding for Local Government that changed the announcements already made. The Chancellor will use the new powers to decouple the business rates multipliers, to freeze the small business rating multiplier, and to index the standard multiplier. This will complicate the settlement, but it will not significantly affect the funding that is received by local authorities.
3. Details of the funding allocations for each local authority were confirmed at the provisional settlement on 18 December 2023 but wholly focused on allocations for 2024/25, adding to the difficulty in reliably forecasting over the medium term.
4. On 24 January 2024 there was an additional "exceptional provision" allocation of funding for local authorities announced to assist with the well documented budget pressures felt across the sector following the provisional settlement announcements. This further funding, mainly in social care, only served to fund an estimated additional £3m for Cheshire East which does not go far enough in terms of filling the budget gap identified at that time.
5. Looking further ahead, prospects for local government finance settlements in the next spending review period look very tight indeed. There is no change in the overall planned increase in Resource Departmental Expenditure Limits (RDEL) of 1% in

real terms. So that means real-terms cuts for unprotected services, including most of local government. The Chancellor is looking to put more pressure on the public sector, with a target of 0.5% annual productivity improvements. This could provide justification for some of those real-terms cuts in future years.

6. The national review of local authority funding, including the changes planned to the Business Rates Retention Scheme are being delayed further until possibly as late as 2026/27.
7. All the information received to date and announced on current and future funding levels point towards local authorities having to dramatically change how and which services they provide going forward in order to maintain financial stability in the longer term.

The key areas being covered in this section include:

- Forecast Outturn 2023/24.
- Flexible Use of Capital Receipts 2023/24.
- Balance of National vs Local Funding.
- Government Grant Funding of Local Expenditure.
- Collecting Local Taxes for Local Expenditure.
- Charges to Local Service Users.
- Investment, Borrowing and the Capital Programme.
- Other Economic Factors.
- Managing the Reserves Position.
- Summary of Financial Stability.
- Forecasting the Medium-Term Budget 2024/25 to 2027/28.

Forecast Outturn 2023/24

Table 1: Forecast Outturn 2023/24

2023/24	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance FR3	Forecast Variance FR2	Movement from FR2 to FR3
	(NET) £m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Service Committee					
Adults and Health	136.5	141.5	5.0	4.7	0.3
Children and Families	80.3	90.3	10.0	10.8	(0.8)
Corporate Policy	41.7	40.7	(1.0)	(0.5)	(0.5)
Economy and Growth	24.8	22.0	(2.8)	(1.9)	(0.9)
Environment and Communities	48.7	51.8	3.1	3.5	(0.4)
Highways and Transport	11.2	11.0	(0.2)	1.2	(1.4)
Sub-Committee					
Finance Sub	(343.2)	(344.3)	(1.1)	0.9	(2.0)
TOTAL	-	13.0	13.0	18.7	(5.7)

8. In January 2024, a forecast outturn of £13.0m net overspend, as per Table 1 above, was reported at the Finance Sub Committee as part of [Third Financial Review 2023/24](#).
9. In October 2023, the Cheshire East Budget Emergency Response Team (CEBERT) was set up to lead on coordinating work across the organisation to address the financial challenge and rebalance the council's budget forecast.
10. Weekly meetings are chaired by the Chief Executive with updates relating to the workstreams identified in the review. These workstreams have included Establishment Management, Procurement Spending Control Panel, Pricing Strategies and Capital Spending. Separate Cells aligned to

spending for each Committee also meet as part of this approach.

11. CEBERT continues to meet weekly and the latest forecast, as at 31 January 2024, shows a potential further improvement from Third Financial Review (FR3) of £1.4m to an £11.6m overspend.
12. The potential improvements since Third Financial Review by service committee are:

Children and Families £0.2m - further in year drawdown from Supporting Families earmarked reserve.

Corporate Policy £0.6m – additional in year staffing vacancies, further reduction in in year non-pay costs, and increase in income.

Environment and Communities £0.1m - additional in year staffing vacancies in Planning.

Finance Sub £0.5m - improvement in Bad Debt provision.
13. This forecast may be subject to variation in the final quarter, particularly from potential winter pressures in health services. Budget managers will continue to take robust actions to control costs and reduce non-essential expenditure to improve the position further.
14. The Council's General Fund Reserve balance is currently at £14.1m. A forecast outturn of £13.0m deficit would nearly eradicate the Council's remaining General Fund Reserve balance. There is also limited scope in the Council's other earmarked reserves to help mitigate the current forecast pressure.

Flexible Use of Capital Receipts 2023/24

15. The proposals within this Flexible use of Capital Receipts Strategy have been prepared based on a capitalisation direction issued by the Secretary of State under Sections 16(2)(b) and 20 of the Local Government Act 2003: Treatment of Costs as Capital Expenditure.
16. The Spending Review in 2015 included a relaxation to the capital regulations by allowing council's to use their capital receipts (income from the sale of assets) for a limited period initially from 2016/17 to 2018/19 to fund revenue expenditure that is designed to transform service delivery and reduce revenue costs. This announcement was implemented by the issuing of regulations in March 2016. The period over which these amended regulations apply has now been extended to the financial year 2024/25.
17. The Department for Levelling Up Housing & Communities issued a consultation in December 2023 (closing date 31 January 2024) to Local Authorities on options for extending the flexibilities on using capital receipts for the local management of budget pressures, allowing councils to borrow for transformational projects and providing the option to de-invest in Investments properties to fund revenue pressures, increase reserve balances or repay Public Works Loan Board loans without the premium.
18. Any changes to the use of flexible capital receipts direction including the options to borrow and use Investment Properties proceeds will not be known until after the Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been approved in February 2024.
19. Therefore, any changes to the Councils' budgets to incorporate the flexibilities will have to be approved at a later date.
20. The current guidance states that qualifying expenditure is expenditure on any project that is designed to generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services and / or transform service delivery to reduce costs and / or transform service delivery in a way that reduces costs or demand for services in future years for any of the public sector delivery partners. The local authority must decide for itself whether a project qualifies for flexibility.
21. Local authorities cannot borrow to finance the revenue costs of the service reforms.
22. The type of expenditure that will be allowed under the flexibility are the up-front set up and implementation costs that will generate the future ongoing revenue savings and / or service transformation to reduce revenue costs and improve service delivery.
23. In allowing the Council to use this flexibility, the Council must have due regard to the requirements of the Prudential Code, the CIPFA Local Authority Accounting Code of practice.
 - There are a wide range of projects that could generate qualifying expenditure and the list below is not prescriptive. Examples of projects shown in the government guidance include:
 - Sharing back-office and administrative services with one or more other council or public sector bodies;
 - Investment in service reform feasibility work, e.g. setting up pilot schemes;

- Collaboration between local authorities and Central Government departments to free up land for economic use;
- Funding the cost of service reconfiguration, restructuring or rationalisation where this leads to ongoing efficiency savings or service transformation;
- Driving a digital approach to the delivery of more efficient public services and how the public interacts with constituent authorities where possible;
- Aggregating procurement on common goods and services where possible, either as part of local arrangements or using Crown Commercial Services or regional procurement hubs or Professional Buying Organisations;
- Improving systems and processes to tackle fraud and corruption in line with the Local Government Fraud and Corruption Strategy – this could include an element of staff training;
- Setting up commercial or alternative delivery models to deliver services more efficiently and bring in revenue (for example, through selling services to others); and
- Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies (for example children's social care or trading standards) to generate savings or to transform service delivery.

24. The Council had several projects that had been identified in 2023/24 that fitted the criteria prescribed in the guidance for transforming and or improving service delivery that will reduce revenue costs by producing efficiency savings for the Council.

25. The original amount approved as part of the 2023-27 Medium-Term Financial Strategy was £1m, however since then a further £2.414m of transformational expenditure has been identified. The additional amount is a recommendation in Appendix A: Recommendation 4 to the MTFS. The table below details the list of projects and the value of capital receipt to be utilised.

Table 2: List of projects funded by flexible capital receipts

Project Name	Project Description and Progress	Expenditure	Expenditure
		2022/23 £000s	2023/24 £000s
Adults	Impower - external consultancy engaged to transform Adults services.	0	420
Adults	Extra Care Housing, policy development.	0	115
Adults	Alternative Futures Group review team - transform approach to Supported Living care support.	0	100
Adults	Care Cubed - digital approach to agreeing packages of care.	0	35
School Transport Transformation Programme	Review of the home-to-school transport (including SEN) in light of increasing costs and SEND demand. This follows the service being brought back in-house from 1/4/22.	230	521
Children & Families Service Transformation	To increase the levels of staff within Children's Social Care - Create a	0	550

Project Name	Project Description and Progress	Expenditure	Expenditure
		2022/23 £000s	2023/24 £000s
	"Grow Your Own" policy so that it enables the Council to retain more qualified staff and Joint Targeted Area Inspection Improvement.		
New Residential Childrens Home	To bring residential care in-house by setting up and running our own care homes.	0	56
Catering Services Review	Review of provision of catering services to schools, including current offer and alternative options to run the service.	0	9
Childrens	Placements transformation	0	30
Project Management Office	To identify time spent within the PMO on supporting transformational projects across CEC. Based on estimates at FR2 and will be refined. Examples include: digital processes; customer experience; cleaner Crewe, green waste and Adults transformation.	0	200
ICT	New Delivery operating model and further digital investment for Customers.	0	316
Estates Service Review	To enable a review of the Estates service and the optimisation of our	0	20

Project Name	Project Description and Progress	Expenditure	Expenditure
		2022/23 £000s	2023/24 £000s
	property assets, as well as promoting key efficiencies in our FM programmes. In year objectives include responding to the MEES energy efficiency regulations and implementing improvement to the property information and management system		
Leisure Services Review	Wholesale review of how leisure services are commissioned by the Council with its appointed provider, aligned to key public health outcomes and in the context of escalating corporate landlord and other costs associated with subsidising the service.	0	22
Library Services Review	Redesign of existing service including reduction of opening hours with the associated changes to staff contracts. This is together with implementation of a commercial strategy to generate new and increased income by utilising the library estate to make the service	0	247

Project Name	Project Description and Progress	Expenditure	Expenditure
		2022/23 £000s	2023/24 £000s
	more financially sustainable.		
Household Waste Recycling Centre Review	Review and implementation of changes to Household Waste Recycling Centre service provision across the borough to ensure that service meets statutory guidance levels., initial draft report complete and procurement PIN notice issued.	0	134
Green Spaces Review	New policy and associated maintenance schedules implemented leading to significant rationalisation and standardisation of maintenance regimes to Council owned green spaces.	0	43
Green Waste Review	Garden Waste Subscription implementation generating an income to the Council to offset direct costs of operating this service - including investment in new systems and significant changes to frontline operational services rolled out and charge implemented from the 15 January 2024.	0	83

Project Name	Project Description and Progress	Expenditure	Expenditure
		2022/23 £000s	2023/24 £000s
ASDV Review	Review of two of the Councils wholly owned companies to ensure that they are achieving the objectives set out in their original and latest business plans i.e. generating a commercial return to the Council to offset its own increasing direct operating costs.	0	35
Planning Review	Improve the planning application process with better lead times and to ensure that the service is adequately staffed where support, training and development opportunities are provided too.	263	119
Community Enforcement New ICT System	To enable service transformation by the introduction of a bespoke IT case management system. This will enable the team to realise key service efficiencies around the back-office functions hence allowing a greater amount of staff time to be spent out on site undertaking key aspects of the enforcement function.	0	25
Transformation of CCTV Service	Full system upgrade to digital wireless to meet technological and	0	67

Project Name	Project Description and Progress	Expenditure	Expenditure
		2022/23 £000s	2023/24 £000s
	security advances, deliver financial savings over time through efficiencies in the delivery of the service, compliance with standards, improved public safety and evidence for enforcement/partners.		
Parking Services Review	To support delivery of changes for car parking that revise operational arrangements and tariffs to provide greater transparency and equity across the borough.	0	267
Total		493	3,414

26. As it is the Council's policy not to rely on capital receipts until they are realised, these capital receipts have not been factored into the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) by way of reducing debt or financing capital expenditure. Consequently, the use of the receipts under this flexibility will have no effect on the Council's Prudential Indicators.

Balance of National vs Local Funding

27. Cheshire East Council continues to rely heavily on local funding to fund services as opposed to Central Government grant. Funding for Council services from Council Tax and Business Rates continues to be c.92% of the total net funding

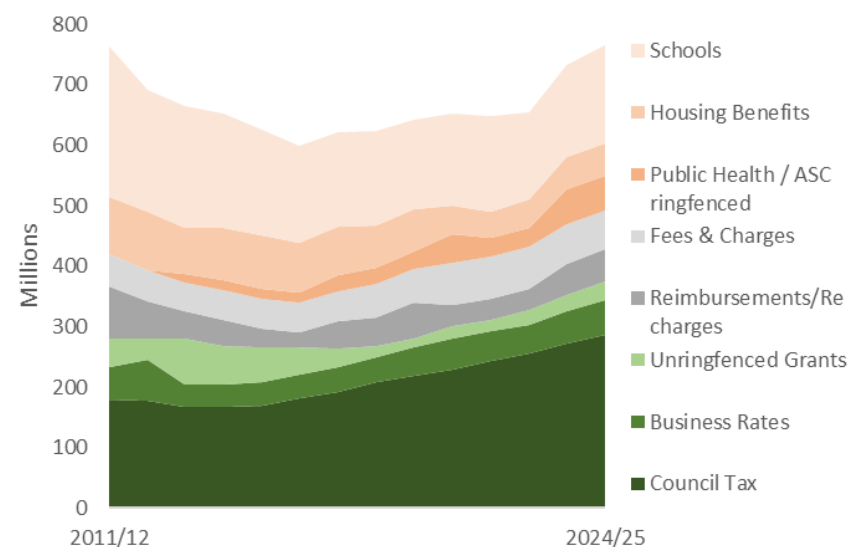
in 2024/25. Net funding excludes ring-fenced grants for Schools, Public Health, and Housing Benefits for example.

28. Key measures for Local Government from the Autumn Statement announcements included:
- New powers to de-couple the business rates multipliers will be used from 2024/25. The small business rates multiplier will be frozen, and the standard multiplier indexed (to 54.6p based on September CPI).
 - 75% Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) discounts will continue for a further year.
 - Local authorities will be "fully compensated for the loss of income from these business rates measures".
 - Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates will be raised to the 30% percentile of local market rents from April 2024. No direct impact on local authorities but this should indirectly reduce pressure on temporary accommodation.
 - Resource Department Expenditure Limit budgets will increase by 1.0% in real terms over the medium term, which imply real-terms cuts for unprotected local government services.
 - Chancellor wants to improve productivity in the public sector (by 0.5% per year) and to reduce the size of the civil service (return it to its pre-pandemic levels). He wants a "more productive state not a larger state".
 - Long-term freeze in capital investment in the public sector.
 - Local authorities will be able to increase planning fees for applications from larger businesses (to recover the full costs) but will have to return fees if timelines not achieved.

- i. Consolidation of local authority pension funds, with local government funds also required to allocate 10% of investments to private equity.
 - j. No further funding increases for local government beyond those that had been previously announced. Additional funding for the NHS and adult social care announced in the Autumn Statement 2022 has been “reaffirmed”, as expected.
 - k. Funding Simplification Doctrine will come into force from January 2024, to simplify the “local government funding landscape, giving councils greater flexibility and freeing up resources for delivery”.
29. There was then a further Policy Statement announcement on 5 December which confirmed that there would be another year of the New Homes Bonus in 2024/25 and the referendum limits for Council Tax increases were also announced. As anticipated, the limit has been capped once again at 4.99% (including 2% ring-fenced for Adults Social Care).
30. All these commitments were confirmed as part of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement which was announced on 18 December 2023. Detailed grant allocations for each local authority (for 2024/25 only) were announced at this time.
31. There was also a further allocation of social care grant announced on 24 January 2024 (actual allocations not provided at that time) which will be confirmed as part of the Final Settlement in February. Full details of the unring-fenced grant funding that is due to be received is set out in this section and in **Annex 7**.

32. **Chart 1** illustrates how the balance between funding sources continues the trend of placing increasing emphasis on support from local funding sources over time.

Chart 1: Council Tax continues to fund a larger proportion of overall Council Spending



Source: Cheshire East Finance

33. **Table 3** sets out the revised funding forecast for Cheshire East Council for 2024/25. This shows how local funding sources are being increased to fund growth in service budgets, and how Government grants are contributing in monetary terms.

Table 3: Funding for services relies more on Council Tax increases than other funding sources

	2023/24	2024/25	1 yr Change	1 yr Change
	£m	£m	£m	%
Council Tax	-271.1	-287.1	+16.0	5.9%
Government Grants (inc RSG)	-26.8	-32.0	+5.2	19.4%
Business Rates Retention	-55.3	-56.6	+1.3	2.4%
Funding Required for Services	-353.1	-375.7	+22.6	6.4%

Sources:

Cheshire East Council

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Note - Figure may not add down due to roundings

34. Central Government's management of the Business Rates Retention Scheme and control over Council Tax levels continue to influence Council's spending plans.
35. In Cheshire East, the Council is meeting this challenge in several ways and focusing on longer term financial stability through the following actions:
 - **Growing the domestic taxbase** - Each new home brings additional Council Tax revenue, New Homes Bonus (up to 2023/24) and, since 1 March 2019, a community infrastructure levy where relevant. However, homes also bring additional costs, such as education, waste collection and highways. The Council ensures that subsidy from its general funding sources is carefully examined to achieve maximum value to keep Council Tax increases for residents in-line with government thresholds or below.
 - **Promoting Economic Growth** - business growth could result in additional income being retained for local

investment, subject to certain thresholds. Therefore, the Council aims to invest in supporting economic growth and infrastructure projects that will unlock development land and support inward investment.

- **Increasing employment opportunities** - economic growth results in fewer people relying on welfare benefits from the Council which releases funding for further investment or for direct provision of front-line services.
- **Maintaining strong collection rates and challenge of taxbases** - to ensure fairness to all involved and ensure the Council maximises local income for local use. This includes an appropriate Council Tax Support Scheme to support households with low incomes.

Government Grant Funding of Local Expenditure

36. The detailed funding settlement from Government impacts on longer term financial planning. Key dates for 2024/25 include:
 - The Autumn Statement of 22 November 2023.
 - The release of the Provisional Settlement on 18 December 2023 confirming the allocation of grants, approach to Council Tax and confirmation of business rates baselines.
 - Further announcement of additional funding to support local authorities on 24 January 2024.
 - Final Settlement announced early February 2024.

These have set out changes to general funding levels – confirming increases in Social Care grants, and one more year of New Homes Bonus funding. Further details are included at **Annex 7**.

37. The Government Grants provided to local authorities can be categorised under several main headings for 2024/25:
- Revenue Support Grant (£414,000)
 - Specific Grants (unring-fenced revenue) (£31.6m)
 - Specific Grants (ring-fenced revenue) (£327.9m)
 - Capital Grants (main programme) (£133.9m)

More detail is provided on each of these elements below.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

38. The Council will receive £414,000 in Revenue Support Grant in 2024/25 which is £26,000 more than 2023/24 (as a result of the predicted inflationary increase of 6.7%).

Unring-fenced Specific Grants

39. Separate unring-fenced Specific Grants have been largely retained and increased in some areas and total £31.6m in 2024/25. The detail is shown in **Annex 7** and summarised in **Table 4**. Table 4 shows the original budget for 2023/24 and **Annex 7** shows the in-year position including grant received after the budget was set.
40. The list of Specific Grants mainly relates to funding for the New Homes Bonus (NHB) and Social Care Grants. They equate to 93% of the total unring-fenced specific grants in 2024/25.
41. The Autumn Statement (November 2023), Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (December 2023) and further funding announcements (January 2024), included

unring-fenced funding for 2024/25 totaling £25.6m for Cheshire East social care.

42. Services Grant has been reduced from £1.7m in 2023/24 to £0.3m for 2024/25.
43. Full details are set out in **Annex 7**.

Table 4: Specific grant levels are increasing

	2023/24	2024/25	1 yr Change	1 yr Change
	£m	£m	£m	%
Revenue Support Grant	-0.4	-0.4	-	
New Homes Bonus	-3.8	-4.1	-0.3	
Social Care Grants	-19.4	-25.6	-6.2	
Other Grants	-3.2	-1.9	+1.3	
Total Specific Grants	-26.8	-32.0	-5.2	19.4%

Sources:
Cheshire East Council
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

44. The 2024/25 allocation of NHB is again to be paid for one year only (£4.1m) which extends the last few years single year allocations. Legacy payments have now been phased out.

Ring-fenced Specific Grants

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

45. The Government announced the revised allocations of DSG for 2024/25 on 19 December 2023. DSG is a ring-fenced

grant provided to the Council to meet certain educational costs.

46. Under the national funding formula (NFF) arrangements DSG is allocated in four funding blocks, namely the Schools Block, Early Years Block, High Needs Block and Central Schools Services Block.
47. The Schools Block allocation to the Council is based on the schools' block NFF. This takes October 2023 pupil data and provides a basic per pupil amount plus additional funding for issues such as deprivation and low attainment. The NFF also applies a minimum per pupil level of funding of £4,610 Primary and £5,995 Secondary in 2024/25. Those values must be used in local formula.
48. Local authorities can provide funding to schools through a local formula for 2024/25. The Schools' Forum have agreed that a local formula using the NFF values, allocating any additional funding via the basic entitlement and applying a minimum funding guarantee of 0% should be submitted for consideration at the 12 February 2024 Children and Families Committee.
49. For 2024/25 the Schools' Forum has not agreed to a transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block to High Needs. The Council has applied to the DfE through the Safety Valve program work to support a transfer.
50. Subject to Children and Families Committee approval that formula will be used to allocate funding to schools for 2024/25. The per pupil figures in **Table 5** assume that the formula is approved.
51. For 2024/25, the supplementary funding issued to schools in the prior years has been rolled into the baseline DSG grant.
52. The Early Years Block mainly comprises:
 - Funding for the universal 15-hour entitlement for all three- and four-year-olds.
 - Funding for the additional 15 hours for three- and four-year-old children of eligible working parents.
 - Funding for the 15-hour entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds.
 - Funding for the 15-hour entitlement for eligible working parents of two-year-old children.
 - Funding from September 2024 for 9-to-23-month-old children for eligible working parents to access 15 hours.
 - Funding to deliver a new Disability Access Fund to settings for three- and four-year-old children.
 - Funding for the Early Years pupil premium plus a few other areas.
53. The early years block has increase significantly in 2024/25 due to the introduction of new 2-year-old and under entitlements of 15 hours of free childcare for eligible children of working parents: starting from April 2024 for 2-year-olds; and from September 2024 for children aged between 9 months and 2 years old, but not including 2-year-olds.
54. The High Needs Block is a single block for local authorities' high needs pupils / students aged 0-24. The block includes place funding for pre-16 and post-16 places in appropriate establishments such as mainstream schools, special schools,

and the pupil referral unit. The block includes top-up funding for pupils and students occupying places in such settings.

55. The high needs block is calculated through the high needs NFF. This is made up of a range of factors and weightings including:
- A basic entitlement
 - A historic spend factor
 - A population factor
 - Measures relating to low attainment and deprivation
 - A funding floor
 - An area cost adjustment
56. The Central Schools Services Block is based on a NFF that includes:
- Historic commitments.
 - Ongoing responsibilities.
 - An area cost adjustment.
57. The historic commitments element of the central block has been subject to a further 20% reduction by the DfE for 2024/25. The council has approved a growth bid to replace the lost funding where those services cannot be reduced in line with the DfE's reduction. The main issue within the historic commitments is prudential borrowing costs.
58. **Table 5** shows the DSG received for 2023/24, the indicative DSG for 2024/25, and per pupil funding levels. (This excludes the adjustment for Academy recoupment).

59. All the schools block funding is passported directly through to schools.

Table 5: The largest increase in Dedicated Schools Grant is in the High Needs Block

Dedicated Schools Grant is allocated in four notional blocks in 2024/25	Actual 2023/24 £m	Provisional 2024/25 £m	Change £m	Change %
Total Dedicated Schools Grant	354.2	388.1	33.9	9.6
Comprising:				
Schools Block	270.5	285.6	15.1	5.6
Central School Services Block	2.4	2.4	0.0	0.0
Early Years Block	25.1	41.5	16.4	65.3
High Needs Block	56.2	58.6	2.4	4.3
Per Pupil Funding	£ / pupil 2023/24	£ / pupil 2024/25		
Dedicated Schools Grant:				
Schools Block				
Primary	4,686	4,923		
Secondary	5,962	6,275		
Central Schools Block (ongoing responsibilities)	36.29	37.66		
Early Years Block 3 and 4 hourly rate – minimum rate	4.81	5.06		
– maximum rate	5.52	5.80		
2-Year-old hourly rate disadvantage children including Early Years Pupil Premium	7.26	7.79		
2-Year-old hourly rate working parents	-	7.11		
9 – 23-month hourly rate	-	9.65		

Notes

- These figures are before the academy recoupment and before any High Needs deductions.

- Figures are prior to de-delegation and assumes Growth Funding is removed.
- The calculation of the primary and secondary split for 2024/25 uses census data at this stage rather than the DfE model which was not available at the time of writing.
- The above figures include the early years supplement. There have been no announcements yet on high needs and schools supplements.

Sources:
Cheshire East Council
DfE

Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) ~ Academy Funding

60. The Department for Education are clear that becoming an academy should not bring about a financial advantage or disadvantage to a school but rather, enable academies to have greater freedom over how they use their budgets.
61. The Schools Block funding receivable for the 92 academies which opened before or during 2024/25 has not been removed from the total DSG award to be received (as reflected in **Table 5**). The funding for these academies of approximately £204m (based on 2023/24 funding) will be deducted from the Authority's DSG as part of the academy recoupment process (see **Annex 7**).

Sixth Form Funding

62. Total sixth form funding of £2.9m is receivable for maintained schools (this is an estimated figure to be confirmed when actual sixth form pupil numbers are known). In 2023/24 a balance of £80.3m was allocated directly to academies by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The allocation for 2024/25 is not yet known.

Pupil Premium Grant

63. The indicator for eligibility will be Free School Meals received in any of the prior six years by any pupil. The allocations for

2024/25 are £1,480 for primary aged pupils and £1,050 for secondary-aged pupils for every eligible child in both maintained schools and academies. All looked after children, adopted children and children with guardians will attract funding of £2,570 and children whose parents are in the armed forces will attract £340 per annum for 2024/25. It is estimated that Cheshire East Council will receive £5.0m in relation to the Pupil Premium for 2024/25.

Physical Education Grant

64. The Council expects to receive £1m for 2024/25. This is an estimate after any reduction for academies.

Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)

65. The Council expects to receive £1.9m for 2024/25. This is an estimate for maintained schools. The figure is normally based on a set amount per eligible pupil. The grant is paid directly to local authorities or academies. The Council will comply with the requirement to pass on the grant to maintained schools in full.

Milk Subsidy Grant

66. This grant has not yet been confirmed for 2024/25, however based on previous allocations, the current grants register assumes £21,000 will be received in 20224/25.

DSG Reserve Forecasts

67. The Council holds a reserve to manage DSG balances without impacting on the Council's General Reserves. Growth in the number of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) had been reducing the reserve balance and in 2019/20 the reserve moved into a deficit position and became a negative reserve.

68. This is a national issue and local authorities are allowed to hold a negative reserve based on a temporary accounting override of accounting treatment approved by DLUHC which means they can be treated as unusable reserves.
69. In December 2022 the override was confirmed for a further three years through to March 2026. The removal of this override would present a significant risk to the financial sustainability of councils and the scale of the deficit already presents a cashflow issue before that point.
70. The estimated impact on the Councils revenue costs, from interest linked to the forecast DSG deficit balance, is that the cost of interest in 2023/24 will be around £3.1m, rising to over £6m in 2024/25. This cost will increase annually if the DSG deficit continues to increase.
71. These pressures, due to the difference between the level of High Needs funding received and the cost to deliver High Needs support, have continued and are forecast to extend the overall deficit in each financial year in the current DSG Management Plan. Current forecasts suggest the reserve will continue to be in an increasing deficit in the medium-term.
72. The Council's DSG Management Plan which sets out the forecasts of spend and deficit over the medium-term was approved by Children and Families Committee on 18th September 2023. The Council is also working with the DfE and has applied to join the Safety Valve (SV) program. Joining the SV program would mean that the DfE would support the Council with medium term planning to try to address the deficit. The Councils application to join the SV program was submitted in December 2023, and we hope to hear if we have been successful in joining the program in March 2024.
73. The DSG management plan which went to committee on the 18th September 2023 forecast that the cumulative DSG deficit override would increase to £306.9m by the end of 2027/28 as a mitigated position, the unmitigated position would be a deficit of £535.7m. The forecast annual interest to maintain a deficit balance of £306.9m is estimated to be around £9.2m based on an interest rate of 3%.
74. **Table 6** summarises the reserve position for 2023/24. This position is unaffordable and unsustainable. The Council is not in a position to budget for removal of the accounting override which could require the deficit being met from other general funds or useable reserves. This risk will therefore continue to be a feature of ongoing liaison with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, as well as with the DfE through the Safety Valve program.

Table 6: Dedicated Schools Grant Reserve is negative

Table 6	2023/24 £m
Brought Forward Position	-46.9
In-Year Forecast Overspend for High Needs	-42.7
Predicted Cumulative Carry Forward	-89.6

Source:
Cheshire East Council

Public Health Grant

75. Public Health responsibilities cover a wide range of services including sexual health services; children's 0-19 services; NHS health check programmes; substance misuse services, infection control and One You services.

- 76. Public Health grant has been ring-fenced from 2013 and will continue to be so during 2024/25 to ensure expenditure is incurred in line with the public health framework.
- 77. Allocations for 2024/25 announced on 5 February 2024 set the grant at £18.4m. For 2023/24 the value of the grant was £18.0m.

Collecting Local Taxes for Local Expenditure

Business Rate Retention Scheme (BRRS)

- 78. Locally collected non-domestic taxes, that are directly retained by the Council, will provide approximately 15% of the Council's net funding in 2024/25. The Council anticipated collection of approximately £142m (before accounting adjustments) in business rates in 2023/24, is based on the Council's NNDR1 return to Central Government on 31 January 2023.
- 79. The projected total deficit at the end of 2023/24 on the Business Rates Collection Fund, is **c.£9.9m**. Further information about Business Rates performance is included in **Annex 5**.
- 80. Under the BRRS arrangements, 50% of the net rates collected is paid to Government with 49% being retained specifically to support Cheshire East Council services. 1% is paid to the Fire Authority. In addition to this reduction a tariff of £27.4m must be paid to Government which is used to top-up funding allocations to other local authorities.
- 81. From 2021/22, growth forecasts in business rates have been paused due to the overall reduction in the taxbase and uncertainty around growth in future years, in part, due to the residual effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the current economic forecasts and the potential for a full review of the approach towards business rates retention approach by Central Government.
- 82. In October 2023, the Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023 was passed to allow Government to de-couple the business rate multipliers, giving ministers the power to increase the small and standard multipliers by different amounts. For 2024/25, the Government has announced that the Small Business Rate Multiplier will remain frozen at 49.9p in the pound, but the Standard Business Rate Multiplier will increase in-line with CPI to 54.6p in the pound. This change is intended to increase the annual yield from business rates, whilst at the same time protecting smaller businesses.
- 83. Despite the increase in the Standard Multiplier Rate, a large compensation payment will be made to Local Government to mitigate the losses between what the Small Multiplier was capped at compared to September 2023 inflation.
- 84. Since the baseline funding level for business rates retention was set back in 2013/14, there have been many policy changes around reliefs for different business types. With each policy change, all local authorities are compensated for their share of business rates foregone.
- 85. In 2024/25, £10.6m of this compensation has been included within the business rates budget with the remaining compensation being credited to the Collection Fund Earmarked Reserve to continue to support any future risks around business rate funding.

86. The total business rates budget is set to increase to £56.6m for 2024/25. **Annex 5** sets out the position in further detail.

Table 7: Baseline funding from Business Rates is only increased in-line with inflation due to uncertainties in the system

	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	1yr Change £m	1 yr Change %
Business Rates Retention Scheme – Baseline Funding	-44.1	-46.0		
S31 compensation and multiplier cap grants	-11.2	-10.6		
Business Rates Retention Scheme – Total Funding	-55.3	-56.6	-1.3	2.4%

Sources:
Cheshire East Council

87. The Impact Assessment at **Annex 3** identifies how changes in business rates could affect local business.

Council Tax

88. Locally collected domestic taxes that are directly retained by the Council will provide 77% of the Council's net funding in 2024/25. The Council takes a careful approach to managing the domestic taxbase to reflect local growth ambitions and support sustainable services in the medium-term.
89. The Provisional Finance Settlement confirmed the referendum limit on base increases is 2.99%, with a further 2% flexibility for an Adult Social Care precept. It is proposed that Council Tax is increased by 4.99% (including 2% ring-fenced for Adult

Social Care pressures) on the 2023/24 level to give a Band D charge of £1,792.59 for 2024/25.

90. Band D Council Tax for 2024/25 is shown in **Table 8**. The proposed increases over the medium-term are currently 4.99% in 2024/25 and then 2.99% each year after that.

Table 8: Band D Council Tax is calculated after grant and business rate allocations

	2024/25 £m	2024/25 £m
Total Net Revenue Budget 2024/25		375.7
Less:		
Business Rates Retention Scheme	15.1% ¹	-56.6
Specific Unring-fenced Grants	8.4% ¹	-31.6
Revenue Support Grant	0.0% ¹	-88.6
Amount to be raised from Council Tax	77.0% ¹	287.1
No. of Band D Equivalent Properties		160,151.52
Band D Council Tax		£1,792.59

Sources:

Cheshire East Council

¹ Percentage of Cheshire East Net Budget

91. The impact on each Council Tax band and the number of dwellings in each band is shown in **Table 9**.

Table 9: Impact of Council Tax on each Band

Band	A	B	C	D
Council Tax £	1,195.06	1,394.24	1,593.41	1,792.59
No of Dwellings	31,495	38,696	36,925	27,811
Band	E	F	G	H
Council Tax £	2,190.94	2,589.29	2,987.65	3,585.18
No of Dwellings	22,906	15,214	12,960	1,966

Source:
Cheshire East Council

Council Taxbase

92. The Council Taxbase quantifies the number of properties from which the Council can collect Council Tax. The taxbase is presented as an equivalent number of domestic properties in Council Tax Band D terms after adjusting for relevant discounts and exemptions (for example a Band H property counts as two Band D properties, whereas a Band A property counts as two thirds of a Band D). The level of Council Tax multiplied by the taxbase equals the expected income.
93. The gross taxbase for 2024/25 (before making an allowance for non-collection) is calculated as 161,769.22. After taking into account current high collection rates, the non-collection rate has been maintained at 1.00% for 2024/25. This results in a final taxbase of **160,151.52** Band D equivalent domestic properties.
94. The taxbase for 2024/25 reflects an increase of 0.86% on the 2023/24 equivalent position. This reflects the overall increase in properties in Cheshire East after allowing for the impact of continuing higher levels of Council Tax support due to the

ongoing economic situation. The Council Taxbase was approved by [Council on 13 December 2023](#).

95. Cheshire East has a relatively high Council Taxbase compared to its nearest neighbours. This is partly due to the much higher proportion of properties in Bands F to H in the Cheshire East area (16.0% in Cheshire East compared to the England average of 9.3% as per [DLUHC Council Taxbase 2023](#) data).
96. Cheshire East has previously offered the owners of rental properties a short-term discount to assist the refurbishment and maintenance of property between lets. The discount was discretionary and not offered by a significant number of other Billing Authorities. It was agreed at the Council meeting in December 2023 that this discount is removed from April 2024 as it is unsustainable and inequitable as the discount is not offered across all types of tenure.
97. In common with most Billing Authorities, Cheshire East Council charges a Council Tax premium of 100% on property that has been empty for two years or more 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.
98. 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%

99. The Government has previously introduced legislation allowing Billing Authorities flexibility to amend the Council Tax discounts available for second homes and to introduce Council Tax premiums for long-term empty property. Cheshire East has used this flexibility to withdraw discounts for second homes and to levy premiums in accordance with legislation as it became available, to encourage an increase in homes being brought back into use. The policy has successfully led to a reduction in empty homes.

100. The Government's Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill gained Royal Assent on 26 October 2023 and included further discretionary options for the application of Council Tax premiums on empty properties, reducing the qualifying period from two years to one year, and making premiums available for imposition on second homes. The change to empty property premium will now come into effect on 1 April 2024.

The impact of the Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS)

101. From 1 April 2013 the Council Tax benefit system was replaced by a local Council Tax support scheme. Claimants under this scheme receive appropriate discounts to their bills depending on their circumstances. It is important to note that pensioner claimants remain unaffected by this change.

102. 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 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.

103. Local Council Tax Support grant was received in 2020/21 and was transferred to the Collection Fund Earmarked reserve.

The funding has been 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.

104. No changes have been made to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25 other than to increase the income bands and non-dependant deductions in line with CPI.

105. The budget for CTS for 2024/25, included within the taxbase calculation, is £21.3m. This will be reviewed in future years to ensure the budget remains aligned with changing need.

Collection Fund

106. Receipts from Council Taxpayers and businesses are paid into the Collection Fund which is then distributed to all precepting organisations (Cheshire East Council, Fire Authority, Police and Crime Commissioner, Central Government and local Town and Parish Councils).

107. A predicted surplus in the Collection Fund can be drawn down to support revenue funding for the following annual budget, and vice versa in the case of a deficit. This can happen if actual changes in the taxbase vary from the predicted changes, or if collection rates vary from the original forecasts.

108. The Council Tax collection fund has been forecast to be a £6.002m cumulative deficit as at 31 March 2024. The Cheshire East share of this deficit is **£5.040m** is to be repaid in 2024/25 and will be managed through the Collection Fund earmarked reserve.

109. The Business Rates Collection Fund has been forecast to be a £9.929m cumulative deficit at 31 March 2024. The Cheshire East share of this deficit is **£4.865m** is to be repaid in 2024/25

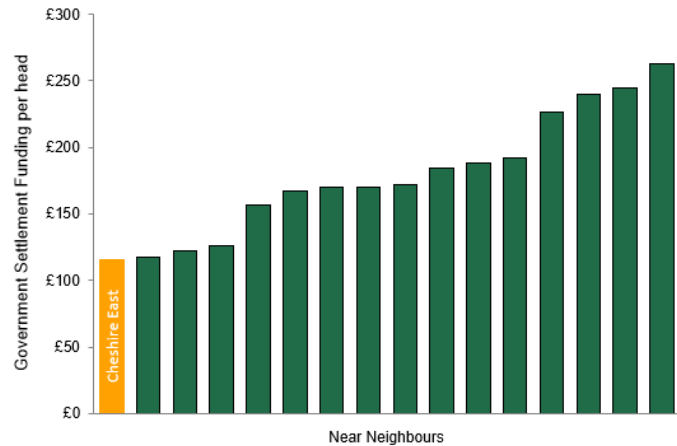
and will be managed through the Collection Fund earmarked reserve.

110. For a detailed breakdown of the Collection Fund position for both Council Tax and Business Rates see **Annex 5**.

Funding Comparisons to similar Councils

111. Comparisons, based on available data, add context to Cheshire East’s funding position. For recent analysis of the Council’s financial position please refer to the Council’s [Value for Money](#) document.

Chart 2: Cheshire East Council receives low levels of Funding per head compared to its statistical Near Neighbours



Sources:
Cheshire East Council
Nomis: Population estimates - local authority based by single year of age 2022
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (Core Spending Power 2024/25)

What is the Council doing about it?

112. There are several areas where the Council is attempting to ensure its voice is heard. These are:

Responding to Key Consultations

113. 2023/24 has seen several consultations affecting Local Government. The Council has had the opportunity to input into the relevant responses collated by the Society of County Treasurers, Society of Unitary Treasurers, and the Local Government Association (Cheshire East Council is a member of all three) and therefore, in some cases, relied on their collective responses to make any relevant comments.
114. The government announced an extra £500m in new funding for social care as part of the 2024/25 final local government finance settlement. This came days after 46 MPs wrote to the prime minister urging for extra funding to be found during the consultation period. This campaign was led by the County Councils Network and the counties all party parliamentary group.
115. The consultations that have taken place so far in 2023/24 are as follows:
- Council Tax and Business Rates
 - Business Rates: Transparency and Disclosure of Information on Business Rates Valuations.
 - Business Rates Improvement Relief: Draft Regulations.
 - Business Rates Avoidance and Evasion: Consultation.
 - Proposals to Exempt Categories of Dwellings from the Council Tax Premiums.
 - Consultation on Technical Changes to the Business Rates Retention System.

- Rates Retention and Formula Grant
 - Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2024/25.
- Accounting and Audit
 - Urgent enquiry from CIPFA LASAAC on deferring the implementation of IFRS 16 Leases (for PFI (Private Finance Initiative) / PPP (Public Private Partnerships) projects only).
 - CIPFA Survey on the impact of the move to Depreciated Replacement Cost.
 - Non-investment asset valuation - Exposure draft 23.
- Education and Schools
 - Implementing the Direct National Funding Formula.
 - Early Years Funding - Extension of the Entitlements.
- Capital and Treasury
 - Consultation on Local Government Capital Risk Mitigation Measures in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill: Capital Risk Metrics.
 - Call for views on new local authority capital flexibilities.
 - Changes to statutory guidance and regulations: Minimum Revenue Provision.
- Pensions
 - 'McCloud' Remedy in the LGPS - Supplementary Issues and Scheme Regulations.
 - Local Government Pension Scheme (England & Wales): Next Steps on Investments.

- General
 - Best Value Standards and Intervention - A Statutory Guide for Best Value Authorities.

Membership of Collective Groups

116. The Council has membership of several collective groups which provide a stronger voice at a national level. They are:
- The Local Government Association
 - The Society of County Treasurers
 - The County Councils Network
 - The Sparse Rural Network
 - The F40 Group
117. The Council is also continuing to make use of the Pixel Financial Management Service and LG Improve (benchmarking) to assist with forecasts and strategy.

Monitoring Developments

118. The Council monitors news alerts and relevant journals for any developments in Local Government funding, including changes to the business rates retention scheme and Fairer Funding Review (now further delayed). The Council actively responds to consultations on the new funding arrangements where possible.

Ongoing briefing with Members of Parliament

119. The Council provides an update on key issues to local MPs on a regular basis, or when special updates are required. At certain times these focus on the Budget and funding issues.

Charges to Local Service Users

120. In certain circumstances the Council makes direct charges for access to services. Some prices will be set nationally but prices should always be related to recovering the Council's costs in delivering discretionary services.
121. Charges for services represent c.8% of total gross income to Cheshire East Council and the prices are reviewed at least annually. This income is netted off the cost of services before Council Tax levels are calculated.
122. The Cheshire East Council pricing structure has over 1,000 different charges. The overall objective is to reduce subsidy from taxation in charged for services. This means some price rises may exceed inflation in the medium-term. In such cases users are consulted and alternative service options are discussed.
123. To assist officers and Members to recover full cost, the Council has a Charging and Trading Strategy to provide the relevant guidance to be applied. Annex 9 provides a full list of fees and charges, alongside the service financial summary tables, for approval as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Investment, Borrowing and the Capital Programme

124. The capital programme reflects the Council's priority to promote local economic wellbeing. To support this ambition the Council actively pursues funding from private sector organisations and Government as well as attempting to

maximise receipts from asset sales. Resources will be utilised in a timely way to allow flexibility within the overall programme. Major highway infrastructure projects, for example, sometimes require Council resources before capital receipts and developer contributions have been received. Funding requirement for future years are updated as plans and funding streams are secured.

125. In 2023/24 the Council experienced a material increase in the cost of borrowing with rates averaging at 5.6%, which has seen interest payments rise from £6.1m in 2022/23 to £12.7m in 2023/24.
126. This trend is set to continue in 2024/25 with interest costs expected to be as high as £16.4m if interest rates remain above 5%.
127. The increase in costs has created a pressure on the Capital Financing budget, which has required an increase of £9.5m, £8.5m of that increase has been taken from the General Fund balance. This is not sustainable moving forward and a review of the capital programme is required to make it affordable.
128. The Council applies an agreed Treasury Management Strategy (**Annex 11**) to ensure capital financing is affordable in the medium-term. During 2017/18 the Council revised its approach to calculating the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) to release revenue funding and mitigate overspending on services. Whilst within the existing policy, this consisted of a change from using the straight line to the annuity method under the Asset Life (Option 3).
129. The capital financing budget for 2024/25 is shown in **Table 10**. This includes repayment of debt and interest payable on

the Council's long-term loans. Costs are partly offset by the interest earned on the Council's investments.

Table 10: Services and Interest receipts help to offset the Capital Financing Budget

	2024/25 £m
Repayment of Outstanding Debt	19.2
Contribution from Services	-1.5
Transfer from Financing Reserve	-3.1
Interest on Loans	16.4
Less: Interest Receivable on Cash Balances	-2.5
Net Capital Financing Budget	28.5

Sources:
Cheshire East Council

130. Charges for the amount borrowed are made to the Council's income and expenditure account and, for 2024/25, comprises the following elements:
- **For borrowing incurred prior to April 2008:** Cost is calculated at a 2% annuity rate over a 50-year period.
 - **For borrowing incurred after April 2008:** Cost is calculated on an annuity basis over the anticipated life of the asset. These periods vary from five years to 50 years depending on the type of expenditure funded from the borrowing.
131. Details of the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy are shown at **Annex 10**.

132. The Council currently has external borrowing of £284m of which £200m is temporary borrowing with other local authorities. The amount of interest paid on the Council's portfolio of loans is a mix of long-term fixed rates of interest and low-rate short-term rates of interest (average 4.66%). Currently long-term interest rates are around 4.77%.
133. The income earned on the Council's cash balances that are temporarily invested is budgeted to be £2.5m.
134. The Council sets out the approach to these issues in its Treasury Management Strategy which is in **Annex 11**.

Capital Programme Planning

135. The 2023/24 capital programme was approved by Council on 22 February 2023. Updates have been provided to service committees during 2023/24.
136. The Finance Update reported in January 2024 and the revised profile of spend for 2024/25 onwards forms the base for the 2024-28 programme, which is detailed in **Annex 10**.
137. Capital commitments have been reviewed to identify the profile of expenditure. The complexities around planning applications, public consultation, and dependencies on third parties for external funding can mean that projects are delayed from one year to the next.
138. Spending plans are monitored to ensure a robust quality assurance framework is followed for each project. The governance arrangements safeguard against projects proceeding where costs may escalate. Variances from approved budgets may become subject to supplementary approval in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules.

Further details on the governance arrangements for the capital programme are set out in **Annex 10**.

Capital Programme Financing

139. The resources required to fund capital investment in the medium-term is set out in **Table 11** and is based on borrowing that the Council can undertake on a prudential basis, Government grant, the level of capital receipts and external contributions that can be generated over the period.

Table 11: Three Year Capital spending forecasts are very high

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Total 2024-28
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Committed Schemes	185.9	153.3	51.7	117.0	507.9
New Schemes	29.9	24.4	15.1	15.1	84.4
Total Capital Programme	215.8	177.6	66.8	132.1	592.3
Financing:					
Government Grants	134.2	57.0	26.2	73.1	290.5
External Contributions	22.9	35.4	19.8	28.0	106.1
Revenue Contributions	2.0	0.2	0.2	0.2	2.6
Capital Receipts	1.8	31.8	1.2	0.5	35.3
Prudential Borrowing	55.0	53.2	19.3	30.2	157.8
Total Sources of Funding	215.8	177.6	66.8	132.1	592.2

Note – figures may not add down exactly due to roundings to 1 decimal place

Sources:
Cheshire East Council

140. The Council will aim to maximise external resources such as grants and external contributions to fund the capital programme. Where Council resources are required the preference is to utilise receipts from asset disposals. The forecast for capital receipts for the period 2024-28 is a prudent approach based on plans of the Asset Management team and their most recently updated Disposals Programme.

141. The schemes in the Capital Programme, both existing and new proposals, have undergone a prioritisation exercise to ensure they represent value for money, attract external funding or alternatively are affordable within the capital financing budget and do not commit the Council to additional debt repayments that are not affordable in the medium-term.

Borrowing for Capital Expenditure

142. The Council's capital investment complies with the "Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities". Under the Code, local authorities have greater discretion over the funding of capital expenditure especially with the freedom to determine, within the regulatory framework of the Code, the level of borrowing they wish to undertake to deliver their capital programmes.

143. The level of Prudential Borrowing required in 2024/25 and in future years is detailed in **Annex 10** Prudential Borrowing Indicators. The revenue consequences have been considered as part of the medium-term strategy to ensure they can be afforded in future years.

Government Capital Grants

Annex 8 provides a list of Government grants that are supporting the Cheshire East capital programme.

Other Economic Factors

144. The Council assesses its financial position over the medium term by using a financial scenario model. It is based on a series of planning assumptions and is updated through the year as more accurate forecasts become available.
145. These financial assumptions are discussed with members of the Finance Sub Committee task group to ensure transparency and challenge of the methods used.
146. Allowance has been made in the 2024/25 budget for other economic factors, such as pay inflation of £7.7m, which is higher than was expected. c.£2.6m of this resulted from under budgeting for the 2023/24 pay inflation. Pay inflation of 3% has been forecast for 2024/25 based on affordability levels.
147. The Budget Report for 2024/25 reflects inflationary pressure in waste services, utilities and other areas, but continues the theme of not including a central allowance for non-pay inflationary pressures on the basis this is being mitigated by effective contract management, service efficiency proposals, changes in services provided or increased charges.

Employer Pensions Contributions

148. The Cheshire Pension Fund (the Fund) undertook the formal triennial actuarial valuation in March 2022. The valuation is a statutory requirement of the LGPS Regulations and provides a health check of the Fund against an appropriate funding target and a review of its funding plan.
149. Funding positions for all the councils in the Fund have improved since 31 March 2019 and Cheshire East's funding position has improved to 98%.

150. Given the improvement in the funding position since 2019, the modelling done by the Pension Fund confirmed that contribution rates could be reduced at this valuation in line with the existing stabilisation parameters.
151. The modelling conducted by the Pension Fund has identified the target rate for each council as 20% of pay. This rate is similar to the primary rate calculated at the 2019 valuation and the modelling confirmed that this remains an appropriate long-term rate to fund the cost of future LGPS benefits and no open, long-term employer should pay less than this rate.
152. The table below summarises the impact of keeping the stabilising parameters as per the current Funding Strategy Statement and reducing contribution rates in line with the existing stabilisation parameters (step down by 1.5% of pay per annum) to a target rate of 20.0% of pay:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Actual / Proposed contribution rates	26.7%	25.2%	23.7%

Debt Management

153. 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 £1.3m since the end of September.
154. Annually, the Council raises invoices with a total value of over £80m. 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.

155. 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.
156. 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).

Managing the Reserves Position

157. The Reserves Strategy identifies two types of reserves:
- **General Reserves**
Balances in this category are not identified for specific purposes but will be used to cushion against the impact of emerging events or genuine emergencies.
 - **Earmarked Reserves**
Balances in this category have been set aside for a specific purpose and will either be spent on that purpose or otherwise returned to General Reserves.
158. Further details, including opening and closing balances for 2023/24 and 2024/25, are contained within the Reserves Strategy at **Annex 13**.

Summary of Financial Stability

159. **Table 12: summarises the position for 2024/25 to 2027/28.**

Table 12	Estimated Net Budget 2024/25 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2025/26 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2026/27 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2027/28 £m
Total Service Expenditure	360.5	380.2	399.1	417.1
Central Budgets:				
Capital Financing	28.5	43.0	57.1	69.8
Income from Capital Receipts	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0
Bad Debt Provision change	-	-	-	-
Use of Reserves	-12.2	-	-	-
Total Central Budgets	15.2	42.0	56.0	68.7
TOTAL: SERVICE + CENTRAL BUDGETS	375.7	422.2	455.2	485.9
Funded by:				
Council Tax	-287.1	-298.8	-310.6	-322.9
Business Rates Retention	-56.6	-56.6	-56.6	-56.6
Revenue Support Grant	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4
Specific Grants	-31.6	-24.5	-24.5	-24.5
TOTAL: FUNDED BY	375.7	380.3	392.2	404.4
FUNDING POSITION	0.0	41.9	63.0	81.5

Note – figures may not add down exactly due to roundings to 1 decimal place

160. Service expenditure for 2024/25 is shown as **£375.7m**. This represents an increase of £22.6m (6.4%) on the Budget at the [2023/24 Third Financial Year Update](#) position.
161. The Funding Available to Services plus the use of reserves in 2024/25 is estimated at **£375.7m**. Proposals were received in a High Level Business Case format, with associated Equality Impact Assessments, and were subject to detailed scrutiny by corporate enabling services through several iterations before being accepted into this budget; these business cases will be developed into the delivery phase.

Forecasting the Medium-Term Budget 2024/25 to 2027/28

162. The overall approach to funding is that local sources of income such as Council Tax and Business Rates will continue to fund a large share of local costs in the future, so a pro-growth approach is appropriate.
163. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy reflects a mix of specific policy proposals in each Service alongside a medium-term approach to Council Tax increases.
164. The Council adopts a standard five measures approach to preparing the MTFS and each measure is explored in relation to the medium-term forecasting of the MTFS. The measures are:

Measure	Description
Measure One ~ Challenge Financial Assumptions	Estimates related to Government funding and inflation in particular are checked against up to date indices and policies.
Measure Two ~ Review Local Taxation	Flexibility in Council Tax and business rates is explored in relation to emerging Government policy, demographic changes, local service ambitions and growth in the taxbase.
Measure Three ~ Manage Reserves	The impact of the Council's Reserves Strategy is analysed, particularly in relation to risk and investment.
Measure Four and Five ~ Manage Cost Drivers & Income	Options for future service delivery are challenged to ensure outcomes will be achieved in a cost effective and efficient way.

165. Detailed information on how these measures have been addressed can be found on the Council's website as background information: [Cheshire East Budget](#).

Annexes to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Report 2024-28

February 2024

An Open, Fairer, Greener Cheshire East

1. Corporate Plan 2021 to 2025

Our Vision **An open, fairer, greener Cheshire East**

Open

We will provide strong community leadership and work transparently with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambition in Cheshire East

Fair

We aim to reduce inequalities, promote fairness and opportunity for all and support our most vulnerable residents

Green

We will lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development

Our Priorities

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

Our Values



2a. Business Planning Process - Engagement

Introduction

- 2.1 Due to continued exceptional budget pressures resulting from the current cost of living crisis, post COVID-19 legacy pressures and high inflation, the Council could not prepare a balanced draft budget during 2023 for early consultation. This challenging financial situation has resulted in extensive additional work to establish the balanced budget contained within this MTFS for 2024/25.
- 2.2 Therefore, Cheshire East Council conducted a shorter engagement process on its Medium-Term Financial Plans through a number of stages running from 8 January 2024 through to full Council on 27 February 2024.
- 2.3 Where consultation with specific stakeholder groups is required in relation to specific proposals, this is being identified as part of the High-Level Business Case. Therefore, some of the proposals remain “subject to consultation”, and further targeted consultation activity will be undertaken in advance of those specific proposals being implemented.
- 2.4 The Council acknowledges that such consultation activity may alter the outcome of the final proposal and mean the expected financial impact included within the budget is subject to change. The Council deals with financial risk by factoring into its minimum level of reserves an allowance for negative changes to proposals arising from consultation or delayed implementation.

Background

- 2.5 Local authorities have a statutory duty to consult on their Budget with certain stakeholder groups including the Schools’ Forum and businesses. In addition, the Council chooses to consult with other stakeholder groups. The Council continues to carry out stakeholder analysis to identify the different groups involved in the budget setting process, what information they need from us, the information we currently provide these groups with, and where we can improve our engagement process.
- 2.6 This analysis helps to inform the consultation process for each Budget and continues to identify additional channels of communication which are used to facilitate consultation with more of our stakeholder groups.
- 2.7 The key events that have happened during 2023/24 in setting the budget for 2024/25 are outlined over the page.
- 2.8 A comprehensive suite of engagement events took place during January 2024 and all the feedback received by the Council from stakeholders or committees will be considered at Corporate Policy Committee on 13 February 2024.

Key Engagement Events

Event	Date	Comments
Finance Sub-Committee	8 March 2023	Aligning the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to the committee structure
Children and Families Committee	5 June 2023	Aligning the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to the committee structure (Service Budgets)
Economy and Growth Committee	6 June 2023	Aligning the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to the committee structure (Service Budgets)
Corporate Policy Committee	15 June 2023	Aligning the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to the committee structure (Service Budgets)
Environment and Communities Committee	16 June 2023	Aligning the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to the committee structure (Service Budgets)
Highways and Transport Committee	22 June 2023	Aligning the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to the committee structure (Service Budgets)
Adults and Health Committee	26 June 2023	Aligning the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to the committee structure (Service Budgets)
Finance Sub-Committee	7 June 2023	Received the Medium Term Financial Strategy Assumptions and Reporting Cycle for 2024-2028.
Finance Sub-Committee	7 June 2023	Received the Draft Pre Audit Statement of Accounts 2022/23 and Outturn Position Report.

Event	Date	Comments
Finance Sub-Committee	7 June 2023	Received the Draft Pre Audit Statement of Accounts for Wholly Owned Companies 2022/23 and Outturn Position Report.
Corporate Policy Committee	11 July 2023	Received the Provisional Financial Outturn 2022/23
Finance Sub Committee Task Group	6 September 2023	Review current MTFS planning assumptions
All Member Budget Engagement Session (1 of 2)	9 August 2023	To discuss with officers the approved budget; and to look ahead at budget challenges / budget setting for 2024/25 and the medium term
All Member Budget Engagement Session (2 of 2)	14 August 2023	To discuss with officers the approved budget; and to look ahead at budget challenges / budget setting for 2024/25 and the medium term
Finance Sub-Committee	7 September 2023	Medium Term Financial Planning Assumptions - Feedback from Task Group (Director of Finance and Customer Services provided verbal update at meeting)
Corporate Policy Committee	5 October 2023	Received the 2023/24 First Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Finance Sub Committee	2 November 2023	Received 2023/24 Second Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Finance Sub Committee	2 November 2023	To consider a report which seeks approval of indicative financial targets to support consultation on the development of the Cheshire East Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28

Event	Date	Comments
Environment and Communities Committee	9 November 2023	Received 2023/24 Second Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Environment and Communities Committee	9 November 2023	The committee received the report which set out the indicative financial envelope for this committee to support consultation on the development of the Cheshire East Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28
Children and Families Committee	13 November 2023	Received 2023/24 Second Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Children and Families Committee	13 November 2023	The committee received the report which set out the indicative financial envelope for this committee to support consultation on the development of the Cheshire East Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28
Economy and Growth Committee	14 November 2023	Received 2023/24 Second Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Economy and Growth Committee	14 November 2023	The committee received the report which set out the indicative financial envelope for this committee to support consultation on the development of the Cheshire East Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28
Adults and Health Committee	20 November 2023	Received 2023/24 Second Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Adults and Health Committee	20 November 2023	The committee received the report which set out the indicative financial envelope for this committee to support consultation on the development of the Cheshire East Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28

Event	Date	Comments
Highways and Transport Committee	23 November 2023	Received 2023/24 Second Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Highways and Transport Committee	23 November 2023	The committee received the report which set out the indicative financial envelope for this committee to support consultation on the development of the Cheshire East Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28
Corporate Policy Committee	30 November 2023	Received 2023/24 Second Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Corporate Policy Committee	30 November 2023	The committee received the report which set out the indicative financial envelope for this committee to support consultation on the development of the Cheshire East Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 to 2027/28
Corporate Policy Committee	30 November 2023	Consider the Council Taxbase report for 2024/25
Autumn Statement	22 November 2023	Announcements on funding position for 2024/25 from Central Government
All Member Briefing	30 November 2023	Budget Challenges session
All Member Briefing	21 December 2023	Update on current budget setting position
Council	13 December 2023	Approve the Council Taxbase report for 2024/25
Provisional Funding announcements	18 December 2023	Confirmation of Autumn Statement funding announcements from Central Government.

Event	Date	Comments
Corporate Leadership Team with Policy Chairs	Post Autumn Statement and Settlement announcements	Consider all policy change options in light of funding announcements
Corporate Leadership Team with Policy Chairs	Early January	Finalise draft budget proposals for January consultation launch
Launch of Budget Consultation	8 January 2024	Launch of Budget Consultation survey to all Members on 8 January followed by online survey on 9 January
Finance Sub-Committee	11 January 2024	Received 2023/24 Third Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Corporate Policy Committee	18 January 2024	Received 2023/24 Third Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Schools' forum	Via email link	Considered Budget Consultation survey
Members of Parliament	19 January 2024	Considered Budget Consultation survey
Trade Union Budget Session	22 January 2024	Considered Budget Consultation survey
Adults and Health Committee	22 January 2024	Received 2023/24 Third Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Manager Share & Support Budget Session (1 of 2)	23 January 2024	Considered Budget Consultation survey

Event	Date	Comments
Central Government	24 January 2024	Further unring-fenced funding announcement on social care support
Cheshire East Business Forum Budget Session	24 January 2024	Considered Budget Consultation survey
Manager Share & Support Budget Session (2 of 2)	25 January 2024	Considered Budget Consultation survey
Highways and Transport Committee	25 January 2024	Received 2023/24 Third Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Economy and Growth Committee	26 January 2024	Received 2023/24 Third Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Economy and Growth Committee	26 January 2024	Received Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2024/25 to 2027/28 and Provisional Settlement Update
Highways and Transport Committee	30 January 2024	Received Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2024/25 to 2027/28 and Provisional Settlement Update
In the Know Staff Consultation Session	30 January 2024	Considered Budget Consultation survey
Town & Parish Councils Budget Session	30 January 2024	Considered Budget Consultation survey
Environment and Communities Committee	30 January 2024	Received 2022/23 Third Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)

Event	Date	Comments
Environment and Communities Committee	30 January 2024	Receive Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2024/25 to 2027/28 and Provisional Settlement Update
Children and Families Committee	31 January 2024	Received 2023/24 Third Financial Review position (including updates for Grants and Capital Programme)
Children and Families Committee	31 January 2024	Received Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2024/25 to 2027/28 and Provisional Settlement Update
Finance Sub-Committee	31 January 2024	Received Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2024/25 to 2027/28 and Provisional Settlement Update
Corporate Policy Committee	1 February 2024	Received Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2024/25 to 2027/28 and Provisional Settlement Update
Adults and Health Committee	2 February 2024	Received Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2024/25 to 2027/28 and Provisional Settlement Update
Final Funding announcements	5 February 2024	From Central Government.
Corporate Policy Committee	13 February 2024	Consider final MTFS Report and Consultation feedback and recommend proposals to Council
Council	27 February 2024	Debate and approval of 2024/25 budget and Council Tax levels .

2b. Budget Engagement Report

See separate document.

3. Impact Assessment

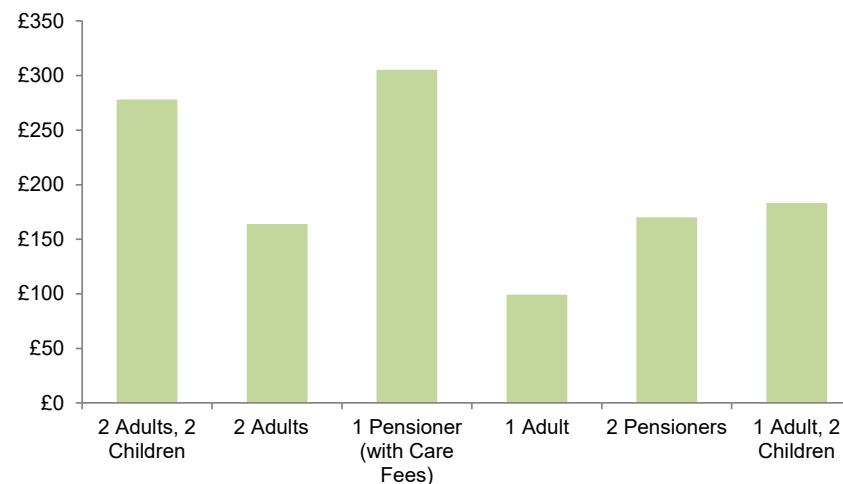
Executive Summary

- 3.1 This annex sets out the impact the budget has on the Council's various stakeholder groups. It is important that people can understand the consequences of the Council's proposals on their lives and the following impacts are expanded on in this section:
1. **Households** – This section looks at the financial impact of this budget on some of the 185,000+ households in Cheshire East.
 2. **Businesses** – This section looks at the impact of proposals on some of the 19,000 businesses in the area.
 3. **Council Partners and Stakeholders** – This section focusses on who the Council works with to achieve shared outcomes.
 4. **Local Environment** – The Council is committed to being carbon neutral, and this section identifies how this budget helps our ambition.
 5. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** – The Council's EDI strategy sets out our vision and this section identifies how this budget supports our approach.

1. Household Impact

- 3.2 The 2024/25 Budget is the result of a major process to set a balanced budget that can meet the needs of local people in the local environment. The details of the Budget have been set out in previous sections in terms of financial stability and allocation to services. This section considers the impact of the Budget on typical groups of service users in terms of the changes they may see and the charges they may pay.
- 3.3 A number of assumptions must be made in relation to property sizes and service usage. The Council uses existing data to inform this process.
- 3.4 **Chart 1** below illustrates the annual impact on six typical households accessing a variety of different services if a blanket increase in line with Consumer Price Index (CPI), as at September 2023, were to be applied.

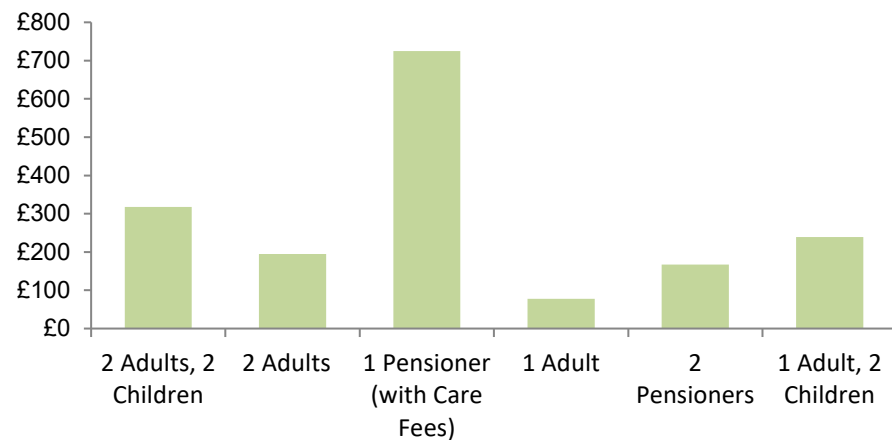
Chart 1: Households would face an average £200 increase in costs if simple inflation was applied to charges



Source: Cheshire East Finance

- 3.5 Every service within the Authority is refining and updating a Charging and Trading Strategy which sets out the rationale for setting / changing fees and charges within that area.
- 3.6 The Strategies calculate full cost of the service being provided and therefore set out the resulting subsidy or surplus each time a charge is made. This will then be used to inform the setting of future levels of fees and charges to ensure fairness and that the Council meets any statutory obligations.
- 3.7 **Chart 2** below illustrates the anticipated annual increases per household when applied to the same variety of services.

Chart 2: Forecast increases in costs are split appropriately across all groups



Source: Cheshire East Finance

- 3.8 The anticipated average increase per household is £287. This is £87 higher than an average increase of £200 if CPI at 6.7% had been applied across all services. Some of the fees and charges in these typical household examples are still in the process of being agreed for 2024/25.

Note:

Typical households are made up as follows:

- 2 Adults with 2 Children living in a Band E property
- 2 Adults no Children living in a Band C property
- 1 Pensioner living in a Band C property
- 1 Adult (not Pensioner) living in a Band B property
- 2 Pensioners living in a Band D property
- 1 Adult with 2 Children living in a Band D property

- 3.9 Each household average is based on typical use of chargeable services expected for that category such as school meals, libraries and environmental, and leisure services.

2. Business Impact

Impact of the 2024/25 Budget Proposals on Businesses and the Economy

- 3.10 The Economic Development service drives the vitality of the local Cheshire East economy and it provides a wide range of activity to support the economy and businesses. Cheshire East has a strong economy and is the home to some household names in advanced manufacturing (Bentley, Alstom, Bird Aviation), life sciences (Astra Zeneca and Alderley Park), fintech (Barclays) and food manufacturing (Mornflakes). But like the rest of the UK, its economy has suffered from rising inflation and the cost of living crisis. Its town centres have been weakened, due to changes in peoples shopping habits, including out of town shopping and a shift to on-line purchases. The decision by the government to cancel HS2 north of Birmingham has also weakened growth.
- 3.11 The Economic Development Service is responsible for putting in place activities to grow the business base in the borough through inward investment, provide business support programmes, delivery of the regeneration of our towns and to roll out rural broadband connectivity. To enable this work to happen the service works to strategic regeneration frameworks for Crewe and Macclesfield and has town centre vitality plans for our other key towns and service centres. It has also levered into the authority specific Levelling Up Funds from central government to enable it to deliver on the Council's key regeneration priorities. This funding includes:
 1. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and the associated investment plan for Cheshire East. The total indicative UKSPF allocation for Cheshire East is £13.9m spread across the three years 2022/23 - 2024/25. The fund is divided into three elements:
 - a. A Core UKSPF allocation of £11.6m split across the three years 2022/23 - 2024/25 which can be spent on defined types of interventions within three categories; 'People and Skills', 'Communities and Place' and 'Business Support'.
 - b. A Rural 'top up' allocation of £0.8m for years 2023/24 and 2024/25 to be spent on capital schemes supporting rural business', communities and place.
 - c. £1.6m to be spent exclusively on the Multiply (Adult Numeracy) Programme.
 2. Future High Street Fund and the Towns Fund totaling £37m has been secured for the ongoing regeneration of Crewe from the government through competitive processes. The purpose of these programmes is to develop projects that 'provide more reasons for more people to visit Crewe town centre more often'. The business cases for the ten towns fund projects have been agreed and signed off by the government.
- 3.12 The Business and Growth Team has a renewed focus on both promoting growth and investment opportunities across the borough and has successfully leveraged £4.1m UK of UKSPF to support local businesses, through:
 - the provision of support to SME businesses to de-carbonise their work practices,

- grants to support the development of new shared workspace to renew our highstreets and
- the support for new start-up companies and small companies with growth potential.

3.13 The Council has made significant commitments to the regeneration of Crewe town centre, and in 2024/25 it will be completing the first phase of the Royal Arcade scheme, comprising a new bus station and 400+ space multi-storey car park. Due to the national economy a new plan for phase 2 of the Royal Arcade is being prepared, in the meantime during this next year the cleared site will be utilised for temporary leisure uses. There are a further 25 capital projects that are being delivered this financial year in Crewe. Including £4m for TADIC a new co-working space, a new £12m youth zone will start on site, and £1m invested in eight pocket parks.

3.14 The service has also secured £1.8m of UKSPF for Macclesfield for two projects, a refurbishment of Macclesfield Market and Macc on Foot, to improve public realm in the town.

Business Rates multipliers for 2024/25

3.15 Multipliers for business rates increase each year by CPI. The Government announced in the Autumn Statement that the multiplier will freeze for the Small Business Multiplier for 2024/25.

- Standard Multiplier at 54.6p* in the £.
- Small Business Multiplier 49.9p** in the £.

(* Includes supplement to fund small business rate relief. ** All occupied properties with a rateable value (RV) below £51,000 are charged using the lower multiplier.)

Transitional Scheme for 2023 rating list

3.16 Transitional Relief will cap business rate bill increases each year to a set percentage before other reliefs and supplements:

Upwards Caps	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Small Property (RV up to £20,000)	5%	10%	25%
Medium Property (RV between £20,000 to £100,000)	15%	25%	40%
Large Property (RV greater than £100,000)	30%	40%	55%

The above percentages are set in legislation by Central Government. This will continue to help businesses that face a large increase in their rates payable following the latest revaluation in April 2023. Properties that have had a reduction in Rateable Value (RV) will benefit from the full decrease.

Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR)

3.17 Properties with RV below £12,000 where the ratepayer meets the criteria will receive 100% relief and properties between £12,000 and £15,000 will receive tapered relief.

3.18 Continuation of amended SBRR criteria to allow businesses in receipt of SBRR to keep it for one year when they take on an additional property that would currently cause them to lose SBRR, in order to help small businesses with expansion costs.

Supporting Small Business (SSB)

- 3.19 This relief is to be awarded to businesses that face a large increase following the revaluation in 2023, as a result of the loss of small business or rural rate relief. The scheme will cap bill increases at £50 per month (£600 per year). Government will fully reimburse the Council for the actual cost of this scheme.

Rural Rate Relief

- 3.20 Mandatory relief for rural businesses will continue at 100% for qualifying properties.

Retail Discount

- 3.21 In the Autumn Statement 2023 the Government announced that relief for eligible retail, hospitality and leisure businesses will be extended for 2024/25. Eligible properties will receive 75% relief up to cash cap of £110,000 per business. This is a temporary relief and Government will fully reimburse the Council for any loss of income.

Supplementary Business Rates

- 3.22 There are no proposals for Cheshire East Council to charge supplementary rates in 2024/25.

Business Improvement District (BID)

- 3.23 Wilmslow Town Centre BID commenced on 1 November 2022 for a five-year period. Separate BID demands are issued to businesses within the BID area. The BID levy for 2024/25 will be 1.55% of the RV for all hereditaments with a RV of £15,000 and above.

- 3.24 Following the successful ballot for a BID in Crewe covering the areas of Crewe town centre, Grand Junction Retail Park and retail districts leading through to Nantwich Road, the BID levy will commence on 1 April 2024 for a five-year period. The proposed BID levy for 2024/25 will be 1.5% of the RV for all hereditaments with a RV of £12,000 and above.

Local Retention of Business Rates

- 3.25 From 1 April 2013 Cheshire East Council retains c.30% of any local growth in the rates generated through increased occupancy of commercial premises subject to certain tolerances. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (**Annex 5**) sets out the Council's ambition and forecast income from promoting economic development.

Local Discretionary Rate Relief

- 3.26 Cheshire East Council has the discretion to award rate relief to any ratepayer. Applications are considered on an individual basis. Relief would only be awarded where it is in the Council Taxpayer's interest to do so.

Improvement Relief

- 3.27 Improvement relief comes into effect from 1 April 2024. This is subject to further regulations and conditions to be set by Government which will be made before annual billing.

Heat Networks Relief

- 3.28 From 1 April 2024 mandatory relief of 100% is available for eligible low-carbon heat networks with individual rates bills.

Mandatory Charity Relief

- 3.29 From 1 April 2024 properties occupied by a registered charity with a RV below 51,000 will be charged on the Small Business Multiplier.

Unoccupied Property Rates

- 3.30 From 1 April 2024 empty properties with a RV below 51,000 will be charged on the Small Business Multiplier.

Payment of Business Rates

- 3.31 Continuation of the option to spread business rates bills over 12 months rather than 10 months.

3. Council Partners and Stakeholders

3.32 The Council is fully committed to creating platforms for cross sector partnership working to ensure resource is maximised to provide the best possible services. Developing a shared vision across Cheshire East on key priorities is best practice to achieve the most effective outcomes for our residents. The key areas of cross sector working, including examples, are as follows:

1. By developing integrated approaches across the Public Sector, we are seeing joined up offers for local people whilst having a greater understanding of the local needs of our population.
 - The Integrated Care Partnership across Cheshire East will explore how commissioning activities can be developed, focusing on population health.
 - The 8 Care Communities partnerships across health and social care are understanding the local health inequalities and identifying solutions to keep people fit and well.
 - Our ongoing partnership operations with Cheshire Police is making Cheshire East a safer place to live.
 - The fast-growing partnership arrangements with Cheshire Fire and Rescue to gather local intelligence and undertake safe and well checks are having an impact on the prevention agenda.
2. By working collaboratively with business and industry we are wanting to protect our businesses, grow our opportunities for local people whilst improving the environmental impact across the borough.
 - A Social Value movement across Cheshire East has developed a network through a Social Value award. This allows all partners to show their commitment to making their organisation and the impact they have to be even greater on the environment, the economy and in our communities.
 - By developing trusted relationships through Regulatory Services, Economic Growth and Regeneration we support business and industry to flourish across Cheshire East.
3. By working closely with Town and Parish Councils to gather local intelligence, disseminate key messages, and promote resident engagement.
 - During the pandemic the ability to recruit volunteers and support the most vulnerable happened at a local level, Cheshire East Council with the support of several Town and Parish Councils alongside the Voluntary sector created partnerships now known as Volunteer Co-ordination Points. This work is continuing to provide local support to local people. Joint Volunteer “Thank You” events acknowledged the valuable support and contribution of volunteers.
 - The development of a Crowdfunding site has created a partnership approach to local projects, it allows partners to come together to create, promote and fund projects in a transparent and inclusive way whilst engaging with local residents.
4. By working closely with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector we are gaining even more insight into the needs of residents and how Council statutory services

can be complimented by more localised approaches that build on the skills that exist within communities.

- The Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector Leaders group are now key stakeholders in any Councils coproduction activities.
- A Cheshire East Local Infrastructure Alliance consisting of key VCFSE, Town and Parish Council infrastructure providers are collaboratively to connect the sector creating thematic partnerships that enhance the local offer and provide either more or joined up resources within communities.
- Our place-based approach through Local Neighbourhood Partnerships and Children and Family collaboratives representing the beating heart of their communities where resource, ideas and opportunities are shared each month which result in the development of local activities.

3.33 This cross-sector working will allow us to unite on key priorities such as building our local economy, investing in our local environment, and developing opportunities that meet the needs of our communities. Using data, input from the VCFSE sector and voice of the residents, a holistic approach is enabled.

3.34 The Council is keen to build on existing relationships and always seek opportunities to develop new relationships to achieve a range of shared priorities.

3.35 **Town Councils:** The funding of Cheshire Association of Local Councils to support the relationships and strong communication between Cheshire East Council and Town and Parish Council can provide consistent approaches to local communities. Recent positive examples of

collaborative working are the Cost of Living Crisis and Ukrainian support.

3.36 **Neighbourhood Partnerships and Collaboratives:** Bringing partners round the table at a local level ensures resources are being used most effectively and services are tailored to meet local needs. The place-based partnership arrangements bring together a range of partners including the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector, Public sector, Private sector and local residents to understand local priorities based on accessible data and local intelligence. As a partnership they collaboratively create and tailor projects to suit the communities needs building on existing assets. Trust is built once positive relationships are formed, thus enabling timely support aligned to the changing needs of Cheshire East residents.

3.37 **Family Hubs and Connected Communities Centres:** by recognising our key partners that have accessible venues in our communities, we are supporting local venues to be best equipped to meet local need. Each of the Family Hubs and Connected Communities Centres delivers services tailored to their community, from coffee mornings, computer classes and line dancing, to learning a language, sharing a problem, and offering space and support for local residents to turn their interests and passions into a group or activity that will benefit their wider community.

Local Residents: Local people are Cheshire East Council's key stakeholders. We work to consult and engage on various issues and changes the Council make across the borough. Recent examples through the delivery of a People's Panel which have provided resident voice direction on how the Council can use the resources available to alleviate cost of living pressures on our vulnerable families.

4. Carbon Impact

- 3.38 The Council has committed to be carbon neutral for its own emissions, and has pledged to work with businesses, residents, and organisations to achieve borough wide carbon neutrality by 2045. Our Environment Strategy and Carbon Action Plan sets out the Council's policy on the Environment and how it will achieve carbon neutrality and influence carbon reduction across the borough.
- 3.39 The Council target will be achieved through Council carbon reduction measures, sustainable energy production and carbon offset through locally focused environmental schemes such as large-scale tree planting sequestration (long-term removal of carbon from the atmosphere).
- 3.40 To assess progress against our carbon neutrality commitment, we have assessed all new savings and growth proposals for the estimated annual change in the Council's carbon emissions – whether positive or negative – so that we can more effectively monitor progress and encourage climate action in everything we do. This, alongside measures which have been previously funded, provides our anticipated progress towards carbon neutrality.
- 3.41 In the previous Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023-2027 the projected combined impact of previous measures and significant new proposals, once delivered, would give us a projected 6% over our carbon neutral target.
- 3.42 We continue to utilise Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding to reduce the carbon intensity of our built estate. To date we have installed thirteen air source heat pumps and seventeen roof mounted solar arrays. Additionally, Delamere House in Crewe has benefitted from a full scheme of window replacements and heat emitters, as well as LED lighting.
- 3.43 In decarbonising our fleet, the focus is to transition small vans and utility vehicles to electric, with vans being purchased for our grounds maintenance teams at Ansa, to complement the vans already operated by Ringway Jacobs and our Community Wardens teams. New charging points have also been installed at depots, council offices and leisure centres. Electric vehicles are also available through our car club for use by council staff.
- 3.44 The Council continues to purchase green electricity and developing inseting projects within the borough to offset the emissions that cannot be eliminated. The first of the council's solar farms is currently being built in Crewe with a second in detailed feasibility. The council has planted 30ha of trees and has identified sites to complete the 120ha of tree planting required.
- 3.45 Overall, the funded measures to date and further expected savings in this strategy, primarily due to more efficient use of Council buildings, currently exceeds our carbon neutrality target by 9%, providing a contingency given pressures on increased use, and if we do not gain the expected benefit of all investments. Further pipeline projects are in development to provide additional contingency.

Carbon Impact of Measures	Tonnes of CO2 equivalent
Carbon footprint of the Council's operations	9,615
Anticipated net impact of previously funded measures	-10,079
Estimated net impact of new savings / proposals	-375
Projected net impact of all measures	-10,454
% towards carbon neutrality	109%

5. Equality Impact Assessment

3.46 Our vision is to make Cheshire East a welcoming place, where equality, freedom, fairness and opportunity are open to all. We want everyone to feel valued, to celebrate diversity and to understand people's different needs and aspirations whether they are living, visiting or working here and we will celebrate backgrounds, experiences, beliefs and faiths, genders, sexual orientations, disabilities and ages.

3.47 To achieve our vision, it is important to consider all individuals when carrying out day to day work. Services do this by providing evidence in the form of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to demonstrate that they have considered the impact of their work on different groups protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010.

We will:

Include	Inspire	Integrate	Inform	Impact
Listen and involve all voices	Celebrate and promote our diversity and the positive opportunity it brings	Deliver and promote accessible services for all	Empower people to respectfully challenge discriminatory and poor behaviour	Support and deliver meaningful change

3.48 The EIA ensures that services consider if there are any negative consequences for each of the 'protected characteristics' as detailed in the Equality Act 2010.

3.49 An EIA is carried out on:

- All new functions, policies, procedures and services as they are developed
- Significantly altered functions, policies, procedures and services
- On existing functions and policies
- All consultations before they are published.

3.50 For all the budget proposals an EIA has been carried out where appropriate. For some proposals it is recognised that these are at a concept stage, therefore for these proposals, an initial screening activity has been carried out with the expectation that a full and detailed EIA will be completed in due course, where this is required, and 'due regard' will be taken of any findings and analysis.

3.51 Having 'due regard' is a legal term which requires the Council to consider what is proportionate and relevant in terms of the decisions they take.

3.52 Under the Equality Act 2010, decision makers must show 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between those between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it and
- Foster good relations between those groups.

3.53 EIA's are published can be found via this link [EIA](#).

3.54 The protected characteristics are: age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership.

3.55 The Council needs to ensure that in taking decisions on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the Budget and the Corporate Plan, the impacts on those with protected characteristics are considered. The Council undertakes EIA

where necessary and continues to do so as proposals and projects develop across the lifetime of the Corporate Plan. The process assists the Council and helps to consider what actions could mitigate any adverse impacts identified and completed EIA form part of any detailed Business Cases.

- 3.56 The proposals within the MTFS include both positive and negative impacts.
- 3.57 There are savings proposals which could have a negative impact on those with protected characteristics and where appropriate mitigation will be required. These will be subject to more detailed equality impact assessments and consultation before any final decisions are made.
- 3.58 The Corporate Plan vision reinforces the Council's commitment to meeting its equalities duties, promoting fairness and working openly for everyone.
- 3.59 Cheshire East is a diverse place, and we want to make sure that people are able to live, work and enjoy Cheshire East regardless of their background, needs or characteristics.
- 3.60 The Council provides essential services such as Social Care, Education, Highways, Economic Development and Waste that will lead the way in achieving this vision for local people. Council services are funded mostly from Council Tax, with additional contributions from business rates and government grants and managing these resources appropriately enables our plans to be sustainable over the medium-term.
- 3.61 The vision will be achieved by being a transparent organisation that cares for the people who need our support as we develop a locally sustainable place. The Corporate

Plan that articulates the vision, and how we will make it a local reality, was approved by Council in February 2021. A new refreshed Council plan is due to be approved for the next period at the full Council meeting in February 2024 alongside the 2024/25 budget.

Budget 2024-28 Cumulative Equalities Impact Assessment

Purpose of assessment

- 3.62 This cumulative equality impact assessment of the proposals set out in the Council's Budget for 2024/25-2027/28, provides an assessment of the potential impacts upon residents, stakeholders and employees, who share one or more protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Our commitment to fairness and equality

- 3.63 The Cheshire East Council vision is to create a Borough that is Open, Fair and Green. The Council provides many essential services to its residents and stakeholders, such as Social Care, Education, Highways, Economic Development and Waste. Council services are funded mostly from Council Tax, with additional contributions from business rates and government grants and managing these resources appropriately will enable our plans to be sustainable over the medium term.
- 3.64 The vision can be achieved by being a transparent organisation, which cares for the people who need our support, as we develop a locally sustainable place. The Council Corporate Plan, which articulates the vision and how we will make it a local reality, was developed through consultation during Autumn 2020 and evidences our strategic direction until 2025.

3.65 Equality Impact Assessments (or EIA) are an important part of ensuring our services are responsive to the needs of our diverse communities and help tackle inequalities, creating a fairer borough for all.

3.66 Each of the proposals set out in the budget will be considered through an equality's lens and, where there is a potential or perceived negative impact, a full Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken, and actions will be identified to mitigate any impacts.

3.67 These individual assessments will be undertaken to establish the impact of our budget savings proposals on residents, stakeholders and employees who share one or more protected characteristic.

Our priorities

3.68 The vision is ambitious and long term, and we are making progress towards delivering it.

3.69 To help focus on the right things we have set ourselves three broad aims, each with a set of priorities. Achieving these priorities will help us to realise our vision.

Our aims are:

- **Open** - An open and enabling organisation
- **Fair** - A Council which empowers and cares about people; and
- **Green** - A thriving and sustainable place.

3.70 For each aim we have identified a set of actions and projects which we will strive to deliver by 2025. We have also identified a set of success measures to monitor our progress. These will be included in the council's Key

Performance Indicators and built into the performance management and reporting processes.

Our legal duties

3.71 Under Section 149 of the Equalities Act, the Council has a legal duty to have "due regard" to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- foster good relations between different groups.

3.72 We are required to demonstrate fulfilment of our duty to pay 'due regard' in the decision-making process and, as such, we need to understand the effect our policies and practices have on equality. Although the Council is not legally obligated to reject savings or growth proposals that could have negative impacts on any particular groups, it must carefully and with rigour consider the impact of its proposals on the PSED, take a reasonable and proportionate view about the overall impact on particular groups, and seek to mitigate negative impacts where possible.

Our diverse population

3.73 Our borough is home to almost 400,000 (398,800) residents and 175,000 households. It contains the major towns of Crewe, Macclesfield, Congleton and Wilmslow (with populations above 20,000). There are also a number of other significant centres of population (over 10,000) in Sandbach, Poynton, Nantwich, Middlewich, Knutsford and Alsager.

3.74 Whilst the population is predominantly White British (94.5%), Cheshire East is becoming an increasingly diverse borough due to its proximity and continually improving transport links to Manchester, Birmingham and London. It is also the home

of choice for many migrant communities from across the world:

- 3.75 **Population:** The total population of Cheshire East is 398,800. Residents aged under 25 represent 25% of this total population, which is significantly lower than figures for both the North West (29%) and England (28%). There are more residents over the age of 65 in Cheshire East (23%) compared to both the North West (19%) and England (18%). There is little difference in gender between the age groups shown, with the exception of residents aged over 65 where the female population (54%) is notably higher than the male population (46%) partly reflecting differences in life expectancy between females and males.
- 3.76 **Race:** The proportion of the population in Cheshire East that were born outside the UK is 8.3%, significantly lower than the figure for both the North West (11.7%) and England overall (17.4%). The highest proportion of residents born outside the UK was in the Crewe Central South (34.7%) followed by Crewe Central (30.9%).
- 3.77 **Ethnicity:** The most reliable source for data on ethnicity remains the 2021 Census. This is an 18 category self-report measure with an 'any other' write in option. Cheshire East has a high proportion of 'White' residents at 98% of the population, higher than the national (87%) and regional average (89%). The figure for 'White: other' population is included above as this represents the largest minority group population in Cheshire East (3.9%) but is hidden due to the way 'White' is considered a single homogenous group when reported.
- 3.78 **Disability:** The term 'disability' is used to refer to a limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability (LLTI) which

limits a person's day-to-day activities. This is usually captured using the decennial Census. In Cheshire East, in 2021, a smaller proportion but larger number of people were disabled (17.0%, 67,819), compared with 2011 (17.5%, 64,831). A further 7.8% of usual residents (31,165) had a long term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities were not limited by it. The five LSOA's with the highest disability rate (more than 25% of all usuals residents) were: Crewe (E01018476), Nantwich (E01018451), Alsager (E01018388), and Macclesfield (E01018645 and E01018620).

- 3.79 **Religion:** The religion question in the 2021 Census is voluntary; 94.5% (376,955) of usual residents answered the question in 2021, in line with the national average of 94.0% and an increase from 93.3% (345,486) in 2011. Just over half of the population in Cheshire East described themselves as "Christian" at 54.3% of usual residents (216,629), however this has fallen 14.6% from the figure in 2011 in which 68.9% (254,940) of usual residents described themselves as "Christian." While the proportion of residents describing themselves as "Christian" in Cheshire East is higher than the national average (46.2%) the decrease between census years was larger than the national decline (13.1%). "No religion" was the second most common response, increasing by 15.0% percentage points to 37.7% (150,257) from 22.7% (83,973) in 2011. There were small increases (0.1%) in the proportion of usual residents in Cheshire East responding as "Buddhist" (0.3%, 1314), "Hindu" (0.5%, 2046) and "Muslim" (1.0%, 4140).
- 3.80 **Sexual Orientation:** Sexual orientation is an umbrella concept, which includes sexual identity, behaviour and attraction. The 2021 Census question on sexual orientation was a voluntary question asked of those aged 16 years and

over. In total, 309,493 (93.9% of the population aged 16 years and over) answered the question. Around 301,391 (91.5%) identified as straight or heterosexual. Around 8102 (2.5%) identified with an LGB+ orientation ("Gay or Lesbian", "Bisexual" or "Other sexual orientation"). The remaining 19,981 (6.1%) did not answer the question.

- 3.81 **Pregnancy and maternity:** In 2021 there were 4,798 conceptions to women in Cheshire East. This equates to conception rate of 71.9 per 1,000.
- 3.82 **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** At the time of the 2011 Census, 49.2% of adult residents were married and a further 0.1% were registered in a civil partnership.
- 3.83 **Gender Reassignment:** The Census 2021 question on gender identity was a voluntary question asked of those aged 16 years and over. The question asked, "Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?". Overall, 329,474 (95.0% of the population aged 16 years and over) answered the question. In total, 312,882 (95.0%) answered "Yes" and 1,387 (0.4%) answered "No". The remaining 15,205 (4.6%) did not answer the question.

The scale of the challenge

- 3.84 The Council is dealing with an increasing demand for services, at a time of ongoing uncertainty around the future of Local Government funding from Central Government beyond the 2024/25 financial year. We have therefore updated the Medium-Term Financial Strategy to focus on locally predictable resources funding locally provided services that are sustainable.
- 3.85 This year, as in previous years, we have made every endeavour to protect those in greatest need and at most

risk. Where possible, savings focus on optimising efficiencies in service delivery. However, some reductions in services have been unavoidable. Where this is the case, we will assess the potential impact on groups with protected characteristics.

- 3.86 Consultation on the overall budget proposals is not a substitute for consultation or undertaking an EIA before implementing individual elements of the proposed budget. Rather, this will help to inform future decisions as we are asking for residents' views on potential Council Tax increases, priorities and savings. Having set the budget, this will not preclude making changes following detailed consultation as long as changes are in accordance with the Council's Constitution and Financial Regulations.
- 3.87 Inevitably the budget is a plan and there will be variations arising during the year. These variations are reported through the in-year budget monitoring.
- 3.88 Budget planning for 2024/25 and the medium term continues being set against the most uncertain economic and fiscal context. Our services continue to be impacted by the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, rising inflation and the need to address the deficit between spending to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and the funding available within the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This uncertainty affects both spending plans and income sources.
- 3.89 Feedback received during consultation and during implementation will continue to inform our medium-term planning. Working with residents and our partners, we will explore and monitor the cumulative impacts that emerge as our proposals are implemented. This information will be

used to help us develop and shape mitigation initiatives and to inform future decisions going forward.

Equalities Impacts: overall cumulative impact

- 3.90 Given the significant financial challenges the council faces it is likely the budget will have some proposals which will have a high or medium negative impact on some protected groups – at this stage it is too early to say who will be impacted and what the impact might be.
- 3.91 The proposals are also likely to include some transformation savings. These are where we aim to provide services in a different and improved way at less overall cost to the Council. It is possible that some of these will have a positive impact on service users although it's far too early to provide any detail.

Impacts on all residents

- 3.92 There are likely to be a small number of changes to universal services and charges, and these have the potential to affect all residents.
- 3.93 Residents can expect to see an increase in their Council Tax and some may also be impacted by increases in other charges. However, the most vulnerable residents will continue to be protected.

Impacts on specific service users

- 3.94 Proposals which relate to changes in services, which support specific groups of residents and their families, including services for vulnerable adults, disabled people, and those with learning disabilities or mental health problems, and children and young people, are expected to be new providers where services are being recommissioned

to achieve savings, or reviews of support packages to focus more upon a person's strengths, resources and ability to access help in their community (strengths-based approach), rather than automatically assigning the highest level of care, regardless of needs or abilities.

- 3.95 Efforts will be made to ensure that there are no negative impacts on vulnerable groups and services which support residents assessed and to receive the level of support required to meet their needs. Indeed, there may be a positive impact as people are empowered and supported to access help in their community and retain their independence for longer.
- 3.96 However, there is a risk that service users, families and carers could be unsettled by any change in the normal support arrangements and feel worried that the revised offer will not meet their needs. It will therefore be essential for services to ensure that service users and their families and carers are involved in any review of the support offer, and that the offer is reviewed on a regular basis to identify and respond to any change in needs and tailor the offer accordingly.

Impacts on staff

- 3.97 The vast majority of any staff savings and efficiencies will come from deleting / not recruiting to vacant posts, so there will be no direct impact on staff or specific protected characteristics.
- 3.98 Any proposals relating to reconfiguring or consolidating teams or bringing common functions together to achieve staff efficiencies, will be considered and assessed using an equality impact assessment. It is not possible at this stage to assess the overall impacts on any specific protected

characteristics but as numbers are low and spread across a number of services / types of roles there are unlikely to be any groups disproportionately impacted.

- 3.99 Any restructures will be subject to staff and staff union consultation, in accordance with the council's reorganisation policy and procedures. Where redundancies are necessary, affected staff will be offered support and prioritised for any new jobs being advertised within the council.
- 3.100 The impacts of proposals on staff with protected characteristics cannot yet be fully determined, but as numbers are expected to be low and spread across a number of services / types of roles, there are unlikely to be any protected groups disproportionately impacted. Any changes to staffing structure will require consultation with staff unions in accordance with the council's reorganisation policy and procedures.
- 3.101 Our established organisational change process ensures we support all of our staff through this change. Where restructures are proposed we carry out an assessment that identifies the implications for those with protected characteristics and finds ways to mitigate accordingly.
- 3.102 Where a redundancy situation is possible, we will take a number of steps including:
- not filling vacancies in advance of a restructure so as many opportunities as possible are available to our existing staff
 - using our redeployment process to help staff at risk find suitable alternative employment within the council

- considering alternative options to redundancy such as early retirement, flexible working or other 'working differently' options.
- stress management support and counselling services will be offered to staff through the Employee Assistance Programme to help them cope with the additional pressures that structural change may bring.

- 3.103 We have an ongoing commitment to making Cheshire East Council an employer of choice and are supporting flexible working opportunities available where possible, including condensed hours, flexible start and end times and part time working.
- 3.104 The Council is committed to a workforce that is representative of the borough at all levels and will continue to look for new ways to improve progression routes for staff and equip them to be senior managers of the future. We will continue to promote our staff equality forums as a way of engaging with, and listening to, staff and working together to continually improve their experience of working in Cheshire East.

Human Rights and Safeguarding

Human Rights

- 3.105 It is unlawful for the Council to act in a way that is incompatible with a European Convention right (unless the council could not have acted differently as a result of a statutory provision).
- 3.106 An interference with a qualified right (e.g., the right to respect for private and family life) is not unlawful if the Council acts in accordance with the law and the interference is necessary in a democratic society.

- 3.107 In deciding whether the interference is necessary, the law applies a proportionality test, including whether a fair balance has been struck between the rights of the individual and the interests of the community.

Safeguarding

Implications for safeguarding in Adult Social Care

- 3.108 Proposals outlined in this document aim to build upon the Council's work on Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP). MSP is enshrined in the Care Act (2014) and our Local Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures.
- 3.109 MSP puts the person at risk of harm or abuse at the centre of decisions and actions about them. MSP respects that adults often bring ideas and solutions which will work best for them and the outcomes they need support in achieving.
- 3.110 This means that safeguarding adults continues to be integral in the work we are undertaking to really embed strengths-based practice.
- 3.111 Ensuring vulnerable adults are safe and focusing on wellbeing is a core element of strengths-based practice and ensures there is consistency in approach whether we are working with a vulnerable person on a support plan or a safeguarding plan.

Implications for safeguarding in Children's Services

- 3.112 Safeguarding children is about protecting them from maltreatment, preventing their health and development being impaired, ensuring that they grow up in environments which provide safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

- 3.113 The mitigation identified for each proposal reduces very significantly the risk of poor safeguarding practice. The council's mitigation should include not adopting any policy where safeguarding practice is adversely affected.

- 3.114 The proposals put forward have been tested against effective safeguarding practice. A broad range of quality assurance measures are already in place and will continue to be monitored and responded to robustly.

Monitoring

- 3.115 Whilst the overall assessment cannot yet be determined, there is a need to continue to monitor this. Each individual proposal will continue to be reviewed and updated as required. Consultation will be carried out where required to seek the views of residents and service users. The lead officer for each proposal will be responsible for ensuring that equality considerations remain at the forefront of decision making as each of these proposals are progressed.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 provides that:

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to —
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (2) A person who is not a public authority but who exercises public functions must, in the exercise of those functions, have due regard to the matters mentioned in subsection (1).
- (3) Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to —
 - (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
 - (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
 - (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- (4) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.
- (5) Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to —
 - (a) tackle prejudice, and
 - (b) promote understanding.
- (6) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.
- (7) The relevant protected characteristics are —
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnership
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation.

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 Risk management is a cornerstone of effective corporate governance and operating a robust framework ensures that there is a mechanism in place to support informed decision-making and appropriate risk mitigation. The Council continues to use risk management and risk appetite to ensure that it can manage its performance, achieve corporate objectives and sustain delivery of service and outcomes to its residents.
- 4.2 Cheshire East recognises that in pursuit of its objectives and outcomes that it may choose, in some circumstances, to accept an increased degree of risk. Where the Council chooses to accept an increased level of risk it will seek to do so whilst ensuring that the potential benefits and threats are fully understood and continually monitor its exposure. Whilst decisions to this effect will ideally only be taken if there is sufficient risk capacity and where proportionate measures to mitigate risk have been established, in the current financial climate, the Council should expect to see scenarios where an additional risk burden has to be recognised and tolerated.
- 4.3 In this constantly evolving environment, with a need to continually adapt to meet legal requirements, economic challenges, demographic and social changes, there is always a danger that emerging risks may not be identified before their impact is felt. The Corporate Leadership Team takes the lead on the management of existing, and identification of emerging and new strategic risks; those which prevent the organisation from achieving its corporate objectives and maintaining service delivery.
- 4.4 The Corporate Policy Committee has regular oversight and assurance reports about the Council's Strategic Risk Register. The Council's Audit and Governance Committee has responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness of the Risk Management Framework.
- 4.5 The highest rated risks on the strategic risk register relate to the challenges faced in delivering services to residents within the Council's limited capacity and resources. The scope of the risks includes our key delivery partners and suppliers, and there is a consistent awareness that financial resilience is key to ensuring the health and prosperity of the borough.
- 4.6 There are three strategic risks directly related to fiscal matters, the failure of council funding, the failure of financial management and control and the failure to deliver the MTFS. The latter recognises the significant challenges the Council faces in being able to deliver services within the approved MTFS. The former relates to 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. The financial management and control risk reflects the effective planning, recording, allocation, review and transacting of income and expenditure.
- 4.7 In the table below are the highest rated strategic risks (net score of 12 and above), as at the Q1 2023/24 review of the strategic risk register, all of which can have an impact on financial stability if not correctly managed, including the allocation of any related budgets.

		Highest Rated Strategic Risks Scoring 12 and above (out of 16)
Ref	Score	Short Risk Title
SR01C	16	Increased Demand for Children's Services
SR07	16	Failure of Council Funding
SR01A	12	Increased Demand for Adult's Services
SR03	12	Failure of Financial Management and Control
SR04	12	Information Security and Cyber Threat
SR06	12	Organisational Capacity and Demand
SR08B	12	Political Uncertainty
SR13	12	Reputation
SR15	12	Failure of the Local Economy
SR16	12	Failure to deliver MTFS savings
SR18	12	Delivery of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection Improvement Plan

- 4.8 Operational risk management is integrated into service planning to ensure that:
- Risks are recognised and mitigated on an ongoing basis, with significant events being escalated appropriately.
 - Risk management activity and decision-making is informed by the organisation's objectives as described in the Corporate Plan; and
 - Regular service level risk assessments are carried out to provide an operational perspective on performance.
- 4.9 As a result of the current economic pressures all local council's leadership teams are being asked to make difficult choices and closely review the scope of their core services. With a number of years of low funding ahead, the careful allocation of resources is more important than ever. Risk management has and will continue to play a key role in understanding and executing organisational objectives when supported by limited resources.

5. Local Taxation (The Collection Fund)

Introduction

- 5.1 The Collection Fund is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers and distribution to local authorities and the Government of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates.
- 5.2 It is one of the main statements that form part of the annual financial reporting and is contained within the annual Statement of Accounts.
- 5.3 This annex sets out the taxbase calculation and forecast outturn position for both Council Tax and Business Rates.
- 5.4 The forecast outturn positions noted in this section will be wholly managed through the Collection Fund Earmarked Reserve and will not impact on the revenue account in 2024/25.

Council Tax

- 5.5 Locally collected domestic taxes that are directly retained by the Council will provide 77% of the Council's net funding in 2024/25. The Council therefore takes a very careful approach to managing the domestic taxbase in a way that reflects local growth ambitions and supports sustainable services in the medium-term.
- 5.6 Growth in the local taxbase supports the ambition in the Corporate Plan of creating economic independence from Government grant. In 2024/25, there continues to be very low levels of general Government grant support to the revenue

budget of Cheshire East Council. The continued increase in demand related to protecting vulnerable people and inflation in costs maintains the requirement to increase Council Tax levels in line with Government expectations.

- 5.7 Taxbase levels have risen steadily in recent years as can be seen in the table below:

Table 1 - Taxbase increases	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
No. of properties as at Oct in previous year	180,505	183,054	185,472	187,973
Estimated new homes	1,800	2,100	2,400	2,200
Cheshire East Taxbase	153,796.10	156,607.48	158,778.54	160,151.52
Growth in taxbase	0.79%	1.83%	1.39%	0.86%

- 5.8 The taxbase also reflects assumptions around Council Tax Support (CTS) payments. The Cheshire East CTS scheme was introduced in 2013/14 and subsequently amended following consultations in 2016/17, 2020/21 and 2022/23 to make the scheme more supportive in the light of funding being made available from Central Government (£3.3m) to be able to further assist the pandemic recovery for residents.
- 5.9 The funding for this Local Council Tax Support grant was received in 2020/21 and transferred to the Collection Fund Earmarked reserve. The funding has been used over the medium-term to support the revenue budget to compensate for suppressed Council Tax levels due to higher Council Tax Support payments.
- 5.10 No changes are proposed to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25 other than to increase the income bands

and non-dependent deductions in line with CPI. This continues the higher levels of support for those on the lowest income.

- 5.11 The taxbase for 2024/25 reflects an increase of 0.86% on the 2023/24 equivalent position. This reflects the overall increase in properties in Cheshire East after allowing for the impact of continuing higher levels of Council Tax support.
- 5.12 The Council Taxbase was approved by [Council on 13 December 2023](#), and further information can be obtained from the Domestic Taxbase report.
- 5.13 Receipts from Council Taxpayers are paid into the Collection Fund which is then distributed to all precepting organisations (Cheshire East Council, Fire Authority, Police and Crime Commissioner, and local Town and Parish Councils).
- 5.14 If receipts are more than the budgeted precepts of the billing authority (Cheshire East) and the major preceptors, then this creates a surplus in the fund which can be released in the following financial year. If receipts are less, then this results in a deficit which needs to be paid back by all parties in their proportionate shares in future years.
- 5.15 It is forecast that there is to be a cumulative deficit of £6.002m on the Council Tax Collection Fund, of which, £5.040m is to be repaid by Cheshire East Council in 2024/25. This deficit will be managed through the Collection Fund Earmarked Reserve and will not impact the revenue budget.
- 5.16 The table below sets out the draft position on the Council Tax fund as at the end of 2023/24.

Collection Fund 2023/24 - Council Tax		£m
Balance brought forward		£m
2022/23 Outturn Deficit		-3.097
Demand on Collection Fund (precepts)		
Cheshire East (inc. Parish Precepts)		-281.213
Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner		-39.764
Fire Authority		-13.890
Total Payments due to Preceptors		-334.867
2022/23 deficit estimation declared in Jan 2023 – repaid in 2023/24		0.153
Total Payments due from Preceptors		0.153
Net payment due to Preceptors		-334.714
Net Income due into the Collection Fund		331.073
Discretionary reliefs to be funded by General Fund		
Foster Carers / Care Leavers		0.736
Total		0.736
Estimated Total Overall Deficit		-6.002
Preceptors Share of Deficit to be repaid in 2024/25		£m
Cheshire East Council		-5.040
Cheshire Police		-0.713
Cheshire Fire		-0.249

Business Rates

- 5.17 The Government introduced the business rates retention scheme on 1 April 2013. There continues to be much uncertainty around the scheme from appeals to the local list. This has resulted in the need to create and build upon a specific earmarked reserve and provision for appeals to protect against large fluctuations in any given year. This Annex provides an illustration of how the scheme has worked and what changes are likely over the medium-term including estimates of future income.
- 5.18 The basic concept is that a baseline position is established and an element of growth over and above that can be retained. Central Government set the baseline over which growth is measured but the Council can budget on locally set figures. This can be informed by the NNDR1 form which contains estimates that must be provided to Government at the end of January each year.
- 5.19 In previous budget cycles, growth estimates above baseline were calculated and the taxbase has been monitored to assess the robustness of those estimates. This proved to be reasonably accurate, but in March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic locked the economy down and businesses have been dramatically affected. This severely impacted the in-year performance of business rates and is likely to continue to have an affect over the medium-term. Further pressures such as the current economic climate and high inflation levels are also likely to have a detrimental effect on businesses over the coming years.
- 5.20 Central Government use of compensation S31 grants to reimburse Local Authorities for the cost of any discounts or exemptions that have been granted since the start of the scheme in April 2013.
- 5.21 For 2023/24 the NNDR1 return was forecasting retained rates of £0.8m above the funding baseline (£44.1m) giving a contribution to the revenue budget of £44.9m. This budget above the baseline was accounting for the growth projections since the start of the BRRS. Any shortfall against this budget as an ongoing result of the Covid-19 pandemic and current economic crisis will continue to be covered by the Collection Fund Earmarked Reserve, which was set up to provide protection against fluctuation in rates.
- 5.22 Business rates compensation grants, payable by Central Government, for any new exemptions or discounts granted since the baseline funding levels were set back in April 2013 are also being used in part to support the revenue budget in 2023/24 which took the total business rates income to £55.3m.
- 5.23 For 2024/25 the usual process of forecasting growth in Rateable Value has been undertaken as set out below.
- ### Available Data
- 5.24 The Council has gathered information from several sources to judge likely levels of economic growth or decline including:
- Information from the business engagement team.
 - Data from the Council's planning system.
 - Data from the team working to generate capital receipts.
 - Data from the Revenues collection service in terms of appeals and expected growth.
 - Data from the valuation office.
 - Financial Strategy & Reporting knowledge of the BRRS calculations.

Method

- 5.25 This available data has been reviewed to generate broad estimates of the potential increase in Rateable Value (RV) over the medium-term.
- 5.26 An allowance has been made for the average impact of timing delays, on appeals, on other RV nearby (displacement) and likely loss of RV where appropriate.
- 5.27 The end result has been converted to business rates and processed via a BRRS model developed and maintained by Strategy Finance.

Results

- 5.28 Retained rates income forecast from growth in the taxbase for 2024/25 is forecast to be £0.85m. After the central share and levy payments have been made it results in a net increase for Cheshire East of £0.26m as per **Table 2**.
- 5.29 However, due to the economic situation that businesses are continuing to face, it continues to be prudent not to include any increase in business rates growth income for 2024/25 and beyond.

Table 2 – Potential Growth in Business Rates Taxbase	2024/25
Small Business Rates	
Estimated Growth/(Decline) in Rateable Value	282,408
Small Multiplier Rate	0.499
Estimated Growth/(Decline) in Small Business Rates Income	£140,922
Standard Business Rates	
Estimated Growth/(Decline) in Rateable Value	1,300,000
Small Multiplier Rate	0.546
Estimated Growth/(Decline) in Standard Business Rates Income	£709,800
Total Estimated Business Rates Income Growth	£850,722
Cheshire East Business Rates Retention (49%)	£416,854
Levy Charge (37%)	-£154,236
Cheshire East Estimated Total Business Rates Retention	£262,618

- 5.30 In October 2023, the Non-Domestic Rating Act 2023 was passed to allow Government to de-couple the business rate multipliers, giving ministers the power to increase the small and standard multipliers by different amounts. For 2024/25, the Government has announced that the Small Business Rate Multiplier will remain frozen at 49.9p in the pound, but the Standard Business Rate Multiplier will increase in-line with CPI to 54.6p in the pound. This change is intended to increase the annual yield from business rates, whilst at the same time protecting smaller businesses.
- 5.31 Despite the increase in the Standard Multiplier Rate, a large compensation payment will be made to Local Government to

mitigate the losses between what the Small Multiplier was capped at compared to September 2023 inflation. This additional cap compensation and the use of other Section 31 grants, totalling £10.6m, is being used to support the revenue budget for 2024/25. The total business rates budget within the funding envelope is set at £56.6m for 2024/25.

- 5.32 The revised Business Rates Retention Scheme that was due to be implemented from April 2021 has been further delayed as per the provisional settlement that was announced on 18 December 2023.
- 5.33 Receipts from businesses are paid into the Collection Fund which is then distributed to all precepting organisations in the following shares - Cheshire East Council (49%), Fire Authority (1%), and Central Government (50%).
- 5.34 The total deficit for the Business Rates Collection Fund, due to be repaid in 2024/25 is £9.929m. Of this deficit, £4.865m will be repayable by Cheshire East. This will be managed through the Collection Fund Earmarked Reserve.
- 5.35 The draft forecast outturn for Business Rates collection fund is shown in the following table:

Collection Fund 2023/24 – Business Rates		£m
Balance brought forward		£m
2022/23 Outturn Deficit		-15.181
Demand on Collection Fund (precepts)		
Central Government		-73.847
Cheshire East		-72.370
Fire Authority		-1.477
Total Payments due to Preceptors		-147.694
2022/23 deficit estimation declared in Jan 2023 – repaid by preceptors in 2023/24		7.480
Total Payments due from Preceptors		7.480
Net payment due to Preceptors		-140.214
Net Income due into the Collection Fund		146.740
Items to be excluded from Collection Fund share to preceptors		
Cost of Collection		-0.578
Enterprise Zone Growth Disregard		-0.608
Renewable Energy Disregard		-0.088
Total		-1.274
Estimated Total Overall Deficit		-9.929
Preceptors Share of Deficit to be repaid in 2024/25		£m
Cheshire East Council		-4.865
Central Government		-4.964
Cheshire Fire		-0.100

Conclusion

- 5.36 The forecast deficit on the Council Tax fund that is due to be repaid by the Authority in 2024/25 is **£5.040m**.
- 5.37 The forecast deficit on the Business Rates fund that is due to be repaid by the Authority in 2024/25 is **£4.865m**.
- 5.38 Both deficits will be formally declared during January 2024 and will be managed through the use of the Collection Fund Earmarked Reserve during 2024/25.

6. The Budget Setting Process for the 2024/25 Financial Year

Set Parameters	Gather Evidence	Consult and Refine	Approve																																																																					
Apr to May 2023	June to Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024																																																																					
Assumptions reported to Council in February 2023	Develop Budget estimates to forecast revised budget position	Changes during and post Consultation period	Medium Term Financial Strategy																																																																					
<table><tr><th colspan="2">Revenue Budget 2024/25</th><th>£m</th></tr><tr><td>Cost of services</td><td>372.7</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td>Local Taxation</td><td>-343.2</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td>Government Funding</td><td>-29.5</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Total</td><td>0.0</td></tr></table>	Revenue Budget 2024/25		£m	Cost of services	372.7	➡	Local Taxation	-343.2	➡	Government Funding	-29.5	➡	Total		0.0	<table><tr><th colspan="2">Review Assumptions</th><th>£m</th></tr><tr><td>Additional net pressure on demand led services</td><td>0.4</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td>Additional Pay inflation</td><td>2.4</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td>Additional Capital Financing Costs - higher interest rates</td><td>8.5</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td>Local Taxation - lower increase in council tax base</td><td>0.9</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td>Local Taxation - extra business rates</td><td>-1.3</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td>Reduced grant estimates based on Provisional Settlement Dec 2023</td><td>0.5</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Shortfall</td><td>11.4</td></tr></table>	Review Assumptions		£m	Additional net pressure on demand led services	0.4	➡	Additional Pay inflation	2.4	➡	Additional Capital Financing Costs - higher interest rates	8.5	➡	Local Taxation - lower increase in council tax base	0.9	➡	Local Taxation - extra business rates	-1.3	➡	Reduced grant estimates based on Provisional Settlement Dec 2023	0.5	➡	Shortfall		11.4	<table><tr><th colspan="2">Confirm Proposals</th><th>£m</th></tr><tr><td>Net change to service proposals</td><td>3.3</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td>Use of Reserves</td><td>-11.7</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td>Increased Grant estimates based on January additional exceptional funding announcement - social care grant</td><td>-3.0</td><td>➡</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Make up shortfall</td><td>-11.4</td></tr></table>	Confirm Proposals		£m	Net change to service proposals	3.3	➡	Use of Reserves	-11.7	➡	Increased Grant estimates based on January additional exceptional funding announcement - social care grant	-3.0	➡	Make up shortfall		-11.4	<table><tr><th colspan="2">Budget Report 2024/25</th><th>£m</th></tr><tr><td>Cost of services</td><td>375.7</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Local Taxation</td><td>-343.7</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Government Funding</td><td>-32.0</td><td></td></tr><tr><td colspan="2">Total</td><td>0.0</td></tr></table>	Budget Report 2024/25		£m	Cost of services	375.7		Local Taxation	-343.7		Government Funding	-32.0		Total		0.0
Revenue Budget 2024/25		£m																																																																						
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7. Revenue Grant Funding

Corporate Grants Register 2024-28 Summary	Revised Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000
Specific Use					
Adults and Health Committee	44,352	40,114	31,264	31,176	31,176
Children and Families Committee	184,011	204,739	202,148	201,870	201,870
Corporate Policy Committee	75,372	77,141	78,182	71,029	71,974
Economy and Growth Committee	7,324	5,868	0	0	0
Environment and Communities Committee	1,709	9	9	9	9
Highways and Transport Committee	3,421	0	0	0	0
Total Specific Use Grants	316,189	327,871	311,604	304,084	305,029
General Purpose					
Adults and Health Committee	12,766	16,754	14,829	14,829	14,829
Children and Families Committee	7,443	9,166	8,091	8,091	8,091
Corporate Policy Committee	7,768	6,077	1,992	1,992	1,992
Economy and Growth Committee	0	0	0	0	0
Environment and Communities Committee	0	0	0	0	0
Highways and Transport Committee	13	0	0	0	0
Total General Purpose Grants	27,990	31,997	24,912	24,912	24,912
Total Grant Funding	344,179	359,868	336,516	328,996	329,941

Adults and Health Committee

Corporate Grants Register 2024-28	Revised Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held within Services)					
Adults and Health Committee⁽¹⁾					
Additional Better Care (for Adult Social Care)	8,706	8,706	8,706	8,706	8,706
Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund	979	979	0	0	0
Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund - topup	2,418	4,098	0	0	0
Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund - Workforce Element	2,206	1,100	0	0	0
Trailblazer support funding - brought-forward	300	0	0	0	0
Discharge Fund	1,221	2,021	0	0	0
Multiply - Supported Employment	536	536	0	0	0
Supported Internship Grant	29	0	0	0	0
Asylum Dispersal Scheme	590	0	0	0	0
Afghan Wrap Around support - brought forward	672	0	0	0	0
Afghan Wrap Around support - 2023/24	0	0	0	0	0
Afghan Resettlement support - brought forward	219	0	0	0	0
Afghan Resettlement support	0	132	88	0	0
Afghan - Flexible Housing Funding	213	0	0	0	0
Afghan - Integration Support	168	0	0	0	0
Afghan - Homelessness Funding	27	0	0	0	0
Afghan - Homeless Wrap Around Funding	18	0	0	0	0
Afghan - Caseworker Tariff	36	0	0	0	0
Homes for Ukraine Scheme - brought-forward	2,214	0	0	0	0
Homes for Ukraine Scheme	295	0	0	0	0
Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits	4,125	4,125	4,125	4,125	4,125
Journey First and Parents First (originally provided by the European Social Fund but now DWP)	350	0	0	0	0
Total	25,322	21,697	12,919	12,831	12,831

Corporate Grants Register 2024-28	Revised Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held within Services)					
Adults and Health Committee - Public Health					
Public Health Grant	17,972	18,345	18,345	18,345	18,345
COVID-19 COMF & T&T - brought forward	527	0	0	0	0
CHAMPS Health Protection / COVID-19 Recovery Funding	27	0	0	0	0
OHID SSMTR Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment & Recovery Grant	354	0	0	0	0
North West Probation Service funding for SMS rehabilitative and resettlement interventions	114	72	0	0	0
CHAMPS Marmot Place Funding - encourage pregnant women to stop smoking - brought forward	21	0	0	0	0
CHAMPS SMS - inpatient detox	15	0	0	0	0
Total	19,030	18,417	18,345	18,345	18,345
GENERAL USE (Held Corporately)					
Adults and Health Committee					
Social Care Support Grant	12,426	16,414	14,489	14,489	14,489
Local Reform & Community Voices	207	207	207	207	207
Social Care in Prisons	73	73	73	73	73
War Pension Scheme Disregard	60	60	60	60	60
Total	12,766	16,754	14,829	14,829	14,829
Total Adults and Health Committee	57,118	56,868	46,093	46,005	46,005

Children and Families Committee

Corporate Grants Register 2024-28	Revised Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held within Services)					
Children and Families Committee - Schools					
Dedicated Schools Grant	354,200	388,141	388,141	388,141	388,141
Less Academy Recoupment	201,250	204,832	204,832	204,832	204,832
Dedicated Schools Grant (Cheshire East)	152,950	183,309	183,309	183,309	183,309
Pupil Premium Grant	4,958	4,958	4,958	4,958	4,958
Pupil Premium Plus - Post 16 Funding	56	56	56	56	56
Sixth Forms Grant	2,892	2,892	2,892	2,892	2,892
Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)	1,928	1,928	1,928	1,928	1,928
Primary Physical Education Sports Grant	982	982	982	982	982
Teachers Pension Grant	111	0	0	0	0
Teacher Pay Additional Grant	953	0	0	0	0
COVID-19 Recovery Premium	900	900	900	900	900
School Led Tutoring Grant	295	295	295	295	295
Milk Subsidy	21	21	21	21	21
Schools' Supplementary Grant (Mainstream Schools Additional Grant)	2,543	0	0	0	0
Senior Mental Health Lead Training Grant	2	0	0	0	0
Newly Qualified Teachers (Education Recovery 5% Time off Timetable)	48	0	0	0	0
S14 Experts and Mentors Programme Grant	7	0	0	0	0
Delivering Better Value in SEND	593	408	0	0	0
Apprentice Incentive Scheme	2	0	0	0	0
Digital Education Platform	3	0	0	0	0
National Professional Qualification Grant	10	0	0	0	0
Early Years Supplementary Grant	1,262	0	0	0	0
Early Years Teachers Pay Additional Grant	87	0	0	0	0
Total	170,603	195,749	195,341	195,341	195,341

Corporate Grants Register 2024-28	Revised Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held within Services)					
Children and Families Committee					
Asylum Seekers	3,647	3,700	3,700	3,700	3,700
Supporting Families (previously Tackling Troubled Families)	384	0	0	0	0
Supporting Families (Payments by Results) Upfront Grant	720	720	720	720	720
Reducing Parental Conflict Grant	48	0	0	0	0
Adoption Support Fund	70	70	70	70	70
KS2 Moderation & Phonics	11	11	11	11	11
Skills & Lifelong Learning	897	897	897	897	897
Remand Grant	107	107	107	107	107
Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Housing Grant	663	676	0	0	0
Holiday Activities & Food Grant Programme	896	906	906	906	906
Extension of the Role of Virtual School Heads to children with a social worker Implementation	118	118	118	118	118
Homes for Ukraine, education and childcare elements	31	0	0	0	0
Household Support Fund	4,400	0	0	0	0
Hong Kong UK Welcome Programme (British Nationals)	53	0	0	0	0
Early Years - Delivery Support Fund	82	0	0	0	0
Early Years - Wraparound Childcare Programme	11	587	278	0	0
Early Years - Professional Development Programme	8	0	0	0	0
Early Years - Experts and Mentors Programme	4	0	0	0	0
Early Years - Childminder Programme	12	0	0	0	0
Family Hubs Transformation Funding	248	0	0	0	0
Leaving Care Allowance Uplift Implementation Grant (New Burdens)	72	72	0	0	0
Staying Close Award	602	602	0	0	0
Supported Accommodation New Burdens Grant	174	174	0	0	0
Enhance Programme Funding	150	350	0	0	0
Total	13,408	8,990	6,807	6,529	6,529

Corporate Grants Register 2024-28	Revised Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000
GENERAL USE (Held Corporately)					
Children and Families Committee					
Social Care Support Grant	6,939	9,166	8,091	8,091	8,091
Staying Put Implementation Grant	130	0	0	0	0
Extended Rights to Free Transport (Home to School Transport)	256	0	0	0	0
Extended Personal Adviser Duty Implementation	57	0	0	0	0
Extension of the role of Virtual School Heads	61	0	0	0	0
Total	7,443	9,166	8,091	8,091	8,091
Total Children and Families Committee	191,454	213,905	210,239	209,961	209,961

Corporate Policy Committee

Corporate Grants Register 2024-28	Revised Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held within Services)					
Corporate Policy Committee					
Housing Benefit Subsidy	53,221	53,221	53,221	53,221	53,221
Discretionary Housing Payments Grant	349	349	349	349	349
Housing Benefit (HB) Award Accuracy Initiative	30	29	28	27	26
LADS - VEP (RTI) funding	21	14	7	0	0
LADS - Internet Protocol Access	1	0	0	0	0
New Burdens: Universal Credit, maintenance & natural migration	8	24	21	18	15
LADS - New Burdens - Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)	60	60	60	60	60
LADS - New Burdens - Benefit Cap	1	1	1	1	1
LADS - New Burdens - Welfare Reform Changes (S4/2022)	0	0	0	0	0
LADS - New Burdens - Single Fraud Investigation	1	1	1	1	1
LADS - New Burdens - Single Housing Benefit Extract Automation	16	0	0	0	0
LADS - New Burdens - Changes to Universal Credit Stop Notice	1	0	0	0	0
Incapacity Benefit Reassessment (S5/2022)	0	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Rebate Scheme - New Burdens on Account Payment	94	0	0	0	0
Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding	325	0	0	0	0
Business Rates Reliefs Grant	21,039	23,442	24,494	17,352	18,301
Democratic Services:					
Police and Crime Commissioner's Panel grant	65	0	0	0	0
Electoral Integrity Programme - New Burdens (Voter ID)	132	0	0	0	0
Electoral Integrity Programme - New Burdens (Postal Votes)	8	0	0	0	0
Total	75,372	77,141	78,182	71,029	71,974

Corporate Grants Register 2024-28	Revised Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000
GENERAL USE (Held Corporately)					
Corporate Policy Committee					
Housing Benefit Administration Subsidy	741	720	720	720	720
NNDR Administration Allowance	578	587	587	587	587
Revenue Support Grant	388	414	414	414	414
New Homes Bonus	3,794	4,085	0	0	0
Services Grant	1,721	271	271	271	271
Council Tax Support Fund	521	0	0	0	0
Council Tax Support New Burdens	25	0	0	0	0
Total	7,768	6,077	1,992	1,992	1,992
Total Corporate Policy Committee	83,140	83,218	80,174	73,021	73,966

Economy and Growth Committee

Corporate Grants Register 2024-28	Revised Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held within Services)					
Economy and Growth Committee					
Rough Sleeping Initiative	319	0	0	0	0
Rough Sleeper Initiative: Target Group Priority Funding	14	0	0	0	0
Homelessness Prevention Grant	608	0	0	0	0
Homelessness Prevention Grant: Homes for Ukraine top-up 2023/24	422	0	0	0	0
Shared Prosperity Fund - brought-forward	1,119	0	0	0	0
Shared Prosperity Fund	2,412	5,868	0	0	0
Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP): Core Funding	250	0	0	0	0
Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP): Growth Hub Funding	261	0	0	0	0
Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP): NP (Northern Powerhouse) 11	500	0	0	0	0
Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP): Skills Bootcamp	1,355	0	0	0	0
Impossible Perspectives – Digital Arts Project	49	0	0	0	0
Towns Fund - Ice Cream Van	15	0	0	0	0
Total	7,324	5,868	0	0	0
Total Economy and Growth Committee	7,324	5,868	0	0	0

Environment and Communities Committee

Corporate Grants Register 2024-28	Revised Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held within Services)					
Environment and Communities Committee					
Bikeability Grant	240	0	0	0	0
Swimming Pool Support Fund	500	0	0	0	0
Enforcement Grant (Planning) - brought forward	30	0	0	0	0
High Speed 2 (HS2) Ltd	850	0	0	0	0
Air Quality Grant (Awareness) - brought-forward	25	0	0	0	0
Air Quality Grant (Cycling) - brought-forward	10	0	0	0	0
Offensive weapons - brought-forward	4	0	0	0	0
Cosmetic fillers - brought-forward	7	0	0	0	0
Food Information Grant - Natasha's Law - brought forward	11	0	0	0	0
Food Standards Agency 22-23	1	0	0	0	0
Section 31 grant - Biodiversity net gain	20	0	0	0	0
Natural England - Stewardship scheme	2	2	2	2	2
Natural England - Stewardship scheme	7	7	7	7	7
Apprentice Incentive Scheme	2	0	0	0	0
Total	1,709	9	9	9	9
Total Environment and Communities Committee	1,709	9	9	9	9

Highways and Transport Committee

Corporate Grants Register 2024-28	Revised Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000	Forecast 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held within Services)					
Highways and Transport Committee					
Bus Service Operators Grant	348	0	0	0	0
Bus Capacity Grant - brought forward	179	0	0	0	0
Local Transport Fund - brought-forward	219	0	0	0	0
Local Transport Fund	389	0	0	0	0
Better Deal for Buses - Supported Bus Services - brought forward	320	0	0	0	0
Better Deal for Buses - Rural Mobility Grant - brought forward	5	0	0	0	0
Bus Support Grant - brought-forward	147	0	0	0	0
Local Authority Capability Fund - brought forward	154	0	0	0	0
LTA Enhanced Bus Partnership Grant	171	0	0	0	0
Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI)	229	0	0	0	0
Bus Service Improvement Plan+ (BSIP+)	1,188	0	0	0	0
Bus Fare Cap Grant	1	0	0	0	0
Active Travel Capability Fund	71	0	0	0	0
Total	3,421	0	0	0	0
GENERAL USE (Held Corporately)					
Highways and Transport					
Pavement Licensing - New Burdens	13	0	0	0	0
Total	13	0	0	0	0
Total Highways and Transport Committee	3,434	0	0	0	0

(1) In respect of Private Finance Initiatives (PFI), Cheshire East Council are currently reflecting the total PFI grant monies received, even though Beechmere Extra Care Housing building in Crewe, which was destroyed in a fire, no longer stands. No agreement has been reached with the HM Treasury on any possible reduction of grant income and Cheshire East Council continues to pay the residual unitary charge excluding Beechmere to Avantage. Discussions are continuing with the private sector partner, along with other relevant stakeholders, for example Central Government and the Nationwide Building Society, about the reinstatement of Beechmere. scheme.

8. Capital Grant Funding

Adults and Health Committee

	Expected Receipt 2024/25 £000	Application of Grants in 2024/25 £000	Expected Receipt 2025/26 £000	Application of Grants in 2025/26 £000	Expected Receipt 2026/27 £000	Application of Grants in 2026/27 £000	Expected Receipt 2027/28 £000	Application of Grants in 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held Corporately)								
ADULTS & HEALTH								
Rural Shared Prosperity Fund	333	333	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adults Social Care Grant	0	78	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL ADULTS & HEALTH	333	411	0	0	0	0	0	0

Children and Families Committee

	Expected Receipt 2024/25 £000	Application of Grants in 2024/25 £000	Expected Receipt 2025/26 £000	Application of Grants in 2025/26 £000	Expected Receipt 2026/27 £000	Application of Grants in 2026/27 £000	Expected Receipt 2027/28 £000	Application of Grants in 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held Corporately)								
CHILDREN & FAMILIES								
Basic Need Grant	4,044	14,448	2,442	9,214	0	3,785	0	2,050
Crewe Towns Funding	0	2,230	0	0	0	0	0	0
Childcare Capital Expansion	0	749	0	0	0	0	0	0
Devolved Formula Capital Grant	340	340	330	330	310	310	300	300
Early Years	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
Family Hubs Transformation	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	0
High Needs/Special Educational Needs Grant	0	7,132	0	0	0	0	0	0
School Condition Grant	2,000	2,110	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
TOTAL CHILDREN & FAMILIES	6,384	27,049	4,772	11,544	2,310	6,095	2,300	4,350

Economy and Growth Committee

	Expected Receipt 2024/25 £000	Application of Grants in 2024/25 £000	Expected Receipt 2025/26 £000	Application of Grants in 2025/26 £000	Expected Receipt 2026/27 £000	Application of Grants in 2026/27 £000	Expected Receipt 2027/28 £000	Application of Grants in 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held Corporately)								
ECONOMY & GROWTH								
Connecting Cheshire Digital 2020 - Super Fast Broadband	2,238	2,238	1,000	1,000	0	0	0	0
Crewe Towns Funding	4,138	7,847	3,201	3,201	0	0	0	0
Disabled Facilities Grant	2,359	2,359	2,342	2,342	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800
Future High Street Funding	3,111	3,111	0	0	0	0	0	0
Green Homes Grant	483	483	0	0	0	0	0	0
Handforth Heat Network	0	594	50	50	450	450	1,424	1,424
Homes England Grant - Gypsy Traveller Site	175	175	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homes England Grant - North Cheshire Garden Village	18,921	18,921	0	0	0	0	0	0
Home Upgrade Grant	4,658	4,658	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department of Transport - Culture & Tourism	0	43	0	0	0	0	0	0
Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund - 3B - Lot 1	1,815	1,815	0	0	0	0	0	0
Schools Condition Grant - FM	0	479	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Core	0	649	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Macclesfield Schemes	0	1,684	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Rural	0	285	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homes England Grant - South Macclesfield Development Area	10,000	10,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL ECONOMY & GROWTH	47,898	55,341	6,593	6,593	3,250	3,250	4,224	4,224

Environment and Communities Committee

	Expected Receipt 2024/25 £000	Application of Grants in 2024/25 £000	Expected Receipt 2025/26 £000	Application of Grants in 2025/26 £000	Expected Receipt 2026/27 £000	Application of Grants in 2026/27 £000	Expected Receipt 2027/28 £000	Application of Grants in 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held Corporately)								
ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITIES								
Crewe Towns Funding	0	4,268	1,858	1,858	0	0	0	0
Future High Street Funding	0	200	0	0	0	0	0	0
FCC Grant Funding	120	120	0	0	0	0	0	0
Simpler Recycling Transitional Funding	0	2,700	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITIES	120	7,288	1,858	1,858	0	0	0	0

Highways and Transport Committee

	Expected Receipt 2024/25 £000	Application of Grants in 2024/25 £000	Expected Receipt 2025/26 £000	Application of Grants in 2025/26 £000	Expected Receipt 2026/27 £000	Application of Grants in 2026/27 £000	Expected Receipt 2027/28 £000	Application of Grants in 2027/28 £000
SPECIFIC PURPOSE (Held Corporately)								
HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT								
Department for Transport S31 Grant - A500	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,833	1,833	49,451	49,451
Department of Transport Incentive Fund	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450
Department of Transport Integrated Transport Grant	2,003	2,003	2,003	2,003	2,003	2,003	2,003	2,003
Department of Transport Maintenance Grant	5,799	5,799	5,799	5,799	5,799	5,799	5,799	5,799
Department of Transport Pothole Funding	7,457	7,457	5,799	5,799	5,799	5,799	5,799	5,799
Department of Transport S31 Grant - Middlewich Eastern Bypass	18,785	18,785	18,530	18,530	0	0	0	0
Department of Transport Maintenance Grant - Additional Funding Footpath	0	669	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintenance - Slurry Sealing & Reconstruction Works	0	791	0	100	0	0	0	0
Department of Transport Maintenance Grant - Prior Years	0	791	0	100	0	0	0	0
Future High Street Funding	3,136	3,136	350	350	0	0	0	0
Housing Infrastructure Fund (MHCLG) - Northwest Crewe Package	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local Growth Fund - Congleton Link Road	0	0	316	316	0	0	0	0
National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) - Flower Pot Junction, Macclesfield	0	415	0	1,636	0	0	0	0
Department for Transport - Safer Road Fund A532	0	201	0	0	0	0	0	0
Department for Transport - Safer Road Fund A536	0	70	0	0	0	0	0	0
Office for Zero Emission Vehicles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Mill Street Corridor - Station Link Project	850	850	0	0	0	0	0	0
Active Travel England	0	649	0	0	0	0	0	0
Local Growth Fund - Sustainable Travel Access Programme	616	616	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT	41,096	43,890	35,246	36,982	16,884	16,884	64,502	64,502
TOTAL SPECIFIC PURPOSE - CAPITAL GRANT FUNDING								
	95,831	133,980	48,469	56,977	22,444	26,229	71,027	73,077

9. Financial Summary Tables (Revenue)

- 9.1 The 2023/24 Budget, shown as the starting point for the following tables, takes account of any permanent changes made during the 2023/24 financial year to date. There may be differences from the budget position in the [2023/24 Third Financial Review Update](#) which includes both permanent and temporary budget changes. The table below summarises these changes. Further details are available on request.

	2023/24 Net Revised Budget £000	Less 2023/24 Temporary Grant Budgets £000	Other Budget Admndments £000	2024/25 Base Budget £000
ADULTS AND HEALTH				
Adult Social Care - Operations	137,923		-28	137,895
Commissioning	-1,433		-156	-1,589
Public Health	0		0	0
	136,490	0	-184	136,306
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES				
Direcorate	697		-1,079	-382
Children's Social Care	48,953		15	48,968
Education & 14-19 Skills	23,196		-12	23,184
Strong Start, Family Help and Integration	7,425		-141	7,284
	80,271	0	-1,217	79,054
CORPORATE POLICY				
Direcorate	570		276	846
Finance & Customer Services	13,257		-516	12,741
Governance & Compliance Services	10,766		-91	10,675
Communications	696		-6	690
Human Resources	2,588		-6	2,582
ICT	11,816		-153	11,663
Policy & Change	2,013		-43	1,970
	41,706	0	-539	41,167

	2023/24 Net Revised Budget £000	Less 2023/24 Temporary Grant Budgets £000	Other Budget Admendments £000	2024/25 Base Budget £000
ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES				
Environment & Neighbourhood Services	48,748		-47	48,701
	48,748	0	-47	48,701
ECONOMY AND GROWTH				
Directorate	290		-109	181
Growth & Enterprise	24,507		-62	24,445
	24,797	0	-171	24,626
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT				
Highways & Infrastructure	11,180		-219	10,961
	11,180	0	-219	10,961
TOTAL SERVICE BUDGET	343,192	0	-2,377	340,815

	2023/24 Net Revised Budget £000	Less 2023/24 Temporary Grant Budgets £000	Other Budget Admndments £000	2024/25 Base Budget £000
FINANCE SUB CENTRAL BUDGETS				
Capital Financing	19,000			19,000
Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	-7,363		2,323	-5,040
Other Income/Expenditure	-54		54	0
Credit Losses	-650			-650
Income from Use of Capital Receipts	-1,000			-1,000
Contributions to / from Reserves	0			0
	9,933	0	2,377	12,310
TOTAL BUDGET	353,125	0	0	353,125
FINANCE SUB FUNDING BUDGETS				
Council Tax	-271,097			-271,097
Business Rates Retention Scheme	-55,277			-55,277
Revenue Support Grant	-388			-388
Unringfenced Grants	-26,363			-26,363
TOTAL FUNDING BUDGETS	-353,125	0	0	-353,125
FUNDING POSITION	0	0	0	0

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL - Summary

REVENUE BUDGET

Budget including Policy Proposals						
	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Directorate						
Adults and Health Committee	223,849	-86,407	137,442	147,310	152,426	157,542
Children and Families Committee	99,583	-10,620	88,963	95,433	103,093	110,540
Corporate Policy Committee	111,416	-69,760	41,656	40,267	41,282	42,197
Economy and Growth Committee	36,169	-8,227	27,942	29,126	30,890	31,330
Environment and Communities Committee	64,930	-16,281	48,649	50,771	52,157	53,856
Highways and Transport Committee	28,669	-12,839	15,830	17,287	19,263	21,667
Total Service Budgets	564,616	-204,134	360,482	380,194	399,111	417,132
Finance Sub Committee	18,727	-3,500	15,227	41,988	56,046	68,744
Total Cost of Service	583,343	-207,634	375,709	422,182	455,157	485,876
Policy Proposals included above						
Policy Proposals						
Adults and Health Committee	5,966	-4,830	1,136	9,868	5,116	5,116
Children and Families Committee	11,062	-1,153	9,909	6,470	7,660	7,447
Corporate Policy Committee	551	-62	489	-1,389	1,015	915
Economy and Growth Committee	3,255	61	3,316	1,184	1,764	440
Environment and Communities Committee	5,619	-5,671	-52	2,122	1,386	1,699
Finance Sub Committee	4,517	-1,600	2,917	26,761	14,058	12,698
Highways and Transport Committee	4,824	45	4,869	1,457	1,976	2,404
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals	35,794	-13,210	22,584	46,473	32,975	30,719

ADULTS and HEALTH COMMITTEE - Summary

REVENUE BUDGET

Budget including Policy Proposals						
Service Area	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Adult Social Care Operations	185,786	-49,497	136,289	145,068	149,068	153,068
Commissioning	19,800	-18,647	1,153	2,242	3,358	4,474
Public Health	18,263	-18,263	0			
Total Cost of Service	223,849	-86,407	137,442	147,310	152,426	157,542
Policy Proposals included above						
Policy Proposals						
Adult Social Care Operations	4,074	-5,680	-1,606	8,779	4,000	4,000
Commissioning	1,892	850	2,742	1,089	1,116	1,116
Public Health			0			
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals	5,966	-4,830	1,136	9,868	5,116	5,116

ADULTS and HEALTH - Adult Social Care Operations

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals				
Service Area	Aim Reference	2024/25		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Care4CE		20,623	-4,489	16,134	16,134	16,134
Community Care – Locality Teams		99,297	-38,240	61,057	68,949	73,837
Community Care – Short Term Intervention		2,679		2,679	2,694	2,826
Adult Social Care Operations		1,646	-1,284	362	362	362
Mental Health and Learning Disability		60,510	-5,433	55,077	56,466	59,446
Adult Safeguarding		1,524	-51	1,473	1,473	1,473
Pension Costs Adjustment		-493		-493	-1,010	-1,010
Total Cost of Service		185,786	-49,497	136,289	145,068	153,068
		Policy Proposals included above				
Policy Proposals						
Working Age Adults - Prevent, Reduce, Delay	Fair	-1,467		-1,467	-1,053	
Older People – Prevent, Reduce, Delay	Fair	-1,566		-1,566	-2,010	
Market Sustainability and Workforce grant	Fair		-1,100	-1,100	1,100	
Fees and Charges	Fair		-1,800	-1,800		
Client Contributions Increase	Fair		-800	-800	-800	
Revenue grants for Adult Social Care	Fair		-2,480	-2,480	7,080	
Investment in Adult Social Care	Fair	7,600		7,600	4,000	4,000
ASC Transformation Earmarked Reserve Release	Fair		500	500		
Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care - Grant Income	Fair			0	979	
Pension Costs Adjustment	Open	-493		-493	-517	
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		4,074	-5,680	-1,606	8,779	4,000

ADULTS and HEALTH - Commissioning

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals				
Service Area	Aim Reference	2024/25		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Communities and Integration		702		702	702	702
Integrated Commissioning - MH, LD & Families		1,069	-160	909	909	909
Integrated Commissioning - New Models of Care		7,909	-4,295	3,614	3,614	3,614
Integrated Commissioning - Thriving & Prevention		7,625	-13,769	-6,144	-6,144	-6,144
Integrated Urgent Care		603	-423	180	180	180
Pay Inflation		1,892		1,892	2,981	5,213
Total Cost of Service		19,800	-18,647	1,153	2,242	4,474
		Policy Proposals included above				
Policy Proposals						
Resettlement Revenue Grants	Fair		850	850		
Pay Inflation	Open	1,892		1,892	1,089	1,116
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		1,892	850	2,742	1,089	1,116

ADULTS and HEALTH - Public Health

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
Service Area	Aim Reference	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Intelligence and Health Care		18,013		18,013	18,013	18,013	18,013
Health Improvement		332		332	332	332	332
Grant Income			-18,345	-18,345	-18,345	-18,345	-18,345
Total Cost of Service		18,345	-18,345	0	0	0	0
		Policy Proposals included above					
Policy Proposals							
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		0	0	0	0	0	0

CHILDREN and FAMILIES COMMITTEE - Summary

REVENUE BUDGET

Budget including Policy Proposals						
Service Area	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Directorate	-399		-399	-588	-767	-746
Children's Social Care	60,061	-1,488	58,573	63,440	69,124	75,467
Education and 14-19 Skills	27,091	-3,151	23,940	25,614	27,523	28,360
Strong Start, Family Help & Integration	12,830	-5,981	6,849	6,967	7,213	7,459
Total Cost of Service	99,583	-10,620	88,963	95,433	103,093	110,540
Policy Proposals included above						
Directorate	-17		-17	-189	-179	21
Children's Social Care	9,605		9,605	4,867	5,684	6,343
Education and 14-19 Skills	1,322	-566	756	1,674	1,909	837
Strong Start, Family Help & Integration	152	-587	-435	118	246	246
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals	11,062	-1,153	9,909	6,470	7,660	7,447

CHILDREN and FAMILIES - Directorate

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals				
Service Area	Aim Reference	2024/25		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Directorate		-417		-417	-617	-817
Pension Costs Adjustment		-10		-10	-20	-20
Pay Inflation		28		28	49	91
Total Cost of Service		-399	0	-399	-588	-746
		Policy Proposals included above				
Policy Proposals						
Other Service Reviews	Open	-100		-100		
Pension Costs Adjustment	Open	-10		-10		
Use of Children & Families Transformation Reserve - estimated balance	Open	1,065		1,065		
Review of structure to further integrate children and families services	Open	-1,000		-1,000	-200	-200
Pay Inflation	Open	28		28	21	21
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		-17	0	-17	-189	21

CHILDREN and FAMILIES - Children's Social Care

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
		2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Service Area	Aim Reference	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Cared for Children and Care Leavers		8,554	-788	7,766	7,766	7,766	7,766
Provider Services and Fostering		34,015	-27	33,988	38,633	43,863	49,752
Children in Need, Child Protection and Children with Disabilities		12,938	-633	12,305	12,305	12,305	12,305
Children's Safeguarding		1,958		1,958	1,963	1,963	1,963
Children's Contracts		1,073		1,073	1,073	1,073	1,073
Head of Service		1,163	-40	1,123	1,123	1,123	1,123
Pension Costs Adjustment		-216		-216	-442	-442	-442
Pay Inflation		576		576	1,019	1,473	1,927
Total Cost of Service		60,061	-1,488	58,573	63,440	69,124	75,467
		Policy Proposals included above					
Policy Proposals							
Reduce Growth in expenditure	Fair	-1,900		-1,900			
Growth to deliver statutory Youth Justice service, and growth to ensure budget is sufficient to meet Safeguarding Partnership duties	Fair	170		170	5		
Legal Proceeding - Child Protection	Fair	770		770			
Growth in Childrens Placement costs	Fair	10,825		10,825	4,645	5,230	5,889
Discretionary offer to children with disabilities	Open	-620		-620			
Pension Costs Adjustment	Open	-216		-216	-226		
Pay Inflation	Open	576		576	443	454	454
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		9,605	0	9,605	4,867	5,684	6,343

CHILDREN and FAMILIES - Education and 14-19 Skills

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
Service Area	Aim Reference	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Education Infrastructure and Outcomes		2,009	-1,964	45	45	45	45
Client Commissioning - Transport		15,597	-57	15,540	17,041	18,589	19,065
Education Partnership and Pupil Support		891	-176	715	715	715	715
Head Of Service and Legacy Pension Costs		2,097		2,097	2,097	2,097	2,097
Skills and Lifelong Learning		909	-879	30	30	30	30
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities		3,550		3,550	3,550	3,550	3,550
Educational Psychologists		1,752	-75	1,677	1,677	1,677	1,677
Pension Costs Adjustment		-172		-172	-351	-351	-351
Pay Inflation		458		458	810	1,171	1,532
Total Cost of Service		27,091	-3,151	23,940	25,614	27,523	28,360

		Policy Proposals included above					
Policy Proposals							
Remove school catering subsidy	Open		-516	-516			
Reduce discretionary Post-16 Travel Support	Open	-400		-400			
Other Service Reviews	Open		-50	-50			
Growth to provide capacity to deliver transformation for SEND	Fair	500		500			
Growth in School Transport budget	Fair	936		936	1,501	1,548	476
Pension Costs Adjustment	Open	-172		-172	-179		
Pay Inflation	Open	458		458	352	361	361
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		1,322	-566	756	1,674	1,909	837

CHILDREN and FAMILIES - Stong Start, Family Help & Integration

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
		2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Service Area	Aim Reference	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Children's Development and Partnerships		387		387	387	387	387
Preventative Services		8,306	-5,887	2,419	2,019	2,019	2,019
Early Start		2,324	-87	2,237	2,237	2,237	2,237
Youth Support		1,618	-7	1,611	2,011	2,011	2,011
Pension Costs Adjustment		-117		-117	-239	-239	-239
Pay Inflation		312		312	552	798	1,044
Total Cost of Service		12,830	-5,981	6,849	6,967	7,213	7,459

Policy Proposals included above						
Policy Proposals						
Achieve the Family Hub model	Fair	-250		-250		
Revenue costs for the Crewe Youth Zone aligned to Supporting Families Funding	Fair			0	400	
Early Help budget to support funding towards the Crewe Youth Zone	Fair			0	-400	
Discretionary offer to children with disabilities	Open	-280		-280		
Other Service Reviews	Open	-100		-100		
Wraparound Childcare Programme (funded)	Open	587		587	-587	
Wraparound Childcare Programme (funded)	Open		-587	-587	587	
Pension Costs Adjustment	Open	-117		-117	-122	
Pay Inflation	Open	312		312	240	246
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		152	-587	-435	118	246

CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE - Summary

REVENUE BUDGET

Budget including Policy Proposals						
Service Area	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Directorate	1,274		1,274	1,771	2,686	3,601
Finance and Customer Services	59,383	-47,030	12,353	12,276	12,276	12,276
Governance and Compliance Services	14,489	-3,559	10,930	11,080	11,080	11,080
Communications	700	-10	690	690	690	690
Human Resources	2,942	-460	2,482	2,482	2,482	2,482
ICT	30,668	-18,701	11,967	10,018	10,118	10,118
Policy and Change	1,960		1,960	1,950	1,950	1,950
Total Cost of Service	111,416	-69,760	41,656	40,267	41,282	42,197

Policy Proposals included above						
Directorate	428		428	497	915	915
Finance and Customer Services	-238	-150	-388	-77		
Governance and Compliance Services	271	-16	255	150		
Communications			0			
Human Resources	-100		-100			
ICT	200	104	304	-1,949	100	
Policy and Change	-10		-10	-10		
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals	551	-62	489	-1,389	1,015	915

CORPORATE POLICY - Directorate

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals				
Service Area	Aim Reference	2024/25		2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Chief Executive		287		287	287	287
Executive Director of Corporate Services		-81		-81	-81	-81
Pension Credit Allocation		-378		-774	-774	-774
Pay Inflation (to be allocated)		1,446		2,339	3,254	4,169
Total Cost of Service		1,274	0	1,274	1,771	3,601
		Policy Proposals included above				
Policy Proposals						
Reduce leadership and management costs	Open	-540		-540		
Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services	Open	-100		-100		
Pension Costs Adjustment	Open	-378		-396		
Pay Inflation (to be allocated)	Open	1,446		893	915	915
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		428	0	428	915	915

CORPORATE POLICY - Finance and Customer Services

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
Service Area	Aim Reference	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Finance		5,056		5,056	5,056	5,056	5,056
Procurement		607	-42	565	565	565	565
Customer Services		2,618	-1	2,617	2,617	2,617	2,617
Revenues and Benefits		51,102	-46,987	4,115	4,038	4,038	4,038
Total Cost of Service		59,383	-47,030	12,353	12,276	12,276	12,276
		Policy Proposals included above					
Policy Proposals							
Close the Emergency Assistance Scheme	Open	-220		-220			
Enforce prompt debt recovery and increase charges for costs	Open		-150	-150	-77		
Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services	Open	-18		-18			
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		-238	-150	-388	-77	0	0

CORPORATE POLICY - Governance and Compliance Services

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
Service Area	Aim Reference	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Governance and Democratic Services		6,192	-2,076	4,116	4,266	4,266	4,266
Legal Services		4,343	-375	3,968	3,968	3,968	3,968
Audit and Risk		3,805	-1,108	2,697	2,697	2,697	2,697
Director		149		149	149	149	149
Total Cost of Service		14,489	-3,559	10,930	11,080	11,080	11,080
		Policy Proposals included above					
Policy Proposals							
Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible	Open	-150		-150	150		
Legal Services Capacity	Open	421	34	455			
Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services	Open		-50	-50			
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		271	-16	255	150	0	0

CORPORATE POLICY - Communications

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
Service Area	Aim Reference	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Communications		700	-10	690	690	690	690
Total Cost of Service		700	-10	690	690	690	690
		Policy Proposals included above					
Policy Proposals							
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		0	0	0	0	0	0

CORPORATE POLICY - Human Resources

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
		2023/24			2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Service Area	Aim Reference	Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Human Resources		2,942	-460	2,482	2,482	2,482	2,482
Total Cost of Service		2,942	-460	2,482	2,482	2,482	2,482
		Policy Proposals included above					
Policy Proposals							
Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services	Open	-100		-100			
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		-100	0	-100	0	0	0

CORPORATE POLICY - ICT

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
		2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Service Area	Aim Reference	Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
ICT - Strategy		13,571	-1,997	11,574	9,625	9,725	9,725
ICT - Shared Service		16,704	-16,704	0			
Digital Online Services		393		393	393	393	393
Total Cost of Service		30,668	-18,701	11,967	10,018	10,118	10,118

Policy Proposals

Accelerate Digital and other ICT Transformation
Mitigation of reduction in the Dedicated Schools Grant
ICT Review 1
Other Efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services

Open
Open
Open
Open

Financial Impact of Policy Proposals

Policy Proposals included above						
		-250		-250	250	100
			136	136		
		450		450	-2,199	
			-32	-32		
		200	104	304	-1,949	100
						0

CORPORATE POLICY - Policy and Change

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
Service Area	Aim Reference	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Business Change		1,742		1,742	1,742	1,742	1,742
Director of Transformation		218		218	208	208	208
Total Cost of Service		1,960	0	1,960	1,950	1,950	1,950
		Policy Proposals included above					
Policy Proposals							
Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services	Open	-10		-10	-10		
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		-10	0	-10	-10	0	0

ECONOMY and GROWTH COMMITTEE - Summary

REVENUE BUDGET

Budget including Policy Proposals						
Service Area	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Directorate	-597		-597	-597	-597	-597
Growth and Enterprise	36,766	-8,227	28,539	29,723	31,487	31,927
Total Cost of Service	36,169	-8,227	27,942	29,126	30,890	31,330
Policy Proposals included above						
Policy Proposals						
Directorate	-778		-778			
Growth and Enterprise	4,033	61	4,094	1,184	1,764	440
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals	3,255	61	3,316	1,184	1,764	440

ECONOMY and GROWTH - Directorate

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
		2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Service Area	Aim Reference	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Directorate		642		642	642	642	642
Sub Regional		80		80	80	80	80
Restructuring		-1,328		-1,328	-1,328	-1,328	-1,328
Pay Inflation		9		9	9	9	9
Total Cost of Service		-597	0	-597	-597	-597	-597
		Policy Proposals included above					
Policy Proposals							
Service Restructures within Place based Services	Open	-787		-787			
Pay Inflation	Open	9		9			
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		-778	0	-778	0	0	0

ECONOMY and GROWTH - Growth and Enterprise

REVENUE BUDGET

Service Area	Aim Reference	Budget including Policy Proposals				
		2024/25			2025/26	2026/27
		Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Assets		1,757	-1,249	508	541	494
Growth and Enterprise Management		147		147	147	147
Facilities Management		18,650	-468	18,182	18,455	19,936
Farms		434	-785	-351	-351	-351
Economic Development		2,292	-469	1,823	2,175	2,264
Housing		3,806	-529	3,277	3,465	3,277
Rural and Cultural Management		165		165	165	165
Tatton Park		5,214	-4,079	1,135	1,130	1,131
Public Rights of Way		869	-53	816	816	816
Cultural Economy		1,056		1,056	1,145	1,145
Countryside		1,204	-245	959	959	959
Visitor Economy		550	-350	200	200	200
Pay Inflation		622		622	876	1,304
Total Cost of Service		36,766	-8,227	28,539	29,723	31,487

ECONOMY and GROWTH - Growth and Enterprise

REVENUE BUDGET

	Aim Reference	Policy Proposals included above				
Policy Proposals						
Reduce opening hours for main offices	Open	-50		-50		
Office estate rationalisation	Open	-550		-550	-150	
Tatton Park	Green		-46	-46		
Transfer of Congleton Visitor Information Centre	Open	-20		-20		
Pension costs adjustment	Open	-157		-157	-164	
Tatton Park ticketing and electronic point of sale (EPOS) upgrade	Green	5		5	1	1
Cultural	Green	20		20	89	
Property Information and Management System - Estates – Revenue Adjustment	Open	30		30		
Housing	Fair	35		35		
Environmental Hub Waste Transfer Station	Green	40		40		
Rural and Visitor Economy	Green	45		45	-21	
Minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) - Estates - Revenue Adjustment	Green	79		79	23	-47
Public Rights of Way Income Realignment	Green	8	107	115		
Crewe town centre maintenance and operation	Fair	650		650	352	89
Assets - Buildings and Operational	Open	3,119		3,119	423	1,481
LFSA Revenue Adjustment - Estates – CE Owned Landfill sites (53 sites) Review and Risk Assessment completions	Green			0	10	
Tatton Park Estate Dwellings Refurbishment	Green			0	15	
Improving Crewe Rented Housing Standards	Green			0	188	-188
Pay Inflation	Open	779		779	418	428
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		4,033	61	4,094	1,184	1,764
						440

ENVIRONMENT and COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE - Summary

REVENUE BUDGET

Budget including Policy Proposals						
Service Area	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Environment and Neighbourhood Services	64,930	-16,281	48,649	50,771	52,157	53,856
Total Cost of Service	64,930	-16,281	48,649	50,771	52,157	53,856
Policy Proposals included above						
Policy Proposals						
Environment and Neighbourhood Services	5,619	-5,671	-52	2,122	1,386	1,699
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals	5,619	-5,671	-52	2,122	1,386	1,699

ENVIRONMENT and COMMUNITIES - Environment and Neighbourhood Services

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
Service Area	Aim Reference	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
		Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000	Net £000
Director of Environmental & Neighbourhood Services		142		142	142	142	142
Development Management		4,358	-2,767	1,591	1,891	1,891	1,891
Building Control		1,185	-919	266	266	266	266
Local Land Charges and Planning Support		713	-546	167	314	314	314
Strategic Planning		1,107		1,107	947	980	980
Neighbourhood Planning		273	-215	58	58	58	58
Environmental - Commissioning ANSA		41,691	-954	40,737	42,415	42,978	43,881
Environmental - Commissioning Orbitas		2,019	-2,857	-838	-801	-801	-801
Environmental - Management Services		2,055	-5,097	-3,042	-3,504	-3,473	-3,473
Regulatory Services		4,018	-1,274	2,744	2,744	2,744	2,744
Libraries		3,631	-560	3,071	2,471	2,471	2,471
Leisure Commissioning		1,430	-1,305	125	528	325	159
Emergency Planning		230	-59	171	171	171	171
Head of Neighbourhood Services & ASB/CEO		729	-89	640	640	640	640
Pay Inflation		1,710		1,710	2,489	3,451	4,413
Total Cost of Service		65,291	-16,642	48,649	50,771	52,157	53,856

ENVIRONMENT and COMMUNITIES - Environment and Neighbourhood Services

REVENUE BUDGET

	Aim Reference	Policy Proposals included above				
Policy Proposals						
Refresh wholly owned company overheads and contributions	Open		-1,000	-1,000	800	
Strategic Leisure Review (Stage 2)	Open		-1,305	-1,305	403	-203
Mitigate the impact of contract inflation and tonnage growth	Green	-490		-490		
Emergency reduction of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) to four core sites	Green	-263		-263	263	
Libraries Strategy	Open		-365	-365	-250	
Reduce costs of street cleansing operations	Green	-200		-200		
Reduce revenue impact of carbon reduction capital schemes	Green	-336		-336	-419	
Increase Garden Waste charges to recover costs	Green		-45	-45	-134	
MTFS 80 (Feb 23) - Waste Disposal - Contract Inflation and Tonnage Growth (updated forecast)	Green	3,577		3,577	864	577
Pension Costs Adjustment	Open	-151		-151	-159	
MTFS 90 (Feb 23) Strategic Leisure Review	Open	1,250		1,250		
MTFS 91 (Feb 23) – Green Spaces Maintenance Review	Green	-200		-200		
MTFS 92 (Feb 23) - Review Waste Collection Service - Green Waste	Green		-3,150	-3,150		
Review MTFS 92 (Feb 23) Garden waste subscription financial model in line with latest subscription levels and with actual observed position on any waste migration	Green		-429	-429		

ENVIRONMENT and COMMUNITIES - Environment and Neighbourhood Services

REVENUE BUDGET

Policy Proposals	Aim Reference	Policy Proposals included above					
MTFS 93 (Feb 23) Libraries - Service Review	Open	-200		-200			
Explore a Trust delivery model for Libraries and other services	Open	150		150	-350		
CCTV	Green		-30	-30			
Congleton Town Council Collaboration Agreement – Grounds Maintenance	Green	-62		-62			
Closed Cemeteries	Fair	5		5	5	5	
Environmental Hub maintenance	Green	23		23	18	12	
Review Closed Landfill Sites	Green	300		300			
Land Charge Income Adjustment	Green		50	50	147		
Building Control Income Alignment	Green		203	203			
Local Plan Review	Green	255		255	-160	33	
Planning income	Green		400	400			
Planning Service Restructure	Green			0	300		
Review of Household Waste Recycling Centres	Green	100		100	-144		
Pay Inflation	Open	1,861		1,861	938	962	962
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		5,619	-5,671	-52	2,122	1,386	1,699

HIGHWAYS and TRANSPORT COMMITTEE - Summary

REVENUE BUDGET

Budget including Policy Proposals						
Service Area	2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Highways and Infrastructure	28,669	-12,839	15,830	17,287	19,263	21,667
Total Cost of Service	28,669	-12,839	15,830	17,287	19,263	21,667
Policy Proposals included above						
Policy Proposals						
Highways and Infrastructure	4,824	45	4,869	1,457	1,976	2,404
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals	4,824	45	4,869	1,457	1,976	2,404

HIGHWAYS and TRANSPORT - Highways and Infrastructure

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
		2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Service Area	Aim Reference	Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Car Parking		2,145	-6,009	-3,864	-5,304	-5,304	-5,304
Strategic Transport		6,800	-503	6,297	6,543	6,245	6,114
ANSA Transport Commissioning (Mgmt Fee)		1,152		1,152	1,152	1,152	1,152
Highways		16,687	-5,110	11,577	14,131	16,249	18,628
HS2		535	-86	449	449	449	449
Highways & Infrastructure Director		144		144	144	144	144
Infrastructure		919	-1,131	-212	-212	-212	-212
Pay Inflation		287		287	384	540	696
Total Cost of Service		28,669	-12,839	15,830	17,287	19,263	21,667

HIGHWAYS and TRANSPORT - Highways and Infrastructure

REVENUE BUDGET

	Aim Reference	Policy Proposals included above				
Policy Proposals						
Highway maintenance savings	Open	-750		-750		
Introduce annual increases to car parking charges	Fair		-150	-150	-450	
Pension Costs Adjustment	Open	-52		-52	-55	
Highways	Open	-31		-31		
Safe Haven outside schools (Parking)	Fair	27	-50	-23	10	
Transport and Infrastructure Strategy Team - Restructure	Open	120		120		
Parking - PDA / Back Office System contract	Fair	100		100	-30	
Flood and Water Management Act 2010 SuDS & SABs	Open	100		100	-50	50
Schedule 3 Implementation						
Energy saving measures from streetlights	Open	242		242		
Parking	Fair		245	245	-970	
Highways Revenue Services	Open	2,479		2,479	2,654	2,118
Local Bus	Green	2,250		2,250		
FlexiLink Service Improvement Plan	Green			0	296	-298
Highways Depot Improvements	Open			0	-50	-50
Bus Stop Advertising Revenue Generation	Green			0	-50	
Pay Inflation	Open	339		339	152	156
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		4,824	45	4,869	1,457	1,976
						2,404

FINANCE SUB COMMITTEE - Central Items

REVENUE BUDGET

		Budget including Policy Proposals					
		2024/25			2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Aim	Expenditure	Income	Net	Net	Net	Net	
Reference	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Capital Financing	31,008	-2,500	28,508	43,036	57,094	69,792	
Income from Use of Capital Receipts		-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	
Transfer to/(from) Reserves	-12,232		-12,232	1	1	1	
Bad Debt Provision	-50		-50	-50	-50	-50	
Other Income / Expenditure	1		1	1	1	1	
Total Cost of Service		18,727	-3,500	15,227	41,988	56,046	68,744
		Policy Proposals included above					
Policy Proposals							
Capital Financing - Minimum Revenue Provision	Open	11,108	-1,600	9,508	14,528	14,058	12,698
Bad Debt Provision Adjustment	Open	600		600			
Use of Earmarked Reserves	Open	-7,191		-7,191	12,233		
Financial Impact of Policy Proposals		4,517	-1,600	2,917	26,761	14,058	12,698

Fees & Charges

Adults and Health Committee

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Commissioned Care - Domiciliary Home Care - 15 min call - Direct Payments Only	Discretionary	n/a	Not commissioned
Commissioned Care - Domiciliary Home Care - 30 min call	Discretionary	8.45	11.70
Commissioned Care - Domiciliary Home Care - 45 min call	Discretionary	10.98	17.55
Commissioned Care - Domiciliary Home Care - 60 min call	Discretionary	14.64	23.40
Commissioned Care - Night Support - Per Night	Discretionary	87.69	95.28
Commissioned Care - Complex Learning Disability Hourly Support	Discretionary	13.74	17.50
Care4CE Services - Home Care - Per hour	Discretionary	56.00	n/a
Care4CE Services - Mobile Night - Per hour	Discretionary	56.00	n/a

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Care4CE Services - Day Care Building Based - Per Day	Discretionary	50.43	n/a
Care4CE Services - Day Care Complex Need - Per Day	Discretionary	62.91	n/a
Care4CE Services - Dementia Day Care - Per Day	Discretionary	62.91	n/a
Care4CE Services - Supported Living - Core (Wilmslow / Knutsford)	Discretionary	1,166.94	n/a
Care4CE Services - Supported Living - Community (Macclesfield / Crewe / Congleton) - Supported Living	Discretionary	835.28	n/a
Care4CE Services - Supported Living Heatherbrae	Discretionary	2,172.30	n/a
Care4CE Services - Learning Disability Respite Care - Per Week	Discretionary	1,477.21	n/a
Shared Lives - Residential - Per Week	Discretionary	388.50	388.50
Shared Lives - Residential Enhanced - Per Week	Discretionary	416.50	416.50
Shared Lives - Short Stay - Per 24hr	Discretionary	55.50	n/a
Shared Lives - Short Stay Enhanced - Per 24hr	Discretionary	59.50	n/a

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Shared Lives - Shared Lives > 1 user - 3hr Session	Discretionary	31.26	32.20
Shared Lives - Shared Lives Individual - 3hr Session	Discretionary	31.26	32.20
Shared Lives - Meals	Discretionary	5.50	n/a
Telecare Services - Telecare Level 1 - Per Week - (Flat Rate)	Discretionary	5.00	7.50
Telecare Services - Telecare Level 2 - Per Week - (Flat Rate)	Discretionary	5.00	7.50
Telecare Services - Telecare Level 3 - Per Week - (Flat Rate)	Discretionary	5.00	7.50
Telecare Services - Telecare aged 85+ living alone - Per Week	Discretionary	5.00	7.50
Extra Care Housing - Wellbeing - Per Week	Discretionary	20.34	25.00
Extra Care Housing - Band 1 - Per Week	Discretionary	30.51	21.50 per hour
Extra Care Housing - Band 2 - Per Week	Discretionary	152.55	21.50 per hour
Extra Care Housing - Band 3 - Per Week	Discretionary	284.76	21.50 per hour

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Extra Care Housing - Extra Care over Band 3 - Per Hour	Discretionary	20.34	21.50
Long or Short Stay Residential - Residential Care - Per Week	Discretionary	461.82	850.00
Long or Short Stay Residential - Residential Dementia Care - Per Week	Discretionary	546.26	890.00
Long or Short Stay Residential - Nursing Care - Per Week	Discretionary	503.00	825.00
Long or Short Stay Residential - Nursing Dementia Care - Per Week	Discretionary	519.25	925.00
Long or Short Stay Residential - Block Booked Carer Respite - Per Week	Discretionary	507.00	850.00
Flat Rate Fees - Money Management Services - Per Week	Discretionary	11.00	12.00
Flat Rate Fees - Full Cost Admin Fee - Per Week	Discretionary	3.00	5.00
Flat Rate Fees - Deferred Payment Agreement Admin Fee - One-off fee	Discretionary	850.00	850.00
THE GABLES - Hire of Rooms - maximum 3 hour sessions	n/a	n/a	Building no longer in use
HONFORD HALL - Hall Hire	n/a	n/a	Building no longer in use

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
HONFORD HALL - Hall Hire - Weekdays (9.00 - 6.00) - per hour	n/a	n/a	Building no longer in use
HONFORD HALL - Hall Hire - Weekdays (Other Times) - per hour	n/a	n/a	Building no longer in use
HONFORD HALL - Hall Hire - Weekend (9.00 - 6.00) - per hour	n/a	n/a	Building no longer in use
HONFORD HALL - Hall Hire - Weekend (other times) - per hour	n/a	n/a	Building no longer in use
HONFORD HALL - Other Charges - Kitchen - Light Use	n/a	n/a	Building no longer in use
HONFORD HALL - Other Charges - Kitchen - General	n/a	n/a	Building no longer in use
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Hall Hire - Additional Hours - weekdays - day	Discretionary	14.00	17.41
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Hall Hire - Additional Hours - weekdays - evening	Discretionary	27.50	34.22
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Hall Hire - Additional Hours - weekend - day	Discretionary	20.50	25.50
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Hall Hire - Additional Hours - weekend - evening	Discretionary	47.00	58.47
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Hall Hire - Commercial Hire Charge (08.00 - 17.00)	Discretionary	225.00	279.92

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Committee Room - Additional hours (daytime) - weekdays	Discretionary	7.25	9.04
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Committee Room - Additional hours (daytime) - weekends	Discretionary	11.25	14.03
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Committee Room - Evening - per hour (min 2 hours) - Weekdays	Discretionary	11.25	14.03
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Committee Room - Evening - per hour (min 2 hours) - Weekends	Discretionary	20.50	25.50
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Other Charges - Kitchen light catering	Discretionary	7.00	8.70
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Other Charges - Kitchen full catering	Discretionary	25.50	31.73
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Other Charges - Use of Room as bar	Discretionary	62.00	77.13
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Other Charges - Stage Production	Discretionary	86.00	107.00
MACCLESFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL - Weddings - Hire of Hall for Weddings	Discretionary	250.00	308.96

Children and Families Committee

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Replacement of passes lost / damaged - Charges are set in advance of the academic year	Discretionary	15.00	Under Review
Post-16 charges - There is an annual parental contribution levied for eligible 16-19 year olds	Discretionary	450.00	Under Review
Spare / paid for seat	Discretionary	460.00	Under Review
Poynton High School scheme (for children not eligible for free school transport service)	Discretionary	700.00	Under Review
Secondary: - Per meal	Discretionary	2.53	Under Review
Primary: - Per meal	Discretionary	2.53	Under Review
Cost recovery basis = costs (tutor + venue) / number of delegates = charge per delegate (subject to minimum charge of £30)	Discretionary	30.00	Under Review
In house training – delivered in the childcare setting / Personalised training: - Salary costs per hour for staff directly delivering the service (salary costs include number of hours preparation, direct delivery and travel time). Plus Travel Expenses and Salary costs per hour for management and administration)	Discretionary	n/a	Under Review

Corporate Policy Committee

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Blue Badges	Statutory	10.00	10.00
Marriages - Marriages at Approved Premises Monday to Friday	Discretionary	625.00	650.00
Marriages - Marriages at Approved Premises Saturday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Marriages - Marriages at Approved Premises Sunday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Marriages - Marriages at Approved Premises Christmas Day and Boxing Day	Discretionary	1,035.00	1,075.00
Marriages - Marriages at Approved Premises Good Friday and Easter Monday	Discretionary	895.00	930.00
Marriages - Marriages at Approved Premises all other Bank Holidays	Discretionary	895.00	930.00
Marriages - Marriages in Mayor's Reception Room, Municipal Buildings - Weekdays	Discretionary	390.00	410.00
Marriages - Marriages in Mayor's Reception Room, Municipal Buildings - Saturdays	Discretionary	475.00	500.00
Marriages - Marriages in Silk Room, Macclesfield Town Hall - Weekdays	Discretionary	390.00	410.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Marriages - Marriages in Silk Room, Macclesfield Town Hall - Saturdays	Discretionary	475.00	500.00
Civil Partnership - Civil Partnerships at Approved Premises Monday to Friday	Discretionary	625.00	650.00
Civil Partnership - Civil Partnerships at Approved Premises Saturday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Civil Partnership - Civil Partnerships at Approved Premises Sunday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Civil Partnership - Civil Partnerships at Approved Premises Christmas Day and Boxing Day	Discretionary	1,035.00	1,075.00
Civil Partnership - Civil Partnerships at Approved Premises Good Friday and Easter Monday	Discretionary	895.00	930.00
Civil Partnership - Civil Partnerships at Approved Premises all other Bank Holidays	Discretionary	895.00	930.00
Civil Partnership - Civil Partnerships in Mayor's Reception Room, Municipal Buildings - Weekdays	Discretionary	390.00	410.00
Civil Partnership - Civil Partnerships in Mayor's Reception Room, Municipal Buildings - Saturdays	Discretionary	475.00	500.00
Civil Partnership - Civil Partnerships in Silk Room, Macclesfield Town Hall - Weekdays	Discretionary	390.00	410.00
Civil Partnership - Civil Partnerships in Silk Room, Macclesfield Town Hall - Saturdays	Discretionary	475.00	500.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Renewal of Vows - Renewal of Vows at Approved Premises Monday - Friday	Discretionary	625.00	650.00
Renewal of Vows - Renewal of Vows at Approved Premises Saturday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Renewal of Vows - Renewal of Vows at Approved Premises Sunday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Renewal of Vows - Renewal of Vows at Home or other Premises Monday - Friday	Discretionary	625.00	650.00
Renewal of Vows - Renewal of Vows at Home or other Premises Saturday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Renewal of Vows - Renewal of Vows at Home or other Premises Sunday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Renewal of Vows - Renewal of Vows in Mayor's Reception Room, Municipal Buildings - Weekdays	Discretionary	390.00	410.00
Renewal of Vows - Renewal of Vows in Mayor's Reception Room, Municipal Buildings - Saturdays	Discretionary	475.00	500.00
Renewal of Vows - Renewal of Vows in Silk Room, Macclesfield Town Hall - Weekdays	Discretionary	390.00	410.00
Renewal of Vows - Renewal of Vows in Silk Room, Macclesfield Town Hall - Saturdays	Discretionary	475.00	500.00
Celebrant Service - Celebrant Service at Approved Premises Monday - Friday	Discretionary	625.00	650.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Celebrant Service - Celebrant Service at Approved Premises Saturday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Celebrant Service - Celebrant Service at Approved Premises Sunday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Celebrant Service - Celebrant Service at Home or other Premises Monday - Friday	Discretionary	625.00	650.00
Celebrant Service - Celebrant Service at Home or other Premises Saturday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Celebrant Service - Celebrant Service at Home or other Premises Sunday	Discretionary	765.00	795.00
Celebrant Service - Celebrant Service in Mayor's Reception Room, Municipal Buildings - Weekdays	Discretionary	390.00	410.00
Celebrant Service - Celebrant Service in Mayor's Reception Room, Municipal Buildings - Saturdays	Discretionary	475.00	500.00
Celebrant Service - Celebrant Service in Silk Room, Macclesfield Town Hall - Weekdays	Discretionary	390.00	410.00
Celebrant Service - Celebrant Service in Silk Room, Macclesfield Town Hall - Saturdays	Discretionary	475.00	500.00
Premises - Approved Premises 3 year licence	Discretionary	1,800.00	1,800.00
Citizenship - Private Citizenship Ceremony - Weekday	Discretionary	100.00	100.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Citizenship - Private Citizenship Ceremony - Weekend	Discretionary	150.00	150.00
Citizenship - Private Citizenship Ceremony - per additional applicant - Weekday	Discretionary	100.00	100.00
Citizenship - Private Citizenship Ceremony - per additional applicant - Weekend	Discretionary	150.00	150.00
Citizenship - statutory fee - Group Citizenship Ceremony - per applicant (stat fee recovered from Home Office)	Statutory	80.00	80.00
Statutory Fees - Civil Partnership Notice	Statutory	35.00	35.00
Statutory Fees - Marriage Notice	Statutory	35.00	35.00
Statutory Fees - Marriage or Civil Partnership at the Register Office (includes certificate)	Statutory	57.00	57.00
Statutory Fees - Copy of birth Certificate from current Register SHORT	Statutory	11.00	11.00
Statutory Fees - Copy of birth Certificate from current Register LONG	Statutory	11.00	11.00
Statutory Fees - Copy of birth Certificate from deposited Register SHORT	Statutory	11.00	11.00
Statutory Fees - Copy of birth Certificate from deposited Register LONG	Statutory	11.00	11.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Statutory Fees - Copy of Certificate (death, marriage) from current Register	Statutory	11.00	11.00
Statutory Fees - Copy of Certificate (death, marriage) from deposited Register	Statutory	11.00	11.00
Statutory Fees - Copy of Certificate (civil partnership) ordered in advance	Statutory	11.00	11.00
Statutory Fees - Copy of Certificate (civil partnership) ordered after the date	Statutory	11.00	11.00
Statutory Fees - Registration of building for worship	Statutory	29.00	29.00
Statutory Fees - Registration of building for solemnization of marriage	Statutory	123.00	123.00
Statutory Fees - General Search (indexes)	Statutory	18.00	18.00
Statutory Fees - Attendance for Housebound notice of marriage / civil partnership	Statutory	47.00	47.00
Statutory Fees - Attendance for Housebound marriage / civil partnership	Statutory	84.00	84.00
Statutory Fees - Attendance for Detained Person notice of marriage / civil partnership	Statutory	68.00	68.00
Statutory Fees - Attendance for Detained Person marriage / civil partnership	Statutory	94.00	94.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Statutory Fees - Entering notice of marriage / civil partnership Registrar General's Licence	Statutory	3.00	3.00
Statutory Fees - Attending marriage / civil partnership by Registrar General's Licence	Statutory	2.00	2.00
Statutory Fees - Customer at fault corrections of register entry by SR (from 1.11.2017)	Statutory	75.00	75.00
Statutory Fees - Divorce / CP dissolution documentaion outside British Isles by SR (from 1.11.2017)	Statutory	50.00	50.00
Statutory Fees - Space 17 amendments (from 1.11.2017)	Statutory	40.00	40.00
Statutory Fees - Reduction of 28 day notice to marry (from 1.11.2017)	Statutory	60.00	60.00
Other Fees - Approved Premises Administration Fee	Discretionary	150.00	150.00
Other Fees - MRR and Silk Room Administration Fee	Discretionary	150.00	150.00
Other Fees - Approved Premises Second Stage Payment	Discretionary	200.00	200.00
Other Fees - MRR and Silk Room Second Stage Payment	Discretionary	110.00	110.00
Statutory Fees - Copy Certificates - Standard Service (5 working days) - Statutory Fee	Statutory	11.00	11.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Statutory Fees - Copy Certificates - Next Day Service (incl statutory fee for certificate)	Statutory	35.00	35.00
Council Tax - Summons	Discretionary	80.00	85.00
Council Tax - Liability Orders	Discretionary	80.00	85.00
Business Rates - Summons	Discretionary	80.00	85.00
Business Rates - Liability Orders	Discretionary	80.00	85.00
Electoral Register (paper and data) Reg 111(5) - Data: Admin Fee - Data: Admin Fee	Statutory	20.00	20.00
Electoral Register (paper and data) Reg 111(5) - Data: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof - Data: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof	Statutory	1.50	1.50
Electoral Register (paper and data) Reg 111(5) - Paper: Admin Fee - Paper: Admin Fee	Statutory	10.00	10.00
Electoral Register (paper and data) Reg 111(5) - Paper: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof - Paper: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof	Statutory	5.00	5.00
Open Register (paper and data) Reg 110(2) - Data: Admin Fee - Data: Admin Fee	Statutory	20.00	20.00
Open Register (paper and data) Reg 110(2) - Data: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof - Data: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof	Statutory	1.50	1.50

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Open Register (paper and data) Reg 110(2) - Paper: Admin Fee - Paper: Admin Fee	Statutory	10.00	10.00
Open Register (paper and data) Reg 110(2) - Paper: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof - Paper: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof	Statutory	5.00	5.00
Monthly Upates (Paper and data) Reg 111(5) - Data: Admin Fee - Data: Admin Fee	Statutory	20.00	20.00
Monthly Upates (Paper and data) Reg 111(5) - Data: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof - Data: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof	Statutory	1.50	1.50
Monthly Upates (Paper and data) Reg 111(5) - Paper: Admin Fee - Paper: Admin Fee	Statutory	10.00	10.00
Monthly Upates (Paper and data) Reg 111(5) - Paper: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof - Paper: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof	Statutory	5.00	5.00
Overseas List (Paper and Data) Reg 111(6) - Data: Admin Fee - Data: Admin Fee	Statutory	20.00	20.00
Overseas List (Paper and Data) Reg 111(6) - Data: Plus per 100 names or part thereof - Data: Plus per 100 names or part thereof	Statutory	1.50	1.50
Overseas List (Paper and Data) Reg 111(6) - Paper: Admin Fee - Paper: Admin Fee	Statutory	10.00	10.00
Overseas List (Paper and Data) Reg 111(6) - Paper: Plus per 100 names or part thereof - Paper: Plus per 100 names or part thereof	Statutory	5.00	5.00
Marked copies of the registers Reg 120 (2) (inclusive of marked postal vote lists) - Data: Admin Fee - Data: Admin Fee	Statutory	10.00	10.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Marked copies of the registers Reg 120 (2) (inclusive of marked postal vote lists) - Data: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof - Data: Plus per 1,000 names or part thereof	Statutory	1.00	1.00
Election expenses Reg 10 (3) - Per each side of each page - Per each side of each page	Statutory	0.20	0.20
Freehold disposals - Auctions of land - sale price up to £500k, 1% of sale price, min £1500	Discretionary	1,777.30	1,866.17
Freehold disposals - Auctions of land - sale price over £500k, 2% of sale price, min £1500	Discretionary	1,777.30	1,866.17
Freehold disposals - Sales of land - sale price under £10k	Discretionary	592.50	710.99
Freehold disposals - Sales of land - sale price over £10k, 1% of sale price, min £1000	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15
Freehold disposals - Sale of freehold reversion	Discretionary	592.41-829.38	622.03- 870.84
Freehold disposals - Conditional contracts, min £1000	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15
Leases - Leases, min £1000	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15
Leases - Leases, renewal	Discretionary	888.70	933.14
Leases - Leases, contracting out (in addition to lease fee)	Discretionary	118.48-177.72	124.40-186.60

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Leases - Agreement preceeding lease, min £1000	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15
Leases - Memo for rent review	Discretionary	118.50	124.43
Leases - Notice of dealing	Discretionary	118.50	124.43
Leases - Surrenders - simple	Discretionary	888.70	933.14
Leases - Surrenders - complex	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15
Licences - Licence to assign - simple	Discretionary	888.70	933.14
Licences - Licence to assign - complex	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15
Licences - Licence to sublet - simple	Discretionary	888.70	933.14
Licences - Licence to sublet - complex	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15
Licences - Licence to occupy	Discretionary	533.17-829.38	559.82-870.84
Licences - Licences - routine	Discretionary	533.17-829.38	559.82-870.84
Licences - Licences - market stalls and allotments	Discretionary	533.17-829.38	559.82-870.84

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Licences - Licences to occupy, tenancies at will	Discretionary	533.17-829.38	559.82-870.84
Deeds - Deed of covenant - simple	Discretionary	888.70	933.14
Deeds - Deed of covenant - complex	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15
Deeds - Deed of release - simple	Discretionary	888.70	933.14
Deeds - Deed of release - complex	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244,15
Deeds - Deed of grant - simple	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244,15
Deeds - Deed of grant - complex	Discretionary	1,481.10	1,555.15
Deeds - Deed of rectification - simple	Discretionary	888.70	933.14
Deeds - Deed of rectification - complex	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15
Deeds - Deed of variation - simple	Discretionary	888.70	933.14
Deeds - Deed of variation - complex	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Misc - Building licence - simple	Discretionary	888.70	933.14
Misc - Building licence - complex	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15
Misc - Public open space advertisements to enable disposal (excl. advert costs)	Discretionary	266.70	280.03
Misc - Wayleaves	Discretionary	414.70	435.43
Misc - Options, min £1500	Discretionary	1,777.30	1,866.16
Misc - Copies of legal documents (incl retrieval) (first page, subs pages £1 each, all plans £5 each)	Discretionary	5.92 first page then 1.18 subsequent pages plans 5.92 each	6.21 first page then 1.24 subsequent pages plans 6.21 each
Misc - Overage, min £1000	Discretionary	1,184.90	1,244.15
Misc - Development agreements - assessed individually on hourly rate	Discretionary	231.10	242.65
Misc - Other - assessed individually on hourly rate	Discretionary	231.10	242.65
Housing - Affordable housing covenants	Discretionary	414.70	435.43

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Housing - Affordable housing - cert of compliance	Discretionary	177.80	186.69
Housing - Discharge of housing act charge	Discretionary	237.00	248.85
Housing - Letter of postponement	Discretionary	177.80	186.69
Housing - Notice of postponement	Discretionary	296.20	311.11
Housing - Removal of restrictions	Discretionary	177.80	186.69
Highways - Agreements - cost recovery on hourly rate	Discretionary	231.10	242.65
Highways - Dedication agreement (incl LR fee) - cost recovery on hourly rate	Discretionary	231.10	242.65
Highways - Footpath diversion orders - cost recovery on hourly rate	Discretionary	231.10	242.65
Highways - S278/s38 agreements (min, plus hourly rate for complex matters)	Discretionary	1,481.10	1,599.58
Highways - Building over agreements (S177 Highways Act) - cost recovery on hourly rate	Discretionary	231.10	242.65

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Highways - Stopping up applications (min, plus hourly rate)	Discretionary	231.10	242.65
Prosecutions - Private prosecutions, criminal and civil - hourly rate plus court fees	Discretionary	231.10	242.65
Planning - S106 agreements (hourly rate)	Discretionary	231.10	242.65
Academy conversions - Cost recovery on hourly rate	Discretionary	231.10	242.65
Hourly rate	Discretionary	231.10	242.65
FOI Requests – Reasonable fee for disbursements (supply of paper copies per sheet, plus postage actual postage cost)	Statutory	0.10	0.12
Re-Use of Datasets – Reasonable fee depending on the cost to the local authority to produce the dataset	Statutory	No fixed fee	No fixed fee
Subject Access Requests – Reasonable fee for manifestly unfounded or excessive (repeated) - requests based per sheet, plus actual postage cost	Statutory	0.10	0.12
CCTV Footage - Per Review (plus VAT). Income is split 50/50 between Compliance & Customer Relations and CCTV Unit	Discretionary	60.00	66.00
CCTV Footage - Per Copy on CD (plus VAT). Income is split 50/50 between Compliance & Customer Relations and CCTV Unit	Discretionary	60.00	66.00

Economy and Growth Committee

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Home improvement Agency fees for grants and loans 10% - minimum charge	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Private sector housing loan fees 7.5% - minimum charge	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Immigration Inspections	Discretionary	110.00	117.00
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Advisory / consultation appointments for HMO licences	Discretionary	110.00	117.00
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Aborted HMO licence appointments	Discretionary	110.00	117.00
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Floor plan layouts for Houses in Multiple Occupation licence applications - £101 for up to 5 units, £11 per additional unit	Discretionary	117.00	124.50
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Home Improvement Agency fee for private works - utilisation of framework contracts	Discretionary	233.00	248.00
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Home Improvement Agency fees for private works - design stage for works up to £10,000	Discretionary	175.00	186.00
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Home Improvement Agency fees for private works - design stage for works £10,001 to £20,000	Discretionary	292.00	311.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Home Improvement Agency fees for private works - design stage for works £20,001 to £35,001	Discretionary	408.00	434.00
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Home Improvement Agency fees for private works - design stage for works £20,001 to £35,001	Discretionary	525.00	558.50
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Home Improvement Agency fees for private works - detail stage for works up to £10,000	Discretionary	292.00	311.00
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Home Improvement Agency fees for private works - detail stage for works £10,001 to £20,000	Discretionary	350.00	372.50
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Home Improvement Agency fees for private works - detail stage for works £20,001 to £35,001	Discretionary	466.00	496.00
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Home Improvement Agency fees for private works - detail stage for works £20,001 to £35,001	Discretionary	582.00	619.00
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - Home Improvement Agency fees for private works - construction stage 5% - minimum charge	Discretionary	233.00	248.00
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - ECO 4 Flexible Eligibility Contractor Registration	Discretionary	350.00	372.50
Discretionary Private Sector Housing Functions - ECO 4 Flexible Eligibility Declaration	Discretionary	100.00	106.50
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - Service of Hazard Awareness Notice	Discretionary	378.00	402.00
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - Service of Improvement Order	Discretionary	378.00	402.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - Service of Prohibition Order	Discretionary	378.00	402.00
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - Service of Emergency Prohibition Order	Discretionary	378.00	402.00
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - Service of Demolition Order	Discretionary	570.00	606.50
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - Service of Emergency Remedial Action Order	Discretionary	378.00	402.00
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - Review of Suspended Improvement / Prohibition Order	Discretionary	150.00	159.50
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - House in Multiple Occupation 5 year Licence - 5 to 6 units	Discretionary	944.00	1,004.50
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - House in Multiple Occupation 5 year Licence - 7 to 12 units	Discretionary	1,002.00	1,066.00
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - House in Multiple Occupation Licence - 13 to 20 units	Discretionary	1,084.00	1,153.50
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - House in Multiple Occupation Licence - 21+ units	Discretionary	1,153.00	1,227.00
Statutory Private Sector Housing Functions - Copy of HMO Public Register	Discretionary	83.00	88.50

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Astbury Marsh Caravan Site - Plot fees for Astbury Marsh Caravan Site (varies by size of plot)	Discretionary	Various, between £28.02 and £35.56 averaging £31.79	Various, between £29.81 and £37.84, averaging £33.82
Roe Street Hostel - Emergency accommodation - 1 hostel and 2 dispersed units - Family unit charges	Discretionary	349.84	373.00
Roe Street Hostel - Emergency accommodation - 1 hostel and 2 dispersed units - Shared Facilities Charges	Discretionary	167.26	178.00
Roe Street Hostel - Service charges	Discretionary	15.00	21.00
Roe Street Hostel - Emergency accommodation - 1 hostel and 2 dispersed units - Electricity	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Self Build Fees - Fee for entry onto the Council's Self Build Register for Part 1 and Part 2 (from 31/10/17)	Discretionary	27.60	29.00
Crewe Municipal Buildings - Room Hire (hourly rate) - East/West Committee Room - weekdays	Discretionary	43.00	47.00
Crewe Municipal Buildings - Room Hire (hourly rate) - East/West Committee Room - Evening (after 5pm) and Weekends	Discretionary	54.00	59.00
Crewe Municipal Buildings - Room Hire (hourly rate) - Committee Room 3 - weekdays	Discretionary	32.00	35.00
Crewe Municipal Buildings - Room Hire (hourly rate) - Council Chamber - weekdays	Discretionary	71.00	78.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Crewe Municipal Buildings - Room Hire (hourly rate) - Council Chamber - evening (after 5pm) and weekends	Discretionary	83.00	91.00
Crewe Municipal Buildings - Room Hire (hourly rate) - Committee Room 3 - evening (after 5pm) and weekends	Discretionary	42.00	46.00
Crewe Municipal Buildings - Room Hire (hourly rate) - Day rate - East/West Committee Room - Weekdays	Discretionary	287.00	316.00
Crewe Municipal Buildings - Room Hire (hourly rate) - Day rate - Council Chamber - Weekdays	Discretionary	383.00	421.00
Crewe Municipal Buildings - Room Hire (hourly rate) - Day rate - East/West Committee Room - Weekends	Discretionary	500.00	550.00
Crewe Municipal Buildings - Room Hire (hourly rate) - Day rate - Council Chamber - Weekends	Discretionary	596.00	656.00
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Weekdays - daytime per hour - Capesthorne Room	Discretionary	60.00	66.00
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Weekdays - daytime per hour - Assembly Room	Discretionary	71.00	78.00
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Weekdays - daytime per hour - Council Chamber	Discretionary	60.00	66.00
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Weekdays - daytime per hour - Silk Room	Discretionary	54.00	59.00
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Weekdays - daytime per hour - Board Room (minimum two hour hire)	Discretionary	n/a	n/a

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Weekend/Evening (after 5pm) per hour (minimum two hour hire) - Capesthorne Room	Discretionary	83.00	91.00
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Weekend/Evening (after 5pm) per hour (minimum two hour hire) - Assembly Room (incl bar area)	Discretionary	96.00	106.00
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Weekend/Evening (after 5pm) per hour (minimum two hour hire) - Council Chamber	Discretionary	83.00	91.00
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Weekend/Evening (after 5pm) per hour (minimum two hour hire) - Silk Room	Discretionary	78.00	86.00
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Weekend/Evening (after 5pm) per hour (minimum two hour hire) - Board Room (minimum two hour hire)	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Use of kitchen with room hire	Discretionary	48.00	53.00
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Capesthorne/Silk Room/Council Chamber - Day rate - Monday/Friday - 9am - 5pm	Discretionary	417.00	459.00
Macclesfield Town Hall - Room Hire (minimum charge £50) - Capesthorne/Silk Room/Council Chamber - Day rate - Saturday/Sunday - 9am - 5pm	Discretionary	596.00	656.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Highways Act 1980 Public Path Order (e.g. Diversion) (Total admin) (plus 2 adverts and works on which VAT is payable)	Statutory	5,410.00	5,760.00
1st instalment - from application to determination	Statutory	2,070.00	2,205.00
2nd instalment - Order making to post-confirmation	Statutory	3,340.00	3,555.00
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Public Path Order (e.g. Diversion) - Single Property / Mineral application (Total admin) (plus 2 adverts and works on which VAT is payable)	Statutory	5,795.00	6,170.00
1st instalment - from application to determination	Statutory	2,235.00	2,380.00
2nd instalment - Order making to post-confirmation	Statutory	3,560.00	3,790.00
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Public Path Order (e.g. Diversion) Multiple Properties (Total admin) (plus 2 adverts and works on which VAT is payable)	Statutory	6,405.00	6,820.00
1st instalment - from application to determination	Statutory	2,675.00	2,850.00
2nd instalment - Order making to post-confirmation	Statutory	3,730.00	3,970.00
Temporary Closures (fees exclude posting of notices on site) - 6 month temporary closure order	Statutory	420.00	450.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Temporary Closures (fees exclude posting of notices on site) - 3 day event closure order	Statutory	420.00	450.00
Temporary Closures (fees exclude posting of notices on site) - 5 day or 21 day temporary closure or extension	Statutory	165.00	180.00
Temporary Closures (fees exclude posting of notices on site) - Motor event temporary closure	Statutory	220.00	235.00
Temporary Closures (fees exclude posting of notices on site) - Extension to 6 month closure requiring Secretary of State approval	Statutory	330.00	355.00
Searches	Statutory	105.00	115.00
Highways Act 1980 S31(6) deposits and statements on behalf of landowner applicants: - Deposited statement and plan with consecutive statutory declaration	Statutory	350.00	375.00
Highways Act 1980 S31(6) deposits and statements on behalf of landowner applicants: - A statutory declaration relating to a current, valid statement and plan	Statutory	175.00	190.00
Meetings/site visits at request of developers/landowners and site notice posting . Rate per Officer per hour plus mileage	Statutory	60.00	65.00
Enforcement cost recovery. Rate per Officer per hour plus mileage, plus any contractor and police fees	Statutory	60.00	65.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Country Parks - Commercial Hire of Recreation Grounds (commercial operation / fair / circus). Fee per operational day and each set up / take down days. (see Note: III) - Commercial Hire of Recreation Grounds (commercial operation / fair / circus). Fee per operational day and each set up / take down days. (see Note: III)	Discretionary	409.00	435.00
Country Parks - Commercial Hire of Park, i.e. where user applies an entrance charge. (Applicable to 1,000 persons attending, then the same amount per additional 1,000 up to 2,999 people.) (See Note: I)	Discretionary	192.00	204.00
Country Parks - Deposit - returnable if site left in undamaged and tidy condition. (See Note: II)	Discretionary	686.00	730.00
Country Parks - Large Scale Events such as Firework displays chargeable at gate, above 3,000 attending. Applies to Commercial, Community and Charity organisations	Discretionary	686.00	730.00
Country Parks - Low Users - Chargeable Activities. (Fitness Classes) - Per day, max 10 sessions, then subject to review (less than 49 users)	Discretionary	16.70	17.80
Country Parks - Site hire (smaller events) such as smaller community events	Discretionary	59.00	62.80
Country Parks - Small scale non profit events	Discretionary	% donation to 'Friends' or for use at specific facility	% donation to 'Friends' or for use at specific facility

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Country Parks - Deposit for site restoration	Discretionary	191.00	203.00
Country Parks - Reinstatement works and clean up if required will be charged at £30 per hour plus the cost of any materials required	Discretionary	43.00	46.00
Country Parks - Canoe permits at Brereton Heath Local Nature Reserve. (See Note IV)	Discretionary	12.40	13.20
Car Parking - Teggs Nose Country Park - 0.5 - 1 Hours - Monday - Sunday	Discretionary	1.20	1.30
Car Parking - Teggs Nose Country Park - 1 - 3 Hours - Monday - Sunday	Discretionary	2.30	2.50
Car Parking - Teggs Nose Country Park - 3 - 10 Hours - Monday - Sunday	Discretionary	3.50	3.70
Car Parking - Teggs Nose Country Park - Season Ticket	Discretionary	44.00	47.00
Car Parking - Brereton Heath Local Nature Reserve - 0 - 1 Hour - Monday - Sunday	Discretionary	1.20	1.30
Car Parking - Brereton Heath Local Nature Reserve - 1 - 3 Hours - Monday - Sunday	Discretionary	2.30	2.50
Car Parking - Brereton Heath Local Nature Reserve - 3 - 10 Hours - Monday - Sunday	Discretionary	3.50	3.70
Car Parking - Brereton Heath Local Nature Reserve - Season Ticket approved clubs	Discretionary	32.30	34.40

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Car Parking - Brereton Heath Local Nature Reserve - Season Ticket	Discretionary	50.00	53.20
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Visitor Centre - 0 - 1 Hour - Monday	Discretionary	1.20	1.30
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Visitor Centre - 1 - 3 Hours - Monday - Sunday	Discretionary	2.30	2.50
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Visitor Centre - 3 - 10 Hours - Monday - Sunday	Discretionary	3.50	3.70
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 1 day	Discretionary	3.50	3.70
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 2 day	Discretionary	6.90	7.30
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 3 day	Discretionary	10.50	11.20
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 4 day	Discretionary	13.90	14.80
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 5 day	Discretionary	17.40	18.50
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 6 day	Discretionary	20.80	22.10
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 7 day	Discretionary	24.30	25.90

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 8 day	Discretionary	27.70	29.50
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 9 day	Discretionary	31.10	33.50
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 10 day	Discretionary	34.70	37.00
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 11 day	Discretionary	38.00	40.40
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 12 day	Discretionary	41.60	44.30
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 13 day	Discretionary	45.00	47.90
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 14 day	Discretionary	48.50	51.60
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 15 day	Discretionary	52.00	55.30
Car Parking - Nelson Pit Day Tickets - 16 day	Discretionary	55.40	59.00
Car Parking - Season ticket for Nelson Pit, Teggs Nose and Brereton Heath LNR	Discretionary	69.00	73.40
Car Parking - Limited number (5) of permits for residents meeting Council's Residents Parking Policy	Discretionary	61.10	65.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Totally Tatton Tickets - Adult	Discretionary	14.00	Under Review
Totally Tatton Tickets - Child	Discretionary	8.00	Under Review
Totally Tatton Tickets - Family weekly Pass One Adult	Discretionary	25.00	Under Review
Totally Tatton Tickets - Family weekly Pass two Adults	Discretionary	35.00	Under Review
Totally Tatton Tickets - Group adult Single Attraction	Discretionary	7.00	Under Review
Totally Tatton Tickets - Group Child Single Attraction	Discretionary	5.00	Under Review
Totally Tatton Tickets - Group Day Ticket Adult	Discretionary	11.00	Under Review
Totally Tatton Tickets - Group Day Ticket Children	Discretionary	6.00	Under Review
Attractions - Mansion - National Trust members	Discretionary	Free	Under Review
Attractions - Mansion - Adult	Discretionary	8.00	Under Review
Attractions - Mansion - Child	Discretionary	6.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Attractions - Mansion - Group Adult	Discretionary	7.00	Under Review
Attractions - Mansion - Group Child	Discretionary	5.00	Under Review
Attractions - Mansion - Guided Tours - up to group of 25 - Weekdays	Discretionary	85.00	Under Review
Attractions - Mansion - Guided Tours - up to group of 25 - Weekends	Discretionary	105.00	Under Review
Attractions - Mansion - Special Interest Guided Tours - Guide Cost - Weekdays up to 25	Discretionary	110.00	Under Review
Attractions - Mansion - Special Interest Guided Tours - Guide Cost - Weekends up to 25	Discretionary	130.00	Under Review
Attractions - Mansion - Family One Adult	Discretionary	15.00	Under Review
Attractions - Mansion - Family Two Adults	Discretionary	21.00	Under Review
Attractions - Garden - National Trust members and RHS members	Discretionary	Free	Under Review
Attractions - Garden - Adult	Discretionary	8.00	Under Review
Attractions - Garden - Child	Discretionary	6.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Attractions - Garden - Group Adult	Discretionary	7.00	Under Review
Attractions - Garden - Group Child	Discretionary	5.00	Under Review
Attractions - Garden - Guided Tours - up to group of 25 - Weekdays	Discretionary	85.00	Under Review
Attractions - Garden - Guided Tours - up to group of 25 - Weekends	Discretionary	105.00	Under Review
Attractions - Garden - Special Interest Japanese Garden Guided Tours - Guide Cost - Weekdays up to 15	Discretionary	110.00	Under Review
Attractions - Garden - Special Interest Guided Japanese Garden Guided Tours - Guide Cost - Weekends up to 15	Discretionary	130.00	Under Review
Attractions - Garden - Family One Adult	Discretionary	15.00	Under Review
Attractions - Garden - Family Two Adults	Discretionary	21.00	Under Review
Attractions - Garden - Walk Up Japanese Garden Tour	Discretionary	5.00	Under Review
Attractions - Old Hall - Group Adult	Discretionary	7.00	Under Review
Attractions - Old Hall - Group Child	Discretionary	5.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Attractions - Old Hall - Guided Tours - Up to group of 25 - weekdays	Discretionary	260.00	Under Review
Attractions - Old Hall - Guided Tours - Up to group of 25 - weekends	Discretionary	350.00	Under Review
Attractions - Farm - Adult	Discretionary	8.00	Under Review
Attractions - Farm - Adult - National Trust member	Discretionary	8.00	Under Review
Attractions - Farm - Child	Discretionary	6.00	Under Review
Attractions - Farm - Child - National Trust member	Discretionary	6.00	Under Review
Attractions - Farm - Family	Discretionary	21.00	Under Review
Attractions - Farm - Family - National Trust member	Discretionary	21.00	Under Review
Attractions - Farm - Group Adult (per person)	Discretionary	7.00	Under Review
Attractions - Farm - Group Child (per person)	Discretionary	5.00	Under Review
Attractions - Farm - Single Adult Family Ticket	Discretionary	15.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Attractions - Farm - Two Adults Family Ticket	Discretionary	21.00	Under Review
Attractions - Farm - Special Interest Farm tours - Weekdays	Discretionary	110.00	Under Review
Attractions - Farm - Special Interest Farm tours - Weekends	Discretionary	130.00	Under Review
Park Entry - Cars, Motor Cycles, Horse Drawn Vehicles	Discretionary	9.50	Under Review
Park Entry - Horse & Rider	Discretionary	8.00	Under Review
Park Entry - Disabled Cars, etc	Discretionary	4.00	Under Review
Park Entry - Annual Season	Discretionary	160.00	Under Review
Park Entry - Disabled Annual Season	Discretionary	80.00	Under Review
Park Entry - Quarterly Season	Discretionary	80.00	Under Review
Park Entry - Monthly Season	Discretionary	56.00	Under Review
Tatton Garden Society (TGS) Members	Discretionary	7.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Sailing - Annual Permit	Discretionary	50.00	Under Review
Sailing - Full Day (without permit)	Discretionary	25.00	Under Review
Sailing - Full Day (with permit)	Discretionary	12.50	Under Review
Sailing - After 15.00 (without permit)	Discretionary	12.50	Under Review
Sailing - After 15.00 (with permit)	Discretionary	7.00	Under Review
Fishing - Adult	Discretionary	10.00	Under Review
Fishing - Child	Discretionary	6.00	Under Review
Grant of new lease/tenancy – commercial	Discretionary	Minimum of £900 or 10% of the first year rent whichever is the greater	Minimum of £900 or 10% of the first year rent whichever is the greater
Renewal of existing lease/tenancy - commercial	Discretionary	Minimum of £900 or 10% of the first year rent whichever is the greater	Minimum of £900 or 10% of the first year rent whichever is the greater

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Grant of new lease/tenancy - other	Discretionary	Minimum of £900 or 10% of the first year rent whichever is the greater	Minimum of £900 or 10% of the first year rent whichever is the greater
Renewal of an existing lease/tenancy - other	Discretionary	Minimum of £900 or 10% of the first year rent whichever is the greater	Minimum of £900 or 10% of the first year rent whichever is the greater
Disposals at less than market value	Discretionary	Discretionary or as per below at MV	Discretionary or as per below at MV
Disposals at market value; £0 - £100,000	Discretionary	Minimum of £900 or 1.5% of the Capital Value (up to a maximum of £5,000)	Minimum of £900 or 1.5% of the Capital Value (up to a maximum of £5,000)
Disposals at market value; over £100,000	Discretionary	Minimum of £1,100 or 1.5% of the Capital Value (up to a maximum of £10,000)	Minimum of £1,100 or 1.5% of the Capital Value (up to a maximum of £10,000)
Disposals at Auction	Discretionary	Buyer's premium - minimum of £5,100 or 3% of the capital value whichever is the greater	Buyer's premium - minimum of £5,100 or 3% of the capital value whichever is the greater

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Grant of an easement	Discretionary	Minimum of £850 or 1.5% of the Capital Value (up to a maximum of £10,000)	Minimum of £850 or 1.5% of the Capital Value (up to a maximum of £10,000)
Grant of licence – commercial	Discretionary	450.00	450.00
Grant of licence – other including events	Discretionary	450.00	450.00
Assignment – commercial	Discretionary	10% of passing rent subject to a minimum of £900.00 whichever is the greater plus 2.5% of any premium agreed (up to a maximum of £5,000)	10% of passing rent subject to a minimum of £900.00 whichever is the greater plus 2.5% of any premium agreed (up to a maximum of £5,000)
Surrender - commercial	Discretionary	£500 or 1.5% of the Capital Value whichever is the greater	£500 or 1.5% of the Capital Value whichever is the greater
Option Agreements - commercial	Discretionary	£900 or 2.5% of the Capital Value (up to	£900 or 2.5% of the Capital Value (up to

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
		a maximum of £10,000)	a maximum of £10,000)
Deed of Variation - commercial	Discretionary	£900 or 2.5% of the Capital Value (up to a maximum of £10,000)	£900 or 2.5% of the Capital Value (up to a maximum of £10,000)
Letter of consent e.g. alterations, Indemnity Letters	Discretionary	£200 or Discretionary	£200 or Discretionary
Assignment/surrender/deed of variation/letter of consent - other	Discretionary	£200 or Discretionary	£200 or Discretionary
Public Open Space Adverts	Discretionary	£1,000 plus VAT (if applicable) exact costs will vary due to specific requirement and location	£1,000 plus VAT (if applicable) exact costs will vary due to specific requirement and location
Grant of Wayleave	Discretionary	700.00	700.00
Supply of plans/copy leases to external Solicitors/Agents/3rd parties	Discretionary	75.00	75.00

Environment and Communities Committee

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Special Collection (vehicle, driver & loader - assume 1/2 tonne collected) - per hour	Discretionary	Commercial activity price on request	Commercial activity price on request
Hire of Mechanical Sweeping Vehicle (Vehicle & driver per hour, min 2 hours incl disposal of waste)	Discretionary	Commercial activity price on request	Commercial activity price on request
Schedule 2 waste collections (per lift, per bin)	Discretionary	Commercial activity price on request	Commercial activity price on request
Refuse Charges - domestic collections - Collection of bulky domestic items (3 max)	Discretionary	45.60	47.88
Refuse Charges - domestic collections - Collection of bulky domestic items (6 max)	Discretionary	90.60	95.13
Refuse Charges - domestic collections - Collection of bulky domestic items (3 max) - Concessionary Rate - Note: Persons receiving one of the following benefits qualify for a concessionary rate: Income Support, Income based Job Seekers Allowance, Council Tax Support, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit (from October 2013), Personal Independence Payment, Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance (from 2014) and Armed Forces Independence Payment	Discretionary	29.80	31.29
Garden Waste Subscription per bin annualy Jan - Dec of part of	Discretionary	56.00	56.00
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary	Discretionary		

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - 360 litre - residual (black) bin	Discretionary	45.60	47.88
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - 240 litre - residual (black) bin	Discretionary	33.90	35.60
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - 240 litre - recycling (silver) bin	Discretionary	33.90	35.60
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - 240 litre - garden bin	Discretionary	33.90	35.60
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - 240 litre - garden (green/brown) bin to now include a food caddy	Discretionary	36.10	37.91
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - 140 litre - residual bin	Discretionary	28.50	29.93
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - Exchange of any bins - for a different size	Discretionary	Dependent on bin	Dependent on bin
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - Concessionary rate for 360 litre - residual (black) bin. 25% reduction - Note: Persons receiving one of the following benefits qualify for a concessionary rate: Income Support, Income based Job Seekers Allowance, Council Tax Support, Housing	Discretionary	35.10	36.86

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Benefit, Universal Credit (from October 2013), Personal Independence Payment, Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance (from 2014) and Armed Forces Independence Payment.			
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - Concessionary rate for 240 litre - residual (black) bin. 25% reduction - Note: Persons receiving one of the following benefits qualify for a concessionary rate: Income Support, Income based Job Seekers Allowance, Council Tax Support, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit (from October 2013), Personal Independence Payment, Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance (from 2014) and Armed Forces Independence Payment.	Discretionary	23.30	24.47
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - Concessionary rate for 240 litre - garden (green/brown) bin, recycling (silver) bin. 25% reduction - Note: Persons receiving one of the following benefits qualify for a concessionary rate: Income Support, Income based Job Seekers Allowance, Council Tax Support, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit (from October 2013), Personal Independence Payment, Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance (from 2014) and Armed Forces Independence Payment.	Discretionary	23.30	24.47
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - Concessionary rate for 140 litre - residual bin. 25% reduction - Note: Persons receiving one of the following benefits qualify for a concessionary rate: Income Support, Income based Job Seekers Allowance, Council Tax Support, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit (from October 2013), Personal Independence Payment,	Discretionary	19.40	20.37

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance (from 2014) and Armed Forces Independence Payment.			
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - Exchange of any bins - for a different size	Discretionary	Dependent on bin	Dependent on bin
Charging all residents for new or replacement kerbside bins, price dependent on size and whether concessionary - Charge for redelivery of bin if ordered and attempted to deliver prior to residency	Discretionary	21.40	22.47
HWRC charges - rubble/construction waste	Discretionary	3.70	3.89
Fleet Management - MOT for Private Vehicle - Note: Maximum charge set by Department of Transport but still requires Portfolio Holder approval	Discretionary	Maximum charge set by DoT	Maximum charge set by DoT
CONGLETON RETAIL MARKET - Shop style trading units - Tuesday: smaller size units	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
CONGLETON RETAIL MARKET - Shop style trading units - Tuesday: medium size units	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
CONGLETON RETAIL MARKET - Shop style trading units - Tuesday: larger size units	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
CONGLETON RETAIL MARKET - Shop style trading units - Saturdays: smaller size units	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
CONGLETON RETAIL MARKET - Shop style trading units - Saturday: medium size units	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
CONGLETON RETAIL MARKET - Shop style trading units - Saturday: larger size units	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
CONGLETON RETAIL MARKET - Outdoor traders - Tuesday: permanent traders	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
CONGLETON RETAIL MARKET - Outdoor traders - Saturday: permanent traders	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
CONGLETON RETAIL MARKET - Sunday car boot sale - per half table	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
CONGLETON RETAIL MARKET - Electricity recharge of trader usage - per unit	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
MACCLESFIELD RETAIL MARKET - Shop style trading units - Area A+ rent & service charge per sq foot per annum	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
MACCLESFIELD RETAIL MARKET - Shop style trading units - Area A rent & service charge per sq foot per annum	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
MACCLESFIELD RETAIL MARKET - Shop style trading units - Area B rent & service charge per sq foot per annum	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
MACCLESFIELD RETAIL MARKET - Shop style trading units - Area C rent & service charge per sq foot per annum	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
MACCLESFIELD RETAIL MARKET - Stall rental - Outdoor stalls - per stall per day Tuesday, Friday, Saturday)	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
MACCLESFIELD RETAIL MARKET - Electricity recharges - recharge of trader usage - per unit	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
WILMSLOW RETAIL MARKET - Stall rental - Outdoor stalls - per stall	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP - Banks Square, Wilmslow - Friday only reduced rate	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP - Banks Square, Wilmslow - Daily rate (excluding Fridays)	Discretionary	Under Review	Under Review
Cremation Fees - Adult - anytime of day excluding 9.20am and 3.20pm	Discretionary	950.00	997.50
Cremation Fees - Adult - 9.20am Cremation	Discretionary	738.00	774.90
Cremation Fees - Adult - 3.20pm Cremation	Discretionary	950.00	997.50
Cremation Fees - Child under 16yrs (cremation only) 9.20 slot	Discretionary	395.00	414.75
Cremation Fees - Surcharge for after hours cremation (e.g. Saturday AM)	Discretionary	991.00	1,040.55
Cremation Fees - Medical Referee (subject to national agreement)	Discretionary	35.00	36.75
Cremation Fees - Removal of cremated remains (incl. certificate and suitable container)	Discretionary	66.00	69.30
Cremation Fees - Witness of cremated remains	Discretionary	66.00	69.30

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Cremation Fees - Placement of cremated remains from other Crematoria	Discretionary	66.00	69.30
Cremation Fees - Cremation certificate	Discretionary	12.00	12.60
Cremation Fees - Storage of cremated remains per month to be applied after 28 days	Discretionary	49.00	51.45
Cremation Fees - Exhumation of cremated remains	Discretionary	275.00	288.75
Cremation Fees - Cremated remains collected within 24 hours of cremation	Discretionary	66.00	69.30
Cremation Fees - Service over-runs	Discretionary	311.00	326.55
Burial Fees - Class "A" Exclusive Right of Burial for a standard grave - (incl. right to erect a memorial)	Discretionary	1,434.00	1,505.70
Burial Fees - Class "A" Exclusive Right of Burial for a standard grave - (incl. right to erect a memorial) - Non Resident	Discretionary	2,868.00	3,011.40
Burial Fees - Children's Areas (incl. memorial and either burial or cremation of an infant)	Discretionary	955.00	1,002.75
Burial Fees - Children's Areas Tribute Plaques	Discretionary	132.00	138.60
Burial Fees - Exclusive Right of Burial for a standard grave - up to 4 caskets (incl. right to erect a memorial)	Discretionary	669.00	702.45

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Burial Fees - Exclusive Right of Burial for a standard grave - up to 2 caskets (incl. right to erect a memorial)	Discretionary	472.00	495.60
Burial Fees - Exclusive Right of Burial for a standard grave - single plot - 1 casket (incl. right to erect a memorial)	Discretionary	288.00	302.40
Burial Fees - Renewal of Right of Burial	Discretionary	764.00	802.20
Burial Fees - 1st depth for a standard grave - Macclesfield; Congleton	Discretionary	1,250.00	1,312.50
Burial Fees - 2nd depth for a standard grave - Macclesfield; Congleton, 1st Crewe & Nantwich	Discretionary	1,124.00	1,180.20
Burial Fees - 3rd depth for a standard grave - Macclesfield; Congleton, 2nd Crewe & Nantwich	Discretionary	1,000.00	1,050.00
Burial Fees - Insufficient room for interment following a request to re-open grave	Discretionary	264.00	277.20
Burial Fees - Internment of Cremated Remains in a wooden casket	Discretionary	275.00	288.75
Burial Fees - Internment of Cremated Remains in a plot space	Discretionary	275.00	288.75
Burial Fees - Internment of Cremated Remains in a vault / kerb	Discretionary	160.00	168.00
Burial Fees - Right of Burial for cremated remains cremation plot - Non Resident	Discretionary	1,266.00	1,329.30

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Burial Fees - Right of Burial for cremated remains in Wall of Remembrance - Macclesfield	Discretionary	645.00	677.25
General Fees - Supply of wooden casket for cremated remains	Discretionary	96.00	100.80
General Fees - Temporary Cross (maximum 12 months)	Discretionary	60.00	63.00
General Fees - Unauthorised Temporary Cross	Discretionary	210.00	220.50
General Fees - Use of Chapel only	Discretionary	263.00	276.15
General Fees - Grave Selection where applicable	Discretionary	96.00	100.80
General Fees - Copy deed for right of burial	Discretionary	60.00	63.00
General Fees - Transfer of ownership	Discretionary	66.00	69.30
General Fees - Extract from Register per single grave space	Discretionary	Free	Free
General Fees - Search fee if year unknown per deceased person	Discretionary	12.00	12.60
General Fees - Papers not received in accordance with rules and regulations	Discretionary	66.00	69.30

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
General Fees - Incorrect coffin size - for burial purposes	Discretionary	144.00	151.20
General Fees - Late arrival of burials - applies after 15 minutes	Discretionary	263.00	276.15
General Fees - Environmental Surcharge	Discretionary	80.00	84.00
General Fees - Use of Wesley Music System for music during service	Discretionary	42.00	44.10
Memorials - Right for every additional inscription on headstone, tomb or monument	Discretionary	66.00	69.30
Memorial Kerbs - Renewal of kerb stone and vase	Discretionary	216.00	226.80
Book of Remembrance - Two line entry	Discretionary	102.00	107.10
Book of Remembrance - Each additional line	Discretionary	25.00	26.25
Book of Remembrance - Five line entry	Discretionary	169.00	177.45
Book of Remembrance - Eight line entry	Discretionary	236.00	247.80
Book of Remembrance - Floral emblem (only with min 5 line entry)	Discretionary	118.00	123.90

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Book of Remembrance - Non-floral emblem (only available with minimum 5 line entry)	Discretionary	149.00	156.45
Children's Book of Remembrance - Two line entry	Discretionary	102.00	107.10
Children's Book of Remembrance - Each additional line	Discretionary	25.00	26.25
Children's Book of Remembrance - Five line entry	Discretionary	169.00	177.45
Children's Book of Remembrance - Illustration - Teddy / Cherub etc	Discretionary	96.00	100.80
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Sanctum Ashes vault - 25 year lease (incl. inscription)	Discretionary	1,080.00	1,134.00
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Sanctum Ashes vault - 50 year lease (incl. inscription)	Discretionary	1,557.00	1,634.85
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Sanctum Ashes vault - replacement plaque	Discretionary	217.00	227.85
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Sanctum Ashes vault - additional inscription	Discretionary	150.00	157.50
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Sanctum Ashes vault - additional motif	Discretionary	72.00	75.60
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Sanctum Ashes vault - photo plaque	Discretionary	152.00	159.60

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Granite Benches	Discretionary	POA	POA
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Granite Boulder - 10 year lease (incl. inscription)	Discretionary	627.00	658.35
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Granite Book plaque - 10 year lease (incl.inscription)	Discretionary	257.00	269.85
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Butterfly Garden plaque (Sandbach Cemetery) - 10 year lease (incl.inscription)	Discretionary	627.00	658.35
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Formal Garden Tower plaque - 10 year lease (incl. inscription)	Discretionary	197.00	206.85
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Formal Garden Kerbstone - 25 year lease (incl. inscription)	Discretionary	746.00	783.30
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Formal Garden Columbarium - 10 year lease (incl. inscription)	Discretionary	442.00	464.10
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Granite Tablet - 10 year lease (incl. inscription)	Discretionary	575.00	603.75
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Sandstone Kerbstone - 25 year lease (incl. inscription)	Discretionary	650.00	682.50
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - ARK Kerbstone - 10 year lease (incl. inscription)	Discretionary	300.00	315.00
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Woodland Tower plaque	Discretionary	285.00	299.25

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Double Columbarium niche (up to 4 sets of ashes) - 25 year lease	Discretionary	1,015.00	1,065.75
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Single Columbarium niche (up to 2 sets of ashes) - 25 year lease	Discretionary	508.00	533.40
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Leather Recordia panel	Discretionary	227.00	238.35
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Tree of Memories	Discretionary	171.00	179.55
Memorial Garden of Remembrance - Wall of Remembrance	Discretionary	627.00	658.35
Home Safety Handyperson Scheme - (Note: this charge was previously listed under Housing but the service is now provided by Orbitas.)	Discretionary	37.00	38.85
GRASS SOCCER PITCHES - Sites with changing includes line marking - Adult - per team per season	Discretionary	680.83	714.87
GRASS SOCCER PITCHES - Sites with changing includes line marking - Junior - per team per season	Discretionary	430.54	452.07
GRASS SOCCER PITCHES - Sites without changing includes line marking - Adult - per season	Discretionary	557.23	585.09
GRASS SOCCER PITCHES - Sites without changing includes line marking - Junior - per season	Discretionary	310.03	325.53
GRASS SOCCER PITCHES - Sites without changing includes line marking - Per match charge with changing	Discretionary	64.89	68.13

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
GRASS SOCCER PITCHES - Sites without changing includes line marking - Per match charge without changing	Discretionary	57.68	60.56
GRASS SOCCER PITCHES - Sites without changing includes line marking - Pitch overmarking included in season charge	Discretionary	189.52	199.00
RUGBY - Sites with changing includes line marking - Adult -per team per season	Discretionary	772.50	811.13
RUGBY - Sites with changing includes line marking - Junior - per team per season	Discretionary	515.00	540.75
RUGBY - Sites with changing includes line marking - Per match charge with changing - Adult - per game	Discretionary	64.89	68.13
RUGBY - Sites without changing includes line marking - Adult - per team per season	Discretionary	630.36	661.88
RUGBY - Sites without changing includes line marking - Junior - per team per season	Discretionary	400.67	420.70
RUGBY - Sites without changing includes line marking - Per match charge without changing - Junior - per team per season	Discretionary	57.68	60.56
RUGBY - Sites without changing includes line marking - Pitch overmarking included in season charge - Adult - per game	Discretionary	200.85	210.89
LACROSSE - Pitch Per Session	Discretionary	497.49	522.36
BOWLS - SEASON TICKETS - Adult per season	Discretionary	160.68	168.71

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
BOWLS - SEASON TICKETS - Concession per season	Discretionary	140.08	147.08
MACCLESFIELD PARKS - Tennis - Club Use	Discretionary	Negotiable	Negotiable
MACCLESFIELD PARKS - Cricket Per Wicket including changing - Senior - Per Wicket including changing	Discretionary	81.37	85.44
MACCLESFIELD PARKS - Cricket Bollington CC - Junior Games - Bollington CC	Discretionary	37.08	38.93
MACCLESFIELD PARKS - Cricket Bollington CC - use of wicket and changing - Bollington CC	Discretionary	36.05	37.85
MACCLESFIELD PARKS - Cricket Bollington CC - use of cricket field for practice - Bollington CC	Discretionary	36.05	37.85
MACCLESFIELD PARKS - Pavilions (non sporting use) Monday to Friday per booking slot - Monday to Thursday per hour, minimum of 2 hours	Discretionary	22.66	23.79
MACCLESFIELD PARKS - Pavilions (non sporting use) Saturday & Sunday per booking slot - Friday, Saturday & Sunday	Discretionary	26.78	28.12
MACCLESFIELD PARKS - Pavilions (non sporting use) Concession rate per booking slot - Association - excluding Summer - Monday to Thursday 1pm - 4.30pm	Discretionary	20.60	21.63
EVENTS - Filming on Green Space - fee per half day	Discretionary	246.75	259.09
EVENTS - Low Users - Chargeable Activities. (Fitness Classes) - (per day, max 10 sessions; then subject to review) Less than 49 users	Discretionary	6.18	6.49

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Commercial Events - Small Scale 1-500 attendees Cost per Day *additional days charged at 90% of day rate - Cost per Day *additional days charged at 90% of day rate	Discretionary	247.20	259.56
Commercial Events - Small Scale 1-500 attendees Deposit '-' returnable if site left in undamaged and tidy condition. If damage exceeds value of deposit additional costs will be recovered. - Deposit - returnable if site left in undamaged and tidy condition	Discretionary	568.56	596.99
Commercial Events - Medium Scale 501-2,500 attendees Cost per Day - Cost per Day *additional days charged at 90% of day rate	Discretionary	487.19	511.55
Commercial Events - Medium Scale 501-2,500 attendees Deposit - returnable if site left in undamaged and tidy condition. If damage exceeds value of deposit additional costs will be recovered	Discretionary	568.56	596.99
Commercial Events - Large Scale 2,501+ attendees Cost per Day - Cost per Day *additional days charged at 90% of day rate	Discretionary	829.15	870.61
Commercial Events - Large Scale 2,501+ attendees Deposit - Deposit - returnable if site left in undamaged and tidy condition. If damage exceeds value of deposit additional costs will be recovered	Discretionary	1,081.50	1,135.58
Charity / Community Events - Small Scale 1-500 attendees Cost per Day *additional days charged at 90% of day rate	Discretionary	59.74	62.73
Charity / Community Events - Small Scale 1-500 attendees Deposit '-' returnable if site left in undamaged and tidy condition. If damage exceeds value of deposit additional costs will be recovered	Discretionary	141.11	148.17

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Charity / Community Events - Medium Scale 501-2,500 attendees Cost per Day - Cost per Day *additional days charged at 90% of day rate	Discretionary	120.51	126.54
Charity / Community Events - Medium Scale 501-2,500 attendees Deposit - Deposit - returnable if site left in undamaged and tidy condition. If damage exceeds value of deposit additional costs will be recovered	Discretionary	284.28	298.49
Charity / Community Events - Large Scale 2,501+ attendees Cost per Day - Cost per Day *additional days charged at 90% of day rate	Discretionary	216.30	227.12
Charity / Community Events - Large Scale 2,501+ attendees Deposit - Deposit - returnable if site left in undamaged and tidy condition. If damage exceeds value of deposit additional costs will be recovered	Discretionary	850.78	893.32
Fairs and Circuses - Fee per operational day and each set-up / take down days	Discretionary	367.00	
Fairs and Circuses - Legal Services contract preparation cost	Discretionary	Price on application	Price on application
Fairs and Circuses - Asset Services surveyors charge (Fee per site annual not per occasion)	Discretionary	397.58	417.46
Fairs and Circuses - Deposit - returnable if site left in undamaged and tidy condition. If damage exceeds value of deposit additional costs will be recovered	Discretionary	TBC	TBC
ALLOTMENTS - Wistaston only - Annual rental of single plot	Discretionary	35.02	36.77
ALLOTMENTS - Wistaston only - Annual rental of single plot (OAP / Registered Disabled)	Discretionary	20.60	21.63

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
ALLOTMENTS - Former Macclesfield - Annual rental per square metre Without water or roads * - Charges reduced by 30% for Allotment Association	Discretionary	0.13	0.14
ALLOTMENTS - Former Macclesfield - Annual rental per square metre With either water or roads * - Charges reduced by 30% for Allotment Association	Discretionary	0.19	0.19
ALLOTMENTS - Former Macclesfield - Annual rental per square metre With both water and roads * - Charges reduced by 30% for Allotment Association	Discretionary	0.19	0.19
ALLOTMENTS - Former Macclesfield - Annual rental per square metre Without water or roads - Senior Citizens	Discretionary	0.19	0.19
ALLOTMENTS - Former Macclesfield - Annual rental per square metre With both water and roads - Senior Citizens - With either water or roads - Senior Citizens	Discretionary	0.10	0.11
ALLOTMENTS - Former Macclesfield - Annual rental per square metre With both water and roads - Senior Citizens - With both water and roads - Senior Citizens	Discretionary	0.10	0.11
Standard and Personal Search Fees - Standard Local Search (Residential)	Discretionary	105.00	Under Review
Standard and Personal Search Fees - Standard Local Search (Commercial)	Discretionary	186.00	Under Review
Expedited Search Service (Full Searches only) - Expedited Full Search only Residential (excl Peak District National Park)	Discretionary	138.00	Under Review
Expedited Search Service (Full Searches only) - Expedited Full Search only Commercial (excl Peak District National Park)	Discretionary	219.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Expedited Search Service (Full Searches only) - Standard Local Search (Residential property within Peak District National Park)	Discretionary	129.20	Under Review
Expedited Search Service (Full Searches only) - Standard Local Search (Commercial property within Peak District National Park)	Discretionary	210.20	Under Review
Register Search (Property within Peak District National Park) - Certificate of Search (LLC1)	Discretionary	36.00	Under Review
Register Search (Property within Peak District National Park) - Certificate of Search (LLC1) (Property within Peak District National Park)	Discretionary	47.00	Under Review
Register Search (Property within Peak District National Park) - Additional Parcels (LLC1)	Discretionary	5.00	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - One Parcel of Land - Residential	Discretionary	69.00	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - One Parcel of Land (Property within Peak District National Park) - Residential	Discretionary	82.20	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - Additional Parcels Of Land - Residential	Discretionary	27.60	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - One Parcel of Land - Commercial	Discretionary	150.00	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - One Parcel of Land (Property within Peak District National Park) - Commercial	Discretionary	163.20	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - Additional Parcels Of Land - Commercial	Discretionary	27.60	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - Submitted with a full search - Printed Enquiry (within Form Con29) excl Question 22	Discretionary	18.00	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - Submitted with a full search - Printed Enquiry (within Form Con29) Question 22	Discretionary	25.20	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - Submitted with a full search - Printed Enquiry (within Form Con29) (Property within Peak District National Park)	Discretionary	21.60	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - Submitted without a full search - Booking In and Validation fee	Discretionary	18.00	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - Submitted without a full search - Each printed enquiry (within CON29 form) excl Question 22	Discretionary	18.00	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - Submitted without a full search - Printed enquiry (within CON29 form) Question 22	Discretionary	25.20	Under Review
Part 1 Enquiries (CON 29) - Submitted without a full search - Printed Enquiry (within Form Con29) (Property within Peak District National Park)	Discretionary	21.60	Under Review
Miscellaneous Enquiries - Each Additional Enquiry (with full search)	Discretionary	45.00	Under Review
Miscellaneous Enquiries - Each Additional Enquiry - (without a Full search includes booking-in fee)	Discretionary	63.00	Under Review
Miscellaneous Enquiries - Registration of a charge in Part 11 (Temporary)	Discretionary	25.00	Under Review
Miscellaneous Enquiries - Registration of a charge in Part 11 (Permanent / Definitive)	Discretionary	25.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Miscellaneous Enquiries - Filing a judgementPart 11 of the register	Discretionary	5.00	Under Review
Miscellaneous Enquiries - Inspection of documents under rule 10	Discretionary	N/C	Under Review
Miscellaneous Enquiries - Each Question / Enquiry - arising from Local Land Charges (LLC1 only) report	Discretionary	36.00	Under Review
Miscellaneous Enquiries - Each Question / Enquiry - arising from Local Land Charges (Con29R only) report	Discretionary	69.00	Under Review
Miscellaneous Enquiries - Each Question / Enquiry - arising from Property Search service data viewing (Register)	Discretionary	36.00	Under Review
Miscellaneous Enquiries - Each Question / Enquiry - arising from Property Search service data viewing (Con29)	Discretionary	69.00	Under Review
Full Search Decision Fees: - Copies of each decision notice (in excess of the 3 "free" decisions - Residential only)	Discretionary	TBC	Under Review
Full Search Decision Fees: - Copies of each decision notice (in excess of the 3 "free" decisions - Commercial only)	Discretionary	TBC	Under Review
Full Search Decision Fees: - Re-issue of original "Full" search report (provided 4 weeks after original)	Discretionary	5.50	Under Review
Full Search Decision Fees: - Re-issue of original "Con29" search report (provided 4 weeks after original)	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Full Search Decision Fees: - Re-issue of original "LLC1" search report (provided 4 weeks after original)	Discretionary	n/a	n/a

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Full Search Decision Fees: - Re-issue of original "Con29R" search report (provided 4 weeks after original)	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Land Charges Registrations - Copies of "Originating" Document - First Page	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Land Charges Registrations - Copies of "Originating" Document - 2nd & Subsequent pages	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Land Charges Registrations - Copies of "Originating" Document - Copy of plan A4	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Land Charges Registrations - Copies of "Originating" Document - Copy of plan A3	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Land Charges Registrations - Copies of "Originating" Document - Copy of plan A2	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Land Charges Registrations - Copies of "Originating" Document - EIR request Pdf copies emailed (each property/land) - additional service to viewing	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Planning Application Fees - Plan Printing - A0 per copy	Discretionary	30.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Plan Printing - A1 per copy	Discretionary	24.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Plan Printing - A2 per copy	Discretionary	19.50	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Plan Printing - A3 per copy	Discretionary	12.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Planning Application Fees - Plan Printing - A4 per copy	Discretionary	6.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Document Copies - Decision Notices	Discretionary	24.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Document Copies - Documents (1st page of any item - all paper sizes)	Discretionary	6.50	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Document Copies - Documents (2nd and subsequent pages - all paper sizes)	Discretionary	1.50	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Document Copies - Tree Preservation (one entry extract)	Discretionary	7.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Document Copies - Tree Preservation Order (full document)	Discretionary	65.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Document Copies - Cheshire Landscape Character Assessment	Discretionary	170.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning advice Charges (Pre Application Advice) - Duty Planning Officer - 30 minute meeting	Discretionary	Free	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning advice Charges (Pre Application Advice) - Householder - per letter	Discretionary	120.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning advice Charges (Pre Application Advice) - Replacement Dwelling Service - per meeting / letter	Discretionary	400.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning advice Charges (Pre Application Advice) - Minor Operations Service - per meeting / letter	Discretionary	240.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Planning Application Fees - Planning advice Charges (Pre Application Advice) - Pre-application service - per meeting	Discretionary	850.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning advice Charges (Pre Application Advice) - Pre-application service - each additional officer	Discretionary	180.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning advice Charges (Pre Application Advice) - Development Team Service - per meeting	Discretionary	2,400.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning advice Charges (Pre Application Advice) - Development Team Service - per each additional meeting	Discretionary	1,200.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Permitted Development Enquiries	Discretionary	75.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Submit and Check Householder Planning Apps only - Help Desk Service	Discretionary	12.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning History Search Requests (Residential) - Planning History search from (2006 to present day)	Discretionary	59.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning History Search Requests (Residential) - Planning History search from (1986 to 2005 inclusive)	Discretionary	110.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning History Search Requests (Residential) - Planning History search (1974 to 1985)	Discretionary	140.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning History Search Requests (Residential) - Planning History search (Pre 1974 to oldest found) for Macclesfield area only	Discretionary	195.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Planning Application Fees - Planning History Search Requests (Commercial) - Planning History search from (2006 to present day)	Discretionary	80.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning History Search Requests (Commercial) - Planning History search from (1986 to 2005 inclusive)	Discretionary	160.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning History Search Requests (Commercial) - Planning History search (1974 to 1985)	Discretionary	195.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning History Search Requests (Commercial) - Planning History search (Pre 1974 to oldest found) for Macclesfield area only	Discretionary	295.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning History Search Requests (Commercial) - Advice on condition compliance - per hour	Discretionary	70.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning History Search Requests (Commercial) - High hedge complaint	Discretionary	650.00	Under Review
Planning Application Fees - Planning History Search Requests (Commercial) - Other - Inspectors Reports, Other Studies, documents, etc	Discretionary	Various	Under Review
Planning Policy Documents (these are actual charges for documents already printed): - Local Plan (P&P extra unless otherwise stated) - Congleton (incl p&p)	Discretionary	63.00	Under Review
Planning Policy Documents (these are actual charges for documents already printed): - Local Plan (P&P extra unless otherwise stated) - Crewe and Nantwich (incl p&p)	Discretionary	75.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Planning Policy Documents (these are actual charges for documents already printed): - Local Plan (P&P extra unless otherwise stated) - Macclesfield (incl p&p)	Discretionary	220.00	Under Review
Planning Policy Documents (these are actual charges for documents already printed): - Proposals Maps ONLY - Congleton	Discretionary	17.00	Under Review
Planning Policy Documents (these are actual charges for documents already printed): - Proposals Maps ONLY - Crewe and Nantwich	Discretionary	17.00	Under Review
Planning Policy Documents (these are actual charges for documents already printed): - Proposals Maps ONLY - Macclesfield	Discretionary	17.00	Under Review
Planning Policy Documents (these are actual charges for documents already printed): - Cheshire East Local Development Framework - Approved Local Plan Strategy (includes p&p)	Discretionary	48.00	Under Review
Planning Policy Documents (these are actual charges for documents already printed): - Development Briefs	Discretionary	Free	Under Review
CONSERVATION PUBLICATIONS - Conservation Area Character Appraisals - 1st page	Discretionary	7.00	Under Review
CONSERVATION PUBLICATIONS - Conservation Area Character Appraisals - Subsequent pages	Discretionary	1.70	Under Review
CONSERVATION PUBLICATIONS - Conservation Publications: - Conservation Area Maps - A3 per copy	Discretionary	13.00	Under Review
CONSERVATION PUBLICATIONS - Conservation Publications: - Conservation Area Maps - A4 per copy	Discretionary	6.50	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
CONSERVATION PUBLICATIONS - Conservation Publications: - Statutory List of Buildings of special Architectural interest - 1st page	Discretionary	7.00	Under Review
CONSERVATION PUBLICATIONS - Conservation Publications: - Statutory List of Buildings of special Architectural interest - Subsequent pages	Discretionary	1.70	Under Review
CONSERVATION PUBLICATIONS - Conservation Publications: - Copy of an individual citation sheet for a Site of Biological Importance (SBI)	Discretionary	30.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Statutory: - Naming of a new road (excluding cost of street name plate)	Discretionary	200.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Residential New Development - Numbering of a new development (including flats, apartments - up to 50 dwellings) - 1. Numbering of new development - for dwellings / units exceeding 50: please use a multiple of the charge for 50 (example - 98 dwelling charge = £400)	Discretionary	245.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Residential New Development - Numbering of a new development (including flats, apartments -up to 7 dwellings) Cost per dwelling	Discretionary	40.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Residential New Property - Numbering of individual "new" dwelling (per dwelling)	Discretionary	45.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Residential New Property - Naming of an individual "new" dwelling (per dwelling)	Discretionary	45.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Domestic New Developments (see notes below): - Numbering of a new development (non domestic - up to 50 units) - See note (1) below	Discretionary	250.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Domestic New Developments (see notes below): - Numbering of a new development (non domestic - up to 7 units) per unit	Discretionary	45.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Domestic New Property: - Numbering of non-domestic "new" unit (per unit)	Discretionary	45.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Domestic New Property: - Naming of a non-domestic "new" building (only where no number exists) per unit	Discretionary	45.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Statutory : - Renaming of an existing road (where requested by developers / residents) excluding the cost of the street name plate	Discretionary	590.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Statutory : - Notification to all concerned parties of postal address amendment (re above) per property	Discretionary	45.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Statutory : - Renaming of road name for unoccupied street	Discretionary	123.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Statutory : - Renaming of an existing dwelling (Residential) per dwelling	Discretionary	50.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Statutory : - Addition of name to numbered dwelling (Residential) per dwelling	Discretionary	50.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Statutory : - Renumbering of an existing dwelling (Residential) per dwelling	Discretionary	50.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Statutory : - Renumbering of non-domestic unit (per unit)	Discretionary	73.00	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Statutory : - Renaming of a non-domestic building (per unit)	Discretionary	73.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Statutory : - Naming of a non-domestic building (only where a number exists) per building	Discretionary	73.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Statutory : - Changes to development after initial notification per property	Discretionary	56.00	Under Review
STREET NAMING and NUMBERING - Non Statutory : - Confirmation of postal address for solicitors or conveyancers per property	Discretionary	40.00	Under Review
PLANNING EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS - Planning Policy Documents: - Evidence Documents including: SHMA, SHLAA, Retail Study, Open Space etc - Note: Documents now available via website, hardcopy provision as requested	Discretionary	Standard copy rate	Under Review
PLANNING BRIEFS & SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE - Note: Documents now available via website, hardcopy provision as requested	Discretionary	Standard copy rate	Under Review
Building Regulation Fees - Document Charges - Building Regulations Compliance letter - Document Charges	Discretionary	50.00	50.00
Building Regulation Fees - Document Copies - Building Regulations Exempt confirmation - Building Regulations - Completion Notice - Document Copies	Discretionary	50.00	50.00
Building Regulation Fees - Document Copies - Building Regulations Exempt confirmation - Building Regulations - Same Day Completion Notice	Discretionary	60.00	60.00
Building Regulation Fees - Document Copies - Building Regulations Exempt confirmation - Building Regulations - Inspection Records	Discretionary	100.00	100.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Building Regulation Fees - Document Copies - Building Regulations Exempt confirmation - Demolition Notice	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Building Regulation Fees - Document Copies - Building Regulations Exempt confirmation - Inspection of Dangerous Structures - per hour	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Building Regulation Fees - Document Copies - Building Regulations Exempt confirmation - Inspection of Dangerous Structures - per hour (Out of Hours)	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Building Regulation Fees - Document Copies - Enforcement Enquiries - Confirmation of compliance status from Statutory register	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Building Regulation Fees - Document Copies - Enforcement Enquiries - Confirmation of compliance requiring a site visit	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Rapid return (no kennelling)	Discretionary	47.00	52.00
Returning of Stray Dog: - Basic Fee	Discretionary	84.00	92.00
Returning of Stray Dog: - Plus per day kennelling fee	Discretionary	12.60	14.50
Combined Dog release Fee including Kennelling - Rates will be dependent on kennelling costs incurred by the Council	Discretionary	Addressed by fees above	Addressed by fees above
Rats - Rats Domestic Premises (max 3 treatments in 6 weeks)	Discretionary	64.00	70.00
Rats - Rats Domestic Premises (Income Related Benefits) (max 3 treatments in 6 weeks)	Discretionary	32.00	35.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Mice - Mice in Domestic Properties Paid in Advance (max 3 treatments in 6 weeks)	Discretionary	64.00	70.00
Mice - Mice in Domestic Properties (Income Related Benefits) (max 3 treatments in 6 weeks)	Discretionary	32.00	35.00
Rats & Mice - Call-out charge for visiting if no treatment is required	Discretionary	10.00	20.00
Pest Control Contracts - Based on Individual Premises Need	Discretionary	POA	POA
General Advice - Telephone Advice	Discretionary	FOC	FOC
Environmental Permitting Regime - Applications, Subsistence, Transfers etc	Statutory	Set by Statute	Set by Statute
Hiring of Horses - Premises Hiring up to 5 horses Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	258.75	272.00
Hiring of Horses - Premises Hiring up to 5 horses Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	287.25	302.00
Hiring of Horses - Premises Hiring more than 5 Horses Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	345.00	363.00
Hiring of Horses - Premises Hiring out more than 5 Horses Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	383.00	403.00
Hiring of Horses - Licence issue fee	Discretionary	175.00	184.00
Selling Animals as Pets - Fish Sales only in an independent or domestic premises Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	206.25	217.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Selling Animals as Pets - Fish Sales only in an independent or domestic premises Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	225.75	238.00
Selling Animals as Pets - Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	275.00	289.00
Selling Animals as Pets - Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	301.00	317.00
Selling Animals as Pets - Licence issue fee	Discretionary	175.00	184.00
Animal Boarding (Kennels, Catteries, Day Care) - Animal Boarding Renewal Kennel or Cattery with up to 10 dogs/cats or day care with up to 2 dogs	Discretionary	206.25	217.00
Animal Boarding (Kennels, Catteries, Day Care) - Animal Boarding Initial Application Kennel or Cattery with up to 10 dogs/cats or day care with up to 2 dogs	Discretionary	225.75	238.00
Animal Boarding (Kennels, Catteries, Day Care) - Animal Boarding Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	275.00	289.00
Animal Boarding (Kennels, Catteries, Day Care) - Animal Boarding Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	301.00	317.00
Animal Boarding (Kennels, Catteries, Day Care) - Licence issue fee	Discretionary	175.00	184.00
Home Boarding - Up to 2 dogs Renewal	Discretionary	192.75	203.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Home Boarding - Up to 2 dogs Initial Application	Discretionary	217.50	229.00
Home Boarding - Renewal	Discretionary	257.00	270.00
Home Boarding - Initial Application	Discretionary	290.00	305.00
Home Boarding - Licence Issue Fee	Discretionary	175.00	184.00
Franchiser/Arranger - Renewal (up to 3 hosts)	Discretionary	263.00	277.00
Franchiser/Arranger - Additional fee per additional host (in excess of 3) included in the licence application or added during the licence period	Discretionary	58.00	61.00
Franchiser/Arranger - Initial Application (up to 3 hosts)	Discretionary	290.00	305.00
Franchiser/Arranger - Additional fee per additional host (in excess of 3) included in the licence application or added during the licence period	Discretionary	58.00	61.00
Franchiser/Arranger - Licence issue Fee	Discretionary	175.00	184.00
Dog Breeding (up to and including 2 breeding bitches) - Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	307.50	323.00
Dog Breeding (up to and including 2 breeding bitches) - Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	369.00	390.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Dog Breeding (3- 10 breeding bitches) - Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	410.00	431.00
Dog Breeding (3- 10 breeding bitches) - Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	492.00	517.00
Dog Breeding (3- 10 breeding bitches) - Licence Issue Fee	Discretionary	275.00	289.00
Dog Breeding (11-25 breeding bitches) - Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	766.00	805.00
Dog Breeding (11-25 breeding bitches) - Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	875.00	919.00
Dog Breeding (11-25 breeding bitches) - Licence Issue Fee	Discretionary	766.00	805.00
Dog Breeding (26-50 breeding bitches) - Breeding Establishment Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	1,150.00	1,208.00
Dog Breeding (26-50 breeding bitches) - Breeding Establishment Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	1,315.00	1,381.00
Dog Breeding (26-50 breeding bitches) - Licence Issue Fee	Discretionary	1,150.00	1,208.00
Dog Breeding (51+ breeding bitches) - Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	1,750.00	1,838.00
Dog Breeding (51+ breeding bitches) - Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	1,915.00	2,011.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Dog Breeding (51+ breeding bitches) - Licence Issue Fee	Discretionary	1,750.00	1,838.00
Keeping or training animals for Exhibition - Animal Exhibits with up to 5 animals - Renewal	Discretionary	206.25	217.00
Keeping or training animals for Exhibition - Animal Exhibits with up to 5 animals - Initial Application	Discretionary	246.00	259.00
Keeping or training animals for Exhibition - Animal Exhibits Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	275.00	289.00
Keeping or training animals for Exhibition - Animal Exhibits Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	328.00	345.00
Keeping or training animals for Exhibition - Licence Issue Fee	Discretionary	175.00	184.00
Fees relating to the above only: Pre-application inspection (recommended for new premises) - single activity (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	121.00	128.00
Fees relating to the above only: Pre-application inspection - fee per additional activity	Discretionary	60.00	63.00
Fees relating to the above only: Variation/transfer of licence	Discretionary	61.00	65.00
Fees relating to the above only: Re-evaluation of rating fee (including inspection)	Discretionary	230.00	242.00
Fees relating to the above only: Re-visit Fee	Discretionary	121.00	128.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Fees relating to the above only: Replacement licence	Discretionary	61.00	65.00
Fees relating to the above only: Procedure writing (1.5 hours)	Discretionary	110.00	116.00
Fees relating to the above only: Procedure writing in excess of 1.5 hours charged at an hourly rate of	Discretionary	71.50	76.00
Fees relating to the above only: Admin fee per hour for anything not covered above £55/hour	Discretionary	55.00	58.00
Fees relating to the above only: Late payment/letter chasing renewal applications after the initial reminder sent at 12 weeks	Discretionary	New	20.00
Dangerous Wild Animals - Renewal (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	230.00	242.00
Dangerous Wild Animals - Initial Application (+ vet fee)	Discretionary	260.00	273.00
Zoo Licence - New application - initial fee	Discretionary	438.00	460.00
Zoo Licence - New application - inspection fee at 12 months	Discretionary	438.00	460.00
Zoo Licence - Renewal - initial fee	Discretionary	438.00	460.00
Zoo Licence - Renewal - inspection fee at 3 years	Discretionary	438.00	460.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Zoo Licence - Hourly rate for work in excess of 6 hours	Discretionary	62.00	66.00
Additional fee in relation to joint licences, i.e. where a joint licence is requested, a licence will be issued for each individual separately to prevent enforcement issues should one of the joint licencees cease to be involved in the business for example	Discretionary	175.00	184.00
Food Safety - Food Health Certificates For Exported Food (for up to 1 hours work and then at a rate of £76 per hour for complex certificates / those requiring a specific site visit)	Discretionary	89.00	94.00
Food Safety / Allergen Training in your workplace (for up to 20 attendees + £15 per candidate workbook)	Discretionary	600.00	650.00
Food Safety - Voluntary surrender of food - per hour + disposal costs	Discretionary	72.00	76.00
Food Safety - Food Hygiene Rating Re-score Visits	Discretionary	147.00	154.00
Food Safety - Food Hygiene Advisory Service - (This will be recharged for a minimum of £152 for the first 2 hours work and then at a rate of £76 per hour)	Discretionary	144.00	152.00
Food Safety - Food Safety / Allergen Training (per person inclusive of materials)	Discretionary	65.00	69.00
Food Safety Training Exam Re-sit Fee	Discretionary	n/a	20.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Private Water Supplies - Charge for undertaking Risk Assessment	Discretionary	254.00	294.00
Private Water Supplies - Private Water Supply Initial Sampling and Costs Shared Supply (excluding analyst fees)	Discretionary	159.00	196.00
Private Water Supplies - Private Water Supply Initial Sampling and Costs Single Dwelling (Excluding Analyst fees)	Discretionary	159.00	196.00
Private Water Supplies - Private Water Supply Resampling (excluding analyst fees)	Discretionary	n/a	98.00
Private Water Supplies - Farm assured sample visit (excluding analyst fees)	Discretionary	96.00	123.00
Private Water Supplies - Resample of Swimming Pool Waters (officer costs)	Discretionary	73.00	86.00
Private Water Supplies - Primary Authority Agreements (Hourly Rate)	Discretionary	72.00	76.00
Provision of Information - Freedom of Information (FOI to max of £400.00)	Discretionary	Free of Charge	Free of Charge
Provision of Information - Environmental information requests (hourly charge)	Discretionary	74.00	78.00
Provision of Information - Contaminated Land Requests	Discretionary	74.00	78.00
Provision of Information - Review and Interpretation of Environmental Reports (Standard Report Cost)	Discretionary	n/a	n/a

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Provision of Information - Review of reports either prior to submission to Planning or if rejected as part of the planning process - The charge will cover the first 3 hours or part thereof	Discretionary	150.00	234.00
Provision of Information - Review of reports either prior to submission to Planning or if rejected as part of the planning process - Any additional time will be charged per hour of part thereof	Discretionary	50.00	78.00
Public Health (Registration) - Ear Piercing, acupuncture, tattooist - Personal	Discretionary	67.00	74.00
Public Health (Registration) - Ear Piercing, acupuncture, tattooist - Personal - additional person once premises licence granted	Discretionary	67.00	74.00
Public Health (Registration) - Ear Piercing, acupuncture, tattooist - Premises & Initial Applicant	Discretionary	154.00	169.00
Public Health (Registration) - Ear Piercing, acupuncture, tattooist - Administrative changes to historic registration	Discretionary	32.00	35.00
Scrap Metal Dealers & Motor Salvage Operators - Collectors Licence (3 year duration)	Discretionary	201.00	201.00
Scrap Metal Dealers & Motor Salvage Operators - Additional Collectors Licence	Discretionary	18.00	18.00
Scrap Metal Dealers & Motor Salvage Operators - Replacement Collectors Licence	Discretionary	18.00	18.00
Scrap Metal Dealers & Motor Salvage Operators - Site Licence (3 year duration)	Discretionary	247.00	247.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Scrap Metal Dealers & Motor Salvage Operators - Replacement Site Licence	Discretionary	18.00	18.00
Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Annual Fee / New Application Fee (Fee dependent upon pitch numbers) - Up to 10 pitches	Discretionary	211.00	225.00
Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Annual Fee / New Application Fee (Fee dependent upon pitch numbers) - Up to 20 pitches	Discretionary	262.00	280.00
Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Annual Fee / New Application Fee (Fee dependent upon pitch numbers) - Up to 30 pitches	Discretionary	328.00	340.00
Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Annual Fee / New Application Fee (Fee dependent upon pitch numbers) - Up to 40 pitches	Discretionary	394.00	416.00
Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Annual Fee / New Application Fee (Fee dependent upon pitch numbers) - Up to 50 pitches	Discretionary	440.00	471.00
Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Annual Fee / New Application Fee (Fee dependent upon pitch numbers) - Over 50 pitches	Discretionary	499.00	521.00
Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Transfer Fee	Discretionary	116.00	124.00
Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Simple Licence Amendment (there is no fee if the charge is imposed by the local authority)	Discretionary	116.00	124.00
Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Detailed Licence Amendment	Discretionary	348.00	372.00
Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Deposit of Site Rules	Discretionary	38.00	44.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Service of Statutory Notices	Discretionary	-	-
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Hackney Carriage - 1 year	Statutory	325.00	340.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Private Hire Vehicle - 1 year	Statutory	325.00	340.00
Accident replacement vehicle 3 month licence including 1 test (new fee for 2023/2024)	Statutory	175.00	175.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Test Fee	Statutory	85.00	85.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Joint Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver - 3 years	Statutory	115.00	120.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Private Hire Operator - 5 years	Statutory	400.00	420.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Vehicle Re-test Fee	Statutory	50.00	50.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Joint Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Driver - Renewal	Statutory	135.00	140.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Replacement Driver Badge	Statutory	10.00	10.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Replacement Plate	Statutory	10.00	10.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Replacement window sticker	Statutory	5.00	5.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - DVLA Licence Check	Statutory	5.00	5.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Knowledge Test	Statutory	50.00	50.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Knowledge Test Remark	Statutory	20.00	20.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Safeguarding Training (where there is a cost to the Licensing Authority)	Statutory	50.00	50.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Transfer of Licence	Statutory	45.00	50.00
Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles - Check and Send Service	Statutory	10.00	10.00
Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Applications	Statutory	58.00	60.00
Street Traders - 12 Month Consent	Statutory	385.00	405.00
Street Traders - 6 Month Consent	Statutory	250.00	265.00
Street Traders - 3 Month Consent	Statutory	200.00	210.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Street Traders - 1 Month Consent	Statutory	150.00	160.00
Street Traders - 1 Week Consent	Statutory	100.00	105.00
Street Traders - 1 Day Consent	Statutory	50.00	55.00
Sexual Entertainment Venues - New application	Statutory	2,280.00	2,280.00
Sexual Entertainment Venues - Renewal	Statutory	1,140.00	1,140.00
Sexual Entertainment Venues - Transfer	Statutory	500.00	500.00
Sexual Entertainment Venues - Variation	Statutory	2,280.00	2,280.00
Copy of Public Register (per entry) Licensing Act 2003	Statutory	10.50	10.50
Cheshire East Council is able to offer a variety of verification, testing and calibration services for businesses. Our qualified officers can test a range of equipment for you including Petrol Pumps, Scales, Weights, Length Measures, or Spirit Measures. We are able to provide certification or test reports and our Equipment is traceable to National Standards. Minimum Charge 1 Hour. (Set by National Body).	Statutory	72.00	76.00
Explosives - (fees set by statute) - Licence - New	Statutory	Set by Statute	Set by Statute

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Explosives - (fees set by statute) - Licence - Renewal	Statutory	Set by Statute	Set by Statute
Explosives - (fees set by statute) - Registration - New	Statutory	Set by Statute	Set by Statute
Explosives - (fees set by statute) - Registration - Renewal	Statutory	Set by Statute	Set by Statute
Explosives - (fees set by statute) - Transfer / Variation or replacement	Statutory	Set by Statute	Set by Statute
Explosives - (fees set by statute) - Fireworks sold all year	Statutory	Set by Statute	Set by Statute
Petroleum - (fees set by statute) - Not exceeding 2,500L	Statutory	Set by Statute	Set by Statute
Petroleum - (fees set by statute) - Exceeding 2,500L but not 50,000L	Statutory	Set by Statute	Set by Statute
Petroleum - (fees set by statute) - Exceeding 50,000L	Statutory	Set by Statute	Set by Statute
Petroleum - (fees set by statute) - Request for search of petroleum files (plus VAT)	Statutory	72.00	76.00
Petroleum - (fees set by statute) - Transfer of licence	Statutory	Set by Statute	Set by Statute
Primary Authority - Hourly Rate	Discretionary	72.00	76.00
Business Consultation Advice - Hourly Rate	Discretionary	72.00	76.00
Age Restricted Products - Do You PASS - First time seller - 2 hour training course	Discretionary	68.00	72.00
Age Restricted Products - Do You PASS - First time offending - owner/DPS course half day	Discretionary	134.00	141.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Age Restricted Products - Do You PASS - Pro active business course	Discretionary	100.00	105.00
Safety of Sports Grounds (if initiated by club) - Hourly Rate	Statutory	72.00	76.00
Proceeds of Crime - Hourly Rate	Discretionary	72.00	76.00
Proceeds of Crime - Searches and Enquiries	Discretionary	Set by Agency	Set by Agency
Internal/External CCTV Monitoring (small)	Discretionary	23.00	24.50
Internal/External CCTV Monitoring (medium)	Discretionary	35.00	37.00
Internal/External CCTV Monitoring (large)	Discretionary	46.00	48.50
Internal/External Alarm Monitoring (small)	Discretionary	23.00	24.50
Internal/External Alarm Monitoring (medium)	Discretionary	35.00	37.00
Internal/External Lone Worker Monitoring (1 year)	Discretionary	9.00	9.50
Internal/External Lone Worker Monitoring (2 years)	Discretionary	7.00	7.50

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Internal/External Lone Worker Monitoring (3 years)	Discretionary	6.00	6.50
Internal/External CCTV Design Services (small)	Discretionary	53.00	-
Internal/External CCTV Design Services (medium)	Discretionary	109.00	-
Internal/External CCTV Design Services (large)	Discretionary	166.00	-
Internal/External CCTV Installation Services	Discretionary	85.00	-
Internal/External CCTV Maintenance Services	Discretionary	85.00	-
Downloading and production of third party evidence	Discretionary	114.00	120.00
Deployable Cameras (per day)	Discretionary	341.00	358.50
Door Entry Services	Discretionary	2,833.00	2,975.00
Town and Parish Council Contribution	Discretionary	2,173.00	2,282.00
Multimedia Loan Charges - Talking books and Language Courses - Adults per 3 weeks - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire	Discretionary	2.00	2.30

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee			
Multimedia Loan Charges - Talking books and Language Courses - Adults per 3 weeks - Cheshire Leisure Card Holder (CLCH) / Discount card rate	Discretionary	1.30	1.30
Multimedia Loan Charges - Talking books and Language Courses - Children per 3 weeks - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	0.50	0.50
Multimedia Loan Charges - Talking books and Language Courses - Children per 3 weeks - CLCH / Discount card rate	Discretionary	0.30	0.30
Multimedia Loan Charges - No charge for people who have difficulty reading print or handling books	Discretionary	-	-
Multimedia Loan Charges - CD's - per week - no longer stocked - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	-	-
Multimedia Loan Charges - CD's - per week - CLCH / Discount card rate	Discretionary	-	-
Multimedia Loan Charges - DVD's new releases - no longer stocked - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	-	-
Multimedia Loan Charges - DVD's new releases - CLCH / Discount card rate	Discretionary	-	-

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Multimedia Loan Charges - DVD's reduced rate (for DVDs over 4 months old and special interest DVDs) - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	1.80	1.80
Multimedia Loan Charges - DVD's reduced rate (for DVDs over 4 months old and special interest DVDs) - CLCH / Discount card rate	Discretionary	1.00	1.00
Overdue Items - Books: - Adult - per item per day (up to maximum) - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	0.25	0.25
Overdue Items - Books: - Adult - per item (maximum charge) - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	10.00	10.00
Overdue Items - Books: - Children under 5 - per item per day (up to maximum)	Discretionary	-	-
Overdue Items - Books: - Children under 5 - per item (maximum charge)	Discretionary	-	-
Overdue Items - Books: - Children aged 5 to 17 - per item per day (up to maximum) (age range change pending - up to 18 years inc) - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	0.05	0.05

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Overdue Items - Books: - Children aged 5 to 17 - per item (maximum charge) (age range change pending) - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	1.00	1.00
Overdue Items - Books: - Adult CLCH / Discount card - per item per day (up to maximum)	Discretionary	0.10	0.10
Overdue Items - Books: - Adult CLCH / Discount card - per item (maximum charge)	Discretionary	5.00	5.00
Overdue Items - Books: - Children aged 5 to 17 Discount card - per item per day (up to maximum)	Discretionary	0.05	0.05
Overdue Items - Books: - Children aged 5 to 17 Discount card - per item (maximum charge)	Discretionary	1.00	1.00
Overdue Items - Multimedia Items - Adult - per item per day (up to maximum) - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	0.50	0.50
Overdue Items - Multimedia Items - Adult - per item (maximum charge) - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	10.00	10.00
Overdue Items - Multimedia Items - Children - per item per day (up to maximum)	Discretionary	n/a	n/a

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Overdue Items - Multimedia Items - Children - per item (maximum charge)	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Overdue Items - Multimedia Items - Adult CLCH / Discount card - per item per day (up to maximum)	Discretionary	0.40	0.40
Overdue Items - Multimedia Items - Adult CLCH / Discount card - per item (maximum charge)	Discretionary	5.00	5.00
Overdue Items - Multimedia Items - Children Discount card - per item per day (up to maximum)	Discretionary	0.15	0.15
Overdue Items - Multimedia Items - Children Discount card - per item (maximum charge)	Discretionary	4.00	4.00
Music Scores and Choral Sets - Vocal Scores - 1 - 20 items - Per item (administered through CWAC)	Discretionary	1.00	1.00
Music Scores and Choral Sets - Vocal Scores - 21- 40 items - Per item (administered through CWAC)	Discretionary	1.00	1.00
Music Scores and Choral Sets - Vocal Scores - 41 - 60 items - Per item (administered through CWAC)	Discretionary	1.00	1.00
Music Scores and Choral Sets - Vocal Scores - Each additional copy - Per item (administered through CWAC)	Discretionary	1.00	1.00
Music Scores and Choral Sets - Orchestral sets - (administered through CWAC)	Discretionary	1.00	1.00
Reservations - Items from within Cheshire (East and West)	Discretionary	1.00	1.20

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Reservations - Items from within Cheshire (East and West) - CLCH / Discount card rate	Discretionary	0.70	0.90
Reservations - Items from UK libraries outside Cheshire	Discretionary	3.70	3.70
Reservations - Items from UK libraries outside Cheshire - CLCH rate	Discretionary	3.70	3.70
Reservations - Item from UK libraries outside Cheshire - Children - Note: children may reserve items free of charge unless obtained from UK outside Cheshire	Discretionary	3.60	3.60
Reservations - Items from British Library	Discretionary	17.15	17.15
Reservations - Items from outside UK	n/a	-	-
Reservations - Play sets - reservation charge per item	Discretionary	1.00	1.00
Reservations - Reading Group Sets - annual subscription - (administered through CWAC)	Discretionary	80.00	80.00
Reservations - Reminiscence box loans	Discretionary	10.00	10.00
Reservations - No charge for people who have difficulty reading print or handling books when reserving talking books, language courses and large print books	Discretionary	Free	Free

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Personal Computer Bookings - Computer bookings - 1 hour per day (subject to availability) Cheshire Library Member	Discretionary	Free	Free
Personal Computer Bookings - Computer bookings - 1 hour per day (subject to availability) Non Cheshire Library Member	Discretionary	2.50	2.50
Personal Computer Bookings - Adult (after 1 hour) - per hour or part hour	Discretionary	2.50	2.50
Personal Computer Bookings - Adult (after 1 hour) - per hour or part hour - CLCH / Discount card rate	Discretionary	1.25	1.25
Personal Computer Bookings - Children (after 1 hour) - per hour or part hour	Discretionary	1.25	1.25
Personal Computer Bookings - Printing: - Black & White - per page	Discretionary	0.20	0.20
Personal Computer Bookings - Printing: - Black & White - per page (Children, CLCH & Discount card rate) - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	0.20	0.20
Personal Computer Bookings - Printing: - Colour - per page	Discretionary	0.80	1.00
Personal Computer Bookings - Printing: - Colour - per page (Children, CLCH & Discount card rate) - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving	Discretionary	0.40	0.50

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee			
Computer Materials - Headphones	Discretionary	3.50	3.50
Computer Materials - USB Memory Stick	Discretionary	5.00	5.00
Photocopying - Black & White - Photocopies - A4	Discretionary	0.20	0.20
Photocopying - Black & White - Photocopies - A3	Discretionary	0.50	0.50
Photocopying - Colour - Photocopies - A4	Discretionary	0.80	1.00
Photocopying - Colour - Photocopies - A3	Discretionary	2.00	2.00
Lost & Damaged Items - Lost Borrower Tickets - Adult - Denotes services where discounts are available for Cheshire Leisure Card Holders available to persons receiving benefits and Cheshire East Libraries Discount Cards which are available for a £10 annual fee	Discretionary	2.00	2.00
Lost & Damaged Items - Lost Borrower Tickets - CLCH / Discount card rate	Discretionary	n/a	n/a
Lost & Damaged Items - Lost Borrower Tickets - Children	Discretionary	1.00	1.00
Lost & Damaged Items - Lost / damaged items - minimum charge per item	Discretionary	3.00	3.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Lost & Damaged Items - Administrative charge deducted from refund	Discretionary	3.00	3.00
Meeting Room Hire - Category A (per hour)	Discretionary	40.00	40.00
Meeting Room Hire - Category B (per hour)	Discretionary	20.00	20.00
Meeting Room Hire - Category C (per hour)	Discretionary	10.00	10.00
Meeting Room Hire - Premium Rate A (per hour) ** - Only available if staffing allows - ** Premium charge for bookings at weekends outside our published library opening hours or after 10pm on weekdays	Discretionary	60.00	60.00
Meeting Room Hire - Premium Rate B (per hour) ** - Only available if staffing allows - ** Premium charge for bookings at weekends outside our published library opening hours or after 10pm on weekdays	Discretionary	30.00	30.00
Meeting Room Hire - Premium Rate C (per hour) ** - Only available if staffing allows - ** Premium charge for bookings at weekends outside our published library opening hours or after 10pm on weekdays	Discretionary	15.00	15.00
Meeting Room Hire - A discount of 15% is available for block bookings of 6 or more meetings paid for in advance	Discretionary	-	-
Meeting Room Hire - Bookings cancelled with less than 48 hours notice will incur the full hire charge	Discretionary	-	-

Highways and Transport Committee

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Provision of Data / Information to External Bodies - Adopted Highway Extension Enquiries - VAT to be added - Type 1 - Defining the highway boundary for sale or purchase of single property. No development potential apparent. Per road enquiry - VAT to be added	Discretionary	92.38	Under Review
Provision of Data / Information to External Bodies - Adopted Highway Extension Enquiries - VAT to be added - Type 2 - Defining the highway boundary in relation to the sale or purchase for development purposes: VAT to be added - For first 500m - VAT to be added	Discretionary	230.96	Under Review
Provision of Data / Information to External Bodies - Adopted Highway Extension Enquiries - VAT to be added - Type 2 - Defining the highway boundary in relation to the sale or purchase for development purposes: VAT to be added - 501m - 1000m - VAT to be added	Discretionary	277.15	Under Review
Provision of Data / Information to External Bodies - Adopted Highway Extension Enquiries - VAT to be added - Type 2 - Defining the highway boundary in relation to the sale or purchase for development purposes: VAT to be added - 1001m and over - VAT to be added	Discretionary	323.34	Under Review
Traffic Signal Data - per site	Discretionary	205.08	Under Review
Provision of existing traffic held (within previous 4 years) based on data type, per survey site	Discretionary	109.20	Under Review
Traffic Counts: - Link Count	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Traffic Counts: - T Junction	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Traffic Counts: - Crossroads	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Traffic Counts: - Video	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Supply of data on accidents on receipt of a completed application form - VAT to be added - Basic Search (single stretch of road less than 1,000m in length) - VAT to be added	Discretionary	207.92	Under Review
Supply of data on accidents on receipt of a completed application form - VAT to be added - Large Search (more than one road and / or no longer than 4,000m in length)	Discretionary	409.72	Under Review
Supply of data on accidents on receipt of a completed application form - VAT to be added - Search in excess of 4,000m in length	Discretionary	Quotation	Under Review
SIDs - Initial consultation	Discretionary	108.00	Under Review
SIDs - SID Licence Fee	Discretionary	108.00	Under Review
SIDs - Installation - Note: The Town or Parish Council is responsible for the attachment of the SID to the post	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
SIDs - Legal costs associated with placement of SID	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Provision of plans, data and research work etc. for members of the public or for commercial purposes - VAT to be added	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Traffic Modelling - Small scale application: (<=200 houses subject to location) Contribution to CEC + developer to reimburse consultant - VAT to be added	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Traffic Modelling - Small scale application: (>200 houses subject to location) 20% of external consultant fee de-minimus - VAT to be added	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Environment reports - VAT to be added	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Provision of Aids to Movements - Application for the provision of signs for third parties, including replacement signage (initial inspection, design and quotation). Non-refundable - Application + 1 sign	Discretionary	361.78	Under Review
Provision of Aids to Movements - Application for the provision of signs for third parties, including replacement signage (initial inspection, design and quotation). Non-refundable - Application + 2 signs	Discretionary	602.13	Under Review
Provision of Aids to Movements - Application for the provision of signs for third parties, including replacement signage (initial inspection, design and quotation). Non-refundable - Additional signage (per sign)	Discretionary	121.43	Under Review
Provision of Aids to Movements - Provision and installation of signs for third parties (includes admin 25% and maintenance fee 25%). After application stage	Discretionary	As per quotation	Under Review
Provision of Aids to Movements - Provision of access protection markings e.g. H Bars	Discretionary		Under Review
Provision of Aids to Movements - Provision of access protection markings e.g. H Bars: - Application Fee / On-site assessment	Discretionary	92.49	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Provision of Aids to Movements - Provision of access protection markings e.g. H Bars: - Works to install new access protection markings (H Bar) linings (non-refundable)	Discretionary	294.51	Under Review
Provision of Aids to Movements - Provision of access protection markings e.g. H Bars: - Works to replace existing access protection markings (H Bar) linings (non- refundable)	Discretionary	294.51	Under Review
Charges Relating to Use / Obstruction of part of Highway - Skip licence - consideration of an application for permission to deposit a skip on the highway for a period of up to 4 weeks (28 days)	Discretionary	92.49	Under Review
Charges Relating to Use / Obstruction of part of Highway - Skip licence - consideration of an application to extend permission to deposit a skip on the highway for a further period of up to 4 weeks (28 days) and each period thereafter	Discretionary	63.55	Under Review
Charges Relating to Use / Obstruction of part of Highway - Skip licence - consideration of an application for permission to deposit a skip on the highway (REFUSED 50% Fee)	Discretionary	46.30	Under Review
Charges Relating to Use / Obstruction of part of Highway - Skip licence - consideration and inspection of skip placed on highway without permission	Discretionary	358.07	Under Review
Charges Relating to Use / Obstruction of part of Highway - Charge plus permit fee and full cost recovery of skip removal (if necessary)	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Temporary Traffic Regulation (TTR) Order - Temporary Notice (21 days) Avoidance of danger (no rebate for subsequently cancelled applications): - Per scheme	Discretionary	1,177.83	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Temporary Traffic Regulation (TTR) Order - Temporary Notice (21 days) Avoidance of danger (no rebate for subsequently cancelled applications): - Plus for each restriction	iscretionary	294.51	Under Review
Temporary Traffic Regulation (TTR) Order - Temporary Order - no rebate for subsequently cancelled applications (includes advertising and admin fee)	Discretionary	1,888.07	Under Review
Temporary Traffic Regulation (TTR) Order - Temporary Notice - 5 days (no rebate for subsequently cancelled applications): - Per scheme	Discretionary	1,177.83	Under Review
Temporary Traffic Regulation (TTR) Order - Temporary Notice - 5 days (no rebate for subsequently cancelled applications): - Plus for each restriction	Discretionary	294.51	Under Review
Temporary Road Closure under Town Police Clauses Act - Charities, community groups and non profit making organisations organising non commercial events (with no significant commercial gain)	Discretionary	No Charge	Under Review
Temporary Road Closure under Town Police Clauses Act - Where the event is organised by a non profit making organisation / charity but there is a significant commercial element (no rebate for subsequently cancelled applications)	Discretionary	329.13	Under Review
Temporary Road Closure under Town Police Clauses Act - Where the event is organised directly by a commercial organisation then the event organiser should be charged as per the current charging practice (no rebate for subsequently cancelled applications)	Discretionary	329.13	Under Review
Temporary Road Closure under Town Police Clauses Act - Per scheme	Discretionary	1,177.83	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Temporary Road Closure under Town Police Clauses Act - Plus for each restriction	Discretionary	294.51	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (up to 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Initial Licence: - Up to 6 month period	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (up to 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Initial Licence: - More than 6 up to 12 month period	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (up to 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Annual Renewal	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (up to 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Annual Renewal: - Up to 6 month period	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (up to 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Annual Renewal: - More than 6 up to 12 month period	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (greater than 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Initial Licence: - For 7-12 seats (up to 6 month period)	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (greater than 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Initial Licence: - For 7-12 seats (more than 6 up to 12 month period)			
Pavement Café Licence (greater than 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Initial Licence: - For more than 12 seats (up to 6 month period)	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (greater than 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Initial Licence: - For more than 12 seats (for more than 6 up to 12 month period)	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (greater than 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Annual Renewal: - For 7-12 seats (up to 6 month period)	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (greater than 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Annual Renewal: - For 7-12 seats (more than 6 up to 12 month period)	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (greater than 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Annual Renewal: - For more than 12 seats (up to 6 month period)	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review
Pavement Café Licence (greater than 6 seats) - Pavement Licence Fees currently suspended - in line with provisions of The Business and Planning	Discretionary	Suspended	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Act 2020 until Sept 2022 - Annual Renewal: - For more than 12 seats (for more than 6 up to 12 month period)			
Provision of highway edge markers on third party request - subject to approval	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Application to place furniture on the highway - (benches / flag poles / memorials or similar)	Discretionary	117.94	Under Review
Planting Licence within the highway verge Section 142 HA (subject to policy review in 23/24)	Discretionary	150.00	Under Review
Legal Costs associated with Planting in the Highway (subject to policy review in 23/24)	Discretionary	Full Cost Recovery	Under Review
Pre start meeting to discuss placing furniture on the highway - (benches / flag poles / memorials or similar)	Discretionary	117.94	Under Review
Furniture placed on the highway – (Christmas trees / benches / flagpoles / memorials or similar within the highway)	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Scaffolding / Hoarding licence - Consideration of an application for a licence to erect scaffolding / hoarding etc on or over the highway: - Application & Inspection Fee for a period of up to 1 week	Discretionary	271.47	Under Review
Scaffolding / Hoarding licence - Consideration of an application for a licence to erect scaffolding / hoarding etc on or over the highway: - Each additional week or part week	Discretionary	80.92	Under Review
Scaffolding / Hoarding licence - Consideration of an application for a licence to erect scaffolding / hoarding etc on or over the highway: - Inspection charge when finding unlicensed scaffolds or hoardings	Discretionary	80.92	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Scaffolding / Hoarding licence - Consideration of an application for a licence to erect scaffolding / hoarding etc on or over the highway: - Inspection / consideration for scaffolds erected without permission	Discretionary	541.96	Under Review
Scaffolding / Hoarding licence - Consideration of an application for a licence to erect scaffolding / hoarding etc on or over the highway: - Scaffolds erected without permission resulting in damage to the network or creating a health and safety concern requiring immediate action	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Licence for cables and bunting over Highway	Discretionary	438.98	Under Review
Licence for cables and bunting over Highway - In the event of additional or new inspections required	Discretionary	150.15	Under Review
Licence for cables and bunting over Highway - Cables or bunting resulting in damage to the network or creating a health and safety concern requiring immediate action	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Retrospective licence for cables and bunting over the highway	Discretionary	883.54	Under Review
Licence for crane over-sailing highway	Discretionary	438.98	Under Review
Licence for crane over-sailing highway - In the event of additional or new inspections required	Discretionary	150.15	Under Review
Licence for crane over-sailing highway - Oversailing crane over highway resulting in damage to the network or creating a health and safety concern requiring immediate action	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Retrospective licence for crane over-sailing highway	Discretionary	883.54	Under Review
Charges for Services Relating to New Development - Section 38 road making agreements including approval or vetting of agreement plans: 11% of estimate price for adoptable highway construction based on Cheshire East Highways Term Maintenance rates; minimum flat fee. Excludes legal costs, suds and structures assessments	Discretionary	11% of construction costs (£10,000 min)	Under Review
Charges for Services Relating to New Development - Legal/administration cost, suds and structures assessments, design approvals	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Charges for Services Relating to New Development - Licence to construct a bridge over the Highway	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Charges for Services Relating to New Development - Licence to construct a building over a Highway	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Charges for Services Relating to New Development - Section 278 road improvement	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Charges for Services Relating to New Development - Amending Section 38 Agreement	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Charges for Services Relating to New Development - Re-inspection of site (over and above those covered in Section 38 agreement)	Discretionary	150.15	Under Review
Charges for Services Relating to New Development - Extension of Agreement	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Charges for Services Relating to New Development - Commuted sum	Discretionary	20 x estimated cost of annual maintenance	Under Review
Charges for Services Relating to New Development - Street Lighting Design	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Charges Relating to Damage to Highway Infrastructure / Equipment - Claims against third parties for damage to Highway assets	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Charges Relating to Damage to Highway Infrastructure / Equipment - Recovery of costs of making safe third party dangerous land, retaining walls or other structures	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Other Charges - Abnormal Load - Route Approval / Asset accommodation works (all costs over and above standard checking / admin costs)	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Section 228 adoptions + Deed of Dedications - Full Cost Recovery (minimum charge of)	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Switching off and bagging over traffic signals / pelican crossings: - Any switching off or on / bagging on or off activity completed Monday - Friday excluding Bank Holidays	Discretionary	294.51	Under Review
Switching off and bagging over traffic signals / pelican crossings: - Any switching off or on / bagging on or off activity completed during Bank Holidays, Saturdays and Sundays	Discretionary	346.49	Under Review
Switching off and bagging over traffic signals / pelican crossings: - Temporary 3 & 4 way Traffic Signal applications	Discretionary	306.09	Under Review
Switching off and bagging over traffic signals / pelican crossings: - Charge for rejected / cancelled applications	Discretionary	92.49	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Consideration of vehicle crossing / dropped kerb applications (non refundable)	Discretionary	144.47	Under Review
Construction of Footway - Vehicular crossings / dropped kerb as part of improvement scheme - only as part of a footway scheme	Discretionary	Recovery of any additional costs incurred	Under Review
Retrospective licence of vehicular crossing / dropped kerb, excluding the cost for any remedial works if required	Discretionary	519.68	Under Review
Utility Defects - Nationally set charges (to be updated as per legislation guidance) Charges to utilities for NRSWA activities: - Sample Inspections	Statutory	50.00	Under Review
Utility Defects - Nationally set charges (to be updated as per legislation guidance) Charges to utilities for NRSWA activities: - Defect joint inspection	Statutory	120.00	Under Review
Utility Defects - Nationally set charges (to be updated as per legislation guidance) Charges to utilities for NRSWA activities: - Remedial works inspection	Statutory		Under Review
Utility Defects - Nationally set charges (to be updated as per legislation guidance) Charges to utilities for NRSWA activities: - Inspection of completed remedial works	Statutory		Under Review
Utility Defects - Nationally set charges (to be updated as per legislation guidance) Charges to utilities for NRSWA activities: - Investigatory inspection (as part of third party report)	Statutory		Under Review
Section 74 New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA)	Statutory	As per table of standard charges (to be updated as	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
		per legislation guidance)	
Section 74 New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) - S74 Overrun Charges (Cat. 0 & 1 Traffic Sensitive) - (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Statutory	£5,000 to £10,000 (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Under Review
Section 74 New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) - S74 Overrun Charges (Cat. 0 & 1 Non Traffic Sensitive) - (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Statutory	£2,500 (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Under Review
Section 74 New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) - S74 Overrun Charges (Cat. 2 Traffic Sensitive) - (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Statutory	£3,000 to £8,000 (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Under Review
Section 74 New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) - S74 Overrun Charges (Cat. 2 Non Traffic Sensitive) - (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Statutory	£2,000 (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Section 74 New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) - S74 Overrun Charges (Cat. 3 & 4 Traffic Sensitive) - (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Statutory	£750 (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Under Review
Section 74 New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) - S74 Overrun Charges (Cat. 3 & 4 Non Traffic Sensitive) - (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Statutory	£250 (Nationally set charge to be updated as per legislation guidance)	Under Review
S171: Storage of Materials on highway - consideration of an application for consent to temporarily deposit materials etc on the highway and for carrying out site inspections to monitor compliance with the consent - Up to one week and each subsequent week or part week	Discretionary	121.32	Under Review
S171: Making an excavation in the highway (where not covered under NRSWA / TMA) - Consideration of the proposed traffic management, agreeing and approving the reinstatement specification, carrying out on site inspections and ensuring compliance with the approved final reinstatement standard	Discretionary	294.51	Under Review
S171: Fines for unlicensed items stored on the highways	Discretionary	10.00	Under Review
Sponsorship on roundabouts - Contract Procurement Process Pending (Market Led)	Discretionary	n/a	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Planting Licences	Discretionary	n/a	Under Review
S 50 NRSWA - Installation of new apparatus in highway (inclusive of admin and 3 inspections) - For first 200m - For first 200m	Discretionary	802.62	Under Review
S 50 NRSWA - Installation of new apparatus in highway (inclusive of admin and 3 inspections) - Plus for every additional 200m or part there of	Discretionary	236.85	Under Review
S 50 NRSWA - Maintain apparatus in highway on existing S 50 licence - per inspection (min 3 inspections)	Discretionary	485.07	Under Review
Stopping Up Orders - Deposit	Discretionary	589.02	Under Review
Stopping Up Orders - Full cost recovery on completion of process including all legal/staffing and advertising costs	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Undertaking ad-hoc works arising as a result of approved third party activities or development	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Land Drainage Consent (Land Drainage Act 1991) - Nationally Set	Statutory	50.00	Under Review
Land Drainage Enforcement (Land Drainage Act 1991)	Statutory	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Con 29 Flood Notices request for additional information - VAT to be added	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Drain Clearance	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review
Recovery of costs of carrying out drainage works to maintain flow in a watercourse upon default by owner / occupier	Discretionary	Full cost recovery	Under Review

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Residents' Parking Scheme - Business permits	Discretionary	120.00	126.00
Residents' Parking Scheme - Residents own permits first vehicle	Discretionary	75.00	79.00
Residents' Parking Scheme - 2nd vehicle	Discretionary	90.00	95.00
Residents' Parking Scheme - 3rd vehicle	Discretionary	100.00	105.00
Change of vehicle incl lost or stolen permits - If this goes to virtual - there will be cost savings	Discretionary	25.00	25.00
Members parking permits - A change to annual from every 4 years - but all subject to complete removal	Discretionary	10.00	40.00
Staff permits - Currently subject to an MTFS proposal to alter criteria and remove	Discretionary	40.00	40.00
Parking dispensation fees - Permits a short term suspension of the parking restrictions - Permit per vehicle - 1 Day	Statutory	30.00	32.00
Parking dispensation fees - Permits a short term suspension of the parking restrictions - Permit per vehicle - 2 Day	Statutory	60.00	63.00
Parking dispensation fees - Permits a short term suspension of the parking restrictions - Permit per vehicle - 3 Day	Statutory	90.00	95.00
Parking dispensation fees - Permits a short term suspension of the parking restrictions - Permit per vehicle - 4 Day	Statutory	120.00	126.00

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
Parking dispensation fees - Permits a short term suspension of the parking restrictions - Permit per vehicle - 5 Day	Statutory	150.00	163.00
Parking dispensation fees - Permits a short term suspension of the parking restrictions - Permit per vehicle - 6 Day	Statutory	180.00	189.00
Parking dispensation fees - Permits a short term suspension of the parking restrictions - Permit per vehicle - 7 Day	Statutory	210.00	221.00
Parking dispensation fees - Permits a short term suspension of the parking restrictions - Permit per vehicle - 8 Day	Statutory	240.00	252.00
Parking dispensation fees - Permits a short term suspension of the parking restrictions - Permit per vehicle - 9 Day	Statutory	270.00	284.00
Parking dispensation fees - Permits a short term suspension of the parking restrictions - Permit per vehicle - 10 Day	Statutory	300.00	315.00
HGV lorry park in Knutsford near M6 - Annual licence to park	Discretionary	700.00	735.00
HGV lorry park in Knutsford near M6 - Six month licence to park	Discretionary	425.00	447.00
HGV lorry park in Knutsford near M6 - Three month licence to park	Discretionary	220.00	231.00
HGV lorry park in Knutsford near M6 - Key deposit (refundable if handed back)	Discretionary	30.00	32.00
Commercial events held on council car parks - to cover potential loss of income - · For any commercial event - including Filming, Food/Music	Discretionary	n/a	n/a

Description of Charge	Statutory / Discretionary	2023/24 Actual Charges £	2024/25 Proposed Charges / Actual Charges £
<p>Festivals, Market stalls selling produce such as food, alcohol or Antiques etc, - held on Council car parks, we propose to charge for a full day's parking at the rate of £4.40 per day on long stay car parks. The fee is multiplied by the turnaround available on short stay car parks. This fee will apply for each space occupied and for each day of occupation. This charge will be applicable to free car parks also, where commercial events occupy spaces that would otherwise be available for public use. This charge applies in cases that are outside the 4 Free days of parking offered by CEBC to Town/Parish Councils, or are more than the 5 days dispensation period for more than 5 vehicles. A simple calculation example is given on the Events fees and charges web pages. - This would increase in line with the MTFS proposal currently subject to statutory consultation</p>			

10. Capital Strategy

Overview and Comment from the Section 151 Officer

- 10.1 The Capital Strategy forms a key part of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) alongside the Treasury Management and Investment Strategies. Each of these strategies is reviewed each year and supports the opinion on the robustness of the Council's financial plans. This capital strategy provides a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services. It provides an overview of how associated risk is managed alongside future financial sustainability.
- 10.2 The capital strategy:
- Provides a framework for the management and monitoring of the capital programme.
 - Creates the process for bidding for capital resources.
 - Sets out the approach to funding capital expenditure.
 - Takes account of the significant revenue implications associated with capital investment.
- 10.3 The Strategy also sets out the Council's processes for:
- Setting the financial parameters for capital expenditure in the medium-term.
 - Confirming the flexible use of capital receipts in the medium-term.
 - The option appraisal of capital project proposals.
 - Deciding on the prioritisation of capital projects.
 - Monitoring and evaluating approved schemes.
- 10.4 The Strategy incorporates confirmation of the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision and gives details of the Prudential Indicators.
- 10.5 Decisions made this year on capital and treasury management will have financial consequences for the Authority for many years into the future. They are therefore subject to both a national regulatory framework and to a local policy framework, summarised in this report.
- 10.6 2023/24 has proven to be a difficult year for Cheshire East Council financially and the rise in interest rates has heavily impacted on the Capital Financing Budget. The revised Capital Financing Budget required for 2024/25 is £28.5m, an increase of £9.5m from 2023/24.
- 10.7 The current strategy was to draw down any overspend on the revenue budget from the earmarked capital financing reserve but that has been reduced in 2023/24 and only £3.5m is forecast to provide cover for budget pressures in 2024/25. This means that after the reserve balance has been applied, the additional £9.5m must be funded from other general balances.
- 10.8 The Council also has a need to borrow and interest costs are anticipated to be in the region of £16.1m in 2024/25 and only reducing slightly in the following three years. Action needs to be taken to reduce the capital programme so that it is affordable and financially sustainable in the years to come.
- 10.9 A review of the programme commenced in October 2023. This work is ongoing but only schemes that are fully funded or of a nature where expenditure is essential whether that is a legal or compliance requirement will be allowed to continue in 2024/25. Also schemes where the work will be substantially complete by 31st March 2024.

- 10.10 Any scheme that matches the criteria below will not be allowed to continue until the capital programme review is complete. The review will ensure projects have been prioritised, de-scoped or removed entirely, so that the Council can reduce the need borrow and reduce the minimum repayment of capital that is charged to the revenue account.

Any scheme in one of the following categories must not proceed without further review from the s.151 Officer:

1. Scheme requires Cheshire East resources, either immediate or in the future.
2. Scheme requires forward funding from the Council that will impact the revenue budget.
3. Scheme is due to commence in 2024/25 or is at a point where work / contracts can be ceased.
4. Scheme is not essential for an invest to business case scheme and does not bring a financial benefit to the revenue budget.

- 10.11 These schemes will be marked as such in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy capital tables and will not have approval to spend until the capital review is complete.

- 10.12 All the marked schemes will require a revised High-Level Business Case to be submitted which will be assessed as to whether the project is still fit for purpose and meets the current needs of the Council by ensuring that all approved capital investment has a positive impact on the revenue budget and secures the financial future of the Council.

- 10.13 Any scheme where an urgent decision is required to allow the continuation of the project, prior to the review being complete will require sign off from the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Finance Sub Committee.

- 10.14 All schemes in the capital programme will be subject to spending controls to ensure that only essential expenditure is being incurred in 2024/25. Project Managers when procuring contracts should make sure that the Council's resources are being used efficiently and ensuring value for money principles are adopted. Adequate contingency/risk allocations should already be built in to the projects to reduce the requirement to request further budget increases during the year that require funding from Cheshire East resources.

Five Principles

- 10.15 Five Principles underpin the Capital Strategy:

1. Capital expenditure is priority based and is aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan priorities.
2. The financial implications of capital projects are aligned with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
3. Capital projects will be focused on achieving the best return on investment.
4. Decisions will follow a clear framework.
5. There will be a corporate approach to generate and apply capital resources.

The overarching aim of the Capital Strategy is to provide a framework within which the Council's capital investment plans will be achieved. The plans are driven by the Corporate Plan.

Alex Thompson

Alex Thompson FCPFA, IRRV(Hons)

Director of Finance and Customer Services

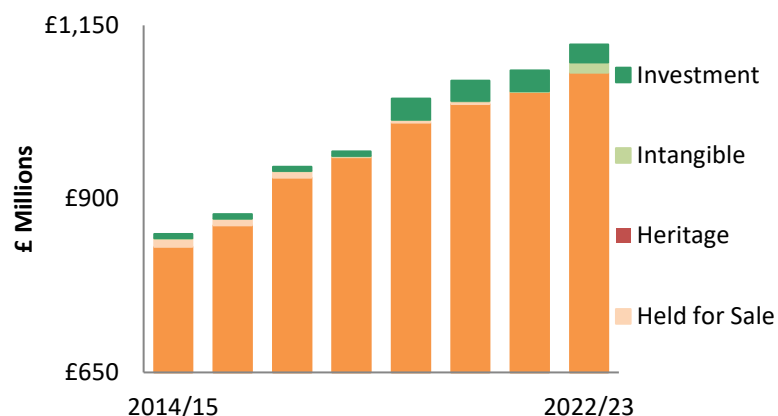
(Section 151 Officer)

1. Introduction

- 10.16 As a public sector organisation, with assets valued in excess of £1 billion, Cheshire East Council is committed to maintaining a robust capital strategy that is clearly related to the priorities within the Corporate Plan, is linked with infrastructure and asset planning; and has consistent approaches to investment.

Chart 1: Total Asset Values held by the Council

Property, Plant and Equipment is the most significant category of assets for the Council.



Source: Cheshire East Council: Statement of Accounts 2013 to 2023.

- 10.17 The capital programme, which is developed in line with the Strategy, is the list of capital projects that the Council plans to undertake within a given timeframe.
- 10.18 The programme is approved in line with the Council's Constitution and would usually cover a minimum period of four years and is reviewed annually by Council. For the 2024-28
- Medium-Term Financial Strategy, given the financial constraints the Council is under, the Council can only report on 2024/25 as the capital programme requires a wholesale transformation as the future years from 2025/26 onwards are not affordable, sustainable and cannot be deemed prudent.
- 10.19 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) definition of capital expenditure is:
- Definition of Capital Expenditure**
"An expenditure on assets that will provide a benefit to the organisation beyond the current financial year including expenditure on purchase of new assets, creation of new assets and enhancing and/or extending the useful life of existing assets."
- A more detailed definition of capital expenditure, as it applies to UK local authorities, is contained in *Practitioners' Guide to Capital Finance in Local Government* (CIPFA, 2019).
- 10.20 Accounting treatment of capital is compliant with International Accounting Standard 16 Property, Plant and Equipment.
- 10.21 Capital investment is subject to due process, and assurance is provided that plans are prudent, affordable and sustainable in accordance with the Prudential Framework (the Prudential Framework being an umbrella term for several statutory provisions and professional requirements that allow authorities largely to determine their own plans).
- 10.22 Non-capital expenditure normally falls outside the scope of the framework and is charged to revenue in the year that it occurs. If expenditure meets the definition of capital, there may be

opportunities to finance the outlay from capital receipts or by spreading the cost over future years' revenues.

10.23 The capital strategy is the foundation of long-term planning of capital investment and how it is to be delivered. Robust processes are relied upon to ensure projects are evaluated and prioritised and approved to the programme along with the resources to fund it. This requires clear parameters to be set at the beginning of the process. Clarity must be supplied via supporting information on the project proposal and clear criteria, related to the organisation's corporate objectives, for prioritising projects.

10.24 In determining how much capital investment to undertake, the Council will consider the long-term impact of borrowing and other forms of capital funding on revenue budgets. The same principle applies to leases, public-private partnerships and outsourcing arrangements to procure public assets.

10.25 Delivering the capital programme requires efficient programme management, project management and procurement, as well as appropriate systems for monitoring, control and scrutiny.

Capital Strategy Principles

10.26 Five Principles underpin the Cheshire East Council Capital Strategy. The principles will be adhered to by Members and employees of the Council and the Section 151 Officer will determine the framework for administering and monitoring the effective application of the principles.

10.27 These principles will be achieved through a process of prioritisation, setting financial parameters, asset management and managing risk as set out in the following chapters.

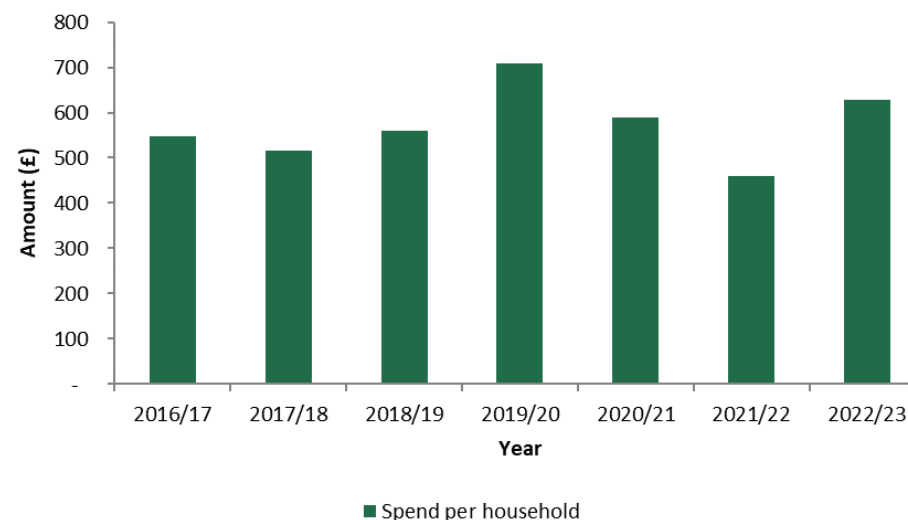
The Five Principles of the Capital Strategy

1.	Capital expenditure is priority based and is aligned with the Council's priorities.
2.	The financial implications of capital projects are aligned with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Asset Management Plan.
3.	Capital projects will be focused on delivering the best return on investment. This will be demonstrated through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capital Projects will be externally funded or supported by private sector investment in a way that maximises the Council's financial interest in the asset. - Borrowing will be appropriate based on the lifetime benefits of a scheme and all investments will be subject to strong control arrangements and risk analysis. - The impact of financing capital expenditure will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains appropriate in terms of the expected return on the overall investment. - Capital investment will follow an agreed set of prudential limits and indicators in order to demonstrate that plans and borrowing are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
4.	Decisions in relation to the programme will follow a clear framework with an appropriate gateway review and robust management of risk relating to capital projects.
5.	There will be a corporate approach to generating and applying capital resources.

2. Prioritisation of Capital Expenditure

- 10.28 Capital Projects will be approved for inclusion in the Capital Programme based on how they meet the needs of the Corporate Plan and adherence with the Capital Strategy.
- 10.29 Capital ambitions may exceed the potential capital resources, particularly given recent funding cuts and demand pressures in the public sector. The Council manages this issue through prioritisation on a variety of factors.
- 10.30 The Capital Strategy stands above operational strategies that are needed for key services such as housing, transport, education and other spending areas.
- 10.31 The first step is to align the capital programme to ensure that we are maximising the capital investment to address the pressures in the revenue budget and remove any projects that do not in the first instance benefit the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- 10.32 The next step is alignment with the Corporate Plan and identification of capital investment that will help to achieve the Council's key vision:
- **Open:** An open and enabling organisation;
 - **Fair:** A Council which empowers and cares about people;
 - **Green:** A thriving and sustainable place.
- 10.33 The capital programme includes investment in education and children's social care, transport infrastructure, major regeneration activities, environmental, cultural and leisure services; all of which contribute to achieving these priorities.

Chart 2: Capital Spend per Household



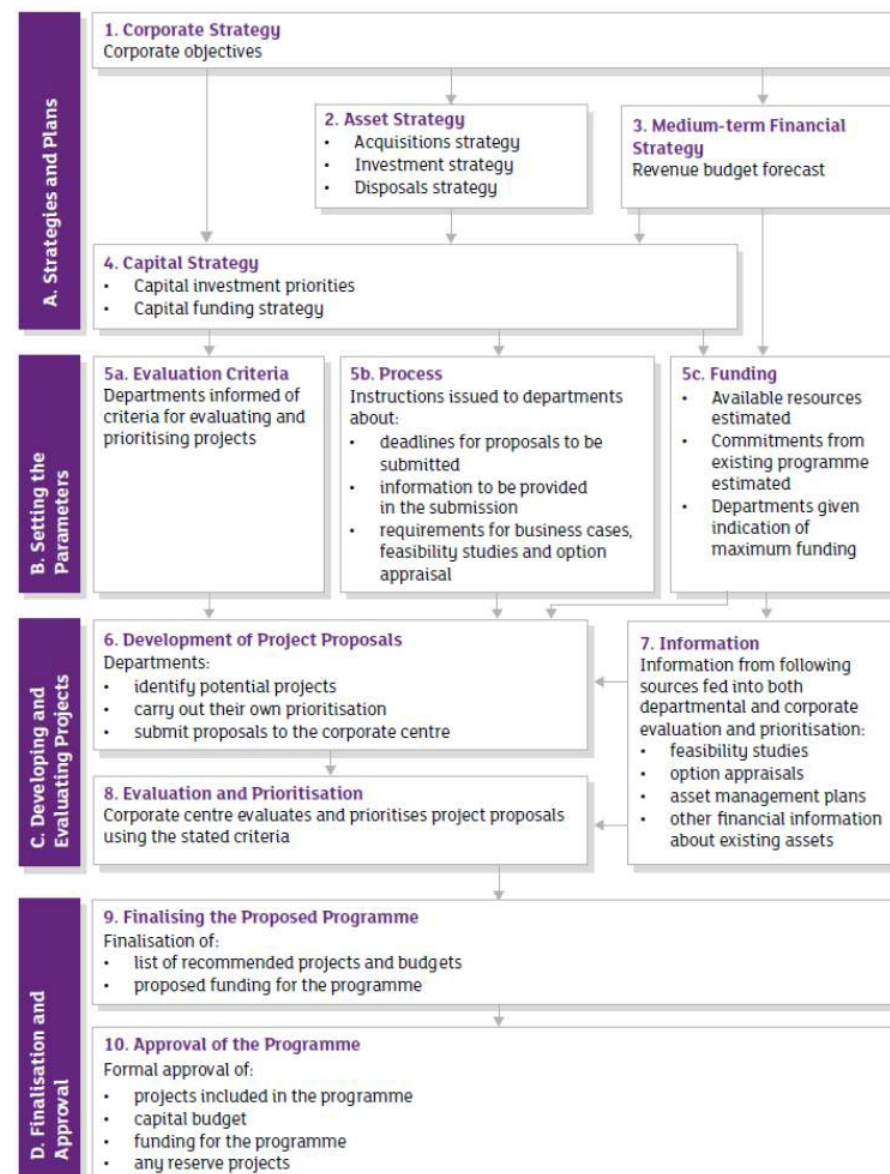
- 10.34 The Council requires the submission of a High-Level Business Case, that assesses all aspects of a scheme and the impact on stakeholders is identified. Therefore, the Council can gain understanding on how a scheme impacts on the overall strategy, the local economy, officers, and resources of the Council.
- 10.35 The 'full' business case model is required for major infrastructure projects. A lighter touch version is sufficient for some projects and the Capital Financing Team will determine the approach as necessary to achieve appropriate approval.
- 10.36 Business Case annexes provide benefits realisation, risks, constraints and dependencies, contractual arrangements,

costs and funding, governance arrangements and key milestones.

- 10.37 High Level Business Cases are submitted as part of the Business Planning process. The Section 151 Officer considers each case to grade them as High, Medium or Low in accordance with the following table.
- 10.38 As a result of the need to transform the capital programme, no additional schemes have been included, unless they are either a fully funded or an Invest to Save scheme.
- 10.39 All the Carbon Neutral related projects that are listed in the Strategy have been deferred to 2027. Some of which will still be subject to the detailed review of the capital programme.

Priority	Description
High likely to be recommended for approval within the capital programme.	Schemes that help reduce the on-going financial pressures and have a positive impact on the MTFS. An agreed service provision within the MTFS. Required compliance and legislative needs. Fully funded by external sources. Self-funding projects with high financial returns.
Medium recommended only if funding is available within the parameters of the MTFS.	Cost effective replacement and enhancement. Projects with positive financial returns. Part funded projects of strategic importance to Council priorities.
Low unlikely to be recommended for approval, unless specific strategic importance is associated with the project, or public demand is significant.	Unfunded projects without financial returns.

10.40 **Annex A** provides the current Capital Programme for the Council.



3. Financial Controls

Setting Financial Parameters

- 10.41 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provides the basis for budget forecasts and annual budget planning for revenue and capital expenditure. This describes the activities to be carried out over the next four years to achieve the corporate priorities alongside the revenue and capital resources which will be needed to deliver those improvements.
- 10.42 As part of the revenue budget setting process, the estimated financing costs for the capital programme and for existing debt are calculated to update the Capital Financing budget (CFB).
- 10.43 The Section 151 Officer will invite bids for Capital Expenditure and present a capital programme at each Budget Council meeting. The Section 151 Officer will determine the prioritisation (see Section 2) and the financial implications to assess whether bids are affordable, and will then report to Members for approval in line with the Constitution.
- 10.44 Strategic management of the capital programme allows schemes to be added throughout the financial year. These will be reported to Committees on a regular basis.
- 10.45 If the CFB varies from the strategy the Section 151 Officer will consider options to top-up or draw down from the Financing Earmarked Reserve and will report this approach to Members.
- 10.46 Underspends on the CFB due to programme slippage will automatically be transferred to the Financing Reserve.
- 10.47 Current forecast for 2024/25 is that the CFB is 7.6% of the Net Revenue budget, that is due to the requirement to increase the budget by £9.5m to cover the increase in interest costs on borrowing.
- 10.48 **Table 1** shows that the estimated budgets from 2025/26 onward are being greatly exceeded by that increase in interest costs, which means the growth in 2024/25 will have to become a permanent increase or action needs to be taken in 2024/25 to reduce the capital programme, the forward funding of projects and the need to borrow.

Table 1: Financial Parameters for 2024/25 to 2027/2028

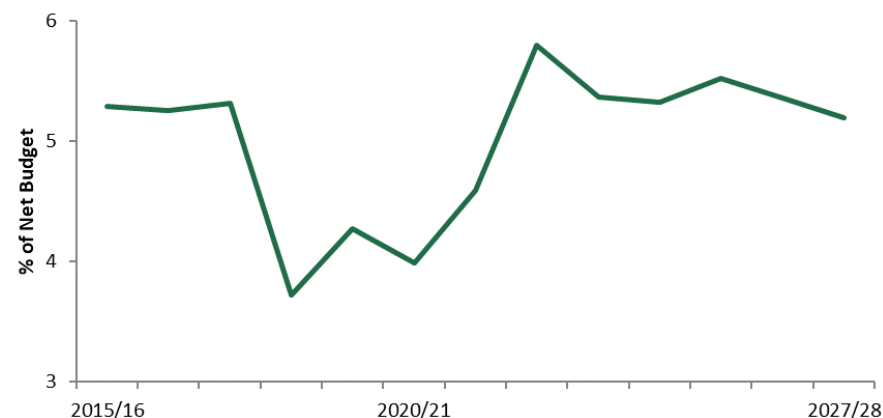
Parameter	Value (£m) 2024/25	Value (£m) 2025/26	Value (£m) 2026/27	Value (£m) 2027/28
Repayment of Borrowing				
Minimum Revenue Provision*	19.2	22.3	24.7	26.3
External Loan Interest	16.4	15.9	15.4	16.7
Investment Income	(2.5)	(2.0)	(1.6)	(1.5)
Contributions from Services Revenue Budgets	(1.5)	(1.9)	(2.9)	(3.6)
Total Capital Financing Costs	31.6	34.3	35.6	37.9
Use of Financing EMR	(3.1)	(0.5)	(0)	(0)
Actual CFB in MTFS	(28.5)	(21.0)	(22.0)	(22.0)
Budget Deficit	0	12.8	13.6	15.9
*Capital Receipts targets	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Flexible Use of Capital Receipts	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

* Anticipated MRP based on achieving capital receipts targets

Repayment of Borrowing

- 10.49 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.
- 10.50 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 costs of repaying debt are spread over the life of the asset, similar to depreciation.

Chart 3: Capital Financing as a percentage of Net Budget



- 10.51 The projection of the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and external debt, based on the proposed capital budget and treasury management strategy is shown in **Annex B**. 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.
- 10.52 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.
- 10.53 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.

Investment Income

- 10.54 The Treasury Management Strategy determines the approach and financial limits associated with providing a financial return on the Council's investment portfolio.
- 10.55 The Section 151 Officer, with advice from treasury management advisors, is responsible for considering the prudent level of available balances in any year and then assessing risk against potential financial returns to determine a level of income to be achieved from investments.
- 10.56 The Council's strategy is to utilise the net financial returns from investments to reduce the overall Capital Financing Budget.

Contributions from Services

- 10.57 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.
- 10.58 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.
- 10.59 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.
- 10.60 The Council's strategy is to use revenue contributions to the Capital Programme to reduce the overall Capital Financing Budget.

Use of Financing Earmarked Reserve

- 10.61 To allow a longer-term approach to setting the Financial parameters of the Capital Strategy the Council maintains an earmarked reserve to minimise the financial impact of annual variations to the Capital Financing Budget.
- 10.62 The Council's Reserves Strategy determines the appropriate use of reserves and how they are set up and governed. In the

first instance any under or overspending of the CFB within any financial year will provide a top-up or draw-down from the Financing Earmarked Reserve. As part of the 2024-28 MTFS there is a proposal to utilise £3.1m in 2024/25 from the reserve to cover future capital financing commitments.

- 10.63 As the Financing Earmarked Reserve will be fully drawn in 2024/25, the Capital Financing Budget will either have to be increased from the General Fund Balance or the capital programme and future borrowing will need to be drastically reduced to enable the Council to remain within budget.

Capital Receipts from Asset Disposals

- 10.64 The Council has a substantial land and property estate, mainly for operational service requirements and administrative buildings.
- 10.65 Council Plans, such as the Local Plan, Local Transport Plan, Farms Strategy and Asset Management Plans, set the strategic framework for significant land and property asset disposals and acquisitions associated with these key areas. In each financial year the net impact of these plans will allow the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Executive Director for Place, to determine the net impact of disposals and acquisitions on the CFB.
- 10.66 Capital receipts from asset disposal represent a finite funding source and it is important that a planned and structured manner of disposals is created to support the priorities of the Council. Cash receipts from the disposal of surplus assets are to be used to fund new capital investment or offset future debt or transitional costs, included within the new flexibilities provisions, as and when received.

- 10.67 The Council will continue to maintain a policy of not ring-fencing the use of capital receipts to fund new investment in specific schemes or service areas unless a suitable business case is made available, but instead subject to any claw back provisions, to allocate resources in accordance with key aims and priorities. Capital receipts have been an important source of finance in previous financial years.

- 10.68 The Council's current strategy is to realise net receipts of £4.0m for the period 2024/25 to 2027/28 and that these receipts will reduce the overall Capital Financing Budget.

Flexible use of Capital Receipts

- 10.69 Following the 2015 Spending Review, in March 2016 DLUHC (formerly MHCLG) published statutory guidance on the flexible use of capital receipts initially for a three-year period covering 2016/17 to 2018/19. The guidance has been updated a number of times since then and most recently in April 2022 which has allowed the flexibility to continue to use Capital Receipts to fund transformational programmes within councils now extends to March 2025.
- 10.70 The Department for Levelling Up Housing & Communities issued a consultation in December 2023 (closing date 31 January 2024) to Local Authorities on options for extending the flexibilities on using capital receipts for the local management of budget pressures, allowing councils to borrow for transformational projects and providing the option to de-invest in Investments properties to fund revenue pressures, increase reserve balances or repay Public Works Loan Board loans without the premium.
- 10.71 Any changes to the use of flexible capital receipts direction including the options to borrow and use Investment Properties

proceeds will not be known until after the Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been approved in February 2024.

10.72 Therefore, any changes to the Councils' budgets to incorporate the flexibilities will have to be approved later.

10.73 There are plans to utilise £1.0m of capital receipts to offset the cost of transformational projects each year over the period 2024/25 to 2027/28. The Strategy for 2024/25 is shown at **Annex D**.

Government Grants

10.74 Government capital grants are generally allocated by specific Government departments to fund projects either as part of a block allocation or following a specific application process. The Council must therefore allocate such funding to support the spending programmes for which they are specifically approved.

10.75 Overall Government funding has reduced in recent years, but the Council still receives Government grants including:

- DfT Local Transport Plan
- Housing Infrastructure Fund
- Disabled Facilities Grants
- DfE Devolved Formula Capital; Schools Condition, Basic Needs and High Needs / SEN Allocations

10.76 The Council's strategy is to ring-fence capital grants to the service that they are allocated to.

Developer Contributions

10.77 Developer contributions will be sought to ensure that the necessary physical, social, public realm, economic and green infrastructure is in place to deliver development. Contributions will be used to mitigate the adverse impacts of development and to help facilitate the infrastructure needed to support sustainable development.

10.78 Development proposals will be expected to provide a contribution to the cost of infrastructure including initial design, capital costs and ongoing revenue such as the maintenance of services and facilities.

10.79 The Council's strategy is to forward fund anticipated Section 106 contributions for major infrastructure and education schemes.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

10.80 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge on new development which became operational in Cheshire East on 1 March 2019. The Levy allows the Council to raise financial contributions from certain chargeable development in the borough such as housing (except affordable housing, self-build housing and apartments) and retail development at the Crewe Grand Junction and Handforth Dean retail parks. The CIL regulations require councils to spend the monies raised on the infrastructure needed to support the development of their area. The definition of infrastructure allows a broad range of facilities to be funded such as play areas, open spaces, parks and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities, as well as those relating to transport, health and education. CIL monies can be used in conjunction with S106 contributions and other monies to deliver infrastructure.

10.81 The Council passes on either 15% or 25% of its CIL receipts to the town or parish council where the CIL chargeable development has taken place, with the higher amount being paid to those councils with a Neighbourhood Plan. The Council will use the MTFS process to allocate the remaining CIL receipts and this will be done within the general framework detailed below:

- Up to 5% of the receipts will go towards the costs of administering CIL and the rest will be used to deliver the Council's planned infrastructure priorities;
- The Council's infrastructure priorities will be identified in its annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) which will be published on the Council's website by the end of December each year. This will also contain details on the amount of CIL receipts received, spent and remaining unspent in the previous financial year;
- CIL monies will only be used to fund the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure to support the development of Cheshire East;
- The MTFS process requires a business case to be made for the funding of projects. Where CIL monies are being sought, the business case for the proposed infrastructure must identify how it will support the planned development of the area. This should include reference to how it relates to and meets the priorities identified in the current IFS, the Council's Local Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- CIL spending decisions will be primarily based on achieving the delivery of published infrastructure priorities and the growth identified in the Local Plan. Other considerations will include the extent to which non CIL funding sources can be leveraged into the infrastructure project and assurance that the ongoing operational and

maintenance costs of the project will be met over the life of the infrastructure; and

- The reasons and decisions made on all CIL funding bids considered through the MTFS process will be published to ensure transparency.

Funding Capital Expenditure

10.82 The inclusion of schemes within the Council's capital budget is intrinsically linked with the way schemes can be financed. This ensures that the affordability of the capital programme reflects the organisation's long-term objectives rather than short-term expedience.

10.83 The Council's strategy is to fund capital expenditure in the first instance from sources other than the Council's Capital Financing Revenue Budget.

10.84 Capital expenditure may be funded directly from revenue, but not vice-versa. Overall financial pressure on the Council makes returns on capital investment a key element of the overall financial stability of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

10.85 Capital budgeting differs from revenue budgeting because:

- The need for capital investment tends to fluctuate year on year to a much greater degree than the need for revenue spending.
- There is usually significant discretion over how or when to make use of the capital funding that is potentially available, such as determining the level of borrowing and the use made of capital receipts in a particular period.
- There is usually significant discretion over when particular capital projects take place capital budgets, unlike revenue

budgets, can usually be carried forward from one year to another.

- Many public sector organisations are able to fund capital expenditure from sources that they are not permitted to use to fund revenue expenditure, such as borrowing.

10.86 The Section 151 Officer will therefore use judgement, as part of the medium-term financial planning process, to determine how schemes can be accommodated within the overall programme, depending on the organisation's overall financial position and its capital investment priorities.

10.87 The Council will ensure every effort is made to provide value for money from capital expenditure, and to maximise the local benefits from capital projects the Council will always target alternative funding sources before committing to contributions from the funding parameters set within the MTFs. All high-level business cases will therefore contain reference to benefits realisation.

10.88 All high-level business cases will include information on how alternative funding sources have been considered. All capital scheme budget managers will also provide regular updates on the status of all funding sources, as required by the Section 151 Officer. Funding sources will be categorised as either 'received', 'contractually committed' or 'in negotiation'.

Contingencies in the Capital Programme

10.89 In the initial stages of development, major capital projects will have significant uncertainties. For example, these may relate to the planning process, the views / interest of stakeholders who must be consulted, ground conditions, or the costs of rectifying or demolishing existing buildings (for example the cost of asbestos removal).

10.90 For this reason, the Council will develop a structured process of identifying and managing risk. In the initial stages of a project these are necessarily broad estimates due to the number of unknown factors. As projects progress the unknown factors will become clearer and project managers will focus on managing these in the most effective way possible, utilising contingencies to do so as needed.

10.91 The process of identifying risk will be two stage, firstly at the project development stage with further refinement at the contract award stage.

10.92 As part of the Capital Programme Review all project contingencies will be assessed to ensure they are appropriate. Approval to access any contingency element must have clear written controls as to when they can be accessed and who has authority to release the contingent funds.

4. Investment and Risk Strategy

- 10.93 The Council is faced with diminishing capital finance and reduced access to grants and external funding. Spend will need to be monitored effectively against available funds. The Council has seen an unprecedented increase in costs for a number of its key projects due to inflationary pressures being experienced nationwide. This pressure is likely to continue in the forthcoming years. However, less dependence and more self-reliance will tend to reduce the exposure to risk.
- 10.94 A risk management framework is in place and the core of this framework is set out in the Corporate Risk Management Strategy. Each directorate has its own operational risk register which integrates the relevant directorate Performance Strategy, improvement plans and budgets. In accordance with the HM Treasury Five Case model, a detailed Risk Assessment must be completed for each capital scheme.
- 10.95 Supporting the Council's budget with adequate reserves is a key element to creating financial resilience and a flexible approach to transferring money from general and earmarked reserves provides protection for Council Taxpayers against year on year fluctuations in expenditure.
- 10.96 The significant resources applied to capital expenditure require the adopted principles of value for money to be at the heart of this strategy. Effective procurement is therefore essential, and the Council seeks to apply rigorous procurement standards in the selection of suppliers and contractors throughout the life of a project.
- 10.97 The Capital Programme should be kept under review having regard to the prevailing economic climate, property market and Government policy. Capital receipts estimates should therefore be kept under review with any significant changes reflected in reporting.
- 10.98 Cheshire East's strong taxbase and independence provides financial stability and offers some local protection from the impact of national economic fluctuations and total spending per head of population being below average when compared to neighbouring authorities. Given this national and local context, the overall financial risk profile should continue to reduce.

5. Governance

10.99 It is important given the risks surrounding Capital Projects that the appropriate governance arrangements are in place:

- The Capital Strategy, including the overall Capital Programme to be approved annually as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy at full Council.
- Updates to the capital programme will be reported to the relevant Committee on a regular basis.
- Committees will review progress against the capital programme and monitor levels of slippage against reported profiled spend.
- Management of Committee work programmes provides the opportunity for Members to consider how scrutiny and amendment of the capital programme ensures alignment to the Council's ambitions.
- Proposals for inclusion in the Capital programme can be made throughout the year. All schemes are subject to approval in accordance with the Finance Procedure Rules before inclusion in the programme.
- An officer group, the Assets Board, meets monthly and is chaired by the Director of Growth & Enterprise. The Board has a key role in the development and implementation of the strategy and reviews performance of the programme.
- The board has strategic oversight of land and property assets and reports on acquisition, disposal, development and management strategies.

Knowledge and Skills

- 10.100 The Capital Strategy and Treasury Management and Investment Strategies are managed by a team of professionally qualified accountants with extensive local government finance experience between them. They all follow a Continuous Professional Development plan (CPD) and attend courses on an ongoing basis to keep abreast of new developments and skills.
- 10.101 The Council's Section 151 Officer is the officer with overall responsibility for Capital and Treasury activities. He is a professionally qualified accountant and follows an ongoing CPD programme.
- 10.102 The Senior Responsible Officers and Project Managers who manage a capital project receive training which provides up to date information on the CIPFA Code of Practice, the Prudential Code, principles of capital accounting including eligible capital expenditure, capital funding and the capital financing budget.

Background Papers

Cheshire East Reports –

- Statement of Accounts
- Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- Quarterly Review of Finance Reports
- Financial Resilience - Value for Money
- Finance Procedure Rules

Arlingclose Ltd, Independent Treasury Management Advisors –

- Capital Strategy Template

Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 (CIPFA)

Local Authority Capital Accounting: A Reference Manual for Practitioners (CIPFA, 2019)

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (CIPFA, 2019 and 2021)

Annex A: Capital Programme

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY						
CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2027/28						
	Prior Years £000	Budget 2024/25 £000	Budget 2025/26 £000	Budget 2026/27 £000	Budget 2027/28 £000	Total Budget £000
Committed Schemes - In Progress						
Adults and Health	190	799	0	0	0	989
Children and Families	34,961	38,908	25,602	10,770	11,550	121,791
Highways & Transport	312,557	44,076	37,304	26,630	87,901	508,468
Economy & Growth	128,869	78,095	67,368	10,361	17,546	302,240
Environment & Communities	5,319	13,261	16,497	1,418	7	36,502
Corporate Policy	79,242	10,379	6,503	2,524	0	98,647
Total Committed Schemes - In Progress	561,139	185,518	153,274	51,704	117,003	1,068,638
CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2027/28						
	Prior Years £000	Budget 2024/25 £000	Budget 2025/26 £000	Budget 2026/27 £000	Budget 2027/28 £000	Total Budget £000
New Schemes						
Adults and Health	0	0	0	0	0	0
Children and Families	0	0	0	0	0	0
Highways & Transport	0	22,375	21,842	15,051	15,051	74,320
Economy & Growth	0	2,168	0	0	0	2,168
Environment & Communities	0	5,717	2,517	18	0	8,252
Corporate Policy	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total New Schemes	0	30,261	24,359	15,069	15,051	84,740
Total Capital Schemes	561,139	215,779	177,633	66,772	132,054	1,153,377
CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY						

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY						
CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2027/28						
Funding Requirement						
	Prior Years £000	Budget 2024/25 £000	Budget 2025/26 £000	Budget 2026/27 £000	Budget 2027/28 £000	Total Budget £000
Indicative Funding Analysis: (See note 1)						
Government Grants	336,151	133,980	56,976	26,230	73,077	626,413
External Contributions	21,387	22,854	35,410	19,827	28,006	127,484
Revenue Contributions	1,216	1,951	219	217	217	3,819
Capital Receipts	347	1,796	31,810	1,180	540	35,673
Prudential Borrowing (See note 2)	202,038	55,199	53,218	19,318	30,215	359,988
Total	561,139	215,779	177,633	66,772	132,054	1,153,377

Note 1:

The funding requirement identified in the above table does not currently represent a balanced and affordable position, in the medium term. The Council will need to transform the capital programme to reduce the number of schemes requiring Cheshire East Resources and the need to borrow whilst interest rates are at the current levels of 5.0%+. The level of capital receipts are based on a prudent approach based on the work of the Asset Management team and their most recently updated Disposals Programme.

Note 2:

The schemes marked ** on the Committee tables that follow this Summary table are the schemes that have been highlighted that can not proceed until the Capital Programme Review has been completed. Any urgent requests to continue prior to the reviews completion will require approval from the Chair of the Finance Sub Committee and the S.151 Officer.

Note 3:

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.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2027/28													
Scheme Description		Forecast Expenditure						Forecast Funding					Total Funding
	Total Approved Budget £000	Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Total Forecast Budget 2024-28 £000	Government Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Adult Social Care													
Community - Rural Shared Prosperity Fund	413	80	333	0	0	0	333	333	0	0	0	0	333
Electronic Call Monitoring System	389	0	389	0	0	0	389	0	0	389	0	0	389
People Planner System	94	44	50	0	0	0	50	50	0	0	0	0	50
Replacement Care4CE Devices	93	66	27	0	0	0	27	27	0	0	0	0	27
Total Adults Social Care Schemes	989	190	799	0	0	0	799	410	0	389	0	0	799

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25-2027/28													
Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget £000	Forecast Expenditure						Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
		Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Total Forecast Budget 2024-28 £000	Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Childrens Social Care													
Childcare Capital Expansion	749	0	749	0	0	0	749	749	0	0	0	0	749
**Children's Home Sufficiency Scheme	2,100	50	2,050	0	0	0	2,050	0	0	0	0	2,050	2,050
**Crewe Youth Zone	4,826	396	3,330	1,100	0	0	4,430	2,230	0	0	0	2,200	4,430
Family Hubs Transformation (Early Years - C110120)	131	104	27	0	0	0	27	27	0	0	0	0	27
Total Children's Social Care	7,806	550	6,156	1,100	0	0	7,256	3,006	0	0	0	4,250	7,256
Strong Start, Family Help & Integration													
Early Years Sufficiency Capital Fund	1,036	913	123	0	0	0	123	123	0	0	0	0	123
Total Strong Start, Family Help & Integration	1,036	913	123	0	0	0	123	123	0	0	0	0	123
Education and 14-19 Skills													
Adelaide Academy	854	98	756	0	0	0	756	586	0	0	0	170	756
Basic Need Grant Allocation	9,035	1,210	5,383	2,442	0	0	7,825	7,825	0	0	0	0	7,825
Brine Leas High School	701	51	650	0	0	0	650	650	0	0	0	0	650
Cledford House	100	10	90	0	0	0	90	90	0	0	0	0	90
Congleton Planning Area	4,470	4,450	20	0	0	0	20	20	0	0	0	0	20
Congleton Planning Area - Primary (1)	2,209	179	100	1,930	0	0	2,030	730	1,300	0	0	0	2,030
Congleton Planning Area - Primary (3)	7,504	4	50	0	2,200	5,250	7,500	4,300	3,200	0	0	0	7,500
Devolved Formula Capital	1,280	0	340	330	310	300	1,280	1,280	0	0	0	0	1,280
Future Schemes - Feasibility Studies	250	0	250	0	0	0	250	250	0	0	0	0	250
Handforth Planning Area - New School	13,003	3	500	8,500	4,000	0	13,000	136	12,864	0	0	0	13,000
Macclesfield Planning Area - New School	4,001	1	0	0	0	4,000	4,000	0	4,000	0	0	0	4,000
Macclesfield Planning Area - Secondary New	1,031	3	1,028	0	0	0	1,028	1,028	0	0	0	0	1,028
Mobberley Primary School	958	33	925	0	0	0	925	625	0	0	300	0	925
Nantwich Planning Area (Primary)	7,861	715	6,146	1,000	0	0	7,146	4,126	3,020	0	0	0	7,146
Poynton Planning Area	1,500	20	480	1,000	0	0	1,480	677	803	0	0	0	1,480
Provision of Sufficient School Places - SEND	7,182	4,182	3,000	0	0	0	3,000	0	0	0	0	3,000	3,000
Provision of SEN Unit - Wistaston Primary School	1,506	306	1,200	0	0	0	1,200	900	0	0	0	300	1,200
Sandbach Primary Academy	1,583	200	1,383	0	0	0	1,383	1,383	0	0	0	0	1,383
SEN Free School 1	500	0	500	0	0	0	500	500	0	0	0	0	500
SEN Free School 2	500	0	500	0	0	0	500	500	0	0	0	0	500

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25-2027/28													
Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget £000	Forecast Expenditure						Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
		Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Total Forecast Budget 2024-28 £000	Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Schools Condition Capital Grant	8,000	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	8,000	8,000	0	0	0	0	8,000
Shavington Planning Area - New Primary School	8,040	181	600	5,000	2,259	0	7,859	5,544	2,315	0	0	0	7,859
Shavington Planning Area - Secondary	3,506	2,368	1,139	0	0	0	1,139	1,139	0	0	0	0	1,139
Springfield Satellite Site (Dean Row)	6,112	5,612	500	0	0	0	500	0	0	0	0	500	500
The Dingle PS Expansion (Was Haslington PA-Primary)	1,395	1,017	378	0	0	0	378	378	0	0	0	0	378
Tytherington High School	2,500	0	200	2,300	0	0	2,500	2,500	0	0	0	0	2,500
Various SEN Sites - Small Works/Adaptations	150	0	150	0	0	0	150	150	0	0	0	0	150
Wheelock Primary School	2,411	211	2,200	0	0	0	2,200	1,690	510	0	0	0	2,200
Wilmslow High School BN	14,179	12,643	1,536	0	0	0	1,536	778	710	0	0	48	1,536
Wilmslow Primary Planning Area	626	1	625	0	0	0	625	125	500	0	0	0	625
Total Education & 14-19 Skills	112,948	33,497	32,629	24,502	10,769	11,550	79,450	45,909	29,223	0	300	4,018	79,450
													0
Total Committed Schemes	121,790	34,961	38,908	25,602	10,769	11,550	86,829	49,038	29,223	0	300	8,268	86,829
Total Children and Families Schemes	121,790	34,961	38,908	25,602	10,769	11,550	86,829	49,038	29,223	0	300	8,268	86,829

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2027/28													
Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget £000	Forecast Expenditure					Total Forecast Budget 2024-28 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
		Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
ICT Services													
Accelerate Digital	1,690	0	890	800	0	0	1,690	0	0	0	0	1,690	1,690
**Care Act Phase 2	6,314	4,956	1,358	0	0	0	1,358	0	0	0	0	1,358	1,358
Digital Customer Enablement	3,113	2,400	713	0	0	0	713	0	0	0	0	713	713
**ICT Device Replacement	1,912	912	1,000	0	0	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	1,000	1,000
ICT Hybrid Model	1,552	581	971	0	0	0	971	0	0	0	0	971	971
**IADM (Information Assurance and Data Management)	19,465	16,784	1,281	1,400	0	0	2,681	0	0	0	0	2,681	2,681
Infrastructure Investment Programme (IIP)	36,370	31,740	1,996	1,804	830	0	4,630	0	0	0	0	4,630	4,630
Vendor Management	1,006	906	100	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100	100
Total ICT Services Schemes	71,423	58,279	8,310	4,004	830	0	13,144	0	0	0	0	13,144	13,144
Finance & Customer Services													
**Core Financials	11,317	9,514	808	698	297	0	1,803	0	0	0	0	1,803	1,803
**Strategic Capital Projects	15,588	11,430	1,261	1,500	1,397	0	4,158	0	0	0	0	4,158	4,158
**Vendor Management - Phase 2	320	19	0	301	0	0	301	0	0	0	0	301	301
Total Finance & Customer Services Schemes	27,224	20,963	2,069	2,499	1,694	0	6,261	0	0	0	0	6,261	6,261
Total Committed Schemes	98,647	79,242	10,379	6,503	2,524	0	19,405	0	0	0	0	19,405	19,405
Total Corporate Policy Schemes	98,647	79,242	10,379	6,503	2,524	0	19,405	0	0	0	0	19,405	19,405

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2027/28													
Scheme Description		Forecast Expenditure						Forecast Funding					
	Total Approved Budget £000	Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Total Forecast Budget 2024-28 £000	Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	Total Funding £000
Committed Schemes													
Culture & Tourism													
Countryside Vehicles	1,579	733	193	219	217	217	845	0	0	845	0	0	845
Culture & Tourism S106 Schemes	379	112	267	0	0	0	267	8	259	0	0	0	267
**New Archives Premises	10,256	761	8,727	667	100	0	9,495	0	0	0	0	9,495	9,495
PROW CMM A6 MARR	100	65	35	0	0	0	35	35	0	0	0	0	35
Visitor Economy - Rural Shared Prosperity Fund	415	130	285	0	0	0	285	285	0	0	0	0	285
**Tatton Park Investment Phase 2	3,280	1,757	350	350	823	0	1,523	0	0	0	0	1,523	1,523
Total Culture & Tourism Committed Schemes	16,008	3,558	9,857	1,236	1,140	217	12,450	328	259	845	0	11,018	12,450
Economic Development													
Crewe Towns Fund - Repurposing Our High Streets	1,450	265	541	644	0	0	1,185	1,185	0	0	0	0	1,185
Crewe Towns Fund - Flag Lane Baths	3,935	542	3,393	0	0	0	3,393	3,393	0	0	0	0	3,393
Crewe Towns Fund - Mill Street Corridor	3,620	778	2,043	798	0	0	2,841	2,841	0	0	0	0	2,841
Crewe Towns Fund - Mirion St	732	130	603	0	0	0	603	603	0	0	0	0	603
Crewe Towns Fund - Crewe Youth Zone non-grant costs	351	148	203	0	0	0	203	203	0	0	0	0	203
History Centre Public Realm & ICV (Crewe Towns Fund)	380	10	0	370	0	0	370	370	0	0	0	0	370
Handforth Garden Village s106 Obligations	6,841	0	0	3,000	3,841	0	6,841	0	0	0	0	6,841	6,841
Handforth Heat Network	13,219	86	594	50	450	12,039	13,133	2,518	7,428	0	0	3,187	13,133
**Demolition of Crewe Library & Concourse	3,396	1,017	2,379	0	0	0	2,379	856	0	0	0	1,523	2,379
Future High Street Funding - CEC Innovation Centre	3,973	1,362	2,611	0	0	0	2,611	2,611	0	0	0	0	2,611
Future High Street Funding - Christ Church Innovation Centre	80	80	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crewe Town Centre Regeneration	32,303	31,073	1,229	0	0	0	1,229	0	0	0	0	1,229	1,229
**Macclesfield Town Centre	2,219	1,861	358	0	0	0	358	0	0	0	0	358	358
**South Macclesfield Development Area	34,630	3,382	11,248	20,000	0	0	31,248	10,000	10,000	0	11,248	0	31,248
North Cheshire Garden Village	57,866	8,402	18,989	30,475	0	0	49,464	18,921	0	0	21,568	8,975	49,464
**Leighton Green	2,096	1,564	532	0	0	0	532	0	0	0	0	532	532
Connecting Cheshire Phase 3	8,000	600	1,500	2,000	1,950	1,950	7,400	0	7,400	0	0	0	7,400
Connecting Cheshire 2020	9,250	6,012	2,238	1,000	0	0	3,238	3,238	0	0	0	0	3,238
UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Core	950	301	649	0	0	0	649	649	0	0	0	0	649
Total Economic Development Committed Schemes	185,292	57,614	49,111	58,337	6,241	13,989	127,678	47,389	24,828	0	32,816	22,646	127,678
Facilities Management													
PSDS - 3B - Lot 1	3,278	200	2,078	1,000	0	0	3,078	1,815	0	0	0	1,263	3,078
PSDS - 3B - Lot 3 (schools)	4,946	4,572	375	0	0	0	375	0	0	375	0	0	375
**Septic Tanks	636	285	351	0	0	0	351	0	0	0	0	351	351
Schools Capital Maintenance	6,956	6,478	479	0	0	0	479	479	0	0	0	0	479
**Corporate Landlord - Operational	1,027	997	30	0	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	30	30
**Premises Capital (FM)	38,989	33,020	3,500	2,469	0	0	5,969	0	0	0	0	5,969	5,969
Poynton Pool Spillway	1,380	638	715	27	0	0	742	0	0	0	0	742	742
Total Facilities Management Committed Schemes	57,213	46,190	7,527	3,496	0	0	11,023	2,294	0	375	0	8,355	11,023

Economy and Growth

CAPITAL

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2027/28

Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget £000	Forecast Expenditure					Total Forecast Budget 2024-28 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
		Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Estates													
Malkins Bank Landfill Site	1,360	676	684	0	0	0	684	0	0	0	0	684	684
**Farms Strategy	2,910	1,700	180	310	180	540	1,210	0	0	0	1,210	0	1,210
Total Estates Committed Schemes	4,270	2,376	864	310	180	540	1,894	0	0	0	1,210	684	1,894
Housing													
Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2	6,210	1,553	4,658	0	0	0	4,658	4,658	0	0	0	0	4,658
Crewe Towns Fund - Warm and Healthy Homes	2,126	30	707	1,389	0	0	2,096	2,096	0	0	0	0	2,096
Green Homes Grant	3,103	2,620	483	0	0	0	483	483	0	0	0	0	483
**Home Repairs Vulnerable People	1,285	768	258	258	0	0	516	0	0	0	0	516	516
Disabled Facilities	21,418	10,189	3,287	2,342	2,800	2,800	11,229	10,302	0	0	0	928	11,229
Temporary Accommodation	1,178	1,088	90	0	0	0	90	0	0	90	0	0	90
Gypsy and Traveller Sites	4,136	2,884	1,252	0	0	0	1,252	175	0	0	0	1,077	1,252
Total Housing Committed Schemes	39,456	19,131	10,736	3,989	2,800	2,800	20,325	17,714	0	90	0	2,521	20,325
Total Committed Schemes	302,240	128,869	78,095	67,368	10,361	17,546	173,371	67,724	25,087	1,310	34,026	45,224	173,371
New Schemes													
Culture & Tourism													
**Green Structures Investment	384	0	384	0	0	0	384	0	0	0	0	384	384
Economic Development													
Nantwich Town Centre Public Realm Improvements	100	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	100	0	0	0	100
Macclesfield Indoor Market Refurbishment (MIMR)	1,269	0	1,269	0	0	0	1,269	1,269	0	0	0	0	1,269
Macclesfield on Foot (MOF)	415	0	415	0	0	0	415	415	0	0	0	0	415
Total Economic Development New Schemes	2,168	0	2,168	0	0	0	2,168	1,684	100	0	0	384	2,168
Total Economy and Growth Schemes	304,408	128,869	80,264	67,368	10,361	17,546	175,539	69,409	25,187	1,310	34,026	45,608	175,539

Environment and Communities

CAPITAL

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2027/28

Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget £000	Forecast Expenditure					Total Forecast Budget 2024-28 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
		Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Environment Services													
Booth Bed Lane, Goostrey	140	0	140	0	0	0	140	100	40	0	0	0	140
Bosley Village Play Area	20	0	20	0	0	0	20	0	20	0	0	0	20
Browns Lane Play Area	12	0	12	0	0	0	12	0	12	0	0	0	12
Carnival Fields	42	0	42	0	0	0	42	0	42	0	0	0	42
**Carbon Offset Investment	450	0	150	300	0	0	450	0	0	0	0	450	450
Chelford Village Hall Open Space and Sport Improvements	51	36	15	0	0	0	15	0	15	0	0	0	15
Chelford Village Hall Phase 2	61	0	61	0	0	0	61	0	61	0	0	0	61
Crewe Towns Fund - Cumberland Arena	2,392	125	1,442	825	0	0	2,267	2,267	0	0	0	0	2,267
Crewe Towns Fund - Valley Brook Green Corridor	3,339	299	2,400	640	0	0	3,040	3,040	0	0	0	0	3,040
Crewe Towns Fund - Pocket Parks	1,272	453	425	393	0	0	819	819	0	0	0	0	819
Elworth Park	52	0	52	0	0	0	52	0	52	0	0	0	52
Fleet EV Transition	6,897	1,200	2,396	3,301	0	0	5,697	0	0	0	0	5,697	5,697
Fleet Vehicle Electric Charging	585	175	314	96	0	0	410	0	0	0	0	410	410
Future High Street Funding - Sustainable Energy Network	200	0	200	0	0	0	200	200	0	0	0	0	200
Green Investment Scheme (Solar Farm)	3,950	2,515	1,429	6	0	0	1,435	0	0	0	0	1,435	1,435
Household Waste Recycling Centres	771	0	756	15	0	0	771	0	0	0	0	771	771
Jim Evison Playing Fields	161	0	161	0	0	0	161	0	161	0	0	0	161
Litter and Recycling Bins	72	0	25	25	22	0	72	0	0	0	0	72	72
Longridge Contaminated Land	20	0	20	0	0	0	20	0	20	0	0	0	20
Longridge Open Space Improvement Project	68	0	68	0	0	0	68	0	68	0	0	0	68
Macclesfield Chapel Refurbishment	429	22	407	0	0	0	407	0	0	0	0	407	407
Main Road, Langley	259	0	259	0	0	0	259	0	259	0	0	0	259
Newtown Sports Facilities Improvements	99	86	13	0	0	0	13	0	13	0	0	0	13
**Park Development Fund	212	0	36	89	87	0	212	0	0	0	0	212	212
Park Lane, Poynton	39	0	39	0	0	0	39	0	39	0	0	0	39
Park Play, Meriton Road & Stanley Hall	10	0	10	0	0	0	10	0	10	0	0	0	10
Queens Park Bowling Green	17	0	17	0	0	0	17	0	17	0	0	0	17
Rotherhead Drive Open Space and Play Area	148	120	7	7	7	7	28	0	28	0	0	0	28
**Solar Energy Generation	14,062	0	1,960	10,800	1,302	0	14,062	0	0	0	0	14,062	14,062
Stanley Hall	55	0	55	0	0	0	55	20	35	0	0	0	55
The Carrs Improvement Project	61	0	61	0	0	0	61	0	61	0	0	0	61
The Moor, Knutsford	36	0	36	0	0	0	36	0	17	0	0	19	36
Tytherington Public Art	10	0	10	0	0	0	10	0	10	0	0	0	10
West Park, Macclesfield	102	0	102	0	0	0	102	0	102	0	0	0	102
Wilmslow Town Council - Villas	81	0	81	0	0	0	81	0	47	0	0	34	81
Woodland South of Coppice Way, Handforth	16	0	16	0	0	0	16	0	16	0	0	0	16
Total Environment Services Schemes	36,193	5,031	13,240	16,497	1,418	7	31,162	6,445	1,147	0	0	23,570	31,162

Environment and Communities

CAPITAL

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25 - 2027/28

Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget £000	Forecast Expenditure					Total Forecast Budget 2024-28 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
		Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Planning Services													
Regulatory Services & Environmental Health ICT System	309	288	21	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	0	21	21
Total Planning Services	309	288	21	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	0	21	21
Total Committed Schemes	36,502	5,319	13,261	16,497	1,418	7	31,183	6,445	1,147	0	0	23,591	31,183
New Schemes													
Environment Services													
Closed Cemeteries	152	0	117	17	18	0	152	0	0	0	0	152	152
Review of Household Waste Recycling Centres	2,000	0	0	2,000	0	0	2,000	0	0	0	0	2,000	2,000
Strategic Leisure Review	3,400	0	2,900	500	0	0	3,400	0	0	0	0	3,400	3,400
Weekly Food Waste collections	2,700	0	2,700	0	0	0	2,700	2,700	0	0	0	0	2,700
Total New Schemes	8,252	0	5,717	2,517	18	0	8,252	2,700	0	0	0	5,552	8,252
Total Environment and Communities Schemes	44,754	5,319	18,978	19,014	1,436	7	39,435	9,145	1,147	0	0	29,143	39,435

Highways and Transport

CAPITAL

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25- 2027/28													
Scheme Description		Forecast Expenditure						Forecast Funding					
	Total Approved Budget £000	Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Total Forecast Budget 2024-28 £000	Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	Total Funding £000
Committed Schemes													
Strategic Infrastructure													
**A500 Dualling scheme	89,456	11,302	1,000	1,000	1,833	74,321	78,154	53,284	4,300	0	0	20,569	78,154
A50 / A54 Holmes Chapel	603	102	501	0	0	0	501	0	501	0	0	0	501
A54 / A533 Leadsmythy Street, Middlewich	563	202	361	0	0	0	361	0	361	0	0	0	361
**A6 MARR CMM Handforth	1,265	1,055	0	210	0	0	210	0	0	0	0	210	210
A6 MARR Technical Design	473	279	194	0	0	0	194	70	125	0	0	0	194
A556 Knutsford to Bowdon	504	406	98	0	0	0	98	0	98	0	0	0	98
Peacock Roundabout Junction	750	0	750	0	0	0	750	0	750	0	0	0	750
Congleton Link Road	88,443	72,125	3,525	4,229	1,950	6,614	16,318	316	13,457	0	0	2,545	16,318
Crewe Green Roundabout	7,500	7,113	190	197	0	0	387	0	387	0	0	0	387
**Flowerpot Phs 1 & Pinchpoint	10,037	1,518	415	7,413	691	0	8,519	2,051	1,950	0	0	4,518	8,519
Future High Street Funding - Adaptive Signals	509	509	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Future High Street Funding - Flag Lane Link	1,558	1,183	25	350	0	0	375	375	0	0	0	0	375
Future High Street Funding - Southern Gateway	5,118	2,007	3,110	0	0	0	3,110	3,110	0	0	0	0	3,110
Highways & Infrastructure S106 Funded Schemes	2,072	860	1,122	89	0	0	1,212	283	928	0	0	0	1,212
Infrastructure Scheme Development	325	63	163	100	0	0	263	263	0	0	0	0	263
Middlewich Eastern Bypass	94,357	29,711	18,785	22,487	19,460	3,914	64,646	37,315	12,816	0	0	14,515	64,646
Mill Street Corridor - Station Link Project	1,534	100	1,434	0	0	0	1,434	850	284	0	0	300	1,434
North-West Crewe Package	51,366	43,192	5,638	435	435	1,667	8,175	0	8,175	0	0	0	8,175
Old Mill Road / The Hill Junction	1,325	313	1,012	0	0	0	1,012	0	1,012	0	0	0	1,012
Poynton Relief Road	52,657	46,966	1,708	396	2,202	1,385	5,691	0	4,691	0	1,000	0	5,691
Sydney Road Bridge	10,501	10,105	140	198	59	0	396	0	396	0	0	0	396
Total Strategic Infrastructure Schemes	420,917	229,111	40,171	37,103	26,630	87,901	191,805	97,917	50,232	0	1,000	42,657	191,805
Highways													
**A532 Safer Road Fund Scheme	1,223	923	300	0	0	0	300	201	0	0	0	99	300
A536 Safer Road Fund Scheme	2,404	2,334	70	0	0	0	70	70	0	0	0	0	70
**A537 Safer Road Fund Scheme	2,733	2,633	100	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100	100
Air Quality Action Plan	473	438	35	0	0	0	35	20	0	0	0	15	35
Alderley Edge Bypass Scheme Implementation	60,611	60,383	228	0	0	0	228	0	0	0	0	228	228
Client Contract and Asset Mgmt	1,243	1,184	58	0	0	0	58	0	0	0	0	58	58
Footpath Maintenance - Slurry Sealing & Reconstruction Works	1,319	650	669	0	0	0	669	669	0	0	0	0	669
Local Highway Measures	7,602	7,402	200	0	0	0	200	0	0	0	0	200	200
Road Network & Linked Key Inf	83	78	5	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	5
**Winter Service Facility	999	739	130	130	0	0	260	0	0	0	0	260	260
Total Highways Schemes	78,690	76,764	1,796	130	0	0	1,926	965	0	0	0	961	1,926

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/25- 2027/28													
Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget £000	Forecast Expenditure					Total Forecast Budget 2024-28 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
		Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Strategic Transport & Parking Services													
Active Travel Fund	2,187	1,538	649	0	0	0	649	649	0	0	0	0	649
**Sustainable Travel Access Prog	3,574	2,411	1,163	0	0	0	1,163	616	309	0	0	238	1,163
Public Transport Infrastructure	1,269	1,213	56	0	0	0	56	56	0	0	0	0	56
Local LTP Strategy Studies	750	555	195	0	0	0	195	195	0	0	0	0	195
Digital Car Parking Solutions	140	93	20	27	0	0	47	0	0	0	0	47	47
Pay and Display Parking Meters	620	607	13	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	13	13
Car Parking Improvements (including residents parking)	322	266	13	43	0	0	56	0	0	10	0	46	56
Total Strategic Transport & Parking Services Schemes	8,862	6,683	2,109	70	0	0	2,180	1,516	309	10	0	345	2,180
Total Committed Schemes	508,468	312,557	44,076	37,304	26,630	87,901	195,911	100,397	50,540	10	1,000	43,963	195,911
New Schemes													
Highways													
**Managing and Maintaining Highways	9,331	0	4,619	4,712	0	0	9,331	1,658	0	0	0	7,673	9,331
Pothole Funding	23,196	0	5,799	5,799	5,799	5,799	23,196	23,196	0	0	0	0	23,196
Integrated Block - LTP	8,012	0	2,003	2,003	2,003	2,003	8,012	8,012	0	0	0	0	8,012
**Maintenance Block - LTP	27,086	0	7,609	7,878	5,799	5,799	27,086	23,196	0	0	0	3,890	27,086
Incentive Fund - LTP	5,800	0	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	5,800	5,800	0	0	0	0	5,800
Total Highways	73,425	0	21,480	21,842	15,051	15,051	73,425	61,862	0	0	0	11,563	73,425
Strategic Transport & Parking Services													
Car Parking Review	895	0	895	0	0	0	895	0	0	895	0	0	895
Total Strategic Transport & Parking Services	895	0	895	0	0	0	895	0	0	895	0	0	895
Total New Schemes	74,320	0	22,375	21,842	15,051	15,051	74,320	61,862	0	895	0	11,563	74,320
Total Highways & Transport Schemes	582,788	312,557	66,452	59,146	41,681	102,952	270,231	162,259	50,540	905	1,000	55,526	270,231

Annex B: Prudential Indicators revisions to: 2023/24 and 2024/25 – 2027/28

Background

10.103 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. There is a requirement to monitor and report the performance of the indicators on a quarterly basis during the financial year.

Estimates of Capital Expenditure

10.104 In 2024/25, the Council is planning capital expenditure of £215.8m as summarised below:

Capital Expenditure	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
	171.1	215.8	177.6	66.8	132.1

Source: Cheshire East Finance

Capital Financing

10.105 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	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
Capital Receipts	2.1	1.8	31.8	1.2	0.5
Government Grants	90.9	134.0	57.0	26.2	73.1
External Contributions	20.0	22.9	35.4	19.8	28.0
Revenue Contributions	1.7	2.0	0.2	0.2	0.2
Total Financing	114.7	160.7	124.4	47.4	101.8
Prudential Borrowing	56.4	55.1	53.2	19.4	30.3
Total Funding	56.4	55.1	53.2	19.4	30.3
Total Funding and Financing	171.1	215.8	177.6	66.8	132.1

Source: Cheshire East Finance

Replacement of debt finance

10.106 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	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
Total	17.5	19.2	22.3	24.7	26.3

Source: Cheshire East Finance

10.107 The Council's full MRP Statement is available in **Annex C**.

Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement

- 10.108 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 £27m during 2024/25. Based on the above figures for expenditure and financing, the Council's estimated CFR is as follows:

Capital Financing Requirement	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
Total	500	527	556	550	553

Source: Cheshire East Finance

Asset disposals

- 10.109 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 for example. The Council is currently also permitted to spend capital receipts on service transformation project until 2024/25. Repayments of capital grants, loans and investments also generate capital receipts. The Council plans to receive £4.8m of capital receipts in the coming financial years as follows.

Capital Receipts	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
Asset Sales	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Loans Repaid	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.0
Total	2.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.0

Source: Cheshire East Finance

Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement

- 10.110 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 cheaper short-term loans (currently available at around 5.6%) and long-term fixed rate loans where the future cost is known but lower (currently 4.7% – 4.9%).
- 10.111 Projected levels of the Council's total outstanding debt (which comprises borrowing, PFI liabilities, leases are show below, compared with the capital financing requirement.

Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
Borrowing	128	77	77	77	77
PFI Liabilities	18	17	17	15	14
Total Debt	146	94	94	92	91
Capital Financing Requirement	500	527	556	550	553

Source: Cheshire East Finance

- 10.112 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

- 10.113 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 £355m and is forecast to rise to £463m over the next four years.

Borrowing and the Liability Benchmark	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
Outstanding Debt	128	77	77	77	77
Liability Benchmark	355	445	472	436	463

Source: Cheshire East Finance

- 10.114 The table shows that the Council expects borrowing to remain below its liability benchmark.

Affordable borrowing limit

- 10.115 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.

	2023/24 Limit £m	2024/25 Limit £m	2025/26 Limit £m	2026/27 Limit £m	2027/28 Limit £m
Authorised Limit for Borrowing	520	550	580	570	570
Authorised Limit for Other Long-Term Liabilities	18	17	17	15	14
Authorised Limit for External Debt	538	567	597	585	584
Operational Boundary for Borrowing	510	540	570	560	560
Operational Boundary for Other Long-Term Liabilities	18	17	17	15	14
Operational Boundary for External Debt	528	557	587	575	574

Source: Cheshire East Finance

Investment Strategy

- 10.116 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.
- 10.117 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	2023/24 Forecast £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	2025/26 Estimate £m	2026/27 Estimate £m	2027/28 Estimate £m
Short-term	20	20	20	20	20
Long-term	20	20	20	20	20
Total Investments	40	40	40	40	40

Source: Cheshire East Finance

- 10.118 Further details on treasury investments are in the Treasury Management Strategy, **Annex 11**.
- 10.119 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 Finance Sub-Committee as part of the Finance Update reports. The Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for scrutinising treasury management decisions.
- 10.120 Further details on investments for service purposes and commercial activities are in the Investment Strategy, **Annex 12**.

Revenue budget implications

- 10.121 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, or in other words, the amount funded from Council Tax, business rates and general Government grants.

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate	2027/28 Estimate
Financing Costs (£m)	19.0	28.5	21.0	22.0	22.0
Proportion of net revenue stream (%)	5.4%	7.6%	5.5%	5.6%	5.4%

Source: Cheshire East Finance

- 10.122 Further details on the revenue implications of capital expenditure are included within Section 2: Financial Stability of this report.
- 10.123 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.

Annex C: Minimum Revenue Provision

10.124 Where the Authority finances capital expenditure by debt, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), although there has been no statutory minimum since 2008. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to have regard to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' *Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision* (the DLUHC Guidance) most recently issued in 2018.

10.125 The broad aim of the DLUHC Guidance is to ensure that capital expenditure is financed over a period that is either reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits, or, in the case of borrowing supported by Government Revenue Support Grant, reasonably commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of that grant.

10.126 The DLUHC Guidance requires the Authority to approve an Annual MRP Statement each year and recommends a number of options for calculating a prudent amount of MRP. The following statement incorporates options recommended in the guidance.

- For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008 and for supported capital expenditure incurred on or after that date, MRP will be charged at 2% annuity rate over a 50-year period.
- For capital expenditure incurred after 31 March 2008, MRP will be determined by charging the expenditure over the expected useful life of the relevant assets, as

the principal repayment on an annuity rate of 2%, starting in the year after the asset becomes operational. MRP on purchases of freehold land will be charged over 50 years. MRP on expenditure not related to fixed assets but which has been capitalised by regulation or direction will be charged over 20 years.

(Option 3 in England and Wales)

- For assets acquired by finance leases or the Private Finance Initiative, MRP will be determined as being equal to the element of the rent or charge that goes to write down the balance sheet liability.
- For capital expenditure loans to third parties that are repaid in annual or more frequent instalments of principal, the Council will make nil MRP, but will instead apply the capital receipts arising from principal repayments to reduce the capital financing requirement. In years where there is no principal repayment, MRP will be charged in accordance with the MRP policy for the assets funded by the loan, including where appropriate, delaying MRP until the year after the assets become operational.

10.127 Capital expenditure incurred during 2024/25 will not be subject to an MRP charge until 2025/26.

Annex D: Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy 2023/24

10.128 The proposals within this Flexible use of Capital Receipts Strategy have been prepared based on a capitalisation direction issued by the Secretary of State under Sections 16(2)(b) and 20 of the Local Government Act 2003: Treatment of Costs as Capital Expenditure.

10.129 The Spending Review in 2015 included a relaxation to the capital regulations by allowing councils to use their capital receipts (income from the sale of assets) for a limited period initially from 2016/17 to 2018/19 to fund revenue expenditure that is designed to transform service delivery and reduce revenue costs. This announcement was implemented by the issuing of regulations in March 2016. The period over which these amended regulations apply have now been extended to the financial year 2024/25.

10.130 The guidance states that qualifying expenditure is expenditure on any project that is designed to generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services and / or transform service delivery to reduce costs and / or transform service delivery in a way that reduces costs or demand for services in future years for any of the public.

10.131 Local authorities cannot borrow to finance the revenue costs of the service reforms.

10.132 The type of expenditure that will be allowed under the flexibility are the up-front set up and implementation costs that will generate the future ongoing revenue savings and / or service transformation to reduce revenue costs and improve service delivery.

10.133 In allowing the Council to use this flexibility, the Council must have due regard to the requirements of the Prudential Code, the CIPFA Local Authority Accounting Code of practice.

10.134 There are a wide range of projects that could generate qualifying expenditure and the list below is not prescriptive. Examples of projects include:

- Sharing back-office and administrative services with one or more other council or public sector bodies;
- Investment in service reform feasibility work, e.g. setting up pilot schemes;
- Collaboration between local authorities and central government departments to free up land for economic use;
- Funding the cost of service reconfiguration, restructuring or rationalisation where this leads to ongoing efficiency savings or service transformation;
- Driving a digital approach to the delivery of more efficient public services and how the public interacts with constituent authorities where possible;
- Aggregating procurement on common goods and services where possible, either as part of local arrangements or using Crown Commercial Services or regional procurement hubs or Professional Buying Organisations;
- Improving systems and processes to tackle fraud and corruption in line with the Local Government Fraud and

Corruption Strategy – this could include an element of staff training;

- Setting up commercial or alternative delivery models to deliver services more efficiently and bring in revenue (for example, through selling services to others); and
- Integrating public facing services across two or more public sector bodies (for example children’s social care or trading standards) to generate savings or to transform service delivery.

10.135 In December 2023 the Department for Levelling Up Housing & Communities issued a consultation to local authorities on options for extending the flexibilities on using capital receipts for the local management of budget pressures, allowing councils to borrow for transformational projects and providing the option to de-invest in investment properties to fund revenue pressures, increase reserve balances or repay Public Works Loan Board loans without the premium.

10.136 The closing date for the consultation was 31st January 2024 and any changes to the use of flexible capital receipts direction including the options to borrow and use investment properties proceeds will not be known until after the Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been reported to Council in February 2024

10.137 Therefore, any changes to the Council’s budgets to incorporate the flexibilities will require later approval.

10.138 The Council has a number of projects that have been identified in 2024/25 that fit the criteria prescribed in the current guidance for transforming and or improving service delivery that will reduce revenue costs by producing

efficiency savings for the Council. The table below details the lists of projects and the value of capital receipt to be utilised.

Table 1: List of projects funded by flexible capital receipts

Project Name	Project Description	Expenditure Prior Years £000s	Expenditure 2024/25 £000s
ICT Hybrid Model	This project is to update the delivery of the ICT Shared Service Model which should make efficiency savings and improve service delivery for both councils.	173	705
Cheshire East Service Transformation Programme	This programme is a group of projects across the Council’s four Directorates to deliver improved service delivery through efficiency and revenue savings.	0	295
Total		173	1,000

10.139 As it is the Council’s policy not to rely on capital receipts until they are realised, these capital receipts have not been factored into the Councils Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) by way of reducing debt or financing capital expenditure. Consequently, the use of the receipts under this flexibility will have no effect on the Council’s Prudential Indicators.

11. Treasury Management Strategy

1. Background

- 11.1 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.
- 11.2 Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the *Local Government Act 2003* to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
- 11.3 In preparing this strategy the Council has had regard to the advice received from its appointed Treasury Management advisors, Arlingclose Ltd who have helped shape the content of this strategy. The current contract for advice is for four years expiring on 31 December 2025.
- 11.4 Investments held for service purposes or for commercial profit are considered in the Investment Strategy (see **Annex 12**).

2. External Context

- 11.5 **Economic background:** The impact on the UK from higher interest rates and inflation, a weakening economic outlook, an uncertain political climate due to an upcoming general election, together with war in Ukraine and the Middle East, will be major influences on the Authority's treasury management strategy for 2024/25.
- 11.6 The Bank of England (BoE) increased the Bank Base Rate to 5.25% in August 2023, before maintaining this level in September and then again in November. Members of the BoE's Monetary Policy Committee voted 6-3 in favour of keeping Bank Rate at 5.25%. The three dissenters wanted to increase rates by another 0.25%.
- 11.7 The November quarterly Monetary Policy Report (MPR) forecast a prolonged period of weak Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth with the potential for a mild contraction due to ongoing weak economic activity. The outlook for CPI inflation was deemed to be highly uncertain, with near-term risks to CPI falling to the 2% target coming from potential energy price increases, strong domestic wage growth and persistence in price-setting.
- 11.8 Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures showed CPI inflation was 6.7% in September 2023, unchanged from the previous month but above the 6.6% expected. Core CPI inflation fell to 6.1% from 6.2%, in line with predictions. Looking ahead, using the interest rate path implied by financial markets the BoE expects CPI inflation to continue falling, declining to around 4% by the end of calendar 2023 but taking until early 2025 to reach the 2% target and then falling below target during the second half 2025 and into 2026.
- 11.9 ONS figures showed the UK economy grew by 0.2% between April and June 2023. The BoE forecasts GDP will likely stagnate in Q3 but increase modestly by 0.1% in Q4, a deterioration in the outlook compared to the August MPR. The BoE forecasts that higher interest rates will constrain GDP growth, which will remain weak over the entire forecast horizon.
- 11.10 The labour market appears to be loosening, but only very slowly. The unemployment rate rose slightly to 4.2% between June and August 2023, from 4.0% in the previous 3-month period, but the lack of consistency in the data between the two periods made comparisons difficult. Earnings growth remained strong, with regular pay (excluding bonuses) up 7.8% over the period and total pay (including bonuses) up 8.1%. Adjusted for inflation, regular pay was 1.1% and total pay 1.3%. Looking forward, the MPR showed the unemployment rate is expected to be around 4.25% in the second half of calendar 2023, but then rising steadily over the forecast horizon to around 5% in late 2025 / early 2026.
- 11.11 US GDP grew at an annualised rate of 4.9% between July and September 2023, ahead of expectations for a 4.3% expansion and the 2.1% reading for Q2. But as the impact from higher rates is felt in the coming months, a weakening of economic activity is likely. Annual CPI inflation remained at 3.7% in September after increasing from 3% and 3.2% consecutively in June and July.
- 11.12 Eurozone inflation has declined steadily since the start of 2023, falling to an annual rate of 2.9% in October 2023. Economic growth has been weak, and GDP was shown to

have contracted by 0.1% in the three months to September 2023. In line with other central banks, the European Central Bank has been increasing rates, taking its deposit facility, fixed rate tender, and marginal lending rates to 3.75%, 4.25% and 4.50% respectively.

- 11.13 **Credit outlook:** Credit default swap (CDS) prices were volatile during 2023, spiking in March on the back of banking sector contagion concerns following the major events of Silicon Valley Bank becoming insolvent and the takeover of Credit Suisse by UBS. After then falling back in Q2 of calendar 2023, in the second half of the year, higher interest rates and inflation, the ongoing war in Ukraine, and now the Middle East, have led to CDS prices increasing steadily.
- 11.14 Moody's revised its outlook on the UK sovereign to stable from negative to reflect its view of restored political predictability following the volatility after the 2022 mini-budget. Moody's also affirmed the Aa3 rating in recognition of the UK's economic resilience and strong institutional framework. Following its rating action on the UK sovereign, Moody's revised the outlook on five UK banks to stable from negative and then followed this by the same action on five rated local authorities. However, within the same update the long-term ratings of those five local authorities were downgraded.
- 11.15 There remain competing tensions in the banking sector, on one side from higher interest rates boosting net income and profitability against another of a weakening economic outlook and likely recessions that increase the possibility of a deterioration in the quality of banks' assets. However, the institutions on our adviser Arlingclose's counterparty list remain well-capitalised and their counterparty advice on both recommended institutions and maximum duration

remain under constant review and will continue to reflect economic conditions and the credit outlook.

- 11.16 **Interest rate forecast:** Although UK inflation and wage growth remain elevated, the Authority's treasury management adviser Arlingclose forecasts that Bank Base Rate has peaked at 5.25%. The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee will cut rates in the medium term to stimulate the UK economy but will be reluctant to do so until it is sure there will be no lingering second-round effects. Arlingclose sees rate cuts from Q3 2024 to a low of around 3% by early to mid 2026.
- 11.17 Arlingclose expects long-term gilt yields to eventually fall from current levels (amid continued volatility) reflecting the lower medium-term path for Bank Rate. However, yields will remain relatively higher than in the past, due to quantitative tightening and significant bond supply. As ever, there will undoubtedly be short-term volatility due to economic and political uncertainty and events.
- 11.18 Like the BoE, the Federal Reserve and other central banks see persistently high policy rates through 2023 and 2024 as key to dampening domestic inflationary pressure. Bond markets will need to absorb significant new supply, particularly from the US government.
- 11.19 A more detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose Ltd is attached at **Annex A**.
- 11.20 For the purpose of setting the budget, it has been assumed that new treasury management investments will be made at an average rate of 5.30%, which takes into account strategic fund investments, and that new borrowing in the form of short-term loans will be borrowed at an average of 5.25%.

3. Local Context

11.21 As at 24 November 2023 the Authority has borrowings of £303m and treasury investments of £72m. 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**.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary and Forecast

	31/03/24 Estimate £m	31/03/25 Estimate £m	31/03/26 Estimate £m	31/03/27 Estimate £m	31/03/28 Estimate £m
General Fund CFR	499	527	556	550	553
Less: Other long-term liabilities *	(18)	(17)	(17)	(15)	(14)
Loans CFR	481	510	539	535	539
Less: External borrowing **	(128)	(77)	(77)	(77)	(77)
Internal (over) borrowing	353	433	462	458	462
Less: Usable reserves	(83)	(24)	(28)	(61)	(39)
Less: Working capital	(63)	(61)	(59)	(58)	(57)
Treasury Investments (or New borrowing)	(207)	(348)	(375)	(339)	366

* PFI liabilities that form part of the Authority's debt

** shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

11.22 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.

11.23 The Authority has an increasing CFR due to the capital programme and will therefore be required to borrow up to £336m over the forecast period.

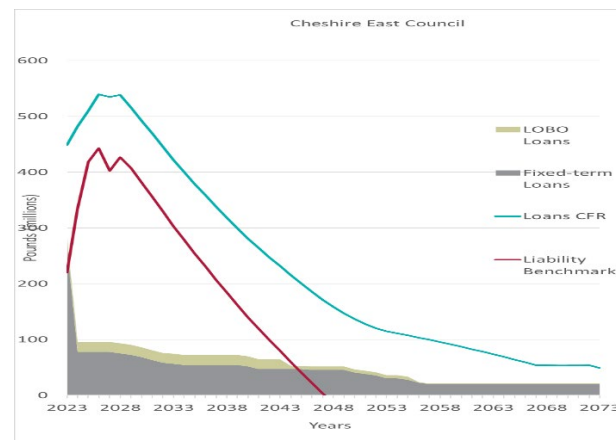
11.24 CIPFA's *Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities* recommends that the Authority's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three years. **Table 1** shows that the Authority expects to comply with this recommendation during 2024/25.

11.25 **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

	31/03/24 Estimate £m	31/03/25 Estimate £m	31/03/26 Estimate £m	31/03/27 Estimate £m	31/03/28 Estimate £m
Loans CFR	481	510	539	535	539
Less: Usable reserves	(83)	(24)	(28)	(61)	(39)
Less: Working capital	(63)	(61)	(59)	(58)	(57)
Plus: Minimum investments	20	20	20	20	20
Liability Benchmark	355	445	472	436	463

11.26 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

- 11.27 The Authority currently holds loans of £303m. Cash flow shortfalls arising from past debt repayments and capital spending are currently being funded through cheaper short-term borrowing. The Authority may also borrow additional sums to pre-fund future years' requirements providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing although at the present time we are not expecting to do this.
- 11.28 The Authority's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.
- 11.29 Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to Local Government funding, the Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to use both internal resources and to borrow short-term loans instead.
- 11.30 By doing so, the Authority is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of internal and short-term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise modestly. Our treasury advisors will assist the Authority with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis. Its output may determine whether the Authority borrows additional sums at long-term fixed rates in 2024/25 with a view to keeping future interest costs low, even if this causes additional cost in the short-term.
- 11.31 The Authority will consider sources other than PWLB when raising long-term loans including banks, pension funds and local authorities and will investigate the possibility of issuing bonds and similar instruments in order to lower interest costs and reduce over-reliance on one source of funding in line with the CIPFA Code. PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield; the Authority intends to avoid this activity in order to retain its access to PWLB loans.
- 11.32 Alternatively, the Authority may arrange forward starting loans during 2024/25, where the interest rate is fixed in advance, but the cash is received in later years. This would enable certainty of cost to be achieved without suffering a cost of carry in the intervening period.
- 11.33 In addition, the Authority may borrow further short-term loans to cover unexpected or planned temporary cash flow shortages.
- 11.34 The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:
- HM Treasury's PWLB Lending facility (formerly the Public Works Loan Board).
 - UK Infrastructure Bank.
 - Any UK public sector body.
 - Any institution approved for investments (see below).

- Any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK.
- UK public and private sector pension funds (except Cheshire Pension Fund).
- Capital market bond investors.
- UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues.
- Salix Finance Ltd energy efficiency loans.

11.35 In addition, capital finance may be raised by the following methods that are not borrowing, but may be classed as other debt liabilities:

- leasing
- hire purchase
- Private Finance Initiative
- sale and leaseback
- similar asset based finance

11.36 **Municipal Bond Agency:** UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association as an alternative to the PWLB. It issues bonds on the capital markets and lends the proceeds to local authorities. This is a more complicated source of finance than the PWLB for two reasons: borrowing authorities will be required to provide bond investors with a guarantee to refund their investment in the event that the agency is unable to for any reason; and there will be a lead time of several months between committing to borrow and knowing the interest rate payable. Any decision to borrow from the Agency will therefore be the subject of a separate report.

11.37 **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 LOBO's have options during 2024/25, and with interest rates having risen recently, there is now a reasonable chance that the lender will exercise their option. If they do, the Authority will take the option to repay the LOBO loans to reduce refinancing risk in future years.

11.38 **Short-term and variable rate loans:** These loans leave the Authority exposed to the risk of short-term interest rate rises and are therefore subject to the interest rate exposure limits in the treasury management indicators below. Financial derivatives may be used to manage this interest rate risk (see section below).

11.39 **Debt Rescheduling:** The PWLB allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate premature redemption terms. The Authority may take advantage of this and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or reduction in risk. The recent rise in interest rates means that more favourable debt rescheduling opportunities should arise than in previous years.

5. Treasury Investment Strategy

- 11.40 The Authority holds invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Authority's investment balance has ranged between £26m and £103m with peaks in cash associated with receipts of grants in advance of expenditure and earlier borrowing decisions based on anticipated levels of expenditure which did not materialise. Levels of around £40m are expected to be maintained in the forthcoming year.
- 11.41 The CIPFA Code requires the Authority to invest its treasury 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. Where balances are expected to be invested for more than one year, the Authority will aim to achieve a total return that is equal or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation, in order to maintain the spending power of the sum invested. The Authority aims to be a responsible investor and will consider environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues when investing.
- 11.42 As demonstrated by the liability benchmark above, the Authority expects to be a long-term borrower and new treasury investments will, therefore, be made primarily to manage day-to-day cash flows using short-term low risk instruments. The existing portfolio of £20m strategic pooled funds will be maintained to diversify risk into different sectors and boost investment income.
- 11.43 The CIPFA code does not permit local authorities to both borrow and invest long-term for cash flow management. However, the Authority may make long-term investments for treasury risk management purposes, including to manage interest rate risk by investing sums borrowed in advance for the capital programme for up to three years; to manage inflation risk by investing usable reserves in instruments whose value rises with inflation; and to manage price risk by adding diversification to the strategic pooled fund portfolio.
- 11.44 **ESG Policy:** Environmental, social and governance (ESG) considerations are increasingly a factor in global investors' decision making, but the framework for evaluating investment opportunities is still developing and, therefore, the Authority's ESG policy does not currently include ESG scoring or other real-time ESG criteria at an individual investment level. When investing in banks and funds, the Authority will prioritise banks that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Banking and funds operated by managers that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Investment, the Net Zero Asset Managers Alliance and/or the UK Stewardship Code.
- 11.45 Under the new IFRS9 standard, the accounting for certain investments depends on the Authority's "business model" for managing them. The Authority aims to achieve value from its internally managed treasury investments by a business model of collecting the contractual cash flows and therefore, where other criteria are also met, these investments will continue to be accounted for at amortised cost.

11.46 The Authority may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparties in **Table 3** below, subject to the cash limits (per counterparty) and time limits shown.

Table 3: Treasury Investment Counterparties and Limits

Sector	Time Limit	Counterparty Limit	Sector Limit
UK Government	3 years	Unlimited	n/a
Local Authorities and other Government Entities	3 years	£12m	Unlimited
Secured Investments*	3 years	£12m	Unlimited
Banks (unsecured)*	13 months	£6m	Unlimited
Building Societies (unsecured)*	13 months	£6m	£12m
Registered Providers (unsecured)*	3 years	£6m	£25m
Money Market Funds*	n/a	£12m	Unlimited
Strategic Pooled Funds	n/a	£12m	£50m
Real Estate Investment Trusts	n/a	£12m	£25m
Other investments*	3 years	£6m	£12m

This table must be read in conjunction with the notes below.

11.47 *** Minimum Credit Rating:** Treasury Investments in sectors marked with an Asterix will only be made with entities whose lowest published long-term credit rating is no lower than A-. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account. For entities without published credit ratings, investments may be made where external advice indicates the entity to be of similar credit quality.

11.48 **Government:** Loans to, and bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by, national governments, regional and local authorities, and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk. Investments with the UK Government are deemed to be zero credit risk due to its ability to create additional currency and therefore may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

11.49 **Secured Investments:** Investments secured on the borrower's assets, which limits the potential losses in the event of insolvency. The amount and quality of the security will be a key factor in the investment decision. Covered bonds and reverse repurchase agreements with banks and building societies are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used. The combined secured and unsecured investments with any one counterparty will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

- 11.50 **Banks and Building Societies (unsecured):** Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. See below for arrangements relating to operational bank accounts.
- 11.51 **Registered Providers (unsecured):** Loans to, and bonds issued or guaranteed by registered providers of social housing or registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing and, as providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving Government support if needed.
- 11.52 **Money Market Funds:** Pooled funds that offer same day or short notice liquidity and very low or no price volatility by investing in short-term money markets. They have the advantage over bank accounts of providing wide diversification of investment risk, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a small fee. Although no sector limit applies to money market funds, the Authority will take care to diversify its liquid investments over a variety of providers to ensure access to cash at all times.
- 11.53 **Strategic Pooled Funds:** Bond, equity and property funds that offer enhanced returns over the longer term but are more volatile in the short-term. These allow the Authority to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Authority's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.
- 11.54 **Real estate investment trusts (REITs):** Shares in companies that invest mainly in real estate and pay the majority of their rental income to investors in a similar manner to pooled property funds. As with property funds, REITs offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile especially as the share price reflects changing demand for the shares as well as changes in the value of the underlying properties.
- 11.55 **Other Investments:** This category covers treasury investments not listed above, for example unsecured corporate bonds and company loans. Non-bank companies cannot be bailed-in but can become insolvent placing the Authority's investment at risk.
- 11.56 **Operational bank accounts:** The Authority may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, collection accounts and merchant acquiring services, to any UK bank with credit ratings no lower than BBB- and with assets greater than £25 billion. These are not classed as investments but are still subject to the risk of a bank bail-in, and balances will therefore be kept to the lowest practical levels per bank. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Authority maintaining operational continuity. From December 2023 the Council is changing banking provider from Barclays bank to Lloyds bank.
- 11.57 **Risk Assessment and Credit Ratings:** Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Authority's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:

- no new investments will be made,
- any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
- full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.

11.58 Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as “negative watch”) so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn on the next working day will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

11.59 **Other Information on the Security of Investments:** The Authority understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential Government support, reports in the quality financial press and analysis and advice from the Authority’s treasury management advisor. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may otherwise meet the above criteria.

11.60 **Reputational Aspects:** The Authority is aware investment with certain counterparties, while considered secure from a purely financial perspective, may leave it open to criticism, valid or otherwise, that may affect its public reputation, and this risk will therefore be taken into account when making investment decisions.

11.61 When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008, 2020 and 2022, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Authority will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Authority’s cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government, or with other local authorities. This may cause investment returns to fall but will protect the principal sum invested.

11.62 **Investment Limits:** The Authority’s revenue reserves available to cover investment losses are forecast to be £83m on 31 March 2024. In order that no more than 4% of available reserves will be put at risk in the case of a single default, the maximum that will be lent unsecured to any one organisation (other than the UK Government) will be £6m. Secured investments will have a higher limit of £12m per organisation. A group of banks under the same ownership will be treated as a single organisation for limit purposes. Limits are also placed on fund managers, investments in brokers’ nominee accounts and foreign countries as below. Investments in pooled funds and multilateral development banks do not count against the limit for any single foreign country, since the risk is diversified over many countries.

Table 4: Additional Investment Limits

Type of Counterparty	Cash Limit
Any group of pooled funds under the same management	£25m per manager
Negotiable instruments held in a broker's nominee account	£25m per broker
Foreign countries	£12m per country

11.63 **Liquidity management:** The Authority maintains a cash flow forecasting model to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Authority's medium-term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

6. Treasury Management Indicators

11.64 The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

11.65 **Interest Rate Exposures:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interest rates will be:

Interest Rate Risk Indicator	Limit
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates	£2,270,000
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% fall in interest rates	£0

11.66 The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at new market rates. The Council is expected to remain a net borrower in 2024/25 so a fall in rates would lead to savings rather than incurring additional cost.

11.67 **Maturity Structure of Borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing will be:

Refinancing rate risk indicator	Upper	Lower
Under 12 months	75%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	75%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	75%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	75%	0%
10 years and within 20 years	100%	0%
20 years and above	100%	0%

11.68 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 the shorter periods is relatively high as there is no shortage of liquidity in the market and short-term funding remains cheaper than alternatives. This will enable the Council to finance temporary cashflow shortfalls at year-end more economically. This will be kept under review as it does increase the risk of higher financing costs in the future.

- 11.69 **Long-Term Treasury Management Investments:** 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 prudential limits on the long-term treasury management investments will be:

Price Risk Indicator	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	No Fixed Date
Limit on principal invested beyond year-end	£25m	£15m	£10m	£30m

- 11.70 Long-term investments with no fixed maturity date include strategic pooled funds and real estate investment trusts but exclude money market funds and bank accounts with no fixed maturity date as these are considered short-term.
- 11.71 The Authority has not adopted the voluntary measures disclosures on security of investments or liquidity.
- 11.72 Security of investments can be measured by the credit rating assigned to the counterparty but for many of our investments (principally other Local Authorities and strategic high yielding funds) there are no assigned credit ratings. Also, the credit rating assigned to Money Market Funds is typically AAA, but the underlying investments are considerably lower. Any measure adopted would therefore add little value.
- 11.73 Liquidity is a self-imposed measure generally on the minimum value of funds which the Council must keep as being immediately available in order to meet unexpected payments. Alternatively, a measure linked to borrowing may

be considered. In practice the Council's cash varies throughout the year meaning that at certain times the focus of liquidity is on investments and at other times on borrowing. Setting a minimum amount to hold for liquidity purposes may mean that the Council has to borrow unnecessarily to cover short periods. For example, if a liquidity limit of £10m is set and cash is predicted to fall to say £4m for a few days we would have to borrow the additional £6m usually at a slightly higher cost than we receive for investment due to commissions payable. In the unlikely event that an unexpected payment would result in a need to borrow then availability of funds from inter LA markets is high, and borrowing would be limited to need. Cash flow forecasting is carried out daily thereby allowing any borrowing to be planned and limited to need.

7. Other Items

- 11.74 The CIPFA code requires the Authority to include the following in its treasury management strategy.
- 11.75 **Policy on Use of Financial Derivatives:** Local authorities have previously made use of financial derivatives embedded into loans and investments both to reduce interest rate risk (for example, interest rate collars and forward deals) and to reduce costs or increase income at the expense of greater risk (such as LOBO loans and callable deposits). The general power of competence in Section 1 of the *Localism Act 2011* removes much of the uncertainty over local authorities' use of standalone financial derivatives (meaning those that are not embedded into a loan or investment).
- 11.76 The Authority will only use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options) where they can be clearly demonstrated to reduce the overall level of the financial risks that the Authority is exposed to. Additional risks presented, such as credit exposure to derivative counterparties, will be taken into account when determining the overall level of risk. Embedded derivatives, including those present in pooled funds and forward starting transactions, will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.
- 11.77 Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria, assessed using the appropriate credit rating for derivative exposures. An allowance for credit risk calculated using the methodology in the Treasury Management Practices document will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.
- 11.78 In line with the CIPFA code, the Authority will seek external advice and will consider that advice before entering into financial derivatives to ensure that it fully understands the implications.
- 11.79 **External Funds:** The Authority acts as the accountable body for Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (CW LEP) and for the Cheshire & Warrington Development Ltd Partnership (Evergreen Fund). The Council holds significant cash balances on their behalf prior to expenditure which is either invested short-term or has reduced the need for external borrowing. For CW LEP, the Authority shares the interest benefit based on an agreed method for each fund which is either the average rate achieved on the Council's in-house (non-strategic) investments or an agreed market indicator rate. Surplus Evergreen Fund balances are required to be invested by the fund so the Council acts as a borrower with an agreed variable interest rate based on the average rate achieved on the Council's in-house (non-strategic) investments.
- 11.80 **Markets in Financial Instruments Directive:** The Authority has opted up to professional client status with its providers of financial services including advisers, banks, brokers and fund managers, allowing it to access a greater range of services but without the greater regulatory protections afforded to individuals and small companies. Given the size and range of the Authority's treasury management activities, this seems to be the most appropriate status.

Annex A: Economic and Interest Rate Forecast

Underlying assumptions:

- UK inflation and wage growth remain elevated but, following a no-change MPC decision in November, Bank Rate appears to have peaked in this rate cycle. Near-term rate cuts are unlikely, although downside risks will increase as the UK economy likely slides into recession and inflation falls more quickly.
- The much-repeated message from the MPC is that monetary policy will remain tight as inflation is expected to moderate to target slowly. In the Bank's forecast, wage and services inflation, in particular, will keep CPI above the 2% target until 2026.
- The UK economy has so far been relatively resilient, but recent data indicates a further deceleration in business and household activity growth as higher interest rates start to bite. Global demand will remain soft, offering little assistance in offsetting weakening domestic demand. A recession remains a likely outcome.
- Employment demand is easing, although the tight labour market has resulted in higher nominal wage growth. Anecdotal evidence suggests slowing recruitment and pay growth, and we expect unemployment to rise further. As unemployment rises and interest rates remain high, consumer sentiment will deteriorate. Household spending will therefore be weak. Higher interest rates will also weigh on business investment and spending.
- Inflation will fall over the next 12 months. The path to the target will not be smooth, with higher energy prices and base effects interrupting the downtrend at times. The MPC's attention will remain on underlying inflation measures and wage data. We believe policy rates will remain at the peak for another 10

months, or until the MPC is comfortable the risk of further 'second-round' effects has diminished.

- Maintaining monetary policy in restrictive territory for so long, when the economy is already struggling, will require significant policy loosening in the future to boost activity.
- Global bond yields will remain volatile, particularly with the focus on US economic data and its monetary and fiscal policy. Like the BoE, the Federal Reserve and other central banks see persistently high policy rates through 2023 and 2024 as key to dampening domestic inflationary pressure. Bond markets will need to absorb significant new supply, particularly from the US government.
- There is heightened risk of geo-political events causing substantial volatility in yields.

Forecast:

- The MPC held Bank Base Rate at 5.25% in November. We believe this is the peak for Bank Rate.
- The MPC will cut rates in the medium term to stimulate the UK economy but will be reluctant to do so until it is sure there will be no lingering second-round effects. We see rate cuts from Q3 2024 to a low of around 3% by early-mid 2026.
- The immediate risks around Bank Rate remain on the upside, but these diminish over the next few quarters and shift to the downside before balancing out, due to the weakening UK economy and dampening effects on inflation.

- Arlingclose expects long-term gilt yields to eventually fall from current levels (amid continued volatility) reflecting the lower medium-term path for Bank Rate. However, yields will remain relatively higher than in the past, due to quantitative tightening and significant bond supply.

Treasury Advisor, Arlingclose Ltd, 3 Year Interest Rate Forecast

	Current	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26
Official Bank Rate													
Upside risk	0.00	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00
Central Case	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.00	4.75	4.25	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.25	3.00	3.00
Downside risk	0.00	0.00	-0.25	-0.50	-0.75	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00
3-month money market rate													
Upside risk	0.00	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00
Central Case	5.40	5.40	5.40	5.30	5.15	4.80	4.30	4.10	3.80	3.50	3.25	3.05	3.05
Downside risk	0.00	0.00	-0.25	-0.50	-0.75	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00
5yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.00	0.50	0.70	0.70	0.85	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Central Case	4.28	4.35	4.30	4.25	4.10	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.35
Downside risk	0.00	-0.55	-0.75	-0.85	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00
10yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.00	0.50	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20
Central Case	4.32	4.40	4.35	4.30	4.25	4.15	4.00	3.80	3.75	3.65	3.60	3.65	3.70
Downside risk	0.00	-0.55	-0.75	-0.85	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00
20yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.00	0.50	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20
Central Case	4.78	4.70	4.65	4.55	4.45	4.35	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25
Downside risk	0.00	-0.55	-0.75	-0.85	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00
50yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.00	0.50	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20
Central Case	4.38	4.30	4.25	4.20	4.15	4.15	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10
Downside risk	0.00	-0.55	-0.75	-0.85	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00

PWLB certainty rate = relevant gilt yield + 0.80%

Annex B: Existing Investment and Debt Portfolio Position

	24/11/2023 Actual Portfolio £m	24/11/2023 Average Rate
External Borrowing:		
Local Authorities	200	4.70%
PWLB - Fixed Rate	60	4.53%
LOBO Loans	17	4.63%
Other	7	5.07%
Total External Borrowing	284	4.66%
Other Long-Term Liabilities:		
PFI	19	-
Total Gross External Debt	303	-
Treasury Investments:		
<i>Managed in-house</i>		
Short-term investments		
Instant Access	23	5.33%
Fixed Term Deposits	29	5.35%
<i>Managed externally</i>		
Property Fund	8	5.00%
Multi Asset Fund	5	6.73%
Equity Fund	2	6.94%
Global Income Fund	4	5.62%
Corporate Bond Fund	1	3.84%
Total Investments	72	5.44%
Net Debt	231	-

12. Investment Strategy

1. Purpose

- 12.1 The purpose of the Investment Strategy is to:
- set out the Council's approach to managing investments
 - establish financial limits for various classifications of investment
 - recognise the role and responsibilities of the Finance Sub-Committee and its position as the main conduit through which investment opportunities should be considered
- 12.2 The definition of an investment covers all the financial assets of a local authority as well as other non-financial assets that the organisation holds primarily or partially to generate a profit; for example, investment property portfolios. This may therefore include investments that are not managed as part of normal treasury management processes or under treasury management delegations.
- 12.3 The Council has a Capital Strategy (prepared in line with the requirements of the Prudential Code); and a Treasury Management Strategy (prepared in line with the requirements of the Treasury Management Code) – relevant disclosures are made within each document.
- 12.4 Consequently, this Investment Strategy is part of a suite of related documents and focuses predominantly on matters not covered by the Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy.

Statutory Background

- 12.5 On 2 February 2018 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) (formerly MHCLG) published updated statutory guidance on capital finance, in respect of Local Government investments and the minimum revenue provision. The guidance may be found at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/>
- 12.6 The guidance was issued to reflect concerns raised by government over patterns of local authority behaviour particularly with respect to the exponential increase in borrowing to invest in commercial properties and other investments where a return was a primary aim. There was concern that local authorities were being exposed to high levels of financial risk through borrowing and investment decisions and that could have a detrimental impact on services if investments did not perform as expected. The requirement to produce this annual Investment Strategy, to be approved by Full Council, was an attempt to recognise this and ensure that Members have sufficient expertise to understand the complex transactions that they have ultimate responsibility for approving.
- 12.7 In the November 2020 Autumn Statement the Chancellor of the Exchequer went further and effectively prohibited the future purchase of commercial assets primarily for generating yield. Where there are any plans to acquire assets primarily for yield, irrespective of the source of financing for that particular asset, then the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) would not advance any lending to the Authority. It is clear therefore that yield should be an

incidental, rather than the principal factor, in any future decision to acquire an investment asset.

- 12.8 2021 saw regulators continue this direction of travel to strengthen and codify the rules around commercial assets and borrowing for yield. In December 2021 CIPFA issued a revised Prudential Code which placed further limitations on the ability of local authorities to borrow and invest.
- 12.9 The new Code incorporated updated and revised content in respect of authorities not borrowing more than or in advance of their needs purely to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. It strengthened previous guidance that authorities “must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return”. This included any form of borrowing whether it be public or private sector. In addition, it included proportionality as an objective in the Prudential Code; and further provisions were included so that an authority considered an assessment of risk to levels of resources.
- 12.10 The code is clear to make the distinction between the normal activities that a council should undertake and those which will expose it to greater risk and uncertainty. Three investment categories have been recognised and they are reflected in this Authority’s definition and presentation of investment information.
- 12.11 It has been the need to diversify and grow revenue income sources to meet growing service pressures and the availability of cheap borrowings that has fuelled the growth in local authority investments. The last year has seen the investment decisions of several local authorities come under scrutiny along with some high-profile failures. These have vindicated the regulators cautionary approach and

reinforced to stakeholders that investments come with risk and real consequences when they go wrong.

- 12.12 More than ever Members need to ensure that they are fully informed and capable of making decisions on investments particularly in areas that are far removed from normal council activities and area of expertise.

Introduction

- 12.13 The Authority invests its money for three broad purposes, and these are reflected in the revised Prudential Code:
1. 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**),
 2. to support local public services by lending to or buying shares in other organisations (**service investments**), and
 3. to earn investment income (known as **commercial investments** where this is the main purpose).
- 12.14 Often there may be a crossover of purposes for 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 normally be linked to other long term strategic or regeneration factors.
- 12.15 This Investment Strategy meets the requirements of the statutory guidance issued by DLUHC in February 2018 and focuses on the second and third of the above categories.

2. Investment Indicators

12.16 The Authority has set the following quantitative indicators to allow elected Members and the public to assess the Authority's total risk exposure arising from its investment decisions.

12.17 **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 1: Total investment exposure in £'000

Total investment exposure	31/03/23 Actual	31/03/24 Forecast	31/03/25 Forecast
Treasury management investments	52,300	40,000	40,000
Service investments: Loans	16,728	26,740	26,668
Service investments: Shares	4,460	4,460	4,460
Commercial investments: Property	24,537	24,537	24,537
Commercial Investments: Loans	3,776	3,446	3,446
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	101,801	99,183	99,111
Commitments to lend	6,097	6,013	6,013
TOTAL EXPOSURE	107,898	105,196	105,124

12.18 The Council has total investments exposure estimated at £105m by March 2024 (£65m excluding treasury management), of which £24.5m relates to property investment backed by physical assets with an income stream and alternative use. Other investments are loans for economic development purposes; and due to their nature, they are not a material element of our budgeting for interest income within the MTFS.

12.19 **How investments are funded:** Currently the Authority's investments are largely funded by usable reserves and income received in advance of expenditure. Prudential borrowing is being used in limited circumstances and performance is closely monitored.

Table 2: Investments funded by borrowing in £'000

Investments funded by borrowing	31/03/23 Actual	31/03/24 Forecast	31/03/25 Forecast
Treasury management investments	0	0	0
Service investments: Loans	0	0	0
Service investments: Shares	0	0	0
Commercial investments: Property	20,089	19,353	18,602
Commercial Investments: Loans	3,776	3,446	3,446
TOTAL FUNDED BY BORROWING	23,865	22,799	22,048

- 12.20 **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 nature of the local government accounting framework, not all recorded gains and losses affect the revenue account in the year they are incurred.

Table 3: Investment rate of return (net of all costs)

Investments net rate of return	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Forecast
Treasury management investments	2.96%	4.90%	5.12%
Service investments: Loans	-6.52%	-0.43%	0.03%
Service investments: Shares	NIL*	NIL*	NIL*
Commercial investments: Property	3.16%	3.20%	3.20%
Commercial Investments: Loans	3.16%	3.13%	3.13%

- 12.21 The return for 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. In addition there are a number of non-interest bearing loans.
- 12.22 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 has now been shown as Nil. There has been an upward revaluation of property assets at Alderley Park which has

impacted the underlying asset value that we show in Table 5 below. We will continue to monitor for signs of sustained recovery, but the underlying asset value remains more than the Authority paid for the shares.

- 12.23 The major assets included within Commercial Investments: Properties, representing over 90% of the value in that classification, are two commercial retail properties. 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 or is subject to a (lower) rent review.
- 12.24 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 tenants have thus far weathered the local economic effects of the past four years though we have experienced further reductions in asset value in the last financial year. As the lease term reduces this may continue until the leases are renewed.
- 12.25 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 need to offset prudential borrowing costs against the income. The impact of the cancellation of HS2 has yet to be evidenced. However, as this is the major income bearing category of investment more attention needs to be diverted to ensure that occupancy and income are maximised and secured for the long term.
- 12.26 The Commercial investments: Loans are at the expected level of return given the rates in place when they were established.

3. Treasury Management Investments

- 12.27 The Authority typically receives its income, such as taxes and grants, before it pays for expenditure such as 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, can lead to a cash surplus which is invested in accordance with guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.
- 12.28 The Constitution of the Authority delegates the power to manage and make Treasury Management Investments to the Section 151 Officer via the Treasury Management Strategy.
- 12.29 **Contribution:** The contribution that these investments make to the objectives of the Authority is to support effective treasury management activities.
- 12.30 **Further details:** Full details of the Authority's policies and plans for 2023/24 for treasury management investments are covered in the separate Treasury Management Strategy (**Appendix 11**).

4. Service Investments: Loans

- 12.31 **Contribution:** The Council lends money to other organisations to support local public services and stimulate economic growth. These are shown below in Table 4. No new loans were issued in the year though there were movements on existing loans.
- 12.32 The Council has participated in a European Regional Development Fund project and has received £20m in grant funding which has been provided to Cheshire and Warrington Development Partnership in the form of a loan to allow development lending across the sub region. This is led by Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership and is non-interest bearing for the Council.
- 12.33 Interest bearing 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 facilities and improving the health of residents. These are included within the Local Charities category.
- 12.34 In March 2013, Astra Zeneca announced it was relocating its R&D function from Alderley Park to Cambridge. 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 interest free loan. The loan was an integral component of the 10% equity stake and therefore needs to be viewed in conjunction with the equity investment.
- 12.35 In addition, the Council has invested £5 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 & Warrington areas, which includes Alderley Park where the Fund is based.

- 12.36 The loan does 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 crystallise when funds are extracted. The Authority has decided against committing new funds to a follow up fund for the time being.
- 12.37 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%.
- 12.38 The Council may consider making further Service Investment Loans in 2023/24, subject to business cases and where the balance of security, liquidity and yield have been considered as part of robust risk assessment. None are currently envisaged.
- 12.39 **Security:** The main risk when making service loans is that the borrower will be unable to repay the principal lent and / or the interest due. In order to limit this risk, and ensure that total exposure to service loans remains proportionate to the size of the Authority, upper limits on the outstanding loans to each category of borrower have been set as per Table 4.

Table 4: Loans for service purposes in £'000

Category of borrower	31/03/23 Actual £000	31/03/24 Forecast £000	31/03/24 Forecast £000	31/03/24 Forecast £000	2024/25 £000
		Balance owing	Loss allowance	Net figure in accounts	Approved Limit
Subsidiaries	0	0	0	0	2,000
Suppliers	23	24	1	23	500
Local businesses	16,377	26,531	70	26,461	30,000
Local charities	221	185	27	158	2,500
TOTAL	16,621	26,740	107	26,642	35,000

- 12.40 Accounting standards require the Authority to set aside loss allowances for loans, reflecting the likelihood of non-payment. The figures for loans in the Authority’s Statement of Accounts are shown net of this loss allowance. The loss allowance figure does not necessarily reflect our anticipation or expectation that loans will need to be written down. Rather, the allowance represents a prudent accounting treatment required by CIPFA guidance. The Authority makes every reasonable effort to collect the full sum lent and has appropriate credit control arrangements in place to recover overdue repayments.
- 12.41 **Risk assessment:** The Authority assesses the risk of loss before entering into and whilst holding service loans. Each application for a loan requires completion of a business

case. This is followed by a process of due diligence taking into account creditworthiness and financial standing and the Council's corporate objectives. External advisors are used where appropriate, dependent on materiality and scope of the loan arrangement. Each application is considered on a case-by-case basis.

- 12.42 As Accountable Body for the Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, the Council is also contracting party to loans provided to organisations from the Growing Places Fund. This £12m Fund was established with Government grants and is "owned" by the Local Enterprise Partnership; consequently, these investments are not made using Cheshire East's resources and are not reflected in the table above, as regards investments made, or affecting upper limits of lending.

5. Service Investments: Shares

- 12.43 **Contribution:** The Council invests in the shares of its subsidiaries and local businesses to support local public services and stimulate local economic growth.
- 12.44 As noted above, the Authority has invested in Alderley Park Holdings Limited to maintain and stimulate this key strategic site 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).
- 12.45 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 change in value of our share of the underlying assets which will fluctuate as the site continues its transition from a single user to a multi-user

campus. In contrast with the commercial property sector, the internal valuation of our stake has risen in the year(i.e., a rise in net asset value), following several years of falls. This highlights the fluctuating nature of this valuation. However, the following observations should be noted:

- 12.46 The valuation (see Table 5) remains greater than the purchase price and the underlying assets at Alderley Park remain strong, with a pipeline of future investments in place. We expect valuations to improve in the future.
- 12.47 The movement in value largely arises from accounting transactions/ re-valuations. A gain or loss to the Council's Revenue and Capital Receipts accounts would only crystallise in the event of divesting our equity stake. As it is a long-term strategic asset there is ample time for the sector to grow.
- 12.48 The Council also has shares in its subsidiary, wholly owned companies. However, they are of nominal value, and the share values are not considered material in the context of this Investment Strategy.
- 12.49 As reflected in this strategy a key objective of future investments will be to generate a return to benefit the Council's Revenue Account. However, the Council may consider acquiring shares in companies if there is a compelling business case demonstrating strong potential for growth in capital value.
- 12.50 **Security:** One of the risks of investing in shares is that they fall in value, meaning that the initial outlay may not be recovered. To limit this risk, upper limits on the sum invested in each category of shares have been set.

Table 5: Shares held for service purposes in £'000

Category of company	31/03/23 actual £000	31/03/24 actual £000	31/03/24 forecast £000	31/03/24 forecast £000	2024/25 £000
	Value in accounts	Amounts invested	Total Gains/ (Losses)	Value in accounts	Approved Limit (at cost)
Local businesses	4,460	1,070	3,390	4,460	10,000
TOTAL	4,460	1,070	3,390	4,460	10,000

12.51 **Risk assessment:** The Authority assesses the risk of loss before entering into and whilst holding shares by: assessing the proposition, taking into consideration the market (the nature and level of competition, how the market / customer needs will evolve over time, barriers to entry and exit and any ongoing investment requirements); using external advisors, where specialist knowledge / intelligence is required in each case; and being part of the entities' governance arrangements, having a seat on the Board, and receiving and analysing information on financial and operational performance against plan, and updated business plans, on a regular basis.

12.52 **Liquidity:** With regard to the existing equity stake in Alderley Park, it was deemed to be a long-term investment, supporting a business and site development plan through to at least 2025. As described above, regular monitoring and receipt of updated business plans will help to inform considerations with regards to the selling of shares; and it is important to note, as a minority shareholder in Alderley Park, that shares must first be offered to other shareholders in those private enterprises (and consequently the prospects

for disposing of shares should be seen as good, as evidenced by the sale of shares in Manchester Science Partnerships in 2019).

12.53 In the event of considering whether to make further Service Investments via shares, the Council will consider maximum investment periods on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the prospects for funds being accessible when required (e.g. to repay borrowing; or for other capital financing purposes) by making an assessment of liquidity, given the nature of the proposed investment (e.g. the type of organisation and/or the market in which it operates).

12.54 **Non-specified Investments:** Shares are the only investment type that the Authority has identified that meets the definition of a non-specified investment in the Government guidance. The limits above on share investments are therefore also the Authority's upper limits on non-specified investments. The Authority has not adopted any procedures for determining further categories of non-specified investment since none are likely to meet the definition.

6. Commercial Investments: Property

12.55 For the purpose of this Strategy, it should be noted that DLUHC defines property to be an investment if it is held primarily or partially to generate a profit. To comply with accounting classifications, the Authority includes several assets in Table 6 that might otherwise be excluded as they are not being held to primarily generate a yield or return.

12.56 Central government continues to express concern over the level of commercial investments held by local authorities and the risk that this presents if an authority becomes over

exposed. Real world examples are now emerging where this eventuality has come to pass. Changes to the Prudential Code have reinforced opposition to investment in commercial property.

12.57 The government has effectively regulated against the purchase of commercial assets primarily for generating yield. Consequently, there have been no new commercial properties acquired in the year and any future investments will be aligned to normal Council service provision. Whilst this limits the Authority's ability to invest in commercial property for investment purposes, it is 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.

12.58 **Contribution:** The Council invests in local commercial property and land, for a number of reasons. The intention of making a profit that will be spent on local public services is largely a by-product and is not the primary reason.

12.59 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 calculation of yield.

12.60 The value of properties is updated annually. The most recent valuation is from March 2023 and reflect the period post COVID-19 and the impact of inflationary and interest rate rises. The year to March 2022 saw retail values grow and the other categories made modest gains. 2023 saw a significant reversal of these gains and every category saw falls in valuation. The most significant correction came with

retail property, and this category is now valued at less than purchase cost. Overall, the valuation of Commercial Investments: Property fell by 15% year on year. The main driver for the fall in is the reduced number of years remaining on an existing lease. This increases the risk of non-renewal thereby lowering the valuation. The downward trend is expected to continue in 2024 until a new tenancy agreement is agreed. No revised valuation for 2024 is currently available. The figures will be updated in future reports.

Table 6: Property held for investment purposes in £'000

Property	Actual Purchase cost	31/03/23 actual Gains or (losses) in-year	31/03/23 actual Value in accounts (includes gains/ (losses) to date	31/03/24 expected Gains or (losses)	31/03/24 expected Value in accounts
Industrial Units	1,492	(122)	1,618	0	1,618
Enterprise Centres	245	(15)	325	0	325
Retail	23,300	(3,887)	22,088	0	22,088
Office	240	(27)	506		506
Total	25,277	(4,051)	24,537	0	24,537

12.61 **Security:** In accordance with Government guidance, the Authority considers a property investment to be secure if its accounting valuation is at or higher than its purchase cost including taxes and transaction costs. At the present time one class of property is valued at less than the historic cost.

12.62 Where value in accounts is at or above purchase cost:

The ideal scenario is that a fair value assessment of the Authority's investment property portfolio has been made within the past twelve months, and the underlying asset values provide security for capital investment.

12.63 Where value in accounts is below purchase cost: The fair value of the Authority's investment property portfolio is no longer sufficient to provide security against loss, and mitigating actions are required to protect the capital invested. These actions include annually reviewing the Commercial Properties portfolio; and where the fair value is below the original purchase price alternative actions are considered (e.g., changing the use of the asset to earn additional investment income; refurbishing the asset to make it more attractive to the market; or re-purposing the asset for use by the Council as an operational property where services to the public will be provided from). If no alternative service uses are considered viable it will be classed as surplus to requirements and steps will be taken to market the asset for sale to realise a capital receipt. However, it should be noted that these are not liquid assets. It would take time to process a disposal. It is the Authority's view that the asset that has seen a significant reduction in value remains a strong, core asset in a prime location with scope to recover. The rental income received continues to fund borrowing costs and MRP provisions but further mitigations are required to arrest the fall in value.

12.64 Risk assessment: The Authority assesses the risk of loss before acquiring and whilst holding property investments by:

- Before entering into any commercial property investment, the Authority assesses the local market conditions, by establishing the supply and demand of the need for a certain type of commercial property investment, what

competition currently exists locally, nationally and globally dependent on the type of activity that will take place in the asset (for example retail units, industrial units or residential properties). These decisions are made alongside the expertise, knowledge and market evidence collected from our Economic Development Service.

- The Authority also ensures that when setting rental income on the assets a cost of use and sensitivity analysis is completed, to future proof the running and maintenance costs of the assets so that rents are set at a level where they are competitive in the local market but will also ensure that the income will provide that additional financial security.
- Whilst holding the commercial properties we continually review market prices, look out for changes in the market, and assess the competition.
- The Authority constantly monitors any changes in the political environments, locally, nationally and globally to assess any potential impact on the local rental markets.

12.65 Future investments would be considered in the first instance by the Section 151 Officer supported by other officers. Any final decision would be made by Council under the advice of the Finance Sub-Committee. Should any investments be identified then the Section 151 Officer can initiate steps to move funds into the main Capital Programme.

12.66 This Investment Strategy acknowledges that with the introduction of the committee system the role of the Finance Sub-Committee is the body that has the role to consider future investments and make recommendations to Council for ultimate approval of individual investments.

- 12.67 No new investments are currently anticipated. However, given that significant commercial retail property has been purchased more emphasis will need to be given towards the category of any future investment to ensure that the portfolio is diversified and not overly reliant upon a single sector.
- 12.68 **Liquidity:** Compared with other investment types, property is relatively difficult to sell and convert to cash at short notice and can take a considerable period to sell in certain market conditions. To ensure that the invested funds can be accessed when they are needed, for example to repay capital borrowed, the Authority constantly monitors the use of all assets and where there is a market for a particular asset or asset type will look into realising the capital receipt on those assets if it outweighs the long-term benefits of holding the asset for a potential rental stream.

7. Commercial Investments: Loans

- 12.69 **Contribution:** The Authority has worked alongside Cheshire West and Chester Council and Warrington Borough Council to each provide the Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) with a £10m loan facility to be used to invest in economic development schemes across the Enterprise Zones in the sub-region. The existing Strategic Capital Projects budget has been utilised for this purpose.
- 12.70 The first loans totalling £8m in respect of Alderley Park were made in December 2020. The purpose is to stimulate economic development, and payback of the loans will be achieved from business rates retained by the LEP under Enterprise Zone regulations. One loan was repaid in July 2022. Whilst the facility is still available there are no imminent plans to draw down further amounts.

Table 7: Loans for Commercial Purposes in £'000

Category of borrower	31/03/23 Actual	As at 31/03/24 Forecast Balance owing	As at 31/03/24 Forecast Loss allowance	As at 31/03/24 Forecast Net figure in accounts	2024/25 Approved Limit
Partner Organisations	3,776	3,446	159	3,287	20,000
TOTAL	3,776	3,446	159	3,287	20,000

- 12.71 When considering making commercial investment loans, there will always be a Council policy-related objective (e.g., regeneration or economic development) in addition to the objective of financial benefit (yield) to the Council's Revenue Account (i.e., interest received) being greater than the costs to the Revenue Account (e.g. debt financing).
- 12.72 In considering commercial loan 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.
- 12.73 **Risk assessment:** The Authority assesses the risk of loss before entering into commercial loans with a thorough due diligence process by: assessing the proposition; taking into consideration the market (the nature and level of competition; how the market / customer needs will evolve over time; barriers to entry and exit and any ongoing investment requirements); using external advisors, where

specialist knowledge / intelligence is required in each case; and receiving and analysing information on financial and operational performance against plan, and updated business plans, on a regular basis.

- 12.74 Each loan application is considered on a case-by-case basis and requires a detailed business case. No further loans are currently envisaged.

8. Loan Commitments and Financial Guarantees

- 12.75 As Accountable Body for the Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, the Council is acting as Entrusted Entity to a £20m European Regional Development Fund supported 'Evergreen' Development Fund, which has issued loans to third parties. The Council, as contracting party, provides guarantees in respect of the amounts provided through ERDF.
- 12.76 The Fund is designed to provide loan finance to specific projects across Cheshire and will not generate a return for the Authority. The balances are included this year within Service Investments: Loans (see Table 4 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.

9. Proportionality

- 12.77 A major concern for external governing bodies is the extent to which Authorities are dependent upon investment income to fund services. Proportionality forms a key component of the Prudential Code.
- 12.78 Historically, the Authority has not been materially dependent on return-generating investment activity to achieve a balanced revenue budget. However, in the context of the current financial situation faced by the Authority and the sector, those returns will become an important factor in the ability to set a balanced budget. Whilst the proportion of the net revenue budget was consistently low and deemed immaterial this could change and 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 could become more difficult to achieve. Therefore, more emphasis needs to be placed on managing the portfolio and securing an income stream or reviewing exit strategies.

10. Borrowing in Advance of Need

- 12.79 Government guidance is that local authorities must not borrow more than, or in advance of their needs purely to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. The Authority follows this guidance. Investments are made to meet the strategic needs of the Authority, its residents and local businesses.

11. Capacity, Skills and Culture

- 12.80 **Elected Members and Statutory Officers:** Adequate steps are taken to ensure that those elected Members and statutory officers involved in the investment decision making process have appropriate capacity, skills and information to enable them to: 1. take informed decisions as to whether to enter into a specific investment; 2. to consider individual assessments in the context of the strategic objectives and risk profile of the local authority; and 3. to enable them to understand how the quantum of these decisions have changed the overall risk exposure of the local authority.
- 12.81 The Finance Sub-Committee comprises 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 and Capital Budgets of the Council through strategic investments, whether that involves using capital/cash resources or borrowing and lending powers.
- 12.82 The Authority continues to identify best practice from across the sector and will incorporate this into the evolving Investment Strategy.
- 12.83 It is recognised that in order to support decision making there will be a need to engage external advisors from time to time. The Authority has appointed Arlingclose Ltd as treasury management advisors and receives specific advice on investment, debt and capital finance issues. Other consultants, such as property consultants, are engaged as required.
- 12.84 **Commercial deals:** Steps have been taken to ensure that those negotiating and reporting commercial deals are aware of the core principles of the prudential framework and of the regulatory regime within which local authorities operate. A team of officers from Place, Finance, Legal, and Procurement are responsible for ensuring that the framework is followed. Where appropriate staff are provided with additional training and up to date skills via CIPFA and other providers.
- 12.85 **Corporate governance:** Corporate governance arrangements have been put in place to ensure accountability, responsibility and authority for decision making on investment activities within the context of the Council's corporate values and Constitution.
- 12.86 The DLUHC requirement to produce an Investment Strategy, approved annually by Full Council is a key component of the corporate governance framework.

12. Glossary of Terms

Investment covers all of the financial assets of a local authority as well as other non-financial assets that the organisation holds primarily or partially to generate a profit; for example, investment property portfolios. This may therefore include investments that are not managed as part of normal treasury management processes or under treasury management delegations.

For the avoidance of doubt, the definition of an investment also covers loans made by a local authority to one of its wholly owned companies or associates, to a joint venture, or to a third party. The term does not include *pension funds* or *trust fund investments*, which are subject to separate regulatory regimes and therefore are not covered by this guidance.

A **credit rating agency** is one of the following three companies: Standard and Poor's, Moody's Investors Service Ltd and Fitch Ratings Ltd.

A **loan** is a written or oral agreement where a local authority temporarily transfers cash to a third party, joint venture, subsidiary or associate who promises to return it according to the terms of the agreement, normally with interest. This definition does not include a loan to another local authority, which is classified as a specified investment.

Specified Investments

An investment is a specified investment if all of the following apply:

- The investment is denominated in sterling and any payments or repayments in the respect of the investment are payable only in sterling.
- The investment is not a long-term investment (the local authority has contractual right to repayment within 12 months, either because that is the expiry term of the investment or through a non-conditional option).
- The making of the investment is not defined as capital expenditure by virtue of Regulation 25(1)(d) of the *Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 [as amended]*.
- The investment is made with a body or in an investment scheme described as high quality; or with one of the following bodies:
 - i. The United Kingdom Government;
 - ii. A local authority in England or Wales (as defined in section 23 of *the 2003 Act*) or a similar body in Scotland or Northern Ireland; or
 - iii. A parish council or community council.
- Should define high credit quality (definition incorporates ratings provided by credit rating agencies).

The **Treasury Management Code** means the statutory code of practice issued by CIPFA: *"Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes, 2017 Edition"*.

The **Prudential Code** means the statutory code of practice, issued by CIPFA: *"The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, 2021 Edition"*.

The **Capital Strategy** is the strategy required by the updates to the Prudential Code and Treasury Management Code.

13. Reserves Strategy

Overview and comment from the Section 151 Officer

- 13.1 The council is required to maintain adequate financial reserves. Reserves are an integral part of sound financial management, they help the Council plan for future spending commitments, balance the budget and manage unpredictable financial pressures.
- 13.2 Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require councils to consider the level of reserves when setting a budget requirement. Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) to report formally on the adequacy of proposed reserves when setting a budget requirement.
- 13.3 The Reserves Strategy presents information about the requirements to maintain financial reserves and provides statements on the types of reserves and current and predicted balances.
- 13.4 The Strategy is revised annually, in line with the process to determine the Council's Budget and sets out a clear purpose for the holding of reserves and sets out principles for the management of balances in the medium-term.
- 13.5 Cheshire East Council's Reserve Strategy was last approved at Council in February 2023.
- 13.6 This strategy represents the latest position. Reserves levels forecast within this strategy are unacceptably low and cannot be considered adequate, reflecting the ongoing impact of inflation, demand and other specific external factors.
- 13.7 The Council will be implementing a full service transformation programme during 2024/25. The programme must reverse the forecast in-year budget deficits and then assign further beneficial financial performance to reserves over the medium-term. This must be a priority towards stabilising the financial future of the Council. This approach aligns to the current Corporate Plan and aims to protect long term service provision at a locally determined level.
- 13.8 Opportunities to increase reserves based on conversations with the Exceptional Financial Support Team (DLUHC) may also support this strategy.

Alex Thompson

Alex Thompson FCPFA, IRRV(Hons)

Director of Finance and Customer Services

(Section 151 Officer)

1. Introduction

Types of Reserves

- 13.9 When reviewing medium-term financial plans and preparing annual budgets the Council considers the management of reserves. Two types of Revenue Reserves will be held:

General Reserves (see Section 2)

- 13.10 This represents the non-ring-fenced balance of funds. There are two main purposes of general reserves: to operate as a working balance to manage the impact of uneven cash flows and avoid unnecessary temporary borrowing; and to provide a contingency against emerging events or emergencies. The target level of reserves is risk based. General Reserves must be adequate and will increase and decrease as follows:

13.11 Increasing General Reserves

- Planned repayment as set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, usually to recover to an adequate level in relation to a detailed risk assessment, or to prepare in advance for future risks or investment.
- Allocation of an operating surplus at the close of the financial year, or movement from Earmarked Reserves based on priorities.

13.12 Decreasing General Reserves

- Planned draw-down of reserves to create investment, and to counteract the possibility of over-taxing in any financial year.

- Allocation of an operating deficit at the close of the financial year, or movement to Earmarked Reserves based on priorities.

Earmarked Reserves (see Section 3)

- 13.13 These provide a means of building up funds, for use in a later financial year, to meet known or predicted policy initiatives. Discipline is required around setting up and maintaining earmarked reserves and this Strategy sets out the Council's approach to this. Earmarked reserves will increase through decisions of the Council and will decrease as they are spent on specific intended purposes.

Assessing the Adequacy of Reserves

- 13.14 To assess the adequacy of general reserves, the Section 151 Officer will take account of the strategic, operational and financial risks facing the Authority. The Council therefore adopts formal risk management processes. The Audit Commission Codes of Audit Practice make it clear that it is the responsibility of the audited body to identify and address its operational and financial risks, and to develop and implement proper arrangements to manage them, including adequate and effective systems of internal control. The financial risks are assessed against the Authority's overall approach to risk management.
- 13.15 There is a requirement for local authorities to include an Annual Statement of Governance with the Statement of Accounts. The Section 151 Officer ensures that the Authority has put in place effective arrangements for internal audit of

the control environment and systems of internal control, as required by professional standards.

- 13.16 Setting the level of general reserves is just one of several related decisions in the formulation of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the budget for a particular year. Account will also be taken of the key financial assumptions underpinning the budget alongside a consideration of the Authority's financial management arrangements.
- 13.17 **Table 1** sets out the significant budget assumptions that are relevant when considering the adequacy of reserves, in addition to the issue of cashflow.
- 13.18 These factors can only be assessed properly at a local level. A considerable degree of professional judgement is required. The Section 151 Officer can express advice on the level of balances in cash and / or as a percentage of budget, so long as that advice is tailored to the circumstances of the Authority for that particular year.
- 13.19 Advice will be set in the context of the Authority's process to manage medium-term financial stability and not focus on short-term considerations, although balancing the annual budget by drawing on general reserves may be a legitimate short-term option. However, where reserves are to be deployed to finance recurrent expenditure this should be made explicit and will occur only to pump prime investment and not to regularly support such costs. Advice will be given on the adequacy of reserves over the lifetime of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- 13.20 The current guidance requires the purpose, usage and the basis of transactions of earmarked reserves to be identified

clearly. A review of the levels of earmarked reserves is undertaken as part of annual budget preparation.

Table 1:
Holding adequate reserves will depend on key Budget Assumptions

- The treatment of inflation and interest rates
- Estimates of the level and timing of capital receipts
- The treatment of demand led pressures
- The treatment of planned efficiency savings / productivity gains
- The financial risks inherent in any significant new funding partnerships, major outsourcing arrangements or major capital developments
- The availability of other funds to deal with major contingencies and the adequacy of provisions

Financial Standing and management

- The overall financial standing of the Authority (including: level of borrowing, debt outstanding and Council Tax collection rates)
- The Authority's track record in budget and financial management including the robustness of the medium-term plans
- The Authority's capacity to manage in-year budget pressures
- The strength of the financial information and reporting arrangements
- The Authority's virement and end of year procedures in relation to budget under / overspends at authority and service level
- The adequacy of the Authority's insurance arrangements to cover major unforeseen risks

Source: CIPFA – LAAP Bulletin 55, 2003

2. General Fund Reserves (Revenue)

Purposes

- 13.21 The purpose of general reserves is to manage the possible financial impacts to the Authority from:
- Emergencies.
 - In-year emerging financial issues.
 - Reacting to investment opportunities.
- 13.22 The Finance Procedure Rules set the parameters for the use of general reserves.
- 13.23 The in-year use of general reserves requires approval in accordance with the Constitution parameters set by Council. Any use of General Reserves must consider the medium-term impact of the decision and how this will align to the robustness of the MTFS, and to the Reserves Strategy.
- 13.24 In all cases the use of reserves should be approved by the Section 151 Officer.
- 13.25 During 2019 CIPFA published a financial management code designed to support the Local Government sector as it faces continued financial challenge, the Code recognises 'that using the financial reserves to finance a deficit or to avoid difficult decisions around spending cuts provides temporary relief, but is not sustainable in the long-term.'
- 13.26 This guidance from CIPFA follows the National Audit Office (NAO) report on financial sustainability in local authorities. This indicated that there is a heightened risk of more Council's over the coming years falling into special

measures as a result of not reconciling the pressure on budgets.

- 13.27 Cheshire East Council has a track record of sound financial management. Nevertheless, in common with many English Local Authorities, the Council finds itself in a position where pressures on the revenue budget are intensifying. This comes as a result of rising inflation and interest rates increasing cost of living pressures on households and the wider economy, coupled with the legacy impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. These combined issues are increasing the demand, and subsequent costs, for public services.
- 13.28 Complexity and market sustainability in Adults' and Children's Social Care in particular, remains the most significant financial pressure for the Council in the medium term. The effects of inflation on contracts, utilities and wage levels are affecting costs across all services.

Opening Balances

- 13.29 The Council held general reserves as at 1 April 2023 of £14.1m. This included an overspend of £0.8m for the 2022/23 financial year, which was £1.7m less than forecast.

Estimated Movement in Reserves

- 13.30 When the 2023/24 budget was set, in February 2023, it was highlighted that the use of general reserves was not sustainable in the medium term. Net spending therefore needed to be contained within the estimates of expenditure that form the budget.

- 13.31 However, the in-year forecasts highlight further pressures due to demand, inflation, interest rates and pay negotiations.
- 13.32 The decision by Central Government to cancel the HS2 project running through Cheshire has created an additional revenue pressure of £8.7m, which will also be drawn down from earmarked reserves by the end of 2023/24.
- 13.33 The in-year forecast overspend for 2023/24 is £13.0m, which will be drawn down from General Reserves if the position was to materialise by the end of March 2024.
- 13.34 As a result, at 1 April 2024, it is anticipated that the Council will hold a General Reserves balance of £1.1m, as shown in **Table 2**.
- 13.35 The in-year forecast budget shortfall for 2024/25 is currently projected to be £11.7m. A forecast outturn of this level could not be funded from the General Fund Reserve balance, therefore all unring-fenced earmarked reserves which have not been identified for use in 2024/25 will be transferred into the General Fund Reserve during 2024/25. This can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2		Total
General Fund Reserve		£000
General Fund Reserve Opening Balance at 1 April 2023		14,100
<u>2023/24 In-year Movements</u>		
To fund the 2023/24 projected budget deficit		(13,000)
General Fund Reserve Closing Balance at 31 March 2024		1,100
<u>2024/25 In-year Movements</u>		
Transfer from unring-fenced earmarked reserves		12,672
To fund the 2024/25 projected budget deficit		(11,654)
General Fund Reserve Closing Balance at 31 March 2025		2,118

- 13.36 There is currently an insufficient balance available in the General Fund Reserve to adequately protect the Council against current and future risks.
- 13.37 The current balance in the General Fund Reserve does not align to the Corporate Plan target of £20m by 2025. For this reason the Council should consider allocation of beneficial financial performance or additional income to reserves in the first instance over the medium-term as an approach to complying with the Plan.

General Fund Reserves – Risk Assessment

- 13.38 The risks facing each local area will vary. In the case of Cheshire East, the impact of rising demand for services, the economic climate including very high inflation and interest rate levels, emerging and delayed Government policies (particularly in relation to business rates and fair funding), and pressure on public services to reduce overall expenditure are relevant, and these present the potential for significant emerging risk.
- 13.39 The minimum target level of reserves is quantified by a detailed risk assessment. This approach allows the Council to take account of local circumstances and the impact of economic forecasts.
- 13.40 Where specific financial liability has not been established, or where outcomes from emerging pressures cannot be detailed, the Council will assume an appropriate level of risk. This reduces the possibility that the Council will be exposed to excessive financial pressure in a single year thereby smoothing the impact on citizens.
- 13.41 Risks are categorised, and potential values are applied to them. This presents the potential exposure to financial risk. **Table 3** shows the risk areas and the level of reserves Cheshire East Council should retain to mitigate that risk. In each case the value of the risk retained has been calculated as a percentage of the potential impact. The percentage is based on the likelihood of the risk actually achieving that total impact in any year.
- 13.42 The Risk Assessment for 2024/25 provides for the Minimum Level to be set at £14.1m. This is considered a relatively prudent overall target for reserves at 3.8% of the net budget.

This reflects the following potential negative financial issues facing the Council in the medium-term:

- Further changes to future Local Government financial settlements may create funding deficits.
- Some savings targets may need to be re-phased or revised following more detailed appraisal or consultation work.
- Maintained schools are predicting significant deficit budget positions in their forecasts as a result of staffing costs and special educational needs costs increasing at a faster rate than funding.

- 13.43 It is also possible that a number of events could happen in a single year and the Council could be exposed to new unidentified risks. For this reason, the analysis also contains a Strategic Reserve calculated as a percentage of gross expenditure (in this case 0.6%).
- 13.44 Risks will be included and managed using the following basic principles:
- a. The risk may impact within the medium-term.
 - b. Risks are potential one-off events.
 - c. The risk will have genuine financial consequences beyond insurance cover.
 - d. Mitigating actions will be in place to minimise the potential requirement for financial support.
 - e. If a risk becomes 100% likely it will be allocated to earmarked reserves or included within appropriate Revenue Budget estimates.
 - f. Emerging risks will be addressed from in-year surplus or virement before any request to allocate general reserves.

13.45 As covered in other areas of the Reserves Strategy, financial risk is managed. for example. by estimating variations, demand led budgets, provisions in the Capital Strategy, limits within the Treasury Management Strategy. Financial and budgetary matters are reported regularly to the Corporate Policy Committee, with the Audit and Governance Committee providing strategic oversight.

Table 3: A robust level of reserves is guided by an assessment of potential risks

Class of Risk	Knock on Effects	Effect on Budget / Mitigating Action	% Risk (a)	Value of Risk Area (b)	Value of risk retained (a x b)	Sub-Total	Risk Assessment
Health & Safety	Major loss of service	Increased cost to reduce further risk of breach / Robust risk assessments	10.0%	£2,000,000	£200,000	£325,000	£300,000
	Lost reputation / Effect on recruitment	Additional cost of new advertising to regain confidence and recruit staff / Effective Communication Plans and Employment option plans	25.0%	£500,000	£125,000		
Fire / Structural damage	Major loss of service	Premises not operational / Robust disaster recovery plan	10.0%	£2,000,000	£200,000	£790,000	£800,000
	Severe Weather	Additional staffing, transport and materials costs / robust emergency plans	28.0%	£2,000,000	£560,000		
	Insurance claims create rising premiums or cost to insurance reserves	Budget growth to cover premiums or self insurance costs / Good claims management	5.0%	£594,000	£30,000		
Budget Pressures	Opening Balances vary from current predictions	Impact on opening balances / apply prudent assumptions to opening balances	4.0%	£14,100,000	£564,000	£5,863,000	£5,900,000
	Savings proposals challenged by changing priorities.	Impact of 2023/24 outturn / robust remedial plans and monitoring of progress	0.4%	£353,125,238	£1,413,000		
	Forecast deficit budgets	In-Year emerging issues / Robust plans and monitoring of progress	10.0%	£13,000,000	£1,300,000		
	Higher than anticipated inflation arising in year	Increased inflation on contracts and services / contract management and robust remedial plans	0.5%	£386,675,000	£1,933,000		
	Potential decrease in Council Tax and Business Rates collection rate	Lower than forecast income or increased reliefs/ robust assessment criteria and debt recovery procedures	0.2%	£326,373,891	£653,000		
Legal & IT costs	Legal challenges to Council service delivery / charges for services	Court costs and claims for financial settlement / clear processes and good workforce management	50.0%	£750,000	£375,000	£625,000	£600,000
		Increased risk of legal claims in period of more substantial policy changes / savings proposals (e.g Care Homes).	20.0%	£1,000,000	£200,000		
	Data corruption and need to improve security	ICT service days to repair, loss of service / robust security policies and firewalls	10.0%	£500,000	£50,000		
Industrial relations / External organisations	Disruption to service and possible costs of arbitration / tribunal	Loss of income, costs of providing essential services or direct costs of resolution, reduced pay costs / emergency planning	1.0%	£150,000,000	£1,500,000	£1,500,000	£1,500,000
Strategic Reserve		Strategic / Emergency risk cover, potential further invest to save options and future pay and structure changes Impact of EUExit on national and local economy	0.6%	£837,266,000	£5,024,000	£5,024,000	£5,000,000
OVERALL RISKS						£14,127,000	£14,100,000
% of Net Revenue Budget							3.8%

13.46 The outcome of this analysis has been to place an estimated total value on the range of risks that may arise, and which are not covered by insurance. This is equivalent in total to £14.1m.

13.47 It should be noted that these risks reflect the net effect of issues relating to sustainable performance against the 2024/25 Revenue Budget. The key factors are:

- The capacity of the organisation to deliver proposed growth or achieve the proposed level of savings entirely.
- Potential underachievement of cost reduction targets following consultation processes.
- Demand for services rising above estimated trends.
- Inflation staying at current high levels or even increasing further.
- Changes to Government settlements.

Adequacy of General Reserves

13.48 The Local Government Finance Act 1988 and 1992 and the Local Government Act 2003 emphasises the importance of sound and effective financial management in England and Wales by the statutory duty of the Section 151 Officer to report to the Authority, at the time the budget is considered

and the Council Tax set, on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of financial reserves.

13.49 CIPFA and the Local Authority Accounting Panel consider that local authorities should establish reserves including the level of those reserves based on the advice of their Section 151 Officer. There is no statutory or recommended minimum level of reserves as they are established by the Section 151 officer making judgements on such matters taking into account all the relevant known and expected local circumstances. Imposing a statutory minimum would therefore be against the promotion of local autonomy and would conflict with the financial freedoms offered to local authorities.

13.50 The Secretary of State in England has reserve powers to specify in regulations a statutory minimum level of reserves that will be used if authorities fail to remedy deficiencies or run down reserves against the advice of the Section 151 Officer. The Government has undertaken to apply this only to individual authorities in the circumstances where an authority does not act prudently and disregards the advice of its Section 151 Officer.

3. Earmarked Reserves (Revenue)

Purpose

13.51 The purpose of an earmarked reserve is:

- To prevent an uneven impact from policy options, by allowing balances to be set aside for future year expenditure.
- To set aside amounts for projects which extend beyond one year.

13.52 Once Earmarked reserves have been established by Cheshire East Council it is the responsibility of Chief Officers, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, to ensure balances are spent in line with their purpose.

13.53 **Table 3** identifies the most commonly established earmarked reserves and the rationale behind why such reserves are created and maintained.

13.54 For each earmarked reserve held by Cheshire East Council there will be a clear protocol setting out:

- the purpose of the reserve,
- how and when the reserve can be used,
- procedures for the reserve's management and control,
- a process and timescale for review of the reserve to ensure continuing relevance and adequacy,
- clear indication of payback periods and approach (if applicable).

Table 4: All earmarked reserves should have a clear rationale

Category of Earmarked Reserve	Rationale
Sums set aside for major schemes, such as capital developments or asset purchases, or to fund major reorganisations	Where expenditure is planned in future accounting periods, it is prudent to build up resources in advance.
Insurance reserves	An Insurance Fund has been established to meet the potential costs of insurance excesses arising from claims in respect of fire and consequential loss, public and employer liability, and vehicles relating to both Cheshire East Council and the former Cheshire County Council.
Reserves of trading and business units	Surpluses arising from in-house trading may be retained or may have to be retained by statute to cover potential losses in future years, or to finance capital expenditure.
Reserves retained for service departmental use	Increasingly, authorities have internal protocols that permit year-end surpluses at departmental level to be carried forward.
School Balances	These are unspent balances of budgets delegated to individual schools.

Source: CIPFA – LAAP Bulletin 55, 2

- 13.55 When establishing reserves, Cheshire East Council will ensure that it complies with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom and in particular the need to distinguish between reserves and provisions.
- 13.56 The protocol for Cheshire East Council earmarked reserves is set out below. The Section 151 Officer will monitor adherence to these protocols. Details of each reserve will be held to demonstrate compliance with the protocols.
- 13.57 Earmarked Reserves will be:
- Set up by Full Council, on recommendation by the Section 151 Officer,
 - Supported by a business case,
 - Normally held for a maximum of 3 years, except where the business case justifies a longer retention,
 - Be reviewed at least annually.
- 13.58 Services may also carry forward balances in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules.
- 13.59 Earmarked reserves have the effect of transferring the tax burden across financial years as current taxpayers' funds are being used to support future years' spending. It is therefore recommended that Cheshire East Council's earmarked reserves are subject to annual review, at least as part of the budget setting process, to ensure that they are still appropriate, relevant and adequate for the intended purpose.
- 13.60 A detailed list of budgeted drawdowns from the earmarked reserves in 2024/25, totaling £9.9m, can be seen in Section 4.
- 13.61 The residual unring-fenced reserves totaling £12.7m will be transferred into the General Fund reserve during 2024/25 as noted in Section 2.
- 13.62 Other service proposals within this MTFS will utilise earmarked reserves where necessary and will be noted accordingly (see Section 1 of the MTFS report).
- 13.63 At 1 April 2024, it is anticipated that the remaining balances on existing ring-fenced earmarked reserves held by Cheshire East Council will be £4.0m, reducing to £1.7m by 31 March 2025.

4. Earmarked Reserve Balances at 31 March 2024 and Transfers to General Fund Reserve

Adults and Health Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1 April 2023 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2023/24 £000	Opening Balance 1 April 2024 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2024/25 £000	Transfer to General Fund Reserve £000	Final Balance 31 March 2025 £000	Notes
Adult Social Care Operations							
Adults Directorate	1,020	(1,020)	0	0	0	0	To support a number of widespread projects within the Adults and Health Directorate. Reserve to be drawn down in-year as per plan within the MTFS.
DOL's Assessments	125	(125)	0	0	0	0	Reserve will be during 2023/24, creating an underlying staff budget pressure within the revenue budget.
Adults Social Care Commissioning							
PFI Equalisation - Extra Care Housing	2,795	0	2,795	0	(2,795)	0	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	(132)	0	0	0	0	Initially to support administrative staffing costs in relation to Central Government's New Homes Bonus guidance for community projects. NHB grant scheme has since ended and the reserve no longer required for this use - potential to return to support Council's overall position.
Public Health							
Public Health Reserve (<i>*ring-fenced reserve</i>)	3,010	(827)	2,183	(528)	0	1,655	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 2023/24 to 2026/27.
ADULTS AND HEALTH TOTAL	7,082	(2,104)	4,978	(528)	(2,795)	1,655	

Children and Families Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1 April 2023 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2023/24 £000	Opening Balance 1 April 2024 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2024/25 £000	Transfer to General Fund Reserve £000	Final Balance 31 March 2025 £000	Notes
Directorate							
Childrens Directorate - Transformation Funding	779	(779)	0	0	0	0	Budgeted drawdowns as per MTFS 2023-27.
Childrens Directorate - C&F ED	422	(422)	0	0	0	0	Budgeted drawdowns as per MTFS 2023-27.
Childrens Social Care							
Domestic Abuse Partnership	146	(146)	0	0	0	0	To sustain preventative services to vulnerable people as a result of partnership funding in previous years. Reserve is partnership funded, so balance is ringfenced or returned to partners.
Strong Start, Family Help and Integration							
Troubled Families Initiative (<i>*ring-fenced reserve</i>)	1,949	(178)	1,771	(1,771)	0	0	Crewe Youth Zone and ACT have been assigned funding from shared outcomes of the Supporting Families Programme.
Public Sector Transformation – contribution to Early Youth Inclusion Fund	57	(57)	0	0	0	0	Revenue grant carried forward, to be fully utilised in year.
Complex Dependencies	21	(21)	0	0	0	0	Revenue grant carried forward, to be fully utilised in year.
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TOTAL	3,374	(1,603)	1,771	(1,771)	0	0	

Corporate Policy Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1 April 2023 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2023/24 £000	Opening Balance 1 April 2024 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2024/25 £000	Transfer to General Fund Reserve £000	Final Balance 31 March 2025 £000	Notes
Directorate							
Corporate Directorate	1,356	(421)	935	0	(935)	0	To support a number of widespread projects within the Corporate Directorate. Future forecasts to be reviewed.
Finance and Customer Services							
Collection Fund Management *	17,819	(10,284)	7,535	(6,300)	(1,235)	0	To manage cash flow implications as part of the Business Rates Retention Scheme. Includes liabilities that will not be paid until future years.
Capital Financing Reserve *	12,886	(12,886)	0	0	0	0	To provide for financing of capital schemes, other projects and initiatives.
MTFS Reserve *	5,147	(4,761)	386	355	(741)	0	To support the financial strategy and risk management.
Section 151 Revenue Grants	558	(558)	0	0	0	0	Unspent specific use grant carried forward into 2023/24.
Governance and Compliance							
Insurance Reserve	4,976	0	4,976	0	(4,976)	0	To settle insurance claims and manage excess costs. Forecasts to be reviewed by service, but reserve cannot be given up.
Elections General	640	(640)	0	0	0	0	To provide funds for Election costs every 4 years. Anticipate reserve will be required in early 2024, but will be held until 2024/25 if election is delayed.
Brexit Funding	13	0	13	0	(13)	0	Residual balance to be reviewed.
Human Resources							
HR (CARE4CE Review, Culture Change, Pay realignment, Learning Mgt System)	59	0	59	0	(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)	306	(306)	0	0	0	0	This scheme has now come to an end and the balance can be returned to General Fund.
Policy and Change							
Brighter Future Transformation Programme *	1,789	(1,299)	490	(20)	(470)	0	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. £1.271m drawn down to date as per MTFS budget. However, there is some uncertainty regarding who controls this reserve and cannot get details of committed spend. To be reviewed.
CORPORATE POLICY TOTAL	45,549	(31,155)	14,394	(5,965)	(8,429)	0	

Economy and Growth Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1 April 2023 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2023/24 £000	Opening Balance 1 April 2024 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2024/25 £000	Transfer to General Fund Reserve £000	Final Balance 31 March 2025 £000	Notes
Directorate							
Place Directorate	1,722	(1,249)	473	(473)	0	0	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 2024/25.
Investment (Sustainability)	648	(221)	427	(427)	0	0	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.
Growth and Enterprise							
Legal Proceedings	228	(124)	104	(104)	0	0	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	361	174	535	175	(710)	0	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	0	0	0	To cover costs of purchase and refurbishment of properties to be used as temporary accommodation to house vulnerable families. Remaining portion of historic grants - not been used due to high levels of ringfenced Homeless Prevention & Rough Sleepers Grants being utilised.
Tatton Park Trading Reserve	0	128	128	0	(128)	0	Ringfenced Trading Reserve used to support projects and overall position at Tatton Park.
Royal Arcade Crewe	20	(20)	0	0	0	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 rates and maintenance costs for Crewe Bus station.
ECONOMY AND GROWTH TOTAL	3,109	(1,442)	1,667	(829)	(838)	0	

Environment and Communities Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1 April 2023 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2023/24 £000	Opening Balance 1 April 2024 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2024/25 £000	Transfer to General Fund Reserve £000	Final Balance 31 March 2025 £000	Notes
Environment and Neighbourhood Services							
Strategic Planning	568	0	568	(287)	(281)	0	To meet costs associated with the Local Plan - site allocations, minerals and waste DPD.
Trees / Structures Risk Management	166	(56)	110	(55)	(55)	0	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	(14)	(28)	0	Funding IT costs over 4 years.
Neighbourhood Planning	82	0	82	(41)	(41)	0	To match income and expenditure.
Air Quality	36	(19)	17	(17)	0	0	Air Quality Management - DEFRA Action Plan. Relocating electric vehicle chargepoint in Congleton.
Street Cleansing	26	(26)	0	0	0	0	Committed expenditure on voluntary litter picking equipment and electric blowers.
Community Protection	17	(17)	0	0	0	0	£4k illicit tobacco grant; £13k Natasha's Law grant.
Licensing Enforcement	8	(8)	0	0	0	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	(2)	0	0	Plans to draw down the reserve in 2023/24 relating to Public Information Works.
ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES TOTAL	994	(173)	821	(416)	(405)	0	

Highways and Transport Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1 April 2023 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2023/24 £000	Opening Balance 1 April 2024 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2024/25 £000	Transfer to General Fund Reserve £000	Final Balance 31 March 2025 £000	Notes
Highways and Infrastructure							
HS2	785	(400)	385	(200)	(185)	0	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.
Flood Recovery Works	400	(200)	200	(200)	0	0	To be utilised for repairs due to any adverse weather events.
Parking Pay and Display Machines / Parking Studies	178	(178)	0	0	0	0	Reserve to be used to implement the parking savings agreed in the February 2023 MTFS; 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	(69)	35	(15)	(20)	0	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	19	(19)	0	0	0	0	To fund the business case work for re-opening the Middlewich rail line. The remaining reserve will be fully required in 2023/24.
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT TOTAL	1,486	(866)	620	(415)	(205)	0	
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES MOVEMENT (Excluding Schools' balances)	61,594	(37,343)	24,251	(9,924)	(12,672)	1,655	

5. Capital Reserves

- 13.64 Capital receipts received in-year are fully applied to finance the capital programme. A small amount of capital receipts are held in reserve to cover future commitments where receipts are to be used flexibly to fund transformational projects.
- 13.65 Where revenue contributions are used to finance capital expenditure these will be held in reserve until such time as the expenditure is incurred.

6. Reserves Strategy Conclusion

- 13.66 Overall, by the close of 2024/25, Cheshire East Council will not have an adequate level of reserves to protect the council from future overspending or potential financial risks.
- 13.67 The full report setting out the work being undertaken to address the reserve levels and future financial security of the authority is set out in the Report from the Director of Finance and Customer Service (S.151) – Section 25 statement on page 16 of the MTFS Full Report.

Background Papers

CIPFA Local Authority Accounting Panel: Bulletin 55, Local Authority Reserves and Balances (2003).
CIPFA Financial Management Code 2019.
Cheshire East Draft Statement of Accounts 2023/24.

14. Financial Authorisation Limits

- 14.1 Financial control is achieved through the mechanism of the Financial Procedures Rules (Chapter 3, Part 3 and Part 4 of the Constitution) and the Financial Schemes of Delegation.
- 14.2 This Annex provides details of the financial authorisation limits for the year 2024/25 to be approved at Budget Council. The financial limits ensure decisions are made at the right level, are formally delegated and involve appropriate consultations with Senior Management, Statutory Officers and Members.
- 14.3 It is appropriate to review these limits on an annual basis to reflect the most up to date financial framework, following a review this Annex confirms the current levels are appropriate for 2024/25.
- 14.4 These limits are in line with the approved Constitution and for 2024/25 apply for the net revenue budget of £375.7m and the capital budget of £215.8m.

Scheme of Virement

14.5 Approval limits for virements are as follows:

Virements between budget heads (Excluding Reserves / Contingencies)

Virement Amount	Approval Level
Up to and including £100,000	Relevant Heads of Service
In excess of £100,000 up to and including £500,000	Chief Finance Office in consultation with the Relevant Member(s) of CLT
In excess of £500,000 up to and Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £1,000,000 revenue; or £5,000,000 capital 	Relevant Member(s) of CLT in consultation with Chair of the relevant committee and the Chair of Finance Sub-Committee
Over <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £1,000,000 revenue; or £5,000,000 capital (where virement is within budget and policy framework)	Finance Sub-Committee

Virements from Reserves or Contingencies

Virement Amount	Approval Level
Up to and including £250,000	Chief Finance Officer
In excess of £250,000 up to and including £500,000	Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Relevant Member of CLT
In excess of £500,000 up to and including £1,000,000	Finance Sub-Committee
Over £1,000,000	Council with recommendation from Finance Sub-Committee

14.6 Council may approve that specific earmarked reserves for contingencies are allocated within the Budget Control Total of a committee. The committee may vire such funds only in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer.

Supplementary Estimates

- 14.7 Approval limits for fully funded revenue and capital supplementary estimates are as follows:

Supplementary Estimate Amount	Approval Level
Up to and including £250,000	Relevant Member of CLT
In excess of £250,000 up to and including £500,000	Relevant Member of CLT in consultation with the Chair of the relevant committee, Chair of Finance Sub-Committee
In excess of £500,000 up to and including £1,000,000	Committee
Over £1,000,000	Council

Asset Disposal / Write-off

- 14.8 The Chief Finance Officer may authorise the write-off of losses up to £25,000, or disposals, of obsolete or surplus equipment, materials, vehicles or stores up to a disposal value of £25,000. Where the value exceeds £25,000, but is less than or equal to £100,000 this should be done in consultation with the Finance Sub-Committee Chair. Write-offs over £100,000 will be the responsibility of the Finance Sub-Committee or Corporate Policy Committee.
- 14.9 Any write-off which arises as a result of theft or fraud must be notified to the Head of Audit and Risk immediately.

Early Retirement / Severance

14.10 The Chief Executive or Executive Director (Corporate Services) in consultation with the Chair of the Corporate Policy Committee must approve all requests up to £95,000 (excluding pay in lieu of notice and accrued holiday pay). All such requests in excess of £95,000 must be approved by the Corporate Policy Committee or a waiver sought from full Council and Central Government.

Grants and Donations

14.11 Grants, donations and contributions will be paid by the Council in accordance with the policies determined under paragraph 6.26 of the Financial Procedure Rules, subject to there being adequate provision in service budgets and the appropriate approvals being sought.

Approval level	Amount
Officers	Up to and including £50,000 (where grant is within approved grant policy and fully funded)
Relevant Corporate Leadership Team member in consultation with the Chair of the relevant committee and Chair of Finance Sub-Committee	Between £50,000 and £100,000 (where grant is within approved grant policy and fully funded)
Committee	All Grants of £100,000 or more. All grants which do not fall within existing approved grant policy require Corporate Policy Committee approval

Bad Debts

14.12 Bad Debts may be written off as follows:

Approval level	Amount
Chief Finance Officer	Up to and including £5,000
Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Monitoring Officer	Over £5,000

14.13 The Corporate Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that an adequate provision for bad debt is made in the Council's accounts at year-end and that contributions to this provision are included in budgetary projections and outturn.

14.14 A record must be maintained for all debts written off. The appropriate accounting adjustments must be made following approval to write-off a debt. The Chief Finance Officer may provide written delegation to other officers to approve the write-off of debt up to and including £5,000.

15. Abbreviations

This Annex provides details of the abbreviations used in the Report in alphabetical order.

Term	Meaning
ASC	Adult Social Care
ASDV	Alternative Service Delivery Vehicles – part of the Council's commissioning approach to funding services
BCF	Better Care Fund
BRRS	Business Rates Retention Scheme – the system of local authority funding introduced on 1 April 2013
CAG	Corporate Assurance Group
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
CDS	Credit Default Swap
CEC	Cheshire East Council
CEFS	Cheshire East Family Support
CERF	Cheshire East Residents First
CFB	Capital Financing Budget
CFR	Capital Financing Requirement
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CSC	Children's Social Care
CTS	Council Tax Support
DfE	Department for Education
DLUHC	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (formerly Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government – MHCLG)
DSG	Dedicated Schools Grant – grant received from Government to fund schools
EqIA	Equality Impact Assessment
EIP	Early Intervention and Prevention
ERP	Enterprise Resource Platform
ESG	Education Support Grant
FTE	Full Time Equivalent

Term	Meaning
FR	Financial Review – in-year financial monitoring report estimating the projected end of year spend
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GP	General Practitioner
GVA	Gross Value Added
HLBC	High Level Business Case
HM	Her Majesty's
HR	Human Resources – one of the Council's corporate service areas
ICT	Information and Communication Technology – the service responsible for computers, networks, software, hardware and phones
IFS	Infrastructure Funding Statement
LA	Local Authority
LED	Light Emitting Diode
LGA	Local Government Association
LOBO	Lenders Option Borrows Option
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
LUF	Levelling Up Fund
MARS	Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government – now renamed to DLUHC (above)
MPC	Monetary Policy Committee
MRP	Minimum Revenue Provision
MTFS	Medium-Term Financial Strategy
NEETs	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NFF	National Funding Formula
NHB	New Homes Bonus Grant
NHS	National Health Service
NJC	National Joint Council
NNDR	National Non-Domestic Rates – the contribution to general local authority costs by businesses. The rate is set by Central Government
PHE	Public Health England
PiP	Partners in Practice

Term	Meaning
PMI	Purchasing Managers Index
PWLB	Public Works Loan Board – a Government agency providing loans to public bodies for capital works
RPI	Retail Price Index
RSG	Revenue Support Grant
RV	Rateable Value
S151	Section 151 (Officer)
SBRR	Small Business Rate Relief
SCIES	Safeguarding Children in Education Settings
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SLE	Separate Legal Entity – a delivery model for delivering services in a different way
SOS	Signs of Safety
SSB	Supporting Small Business
TC	Town Centre
TUPE	Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations
VIC	Visitor Information Centres
VCFSE	Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise
WOC	Wholly Owned Company

16. Forecasts (February 2023)

Forecasts presented to the Council in February 2023 reported a forecast balanced budget position in the medium-term.

Summary position for 2023/24 to 2026/27	Revised Budget 2022/23 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2023/24 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2024/25 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2025/26 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2026/27 £m
Childrens	73.5	79.1	82.0	84.6	87.9
Adults	121.1	136.3	142.4	147.2	152.3
Place	79.6	84.4	88.0	89.5	93.3
Corporate	38.4	41.0	42.0	40.2	41.1
Total Service Budgets	312.6	340.8	354.4	361.5	374.5
<i>CENTRAL BUDGETS:</i>					
Capital Financing	19.0	19.0	20.0	21.0	22.0
Past Pensions Adjustment from Actuary results	-5.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Income from Capital Receipts	0.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0
Bad Debt Provision increase	0.2	-0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Use of (-) /Contribution to (+) Earmarked Reserve	1.3	-5.0	-0.6	0.0	-2.2
Total Central Budgets	15.1	12.3	18.4	19.9	18.8
TOTAL: SERVICE + CENTRAL BUDGETS	327.7	353.1	372.7	381.5	393.3
<i>FUNDED BY:</i>					
Council Tax	-254.7	-271.1	-287.9	-299.6	-311.5
Business Rate Retention Scheme	-49.1	-55.3	-55.3	-55.3	-55.3
Revenue Support Grant	0.0	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4
Specific Unring-fenced Grants	-24.0	-26.4	-29.1	-26.1	-26.1
TOTAL: FUNDED BY	-327.7	-353.1	-372.7	-381.5	-393.3
Funding Position	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

17. Feedback

We want you to be involved in decision making in Cheshire East.

To register to be involved in consultations undertaken by Cheshire East Council, you can do so by joining the Digital Influence Panel.

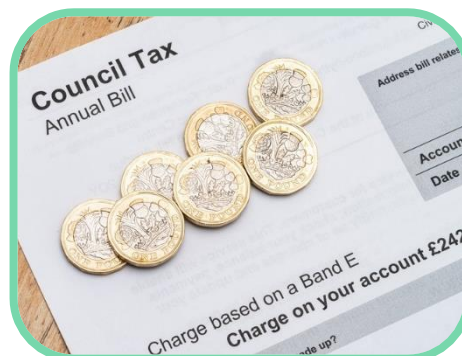
[Join the Digital Influence Panel](#) or scan the QR code to join.



[View the results of previous consultations](#) undertaken by Cheshire East Council.

A summary of responses to Cheshire East Council's

Budget Consultation for 2024 – 2025



Executive summary

Introduction

The Budget Consultation was conducted between 8 and 28 January 2024 to gather feedback on council proposals for balancing its budget for 2024 to 2025.

Responses were invited from anyone who wished to respond – the consultation was not run as a referendum nor as a statistically robust random sample survey.

In total, there were 2,829 consultation engagements, including 1,351 survey completions, 1,105 social media engagements, 329 attendees at budget consultation events, and 44 webpage comments, emails and letters.

Feedback on the 29 MTFS proposals

Respondents completing the consultation survey were asked to indicate whether they supported or opposed 29 separate MTFS proposals included in the Budget Consultation for 2024 to 2025.

Net levels of support or opposition for the 29 MTFS proposals varied significantly, from 87% net support, down to -45% net opposition.

23 proposals with net support

23 of the 29 proposals received net support, with details of these presented in the table below.

Although these proposals had net support, feedback suggests they are complex issues which potentially impact on some of the most vulnerable residents in Cheshire East. Some also felt there was not enough information to give an opinion on proposals, some of which they felt were vaguely worded.

Respondent feedback for each proposal can be found in the main report.

Budget proposal that received net support	Net Support
CP1: Reduce leadership and management costs	87%
CP7: Reduce spending on staffing and agency costs	76%
CP5: Improved debt recovery and increased charges of costs	73%
CP3: Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible	70%
EC1: Refresh wholly owned company overheads and contributions	66%
CF7: Reduce growth in expenditure	66%
CF6: Other service reviews	66%
CF3: Review of structure to further integrate children and families services	65%

CP6: Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services	65%
CF5: Achieve the Family Hub model	59%
CP4: Accelerate digital and other ICT transformation	50%
EG1: Service restructures within place based services	48%
EC6: Reduce revenue impact of carbon reduction capital schemes	45%
AH3: Working age adults - Prevent, reduce, delay	44%
EG2: Reduce opening hours for main offices	36%
AH4: Older people – Prevent, reduce, delay	32%
CF1: Discretionary offer to children with disabilities	31%
CF2: Remove school catering subsidy	25%
EC4: Fund libraries a different way	24%
AH2: Client contributions increase	17%
EC2: Strategic Leisure Review (Stage 2)	14%
AH1: Fees and charges	10%
CF4: Reduce discretionary post-16 travel support	7%

6 proposals with net opposition

The 6 proposals that received net opposition included:

HT1: Highway maintenance savings (-45% net opposition) – Respondents simply felt that highway maintenance and pothole repair should be a top priority for the council, and that the roads are already in a poor state as it is.

CP2: Close the Emergency Assistance scheme (-30% net opposition) – Some felt that for such a small saving this proposal wasn't worth it, given it would affect some of the most vulnerable residents in the borough. They suggested a reduction in funding here might have a knock-on effect onto other services. Others supported this proposal feeling people should be self-reliant. Some were unclear about what the scheme does, and what the implications of the proposal are.

EC7: Increase garden waste charges to recover costs (-28% net opposition) – Those opposed felt green waste collection should be free, and felt this is a stealth tax. Others felt this proposal is coming too soon after the charge was first introduced, that there is a lack of take-up of the scheme as it is, and that this will lead to increases in fly-tipping. They suggested introducing smaller bins at cheaper rates, reducing collection frequency and promoting bin sharing between neighbours.

EC5: Reduce costs of street cleansing operations (-20% net opposition) – Those opposed to the proposal suggested that keeping towns and streets well-kept and clean was also a high priority, that the streets are already a “disgrace” and that street cleaning should not be reduced.

EC3: Reduce costs of waste disposal and number of HWRCs (-20% net opposition) – Those opposed felt HWRCs are a key service the council must provide, that people need somewhere to dispose of their waste in an environmentally friendly way. They felt closing sites would be unfair on the towns that would no longer have a HWRC, that closures would be environmentally unfriendly by making people travel further, by impacting on recycling rates and by going against the council’s carbon reduction agenda. They felt it would lead to an increase in fly tipping, and an increase in people putting waste in black bins, and felt any savings would be outweighed by the costs of dealing with these issues. They felt also doing this at the same time as introducing a charge for green waste would further compound these issues. Respondents suggested closure of sites should be a last resort, and that alternative ideas should be considered to keep sites open, including by reducing opening hours, charging for site use, or by monetising waste streams better.

HT2: Introduce annual increases to car parking charges (-13% net opposition) – Those opposed felt that car parking charge increases would further kill off towns and highstreets, many of which are “dead” as it is, and that charges are already too high. They felt this would lead to an increase in illegal parking.

Feedback on the 10 extra budget saving ideas

Respondents completing the consultation survey were also asked to indicate whether they supported or opposed 10 extra budget saving ideas, which were suggested over and above the 29 MTFS proposals put forward.

Net levels of support or opposition for the 10 extra budget savings ideas varied from 83% net support, down to -48% net opposition.

8 extra budget saving ideas with net support

8 of the 10 extra budget saving ideas received net support, with details of these provided in the table below.

Budget saving ideas that received net support	Net Support
Seek further Government support	83%
Increase advertising income, by advertising on bus stops, roundabouts and other council property	79%
Share more services with other councils	72%
Lower the amount of Council Tax support available from 100% to pre-covid levels. Pensioners will remain on the national scheme as they do currently	56%
Review net spending and subsidy for tourism and place marketing services	44%
Transfer buildings and activities to Town and Parish Councils	36%
Review net spending and subsidy for the Arts and Culture Budget	33%

Reduce funding for Demand Responsive transport services (FlexiLink and Go-Too bus services) - consider a range of options including simplifying routes, changing days/hours of service and revising fares paid by passengers	18%
Increase charges for council services to ensure service users pay full costs, without any subsidy from taxation	9%
Reduce support offered to businesses	9%

2 extra budget saving ideas with net opposition

2 of the 10 extra budget saving ideas received net opposition, with details of these provided in the table below.

Budget saving ideas that received net opposition	Net Opposition
Cut subsidies to local bus services	-48%
Move to three-weekly Black Bin (residual waste) collections	-40%

General themes arising from feedback

A number of key themes arose throughout the consultation feedback, and these are summarised below:

The council is not delivering, not serving residents – There is a growing sense among some that the council is not delivering the essential and high priority services expected, and not delivering value for money for the amount of Council Tax paid, especially as it continues to cut back on services. Some simply cannot understand how the council has got into this situation nor where the money has gone, with others calling for the council to be abolished.

Some proposals will hit the most vulnerable the hardest – There is concern that many of the proposals put forward will hit the most vulnerable and most in need the hardest, especially those put forward in social care services. There is concern this period of transition will be a very difficult time for many, and that there will impacts on other council services in the long term. Some suggested that Council Tax and service charges should be means tested to a greater degree.

A lack of long-term planning – Respondents felt some proposals are short term and reactionary and couldn't understand how proposals fit into the bigger picture. They felt some proposals also contradict each other. They also suggested the lack of holistic planning may mean some proposals may have consequences that will cost the council more in the long run, and that the short-term savings being realised would be false economy.

Respondents called for impact assessments to be produced for proposals, to help understand their impact, and to understand how they fit into the bigger picture.

Closures or charges should be a last resort – A general sentiment within recent consultations has been that respondents felt reductions in services and site closures should only come as a last resort. They felt that wherever possible alternative funding and alternative service delivery should be explored as alternatives to service reduction. Respondents also stressed that operational efficiencies were strongly preferred to service cuts.

Alternative service delivery ideas included: charging for services, reducing opening hours, renting out space, improving services to generate more income, service transformation to make them more efficient, alternative delivery models, combining services together, combining services with neighbouring Local Authorities, and transferring services and assets to other organisations.

Make budget savings internally – Respondents suggested ways in which they felt the council could make budget savings internally, including: Reviewing staff structures and numbers; improving staff performance; reviewing staff pay and benefits; adopting more efficient ways of working; stop wasting money; reducing running costs; generating more income; recovering more money owed; reviewing the use of contractors, consultants and agency staff; selling off assets; and reviewing spending on non-essential services.

Staff reductions should be carefully managed – However, respondents were concerned that reductions in staff should be carefully managed, so as to ensure that key services continue to be delivered effectively. There was also concern that where staff reductions are made it should be the most efficient staff that are retained. Front line staff are also feeling vulnerable with the amount of change being seen within services.

Lack of information to give an opinion – For many proposals, respondents felt there was not enough information provided for them to give an informed opinion, and that the wording of some proposals was confusing and used too much jargon.

Conclusions

Frustration during a great period of change

The council is in the midst of one of the greatest periods of change, or transformations, in its history. This rate of change is being felt by stakeholders, with exasperation among many at the changes taking place, and at the perceived worsening performance of the council.

At the most extreme, some are stating the council is not fit for purpose and are calling for it to be abolished, and while this is a small proportion now, if the council continues to force through changes which residents are opposed to, and which seemingly make the borough a worse place to live in, those calls may only increase.

Stakeholders are willing to embrace savings

That said, stakeholders are not completely against change and budget savings – of the 39 proposals and money saving ideas put forward in this consultation, respondents provided net support for 80% of them (31 out of the 39).

This indicates a level of acceptance of the current financial situation and a willingness for stakeholders to agree to savings. The council should look to deliver these proposals and ideas with net support, but carefully so, as some of these proposals will impact on some of the most vulnerable in our community.

Opposition to key service cuts without alternatives being explored

There is strong opposition to proposals that impact key services, such as highways maintenance, street cleaning, Household Waste and Recycling Centres, and local bus services.

Respondents also seem strongly opposed to proposals when service reductions or site closures are put forward as the primary option, without alternative service delivery options being explored first.

It may be that respondents see service reductions and site closures as a last resort, and this may best be evidenced with the different levels of support for Library Service proposals in recent years – Last year's Library Service proposal set out service reductions in the form of reduced opening hours and the removal of the mobile library, and had net opposition of -58%, whereas this year's Library Service proposal set out to seek alternative funding for the service, explore partnership working and generate income to keep the service going, and this received net support of +24%.

Where the council is proposing to reduce key services, it must be extremely careful with how it does so, otherwise it may lose the goodwill of stakeholders and could destroy any remaining trust that remains between the council and its taxpayers. The council should consider carefully whether to proceed with any proposals strongly opposed by respondents in their current guise, and look to seek alternative solutions where possible.

Concern about the lack of long-term planning

Respondents are also concerned about the lack of holistic and long-term planning with budget saving proposals, including the compound effects of different proposals on each other.

For example they are concerned that the implementation of the green waste charge at the same time as the closure of Household Waste and Recycling Centres will lead to significant increases in fly tipping and in the amount of waste being deposited in

black bins, which they suggested would cost the council more to deal with in the long run, than the savings will realise in the short term. They also feel these proposals will lead to a worsening local appearance of the borough, particularly at the same time as cuts to street cleaning, as well as impacts on the environment with people travelling further to dispose of waste.

There are strong calls from respondents for the introduction of impact assessments for proposals, and for improved long-term planning during this period of enormous change, to ensure that changes are in the best interest of the borough long-term.

Taking residents with us

Finally it will be essential for the council to take residents and stakeholders with it as best it can through this huge transformation, ensuring stakeholders are engaged in the co-design of services, rather than the council forcing through proposals without listening stakeholders.

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Report produced 1 February 2024 by Ben Buckley of the Research and Consultation Team, Cheshire East Council. Email RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk for further information.

Introduction

Purpose of the consultation

The Budget Consultation for 2024 to 2025 was conducted between 8 and 28 January 2024, and was conducted to gather feedback on council proposals for balancing its budget for 2024 to 2025.

[The full consultation material can be viewed here \(PDF, 394KB\)](#), and covered:

- Introduction setting out background to the consultation
- Making savings against internal spending
- 29 savings proposals put forward by each Committee
- Increasing Council Tax from April 2024
- Managing the council's financial challenges

Promotion

Responses on the consultation material were invited from anyone who wished to respond – the consultation was not run as a referendum nor as a statistically robust random sample survey. Results should therefore be interpreted within the context in which they were gathered.

The consultation was widely promoted, most notably through:

- Media releases
- Emails to key stakeholders including all local Town and Parish Councils
- Members Briefings
- Town and Parish Council meetings
- A Trade Union Budget Briefing
- Business and Schools forums
- The council's Digital Influence Panel
- Social media
- Internal council employee message boards

Giving feedback

People could respond to the consultation by:

- Completing an online survey
- Completing a paper version of the survey, made available at all libraries in Cheshire East
- Publicly commenting on [the Budget Consultation webpage](#)

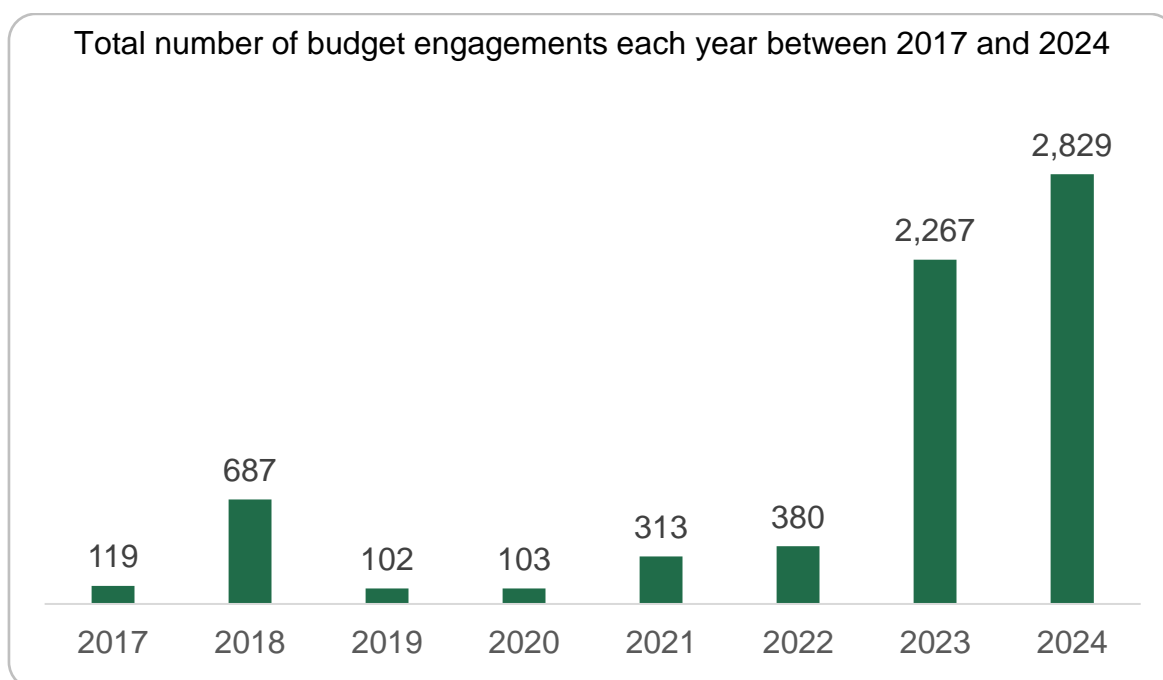
- Emailing the Research and Consultation Team at CEConsultation@cheshireeast.gov.uk
- Writing to Research and Consultation, Westfields, Sandbach, CW11 1HZ
- Telephoning 0300 123 55 00
- Tweeting @CheshireEast #CECBudget

Responses

In total, there were 2,829 consultation engagements, including:

- 1,333 online survey completions
- 1,105 social media engagements
- 329 attendees at budget consultation events
- 29 email and letter responses
- 18 paper survey completions
- 15 budget webpage comments

The number of budget consultation engagements in 2024 was similar to 2023 (2,267), and significantly higher than each year 2017 to 2022.



In 2024 there were a similar number of survey responses as in 2023, and a similar number of event attendees.

However, there were significantly more social media engagements in 2024 as compared 2023, and significantly fewer budget webpage comments, emails and letters. There were also no SUM ideas submitted in 2024 as the scheme was not run this year.

Feedback mechanism	'17	'18	'19	'20	'21	'22	'23	'24
Survey responses	47	436	97	99	291	264	1,452	1,351
Social media engagements	26	116	-	-	-	20	269	1,105
Event attendees	32	-	-	2	-	73	232	329
Budget webpage comments	-	-	-	-	14	6	170	15
Emails / letters	14	132	5	2	8	3	92	29
SUM ideas submitted	-	-	-	-	-	14	52	-
Petitions	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total engagements	119	687	102	103	313	380	2,267	2,829

There were also 17 newspaper articles published about the consultation, a list of these can be found in Appendix 4.

Reading this report

The main sections of this report contain an analysis of the survey responses received during the consultation.

Feedback received via email, letter, social media, and through events is summarised in the appendices.

Overview of feedback on the 29 MTFS proposals

Respondents completing the consultation survey were asked to indicate whether they supported or opposed 29 separate MTFS proposals included in the Budget Consultation for 2024 to 2025.

Net levels of support or opposition¹ for the 29 MTFS proposals varied significantly, from 87% net support, down to -45% net opposition.

23 proposals with net support

23 of the 29 proposals received net support, from “CP1: Reduce leadership and management costs” with 87% net support, down to “CF4: Reduce discretionary post-16 travel support” with 7% net support.

Details of the 23 proposals with net support are given in the table below.

Budget proposal that received net support	Cmte	% Support	% Oppose	% Not sure	No. survey responses	Net Support
CP1: Reduce leadership and management costs	CP	90%	3%	7%	978	87%
CP7: Reduce spending on staffing and agency costs	CP	85%	9%	7%	975	76%
CP5: Improved debt recovery and increased charges of costs	CP	82%	9%	8%	965	73%
CP3: Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible	CP	81%	11%	9%	973	70%
EC1: Refresh wholly owned company overheads and contributions	E&C	74%	8%	17%	988	66%
CF7: Reduce growth in expenditure	C&F	76%	10%	14%	968	66%
CF6: Other service reviews	C&F	74%	8%	18%	964	66%

¹ Net levels of support or opposition are calculated by subtracting the % of respondents that oppose a proposal, from the % that support a proposal. For example, if 76% of respondents support a budget proposal and 14% oppose it, the net level of support = 62%

CF3: Review of structure to further integrate children and families services	C&F	75%	10%	15%	973	65%
CP6: Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services	CP	74%	9%	17%	946	65%
CF5: Achieve the Family Hub model	C&F	70%	10%	20%	966	59%
CP4: Accelerate digital and other ICT transformation	CP	68%	18%	14%	971	50%
EG1: Service restructures within place based services	E&G	63%	15%	22%	931	48%
EC6: Reduce revenue impact of carbon reduction capital schemes	E&C	63%	18%	19%	990	45%
AH3: Working age adults - Prevent, reduce, delay	A&H	61%	17%	22%	977	44%
EG2: Reduce opening hours for main offices	E&G	64%	28%	9%	962	36%
AH4: Older people – Prevent, reduce, delay	A&H	57%	25%	17%	985	32%
CF1: Discretionary offer to children with disabilities	C&F	56%	24%	20%	971	31%
CF2: Remove school catering subsidy	C&F	57%	32%	11%	991	25%
EC4: Fund libraries a different way	E&C	54%	30%	16%	1016	24%
AH2: Client contributions increase	A&H	47%	30%	22%	981	17%
EC2: Strategic Leisure Review (Stage 2)	E&C	48%	35%	17%	987	14%
AH1: Fees and charges	A&H	43%	33%	24%	989	10%
CF4: Reduce discretionary post-16 travel support	C&F	45%	38%	18%	982	7%

Committee key: CP = Corporate Policy, E&G = Economy & Growth, E&C = Environment & Communities, C&F = Children & Families, A&H = Adults & Health, H&T = Highways & Transport

6 proposals with net opposition

6 of the 29 proposals received net opposition, and these included:

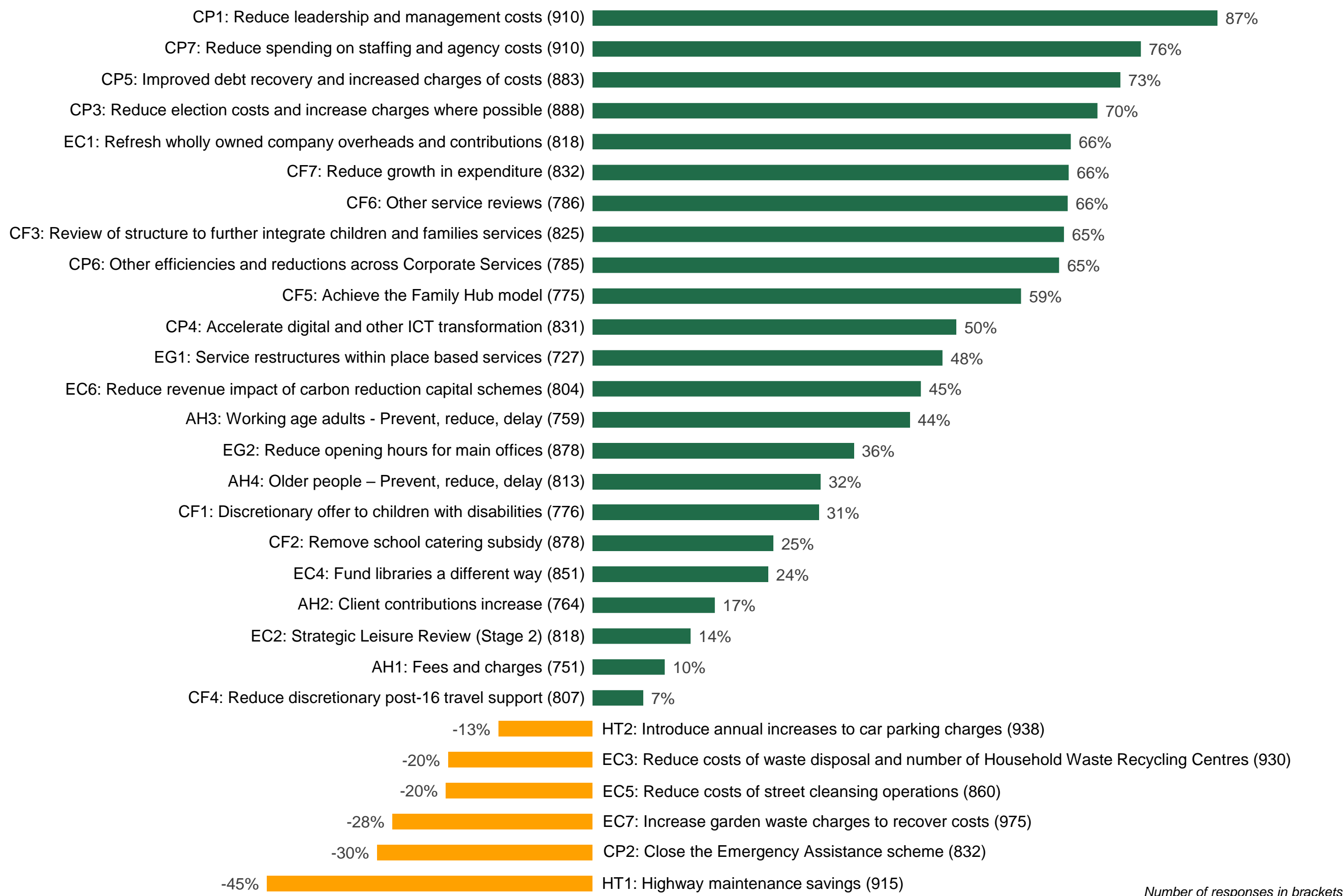
- HT1: Highway maintenance savings (-45% net opposition)
- CP2: Close the Emergency Assistance scheme (-30% net opposition)
- EC7: Increase garden waste charges to recover costs (-28% net opposition)

- EC5: Reduce costs of street cleansing operations (-20% net opposition)
- EC3: Reduce costs of waste disposal and number of Household Waste Recycling Centres (-20% net opposition)
- HT2: Introduce annual increases to car parking charges (-13% net opposition)

Details of the 6 proposals with net opposition are given in the table below.

Budget proposal that received net opposition	Cmte	% Support	% Oppose	% Not sure	No. survey responses	Net Opposition
HT1: Highway maintenance savings	H&T	22%	67%	11%	1024	-45%
CP2: Close the Emergency Assistance scheme	CP	28%	58%	14%	967	-30%
EC7: Increase garden waste charges to recover costs	E&C	33%	60%	7%	1045	-28%
EC5: Reduce costs of street cleansing operations	E&C	32%	52%	15%	1016	-20%
EC3: Reduce costs of waste disposal and number of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC)	E&C	35%	55%	10%	1032	-20%
HT2: Introduce annual increases to car parking charges	H&T	39%	52%	9%	1031	-13%

Committee key: CP = Corporate Policy, E&G = Economy & Growth, E&C = Environment & Communities, C&F = Children & Families, A&H = Adults & Health, H&T = Highways & Transport

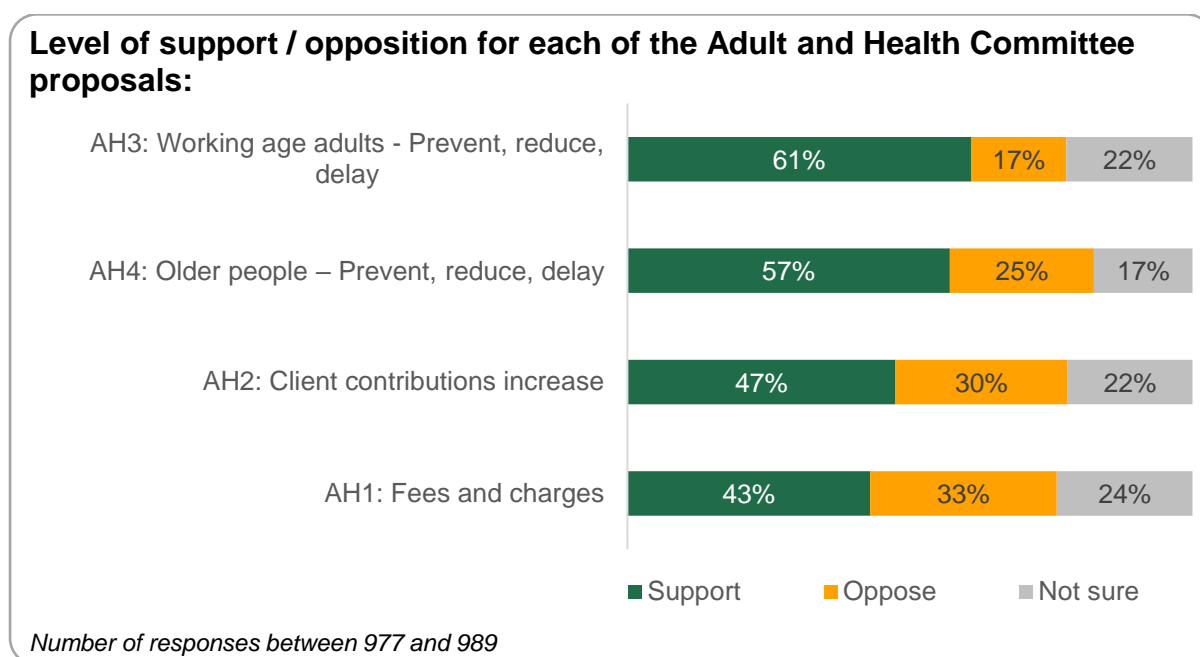
Net support minus opposition for each of the proposals in the Budget Consultation 2024:

Adults & Health Committee proposals

Net support or opposition for each of the Adults & Health Committee proposals was:

- AH3: Working age adults - Prevent, reduce, delay (44% net support)
- AH4: Older people – Prevent, reduce, delay (32% net support)
- AH2: Client contributions increase (17% net support)
- AH1: Fees and charges (10% net support)

Levels of support and opposition for each of these proposals is shown in the chart below:



Comments about AH1: Adult Social Care fees and charges

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “AH1: Adult Social Care fees and charges”.

In total, 229 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	111
Care is already expensive, people will struggle to pay for it. This will cause them to lose all their savings, will cause deprivation and debt	32
This impacts the most vulnerable and most in need	21
General opposition to the proposal	12
This could mean people miss out on the care they need	10
People who have worked whole life and paid into system should be entitled to car, this is unfair on working people	10

This will burden the NHS and the system in long run if people can't pay for care due to increased charges	8
This will impact the mental health and stress of those struggling to pay	7
Just because people fund their own care doesn't mean they could afford more	5
Those who can pay shouldn't subsidise those who can't	2
This won't solve the problem	2
This could take away independence from people, we need to be supporting them	1
Staff won't be able to undertake the additional work if cuts made	1

Support for the proposal	18
General support for the proposal	12
People should pay for their own care	6

Applicants should be means tested	43
Applicants should be means tested to see if they should pay, and the system should not be abused. Ensure people are properly / fairly assessed	37
Everyone should have basic minimum support from the council	6

Funding comments	22
Save money from other areas, reduce senior management salaries, recover debts, have better budget management	6
Funding should come from central government	5
Stop building more houses if the council can't support the population increases	4
Review contracts with care homes and suppliers, review service charges and costs	4
Increase Council Tax to pay for this	3

Further information required	27
Don't know enough about this issue or the impact of this proposal. Not enough info to give an opinion	20
Don't understand the proposal, the wording is unclear	7

The whole social care system needs an overhaul	8
Needs a tiered system of charges	4
The whole system needs a radical overhaul	3
Immigrants receive more support	1

Comments about AH2: Client contributions increase

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "AH2: Client contributions increase".

In total, 164 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	81
Pensions are already low, people will struggle and lose all their savings. This will cause deprivation and debt	33
This proposal impacts the most vulnerable and in need	16
General opposition to the proposal	9
People have worked their whole life and paid into system, they should be entitled to support, this is unfair on working people	8
This could mean people miss out on the care they need	6
This will burden the NHS and the social care system in long run if people can't pay for care due to increased charges	3
Just because people fund their own care it doesn't mean they can afford more	2
Those who can pay shouldn't subsidise those who can't	2
The proposal won't solve the problem	2

Support for the proposal	14
General support for the proposal, if needs must	10
People should pay for their own care	4

Applicants should be means tested	31
Applicants should be means tested to see if they qualify for support	16
People should pay only if their income is in line with inflation	13
There needs to be a tiered system of charges	1
Everyone should have basic minimum support from the council	1

Funding comments	12
Look at other areas to save money - reduce senior management salaries, recover debts	7
There should be no increase in public sector pensions	2
This should be funded by central government	2
Review contracts with care homes and suppliers, review charges and costs	1

Further information required	26
Don't understand the proposal / wording	16
Don't know enough about this / the impact / this type of funding / not enough info	10

Comments about AH3: Working age adults – Prevent, reduce, delay

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “AH3: Working age adults – Prevent, reduce, delay”.

In total, 191 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	71
Families will be under more pressure, families are already struggling to care	15
This will affect the mental and physical health of families due to the increased pressure, they will in turn need support	9
This impacts the most vulnerable and in need, leaving them at risk of missing out on care	8
What about those who have no family, who have elderly parents or where it's unsuitable for families to care for them	8
Disagree with the proposal, it's not feasible	6
This is an abdication of CEC responsibility, these should be statutory services, which we pay for through council tax	6
Families are already struggling financially and this will further impact them	5
These services are vital, a delay in service is not acceptable	4
The direct payments process is complicated and does not work	4
Unmet needs will impact the NHS and services later on	2
Support is already lacking	2
This could result in carers needing to give up work	1
This does not support those with complex needs, Shared Services is not suitable for everyone	1

Support service comments and suggestions	43
There needs to be full and thorough assessments to ensure care is appropriate and needs are met	11
The focus should be on prevention of future care needs	7
There should be strict auditing on needs and should only be for those who really need support. Support needs should be means tested, including financial need	6
Can this replace one to one care competently? What safeguards are in place? Where is the evidence that statutory services will be provided?	4
Sell assets, reduce top tier salaries, find the money from somewhere else and lobby the government	4
As long as this is person-centred and is the individual's choice, it's important to give people choice and autonomy	4
Younger adults are better amongst their peers	3
Look at other successful councils and models	2
As long as the level of care and service is not compromised or reduced	1
The PeoplePlus and any future provider contracts should be reviewed for value for money and fit for purpose	1

Support for the proposal	46
It is important to keep families together	26
Families should have the responsibility of caring for their own	10
Agree with the proposals	8
Disabled adults receive benefits to pay for these services	2

Other comments	31
Comments related to the proposal: do not understand it, unsure of the implications and more information is needed to make a choice	24
Other	5
The questionnaire wording is unclear	2

Comments about AH4: Older people – Prevent, reduce, delay

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “AH4: Older people – Prevent, reduce, delay”.

In total, 264 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	156
Volunteers are already stretched, at breaking point and couldn't provide the support needed	30
Families are already stretched, already caring, as well as working	21
Leaves people vulnerable, at risk of isolation and missing vital care	15
Volunteers are already financially stretched and rely on grants which will likely be cut	11
Care support is already lacking	10
Could be unsafe and risky using untrained and unskilled volunteers	10
Unacceptable for elderly in need to rely on volunteers and charity, they are entitled to receive statutory care	9
Elderly may not have any family, or local family and could miss out on necessary care	9
Volunteers and charity is not a reliable alternative	8
Families health and well-being could be impacted if more pressure on to care	8
Older people want to be <i>at</i> home not <i>in</i> a home, it's important to support this, and not be forced into a care home	5
The 'most cost effective' is not the same as the most appropriate or safest, the individual's care is the priority	4
Strongly oppose	3
Volunteers tend to be older, who won't be able to care as well or as much, there aren't many young volunteers	3
It is unfair to rely on the voluntary sector	3
Families may not be appropriate to help, if poor relationship, or possible abuse and neglect	3
Volunteers may not be who they say they are, are volunteers governed?	2
We are paying more in taxes for fewer services	1
Since Covid volunteer groups have scaled back or disappeared, they have struggled to recruit	1

Care support and process comments	68
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Proper and thorough assessments of care needs would need to take place, on an individual basis	11
The council should be providing a statutory minimum level of care to all	9
As long as the quality of care is of standard and not compromised	9
People should be paid to provide care, you can't expect families to give up work for free to care for a relative, carers need support too	5
Save money elsewhere, for example review top salaries, sell assets	5
Carers pay is too low, there won't be enough of them or they will be poor quality carers	4
The process needs to be robust, properly thought out and needs thoroughly testing	4
The current technology is inadequate	4
There's a risk of digital exclusion, a lot of elderly people won't know how to use it, this could leave them at risk	4
Care support should be means tested, charge more for those can afford it, support those who can't	3
Families would need proper training and support	3
Technology will require capital expenditure and investment	2
Technology is not suitable for everyone, a minority	2
What happens if the technology fails? It could leave the person at risk	2
Widely promote the community support available, which may reduce the need for NHS services	1

Partnerships and working with others	5
Work with the NHS to reduce care need	2
Work with charities	2
Work with and encourage the parish councils to become involved	1

Support for the proposal	23
Families should want to and should contribute to the support and care of their families	9
Agree / support the proposal	8
Agree with re-using equipment, is this not already done?	5
Technology should be more wisely utilised	1

Other comments	12
Other	6
Comments related to the questionnaire, lack of detail and lack of clarity	5
What is the cost saving?	1

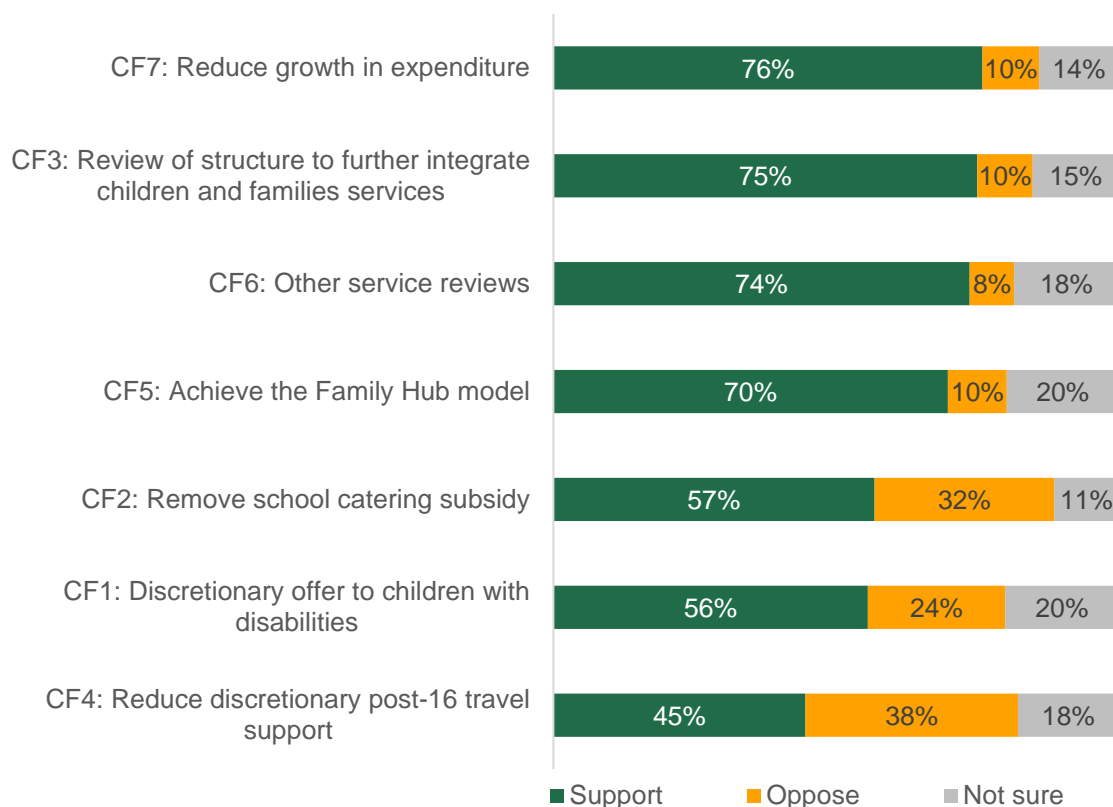
Children & Families Committee proposals

Net support or opposition for each of the Children & Families Committee proposals was:

- CF7: Reduce growth in expenditure (66% net support)
- CF3: Review of structure to further integrate children and families services (65% net support)
- CF6: Other service reviews (66% net support)
- CF5: Achieve the Family Hub model (59% net support)
- CF2: Remove school catering subsidy (25% net support)
- CF1: Discretionary offer to children with disabilities (31% net support)
- CF4: Reduce discretionary post-16 travel support (7% net support)

Levels of support and opposition for each of these proposals is shown in the chart below:

Level of support / opposition for each of the Children and Families Committee proposals:



Number of responses between 964 and 991

Comments about CF1: Discretionary offer to children with disabilities

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “CF1: Discretionary offer to children with disabilities”.

In total, 155 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	74
Disabled / SEND children and their parents need all the support they can get	20
The service is already inadequate, there should be fewer cuts, not more	17
Any cuts will impact the vulnerable and most in need	10
This will compromise outcomes	9
Cuts will be more costly in the long run as there will be more demand on services, including from parents who will struggle to support	6
No more cuts, make savings elsewhere	5
The council should provide a minimum statutory service	3
Cuts may result in tribunals and challenges under the equalities legislation	2
Cuts will have a negative impact (general comment, impacts unspecified)	1
Long term impacts need to be properly assessed	1
Support for the proposal	36
As long as the standard of care is maintained and outcomes are not compromised	13
Agree with the proposed budget cuts	12
Parents should contribute to the discretionary support	4
The disabled and carers receive an allowance to fund the support required	4
The use of taxis to take children to school should be scrapped	2
Parent should be responsible for their children	1
Comments and suggestions	16
Needs should be properly assessed and support given only for those truly in need	11
Needs should be means tested, only provided to those on low incomes	5
Other comments	29
Need more information, there isn't enough detail in the proposal	12
Comments related to not understanding the proposal / wording / jargon	7
Unable to comment as don't use these services	5
Other comment	5

Comments about CF2: Remove school catering subsidy

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “CF2: Remove school catering subsidy”.

In total, 221 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Support for the proposal	49
The council should not subsidise school meals except Free School Meals, this should never have been subsidised. If parents want their child to have a school meal then they should pay the full cost or provide a packed lunch, parents should feed and look after their families - those who take pack lunches are subsidising free school meals. Parents probably spend money on TV, cigarettes, drink, junk food, and this isn't fair on working parents who provide pack lunches, this is an unfair tax.	28
Support the proposal, as long as those who need Free School Meals get them and are not affected. It is a lifesaver to some.	10
If it's not working financially, then remove the service. It's fair to ask the going rate, and not to subsidise meals. If enough income isn't generated there is an obvious need for change.	8
Support the proposal, as long as any savings go to children and is not wasted.	1
Cut free school meals, close all school canteens, take a packed lunch. The nanny state must end.	1
If not statutory, remove the service.	1

Opposition to the proposal	100
All children should receive (free) school meals as part of their statutory attendance. Good food and good nutrition is important and key to learning. For some it may be the only hot cooked meal they get. Food education is important. Hot meals for kids at schools is vital. Those that can afford should help as long as low income families are not affected.	29
Many families that don't receive free school meals are the ones that need the help more, some families are just over the threshold, on low incomes, and as working parents are struggling. There are many in need of cheap nutritious meals who don't receive Free School Meals.	28
Given the current cost of living crisis this could have an impact on the health of children and on their education. School meals are a service not a money making machine. Kids are starving.	11
Morally unthinkable, this is a vital service. Low earning families will be worst affected, increasing inequalities. School meals have a social value beyond free school meals. This is an unnecessary austerity proposal. This country has always supported schools and the NHS, this is untouchable.	10
School catering is already struggling! Schools are already struggling for funding and this is likely to result in a decrease in the quality of food available for children at schools. Schools can't afford this.	10

Make cuts elsewhere. Look Internally. Why is it always services that go first?	4
This proposal just moves the spending from one pot to a different one, or pushes shortfall onto families or school budgets.	3
This could result in a reduction in number of pupils paying for meals which will need to be factored in, a reduction in income but the same number of staff could cause a financial impact. How will you fund the Free School Meal requirement if the catering service suffers a reduction in parental take up?	3
Not receiving this service will add to neglect and more pressure on other services (CHECS), storing up more complex and expensive problems for the future.	2

Service transformation suggestions	42
Scrap the catering unit. Enable schools to develop own approach to school meals independently of the council, or create a small business unit to support schools in procuring the right catering solutions for them instead. Have schools make the meals on site, surely it's cheaper to buy produce and cook. Offer freedom for catering to offer own ideas and include all dietary requirements. There are many ways to save money in catering one of which is not using all this ready to cook products, cooking from scratch can reduce the costs massively.	13
Review the whole service and publish the results. If the school catering service is not delivering an appropriate service then the whole service needs to be reviewed and lessons taken from regions where effective, healthy and value driven services are provided.	8
School catering should be made more appealing to its target audience to increase the uptake - pay a decent amount, get a decent meal.	7
This should be an income stream for the council and schools, not a cost centre. Make the service profitable. Some schools have taken over the service and improved the food provided, and for a small profit too. Cooking from scratch can reduce costs massively.	5
Find better providers, consider local non profit firms as providers. School meals should be catered by local firms that have a local reputation to maintain.	3
Introduce a free/reduced/full cost school meal model.	1
Consider models used in other Local Authorities.	1
Deliver the service jointly with another Local Authority.	1
School meals should be means tested.	1
Remove the choice element of school meals, have one main dish/meal to cut costs and reduce staffing levels.	1
Find commercial sponsorship.	1

The quality of school meals is poor	12
Current school meal provision is already terrible, not fit for purpose. The pigs on farms eat better than the slop served at most schools. Children's meals have gone down on quality over the last few years. Parents are paying for these meals and children are receiving unhealthy and sub-	8

standard food. We need to feed our children good, healthy, quality food. The standard of cooking of some of the meals is atrocious - over cooked, dry, burnt and low portion control.	
School meals are already too expensive, so no wonder they are not generating income.	4

Comments regarding Free School Meals	5
Not all families that receive Free School Meals need them. Schools locally have been encouraging people to claim school meals even if their child doesn't use them because they said funding could then be used in the school general budget. This type of accountancy is wrong. Stop allowing families to claim Free School Meals when family circumstances change and improve.	3
Should all those who receive Free School Meals be doing so?	1
Protect those on Free School Meals from stigmatisation.	1

More information required	13
Not enough information to give a view	7
Unclear about what is being proposed - Are you increasing costs to schools or asking parents to pay more per child's meal?	4
What is causing this issue?	1
Why is the service not profitable now?	1

Comments about CF3: Review of structure to further integrate children and families services

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "CF3: Review of structure to further integrate children and families services".

In total, 202 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Support for the proposal	117
Support avoiding duplication as there is too much and too many departments that do not speak to each other. Merge duplicate services together and avoid doubling up on management structures. Departments in Social Services as a whole do seem to have multi departments repeating the same functions. The approach of "do it right, do it once" should be taken. It's impossible to find the 'right' person to talk to so streamlining services sounds like a sensible plan. Some departments are fairly pointless for example family support workers don't provide a great deal of support and often do more harm than good, giving bad advice etc.	45
General agreement, any efficiency is welcomed as long as it delivers the same level of service. If staffing costs are over 75% of the budget then there are too many staff. If it can be shown by research or information from other	34

councils that it is possible to achieve the good results required we support the proposal.	
This should have been happening anyway.	13
There are too many managers, too much deadwood. There is ineffectual management whose sole purpose appears to be obstructing support rather than providing it. Middle management is easily capable of reduction with limited (to no) impact on front line service delivery.	13
A restructure needed - There are too many managers, and not enough front line social workers. Look at how teams are structured and how many layers there are between the Chief Executive and front line workers - There shouldn't be as many as are currently in place. There are too many project managers and business managers, heads of service etc.	6
There are parts of the children and families service that don't currently work well at all. It is hard to see how reducing the money available is going to make them more efficient. Children's services haven't got a clue what they are doing.	4
The most inefficient staff should be removed and not given a nice handout!! Have more robust staff appraisal and performance monitoring.	1
The bureaucracy and its consequential cost is mind boggling.	1

Opposition to the proposal	47
Front line staff are under pressure as it is, they are over worked, with many long-term illnesses due to stress etc. Staff are having to absorb extra work to ensure statutory duties are kept up, but without receiving payment to cover all these additional hours. By cutting staff even more we are likely to see a lot of staff choosing to leave CE, meaning more recruitment and training costs. High staff turnover is a problem, and we have good, experienced staff. Recruitment needs to take place to ensure workloads are manageable, as services are very stretched. There is currently a backlog of cases as it is.	22
Cutbacks in Children and Family services is having a detrimental affect on the outcomes for our children. Cutbacks in the 0-18 service have demonstrated that there has been a significant increase in Child Protection, domestic abuse, mental health in both adults and children. We need investment not divestment. The situation was deteriorating pre-covid and has only carried on worsening. It would be likely service levels would decrease to an unthinkable level. Families will suffer more than they do now. SEND children are already being impacted.	10
Restructure concerns – Children and Families services have just had a restructure in 2023 which was delayed from the previous year. How much money, time and resources are spent restructures? Moral is already low and has not recovered from the last restructure this will impact it further. Currently the work being done in C&F directorate is spread way too thin after the last round of MARS and no replacements have been put in. Restructures only result in pay outs for staff and loss of experience. CEC has been restructuring year on year. Restructures cause job uncertainty and wider concerns about delivery.	7
Make savings elsewhere, why is it always services that go first?	5

Heads of Service currently have unachievable workloads and this needs a review. Pressure already very high for senior managers covering wide areas of responsibility, this leads to a lack of supervision and leadership for team managers and wider teams.	3
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Comments about the MARs scheme and voluntary redundancy	7
The MARS scheme discourages staff from sharing retirement plans ahead as could disadvantage them if wish to go for MARS. MARS can happen too quickly meaning that cover is not fully considered and then there is a gap placing significant pressure on the team left behind.	2
If the MARS scheme is going to cost money to implement then I am opposed to it as the council cannot afford it as I'm assuming there will be compensation payable to the individual. Relying on MARS (e.g. redundancy on the cheap) will only retain older staff due to pension reductions.	2
Offering voluntary redundancies can create culture behaviours of staying in roles longer in the hope for this in future. It can affect natural (free) attrition of staff. Reducing and offering redundancy would create more problems and add to the already strained services.	2
Many applications for MARS are declined.	1

Further information required	26
More information is needed, what does this mean at the delivery front end to families.	13
The proposal is poorly worded without sufficient detail. It is deliberately vague, the description is a word salad. I don't understand all of the "buzz words" and acronyms that have been used.	10
What is the Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme?	1
How much will this cost?	1
£1 million seems a large savings target, is this possible?	1

General comments	5
Remove taxi fees for families as most of them have vehicles. Stop sending children to and from school in taxis.	2
Please ensure you work with outside agencies such as the NHS to ensure a joined-up approach.	1
Stop paying for learning differences like ADHD – this is being abused by some parents who are extremely well off.	1
This is clutching at straws.	1

Comments about CF4: Reduce discretionary post-16 travel support

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “CF4: Reduce discretionary post-16 travel support”.

In total, 190 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	102
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This proposal impacts the most vulnerable in society, those who are already disadvantaged, and those who rely on the support/service	36
This will impact children going to school, impact their education and development and integration into society	19
This will impact on families finances, some will struggle to pay	17
Children have to be in education until 18 so the support should be provided	10
Suitable education settings aren't local, therefore transport is needed to get them to the required setting. Either that or more local SEND setting should be provided	10
The proposed savings would be negligible	6
This will cause long term issues, and be a burden on NHS and social care services	4

Support for the proposal	32
General support for the proposal, agree with reducing discretionary services	13
Support the proposal, as long as those affected aren't disadvantaged	10
Benefits received should cover travel expenditure	9

Applicants should be means tested	22
Review SEND transport need, and eligibility. People should be means tested to see if they need the service	22

Funding comments	6
Make savings elsewhere	4
Lobby central government for funding for this	1
Increase involvement from voluntary sector	1

Other comments	28
Stop SEND taxis - use alternative travel e.g. buses	12
What are the alternative arrangements?	8
Why is there an increase in SEND children? What's the root cause? Solve the root cause instead.	3
Comments around the consultation questions and wording	3
SEND transport is not free, it costs £450 per year	1
Any policy needs to be consistent across the service	1

Comments about CF5: Achieve the Family Hub model

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "CF5: Achieve the Family Hub model".

In total, 81 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Support for the proposal	23
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Generally support family hub model, sounds sensible, special schools definitely required	11
Support if families do not have to pay more, service is not reduced, if provides a better service. If it saves more than it costs - should generate both short-term cash and ongoing savings	7
Support partnership, better to work together, removing duplication, more efficient - buildings however need to be fit for purpose, still need to be funded	5

Further information required	23
Not a lot of information, not sure what this is	19
Unclear which buildings will close, will a family hub be available in each town, where do people go and what do they do instead?	4

Opposition to the proposal	12
This is false economy and pushes problem elsewhere – These prevent early intervention, sounds a big scheme for not much savings	7
General opposition, people rely on these centres, this is a backwards step, the council must not close local childrens centres, there are not enough hubs at present	5

Suggestions	18
Resources should be allocated equally, make sure nobody is left out. Make sure they are in the right areas, cater for individual requirements, continually review	9
Could co-locate in other buildings, reduce the number of buildings that are open, further engage & share premises with NHS service, partner with neighbouring councils, staff could work at home or hybrid working.	5
Use council space, libraries, merge into school control	4

General / other comments	5
General negative comment / statement	5

Comments about CF6: Other service reviews

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “CF6: Other service reviews”.

In total, 124 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	40
Oppose this being reduced, children will suffer from any cuts, we already have to fight for SEND support, the service is already on its knees, this affects the most vulnerable and increases burdens on families	24
This service needs more funding not less, council should prioritise support for them, this is a lifeline for many people, target elsewhere	9

Reducing services to children rarely results in long-term savings, it will cost more in the long run than you will save, early intervention is an effective tool	6
EHIPS shouldn't be affected	1

Support for the proposal	45
Support removal of discretionary elements, provide essential services to those that need them, services should be means tested, parents should contribute to any excessive costs above a basic provision	16
Happy to support if doesn't affect outcomes, people don't have to pay for support, suitable transition arrangements need to be put in place to manage the savings with families	15
General support, sounds sensible, needs streamlining especially if we don't have the budget	14

Further information required	27
Not clear what is being proposed, it doesn't make sense, insufficient information provided	22
There is no transparency on the council's costs, where is the saving coming from, why have increasing fuel costs been mentioned?	5
Not sure what elements are statutory and what are discretionary.	1

Suggestions	9
Have firm boundaries, review spending on taxis for SEN children, review why there has been an increase in this area and on claimants	7
Support struggling families in a better way, look at how new technologies can be leveraged for back-office savings	2

General / other comments	3
General negative comment / statement.	3

Comments about CF7: Reduce growth in expenditure

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "CF7: Reduce growth in expenditure".

In total, 131 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Support for the proposal	63
General support, it makes sense	18
Support bringing services back in house, having more local options is good - local facilities should reduce costs, external placements are costly	16
Support if children still get the support they need. This needs trialling to establish whether the children are genuinely better cared for. Outcomes need to be protected. Need to review initial schemes on a regular basis.	15

Having children's homes is a good idea, agree with use of residential homes. It has to be well thought through, cost effective and adequately funded. See if old care homes can be adapted instead of building new.	8
Support a reduction in agency and contractor staff, and a reduction in court and legal costs	6

Opposition to the proposal	24
Residential children's homes are a backward step, they are too costly. Children's homes have not proven to be the best option for all - instead grow the foster/adoption schemes.	14
General opposition. This will impact the most vulnerable. Reducing services to children rarely results in long-term savings.	8
The staff required would have to be qualified to an acceptable level therefore costing the council a substantial expenditure. This is not the right time to increase capital expenditure to open residential children's homes.	2

Further information required	17
Would need to see more detail, there is not enough detail	8
What will happen to the children without this support? What is the impact on the children? What are you going to do to support children before they go into care? Is this achievable without compromising standards?	6
What is the evidence that the external placements have LOW outcomes? What funding & resources will be used to open the residential children's homes? How many residential homes? At what cost? How long will they take to be in place?	3

Suggestions	13
The whole system is flawed, look into early intervention and look into why issues occur in the first place. Take fewer children into care and provide support at home. Target efficient and reliable social work.	9
More foster carers are needed, with good training and a variety of placement settings. The council needs to expand on those who are allowed to be a foster carer, promote fostering better, offer more emotional and financial support to foster carers.	4

General / other comments	14
General negative comment / statement	7
Don't actually believe you can achieve this, it will take a long time to achieve. Current funding does not allow adequate outcomes in this area, the money won't go far	5
Don't believe recruiting more foster carers is a benefit. Review costs given to foster carers as it seems a lot	2

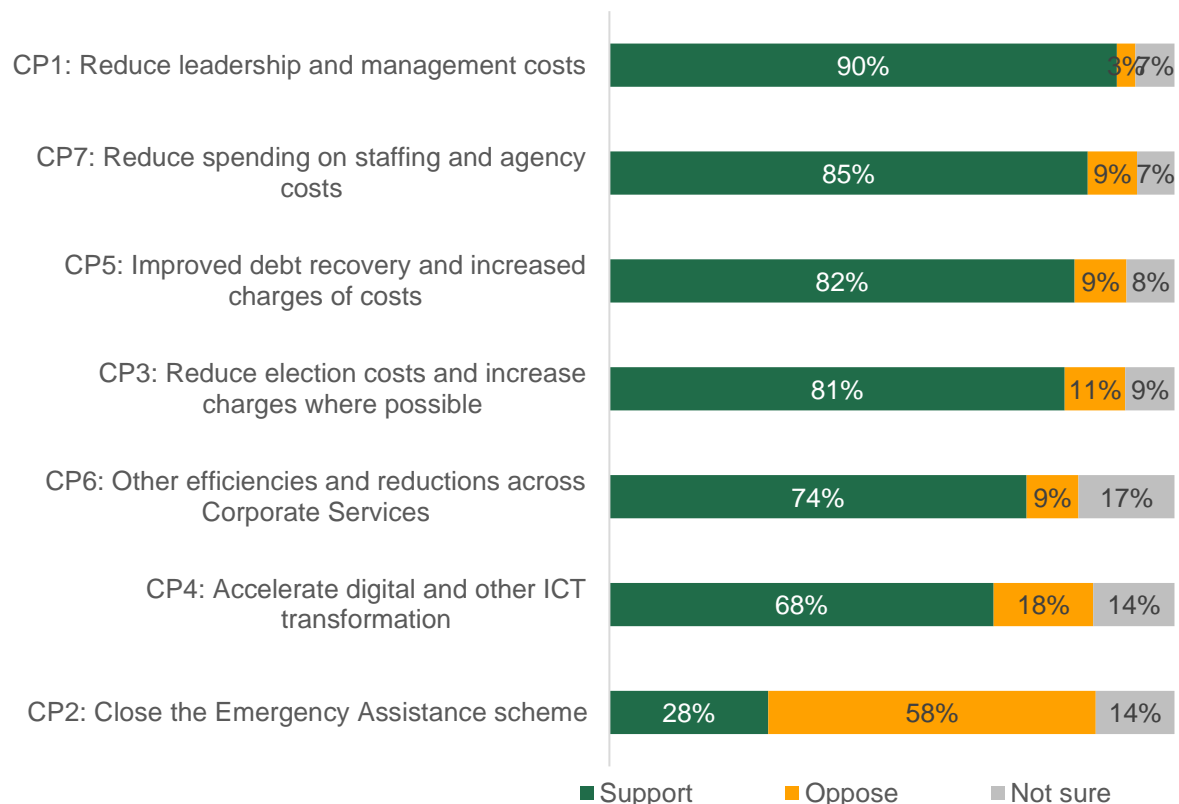
Corporate Policy Committee proposals

Net support or opposition for each of the Corporate Policy Committee proposals was:

- CP1: Reduce leadership and management costs (87% net support)
- CP7: Reduce spending on staffing and agency costs (76% net support)
- CP5: Improved debt recovery and increased charges of costs (73% net support)
- CP3: Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible (70% net support)
- CP6: Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services (65% net support)
- CP4: Accelerate digital and other ICT transformation (50% net support)
- CP2: Close the Emergency Assistance scheme (-30% net opposition)

Levels of support and opposition for each of these proposals is shown in the chart below:

Level of support / opposition for each of the Corporate Policy Committee proposals:



Number of responses between 946 and 978

Comments about CP1: Reduce leadership and management costs

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “CP1: Reduce leadership and management costs”.

In total, 295 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Support or the proposal	129
There are too many senior managers, these should be reduced	36
Senior management pay is too high, these salaries should be cut	28
Current managers are ineffective and underperforming, the CEC has not had good leadership	13
Agree, support the proposal overall	12
The (interim) CEC salary was scandalous	7
Salaries need addressing	7
Benefits such as bonuses, pension contributions and sick pay should be cut or frozen	6
Some roles and positions aren't necessary, for example the Director of Change position	5
Residents do not receive value for money, residents are disappointed in the services received	5
Too many managers are doing admin roles and lower grade staff roles	3
Council pay is more than in other sectors	3
Managers stay for a while then move on	2
Cut the number of committee members	2

Concerns and suggestions on the proposal and savings	104
This could mean expertise is lost, there needs to be robust staff in place	24
Roles should be reviewed for need, duplicity and whether they can be incorporated into other teams	17
More investment is needed in frontline staff, already overstretched	10
More savings could be made, more than £0.5m	10
Senior pay should reflect performance and outcomes	9
The whole structure, root and branch needs reviewing. Staff numbers and roles should be under constant review	8
Concerns that frontline staff will feel the pressure of reduced management, which could impact service quality and impact staff well-being	7
Improve efficiencies within the council, cut bureaucracy and over-complicated models	6
If a post is left vacant then leave it vacant, is it needed if it hasn't been filled?	4
Use fewer consultants and contractors and ensure those who are used deliver	4
As long as service delivery and quality is not compromised	3
This will lead to a decline in services and quality of services	2

Disagree with proposal	54
Save money elsewhere, sell assets	31
Managers are needed to support frontline, lower grade staff, but properly and effectively	23
Other	8
Other comments	6
More information is needed	2

Comments about CP2: Close the emergency Assistance scheme

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “CP2: Close the emergency Assistance scheme”.

In total, 199 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	133
These are the most vulnerable people, including those recovering from homelessness, why would the council even consider this? Money shouldn't come into it, this assistance must be kept. The local authority needs to be there in times of crisis to help and support the most vulnerable in the community. What makes us a civil society is how we look at the vulnerable. What an appalling suggestion.	82
For the sake of such a small amount, this is a draconian measure, and not worth it. If we are unable to support vulnerable members of the community but pay for mayoral paraphernalia etc, you really have to wonder we bother. Lessen the amount of savings to be made from this proposal.	20
This proposal will cause a knock on effect to other services, including Adult Social Care, the NHS, police and fire services. This could lead to people being admitted to care homes or delayed discharges from hospital because their needs cannot be met in the community without the basics such as whiteware etc. This proposal is short-sighted, cancelling this will lead to problems for people further down the line.	19
Opposed to this proposal, especially during a cost of living crisis, post pandemic.	4
Find savings elsewhere: Reduce management instead; sell the B&Q carpark in Crewe; tax the rich more.	4
If central government doesn't support these people, we can't remove that safety net - we must provide a safety net for people.	3
This service has already been slimmed down to a minimum.	1
Support for the proposal	14
If we don't have the budget, then this service needs to be withdrawn. The council can't support this without central government assistance. We need to stop giving money to people if we have not got it, there are so many other benefits that vulnerable people can access and this is not what Council Tax should be used for.	5

People need to be self-reliant and self-sufficient. Too many individuals expect too much from services without helping themselves, they expect everything to be provided for them but don't always help themselves. The majority of these people bring problems upon themselves through drug and alcohol abuse and have no incentive to change. It is a waste of money which should be spent on older people who have contributed to society all their lives.	3
Reluctant support for the proposal.	2
There are many other organisations that can provide this support (white goods), so the council doesn't need to and this scheme no longer needs to be funded by tax paying residents.	2
It needs to be made absolutely clear that it is central government who have removed funding for the service and that CEC can't afford to pay for it.	1
This service is not needed with all the charities now helping out with white goods etc.	1

Further information required	31
Is there alternative help available, if so where? The council should provide details of other means of support available. Many CEC staff do not know where or how to signpost to alternatives.	20
There is not enough info to be able to comment. E.g. How many people access the service? What form does this "emergency help" take? The saving of £0.2m is based on what total budget for this area?	9
What risk assessments have been done to assess the implications and impact if it is scrapped? Are consequential costs considered? Is there an impact assessment on proposals?	2

Improve the service	14
Rather than withdraw the support, review the qualifying criteria for it. The service should not be closed, but should be targeted very stringently, and genuinely vulnerable people should be supported.	7
Improve the service efficiency, as the service isn't run efficiently, there needs to be a change in how scheme is administrated and managed. The service doesn't keep track of who has received goods. It should be changed to a completely internal referral process for the council whereby individuals cannot make their own application but must be referred by a member of Cheshire East Council. Review the demand for the service and the type of things being funded before making decision on ending the scheme.	4
Rather than withdraw the support review more efficient ways to support those in need. The council must be able to tie in with local retailers & charities to continue providing some level of support, rather than withdrawing it altogether. Can the council work with other Local Authorities or organisations to provide this support? Could large local employers in the area support through their social responsibility work?	2
Promote the service better, make it easier to access.	1

Other comments	7
A shame central government funding was removed, the council should re-seek government funding.	4

We can't rely on the third sector to pick things up like this, the third / voluntary sector is not a long term solution, they are stretched as it is.	2
Reduce the reliance on political pressure groups such as The Trussell Trust.	
This service should be picked up by the commercial / voluntary sector.	1

Comments about CP3: Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "CP3: Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible".

In total, 157 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Support for the proposal	50
Makes sense	21
There are too many poll clerks at stations, many sitting doing nothing	8
Council Tax payers should not be funding elections, we already pay too much for too little, the government should be funding elections	8
Parishes should be charged	3
All costs from Town and Parish Councils should be recovered	3
Make sure charging is sensible	3
As long as not to the detriment of services	2
As long as no increase in Council Tax	1
This may encourage people to vote and stand for elections	1

Concerns and suggestions	50
Our democratic rights must not be compromised, elections are critical to society	11
Stop wasting money at elections, for example stationery and signs, review station hire costs	8
Make efficiency savings	7
Move to online and postal voting to reduce the number of stations needed	6
Use volunteers for poll clerks	5
Reduce the number of Councillors and expenses	4
Poll clerks should not be paid in addition to their salaries	3
Combine the smaller, less used stations into one larger station	3
Scrap smaller / local elections, e.g. the Police and Crime Commissioner	2
Reduce the number of high-level staff	1

Oppose to the proposal	33
Residents will still have to pay, via precept, if charge Town and Parish Councils are charged	11
This is unfair on Town and Parish Councils, they are already struggling financially, they have not budgeted for this and will be impacted	10
Town and Parish Councils receive precept, no need to recover costs	2

This is just passing the buck, robbing Peter to pay Paul	6
This is unachievable	2
Poll clerks will be busier with the new ID checks	1
This will be an obstacle for recruiting future Councillors	1

Other comments	24
There isn't enough information or detail in the proposal	9
Why is this not already done, why has this taken so long?	5
Other	5
Town and Parish Councils should be scrapped, there are ineffective	2
The returning officer role should be part of an existing role	1
Learn from other areas	1
What about the implementation costs?	1

Comments about CP4: Accelerate digital and other ICT transformation

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "CP4: Accelerate digital and other ICT transformation".

In total, 240 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	107
I want to speak to people not AI, personal contact more is effective, we will lose the personal touch, it will generate incorrect information and cause more problems than it solves.	52
Don't introduce commercial advertising, it will put people off using the website especially for people with visual impairments or low digital skills, it would make it harder to use, the council should not be endorsing a private company.	22
General opposition – It will not go well (think Horizon!), systems don't work and cost too much.	16
Need to sort IT – You can't get your IT sorted now, IT equipment for staff is not good. Need to update ICT, ensure staff are well trained before further changes are made, don't minimise spend on ICT devices.	13
Unlikely to save costs in next financial year, will cost to implement. Will incur additional costs.	4

Support for the proposal	100
As long as it works, as long as it's tested, as long as it is safe and secure, as long as it doesn't mean spending more long term or spending more on agency staff. Strong leadership is needed on this, work in partnership with an identified successful private company who have got this right.	30
General support, you should have been doing this already, it should be an expectation.	26

Support for the proposal, however, need to be mindful of those digitally excluded inc. older residents – some still need some customer service. Conduct impact assessments of proposals.	28
Support advertising – Advertise on the website but not too much, will need to be monitored carefully, limit to local businesses.	16
Support for the proposal, however not at the expense of modern ICT, staff/ front line staff. Needs to be a compromise between cost and quality. ICT support also needs to be adequate.	12

Further information required	7
Unclear, have not detailed the spend, cost savings this will deliver nor the timetable.	7

Suggestions	16
Reuse equipment rather than issue new, reduce expenditure on unnecessary mobiles & laptops, replace equipment when necessary and not on an automatic rolling basis.	8
Review contracts, look at a long-term strategy to move to Open Software, merge the client ICT team with the client ICT team at Cheshire West and Chester.	7
Advertise on bus shelters, litter bins, as well as other council assets.	1

General / other comments	10
Surprised savings are so small, doesn't seem cost effective.	6
General negative comment / statement.	4

Comments about CP5: Improved debt recovery and increased charges of costs

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “CP5: Improved debt recovery and increased charges of costs”.

In total, 147 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Support for the proposal	46
This should be made a priority, debts should be recovered	16
Why should council tax payers cover the cost of debtors?	11
Too many people get away with not paying	10
Agree / This makes sense	9

Suggestions and comments	50
As long as this doesn't impact the vulnerable and put people into further debt, the vulnerable should be dealt with sensitively and be protected	29
As long as it's cost effective and the cost to recover doesn't exceed the debt amount	8
Current administration and debt recovery staff needs reviewing	6

Focus on businesses	2
Improve the process, including issuing invoices on time	2
Recover debts through benefits	1
If people don't pay then withdraw their services	1
Set a bigger target	1

Opposition to the proposal	27
This will make it worse for the vulnerable, there's a reason they can't pay and will end up worse	19
Do not trust automation	4
This will not save money	3
Sell assets	1

Other comments	24
Is this not already done, why is this not already done?	13
Need more information, unsure of the implications or numbers	7
What about small mistakes, if a fine has been wrongly enforced	2
Outsource the debt recovery to an external supplier	1
Is this achievable?	1

Comments about CP6: Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "CP6: Other efficiencies and reductions across Corporate Services".

In total, 173 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

General support for proposals	29
Support all proposals. More efficiency is long overdue. Cut costs where possible.	22
This should all be being done anyway.	5
Proposed savings here are too small, a more ambitious target should be set. Work closer with other councils to get advantage of bigger savings. Savings can easily be double this.	2

Comments on "Remove school subsidies through price increases or service reductions"	43
Oppose generally	27
Oppose - Schools are struggling too much already & need more support	10
Oppose - A lot of vulnerable families are dependant upon these. This impacts children.	5
General support	1

Comments on "Savings through additional hybrid working practices"	36
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Support - CEC has the opportunity to lead the way on this. Increasing hybrid working will reduce travel costs, heating costs of buildings and can be more efficient. There is no reason why staff cannot work full time at home and just come in for meetings.	15
Oppose - Hybrid work costs the council, does not make savings. Hybrid working is not a saving as outputs are less from each staff member and onboarding takes far longer. People do less work at home. Hybrid working practices are increasingly becoming less efficient and desirable with staff, through a lack of cohesion of teams, reduced oversight and supervision etc. The council functions better when staff are in the office. Losses to efficiency will completely outweigh any short term savings. The council still has to be accessible by the public, it feels disjointed now.	14
Hybrid working should be voluntary only	1
As long as there is a council wide policy for all staff as it currently differs for services	1
Staff should be encouraged to work from both home and the office for a healthy work life balance	1

Comments on “Cease all external design and printing”	11
General support. If design can get done in-house, using talents of existing staff, this should be the way forward.	5
Oppose - External design and print is often cheaper. The way it's procured is the problem, having to use suppliers on a framework with a percentage added on means the council doesn't get a competitive cost. The internal service can't meet the need for all design and print requirements. Tatton Park specifically has needs that often extend beyond current internal capabilities.	2
If we cease external design and printing do we have resources to cover this as the need for design and printing will still exist?	2
External design and printing can be done by CWAC, they do a great job	1
Surely not a large enough cost to worry about?	1

Comments on “Across the board efficiencies from procurement and income generation including introducing more venues for registrar services”	9
General support	5
Support for more venues for registrars. Won't introducing more venues for registrar services increase costs?	3
Procurement for all councils should be done on a national level which would dramatically reduce costs and staffing	1

Comments on “Review of current provision across workforce and organisational development to deliver differently with reduced costs”	5
General support	2
A reduction in staff training will have an impact on council effectiveness	2
Consider having less Councillors too. Maybe less Councillors with stronger portfolio positions of all parties would make a more robust decision making process.	1

General comments		14
Cheshire East Council is inefficient, the council has to provide value for money at all times.		7
Reviews are a delaying tactic to avoid making decisions. How much do these reviews cost?		2
Need to be careful not to reduce services to the public too much, this is damaging to the council's reputation		2
Pulling as many services as possible back in-house would increase savings.		1
Bring Highway maintenance back in house. Ringway Jacobs' priorities will focus on profitability before road maintenance. Examine all contractors! Their profits are council tax payments giving us nothing.		1
CEC should encourage a review of the national pension scheme with a view to replacing it with a defined contribution scheme. This would save millions.		1

More information required		26
Proposals are vague, more detail is required about the impacts of these to be able to make an informed comment. What are the implications of these proposals?		18
There are too many different proposals to say whether agree or disagree. Difficult to say if I support this or not. All items have different outcomes. This is a strange listing to lump together.		7
Are there still many schools still with CEC?		1

Comments about CP7: Reduce spending on staffing and agency costs

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "CP7: Reduce spending on staffing and agency costs".

In total, 319 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Support for the proposal		193
General support, agencies cost a fortune and should be avoided at all cost. Everybody knows the large mark up and charge that is involved, and how big a cut agencies take. The use of agency staff needs to be the last resort, often these staff have an inflated salary and offer a below par service		101
Move towards having permanent in-house staff and increase the numbers of permanent staff. Ensure the right people are employed in the first place. Invest more in permanent staff – people are your greatest asset and this must be done while ensuring they feel valued and motivated. Make permanent staff feel better valued. There has been no investment in CEC growing their own staff, i.e. social workers, therefore it is necessary to use agency staff at inflated rates in order to meet the statutory requirements in children and adult services. To retain good staff the council do need to have a good pay and other benefits package. Give permanent staff extra hours rather than pay agency staff		24
Support the proposal, as long as there are no reductions in service delivery		22

Why are so many agency staff used anyway? £3.2 is an incredible amount! What is the cultural cause of use of agency staff – that needs investigating. Is this achievable without understanding why agency costs and overtime are so high? Why not disclose the total spend on agency costs?	10
This should have happened already	10
Have a bank of casual staff you can call on as and when needed, where they are paid the same as other staff. Agency staffing is useful for short term gaps in the workforce, but an expensive long-term solution to fill posts. Have a pool of staff that can be sent to cover some gaps e.g. long-term sickness rather than buying expensive agency staff, perhaps people who cannot work full-time continuously but appreciate the work for a few weeks or months	7
The council needs to improve on resource management and staffing, be more efficient to increase headcount vs paying overtime. Manage staff better, staff cost management has been poor since the authority was set up. CEC has been totally incompetent for years in allowing this situation to exist, and needs to look at recruitment to see if it is recruiting the right people. There should be no need for extra agency staff or even overtime if management are efficient and have planned correctly. The council needs a plan for how it will ensure it retains the right skills and experience.	7
Support for a reduction in overtime. Overtime is not paid in private sector professions, and it is madness that it was ever allowed in the public sector.	5
As long as it is communicated to service users that lead times might be increased, and which services will be impacted	2
Agency spending has become an essential part of staffing within some depts over recent years, which tends to provide a substandard consistent service to residents at a much higher cost. Unfortunately some permanent employees have left Local Authority to become agency staff and returned to work in the same practise on better terms as their 'own boss'. This is not tenable in the long term as it impacts on both residents and staff	1
Appalled to hear how much the stand in Chief Executive was being paid – it was obscene	1
Comensura is expensive – not only do we also pay the agencies, we pay Comensura too. The quality of candidates on Comensura is poor	1
Consultants are a false economy	1
There are too many agency staff in social care teams	1

Concerns about reductions in use of agency staff	36
The impacts on staff of these measures need to be considered as this will increase workloads. Permanent staff will struggle to do their own jobs and take on that work the agency staff were doing or that was covered by overtime. This will impact on care staff, we can't rely on overtime instead. As foster carers, if we hadn't had agency workers during 2023, we would have struggled to get support. We had so many social workers leaving, so many experienced staff on medical leave mainly due to burn out. Agency staff are always going to cost more, but a reduction in a workforce already working more than is good for their mental, emotional and physical health is not helpful. This needs carefully looking at...weigh up the pros which are saving money against the pros; burnt out employees who are doing their best in	21

difficult circumstances with insufficient resources. Look after your staff and they will have your back when the going gets tough! Social services etc should not be expected to do unpaid overtime to support a financially struggling council	
Agencies should only be used when it is vital to do so not as routine. Agency/contractor workers should always be a last resort and should only be at, not above, market rates. In some areas it is impossible to recruit staff directly, agency staffing is often the only way to undertake essential services	7
Agencies may be more cost effective than having permanent staff as you can flex up or down as needed, agencies provide flexibility	5
Agency staff are needed to supplement skills and resource shortages and to deliver statutory services	2
Agency employment should be time limited: 12 months to cover maternity/long term sickness etc; 3 months to cover additional head count. Anything outside of these parameters would mean there is need for a permanent role and should therefore be applied for in the usual manner.	1

Concerns about reductions in use of overtime	32
Opposed to cutting overtime. Overtime is necessary when a recruitment freeze is on, due to capacity of the teams. Removing overtime could reduce flexibility and goodwill from employees. Front line work crews need to be doing over time to correct faults, potholes, fly tipping etc. These should not be prevented from doing over time. Many employees have to rely on overtime to make ends meet.	17
Pay overtime if essential, for statutory services or frontline services. A reduction in overtime cannot happen in adult social care as services are already very close to being unsafe. We have agency staff in Social Care to plug the gaps because the council can't fill staff vacancies with permanent staff – probably because permanent staff are not paid enough	14
Contracts for people working shift patterns needs to be changed, so that people can do 12 hour shifts, and not 8 hours shifts + overtime.	1

Other concerns about the proposal	21
An impact assessment of this proposal is needed to understand how this proposal will affect service delivery. Concern about the compound effect of 1) a recruitment freeze 2) cancellation of premium overtime and 3) a reduction of agency staff. There needs to be a careful balance. The delivery of this proposal relies on thoughtful, gifted leadership. How does this proposal tie in with other proposals?	13
The only reason we use agency recruitment is because HR Services do not work. Onboarding in Cheshire East is the worst I have seen. Delays are caused by new staff not having contracts and offer letters, meaning agency have to stay longer than required	3
This does not look achievable. If staff are reduced, it just seems like it would take even longer to get the job done	3
Address the fact that teams are working with many interim arrangements in place causing uncertainty and staff turnover.	1
Response times are already poor. We should not be planning for them to get worse.	1

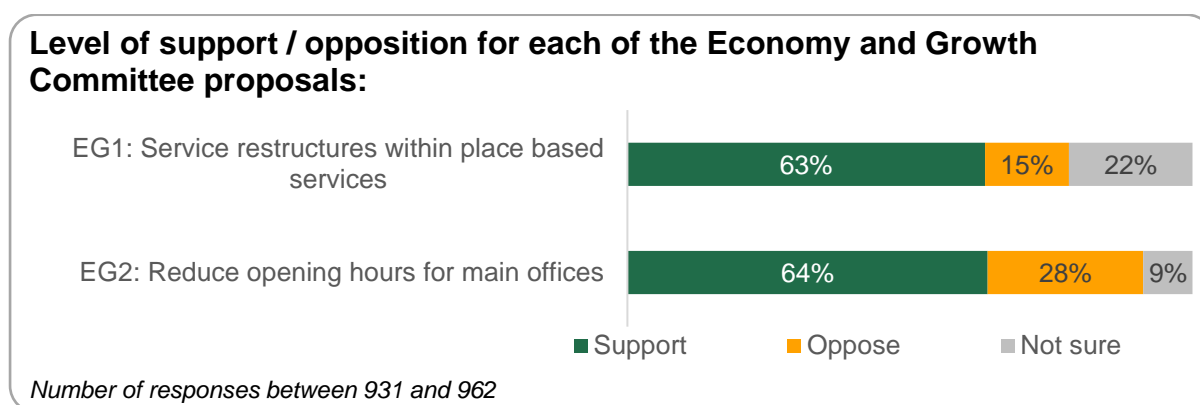
Other ideas		33
Increase the productivity of current staff. Manage performance better so that you are not having to carry people without having the benefit of their work. Pay should be performance based. Stop people working from home.	11	
Review sick pay. Most companies do not pay for one or two days absence. Reduce the amount of sick day absences. Be more stringent over sickness. The council / NJC occupational sickness scheme is very good and a new employee has access to occupational sick pay from day one. The sickness absence scheme is a very long process, so the cost of covering sickness is expensive	6	
Employer pension contributions should be cut to be closer to those in the private sector	2	
Take on more apprenticeships and intern opportunities	2	
Quality staff want permanent contracts, stop offering 12 month contracts, they don't attract a good calibre of candidates	2	
Reduce all senior Council workers wages	2	
Use a flexitime type concept rather than overtime	2	
Bring pensions and contracts in line with private sector	1	
Cut golden handshakes and golden goodbyes	1	
Offer more placements to the unemployed	1	
Offer voluntary redundancy	1	
Retain only essential spending	1	
Stop or pause the Gemini Programme which is splitting ICT Services – The Gemini programme increases the spending on staffing and external consultancy to delivery the programme	1	
More information required		4
The proposal is not explained sufficiently clearly to have a view	2	
How does this fit with the freeze on employment? Without explaining to residents how and when overtime or additional hours payments are made how could we comment meaningfully on how this would impact and whether it is something to support or oppose	1	
Why are so many staff having to work overtime, can the council not employ enough staff?	1	

Economy & Growth Committee proposals

Net support or opposition for each of the Economy & Growth Committee proposals was:

- EG1: Service restructures within place based services (48% net support)
- EG2: Reduce opening hours for main offices (36% net support)

Levels of support and opposition for each of these proposals is shown in the chart below:



Comments about EG1: Service restructures within place based services

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “EG1: Service restructures within place based services”.

In total, 100 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Support for the proposal	37
Support for the proposal, however, changes need to be carefully managed so as not to increase existing pressures. It shouldn't be a blanket policy, the aim must be cost reduction whilst maintaining service levels. Ensure delays in recruitment and failure to retain staff does not lead to needing expensive interim cover. The council must maintain or improve disabled access and support.	17
In support, seems reasonable, in favour of centralisation regarding staff	8
Stop all recruitment, stop all budget increases, offer voluntary redundancy, remove unnecessary posts, review management structures	7
Should only be undertaking statutory services, statutory posts should be prioritised, prioritise front line staff	5
Opposition to the proposal	27

Staff are valuable assets, waiting times are already long enough, this will impact the most vulnerable, reduction in service is unacceptable, this is misguided, a false economy	15
Cuts to place services should be minimised, don't reduce staff, place based services are what the public values the most. Many staff in support roles cover at least another role already, there are already pressures due to loss of staff, the directorate we won't be able to meet targets	12

Further information required	20
Unclear, what are the implications, what are place based services, which posts specifically?	19
What is the long-term plan?	1

Suggestions	10
Give Tatton park to National Trust to run, generate revenue from Tatton park and events, generate external funding	6
Increase productivity in the staff you have, increase overtime working	2
Should limit multiple applications for the same project, decentralise staff to gain savings & more effective local responses. Make better use of CEC real estate. Give funding to partnerships and commissioned services to do the job.	2

General / other comments	6
General negative comment / statement	4
This is vacancy management rather than restructure, it is not an efficient way to restructure a service	2

Comments about EG2: Reduce opening hours for main offices

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "EG2: Reduce opening hours for main offices".

In total, 236 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	100
Staff are not as productive at home should be in offices, remote working leads to inefficiencies, the buildings are there use them	29
Impact on service provision compared to the savings not worth it, more customer complaints. Too much will need to be invested in remote working infrastructure, counterproductive. Negative impact of the environment	22
You must be accessible, especially to the elderly, most vulnerable e.g. the homeless. Staff are hard enough to contact as it is, service is already poor	18
Staff should have the option to go into offices when they need to, ICT equipment provided for working from home is insufficient, it impacts mental health and wellbeing. Where are teams and staff going to work from, there is not enough space in buildings	17

Closed offices give the wrong impression, don't agree with closing buildings on a rota, some services need to be available at both locations daily, not everyone can go on certain days	9
General opposition, this is unattainable	5

Support for the proposal	74
In support, seems sensible – working from home is the new norm, working from home will reduce costs with access to office on some days. Buildings could open less	30
Support closure of council buildings between the hours of 6pm and 8am.	16
Supportive, but only if the services are still available when required, when open services are fast and efficient> People should be able to access support at other CE buildings / central hubs. Ensure disabled people have access and support. Impact assessments are required	10
Prefer / support Option 1	8
Prefer / support Option 2	7
Support as long as reduced building hours doesn't impact staff pay. Staff utilise buildings on the days they are open to minimise wastage (heating bills etc)	3

Suggestions	26
A further review is needed what the busiest days are, there need to be alternative suggestions on the options e.g. centralise offices, use smaller premises, close the Crewe office or reduce it to 3 days per week, operate Macclesfield 5 days per week, close on a Friday, close between 5.30 and 7.30, consider 10am to 2 pm, avoid Friday closure, go to a 4 day week	17
Review use of electricity, gas, heating, lighting, rent out office space, review the offer of alternative (digital) services	9

Further information required	11
Will salaries be reduced accordingly if partial weeks are being worked, people are working from home. Will staff have a WFH allowance, what's the cost of moving between the buildings	5
Unsure if this could impact services or availabilities, would emergency cover be available, unsure what impact closing Westfields will have	4
Not explained sufficiently, is this consistent with the other objectives	2

General / other comments	25
Surprised savings are so small, may cost more to implement	12
General negative comment / statement.	8
Options have pros and cons for staff and residents, go with the option staff most prefer, not all costs end because a building is closed, ensure you don't generate mileage claims. Consider homeworking compensation to the employees	5

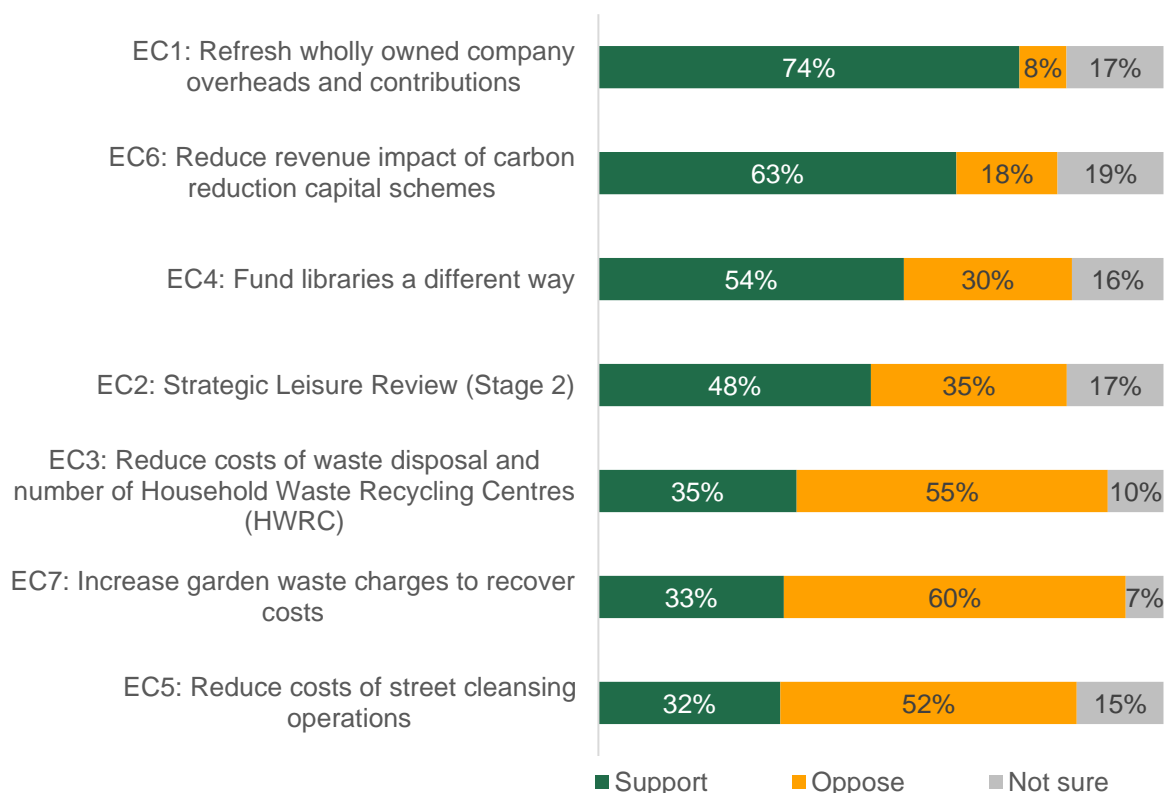
Environment & Communities Committee proposals

Net support or opposition for each of the Environment & Communities Committee proposals was:

- EC1: Refresh wholly owned company overheads and contributions (66% net support)
- EC6: Reduce revenue impact of carbon reduction capital schemes (45% net support)
- EC4: Fund libraries a different way (24% net support)
- EC2: Strategic Leisure Review (Stage 2) (14% net support)
- EC3: Reduce costs of waste disposal and number of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) (-20% net opposition)
- EC7: Increase garden waste charges to recover costs (-28% net opposition)
- EC5: Reduce costs of street cleansing operations (-20% net opposition)

Levels of support and opposition for each of these proposals is shown in the chart below:

Level of support / opposition for each of the Environment and Communities Committee proposals:



Number of responses between 987 and 1,045

Comments about EC1: Refresh wholly owned company overheads and contributions

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “EC1: Refresh wholly owned company overheads and contributions”.

In total, 151 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Support for the proposal		41
General support - This makes sense and it is always good to review. Why hasn't this already been done, this should be the norm		25
Wholly owned companies should be subject to scrutiny and challenge and be performance managed. The council needs to improve existing services, review profitability, any profit should be clearly identified and shared with the council		7
Yes review as long as it doesn't impact the service or improves it. Don't cut where good changes have been made in carbon neutral and recycling. Don't use highly paid external "business consultants". This should be an independent, external review		5
Good idea, a review of management is needed. Decrease any agency staff and overtime. Avoid large redundancy payments to senior staff in ANSA or Orbitas		4
Suggestions		35
Bring the service back in house or outsource fully. Wholly owned companies should be phased out if not delivering value for money. The revenue generation aspects of these companies should be done as a council department to avoid duplication		12
Needs to be efficient, query the efficiency of council owned businesses, provide a first classed service, services should help council finances. Needs to be done at minimal cost, costs should be reduced in line with good practice		9
Become more commercial, increasing additional revenue streams must be encouraged. Put contracts out to tender		5
Sell advertising on waste collection vehicles, look at developing a commercial waste collection service, charge more to NT properties		5
Would work more efficiently if CEC left it alone, do not interfere, necessary profit driven ethos is inconsistent with the Local Authority		4
Opposition to the proposal		2
Oppose waste services being outsourced / too many services have been outsourced		2
Further information required		36
The proposal and wording is not clear and not explained sufficiently. Unsure of the proposal implications		15

Doesn't make sense - if the number of households has increased the income from Council Tax will have also increased. Stop building new houses, this will reduce demand for this service	12
What is the cost of the review? What is the cost versus benefits? What is the £1 million to be made up of?	9

General / other comments	37
Comment about bin charges / collections / HWRC sites e.g. disagree with charge for green waste bins / lack of take up could be due to lack of advertising / no cuts to bin collections / look at how waste is operated In Europe with community bins. Reopen local waste centres.	12
General negative comment / statement	11
Service is poor / bad experience of Ansa or Orbitas / Orbitas charges are excessive.	11
Service is good / good experience of Ansa	3

Comments about EC2: Strategic Leisure review (Stage 2)

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "EC2: Strategic Leisure review (Stage 2)".

In total, 236 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	77
Leisure services are essential for mental and physical health and wellbeing, and their removal / reduction will have a negative impact on this	35
This will have a knock on effect on council social care services and the NHS if access to health and fitness is reduced	25
Don't price out, people will go to private gyms. Leisure fees should be means tested	10
Do not make any cuts	4
Do not sell or transfer leisure service assets	3

Support for the proposal	17
The proposal makes sense, cut leisure services funding	13
Close underused or close proximity leisure centres	3
Sell underused leisure centres	1

Car parking comments	71
Don't charge for parking at Leisure Centres or in town centres, we need to draw people in and not deter them. Town centres are dying	37
Don't put barriers (e.g. car parking charges) in way of health and fitness. The council should be encouraging a healthy population	24
Charge for parking across all sites	9
Have a small charge for residents annual parking permit	1

Fund leisure centres in different ways	23
Look at income opportunities e.g. rent out space / rent to clubs / NHS facilities	10
Increase membership fees	6
Explore public-private partnerships e.g. with private gyms / schools	4
Sell / transfer leisure service assets	3
Improve the leisure centre offer	10
Invest in leisure centres where viable	6
Have better offerings and more swim times at leisure centres, it's currently too restrictive with school bookings etc	4
Town and parish council comments	9
Do not shift burden of their management onto town and parish councils	6
It's a double taxation if moved to town and parish councils	3
Other comments	29
Proposals are unclear, mashed together, needs separating out. It's confusing and needs clarifying	18
Review leisure service providers and the contracts with them	4
Comments related to Leisure Trust and how that could or couldn't work	2
Comments related to council incompetencies	2
Access grants for energy saving measure	1
Public health / grants will also be cut – Don't rely on those	1
Why hasn't council tax income increased in line with increase in population?	1

Comments about EC3: Reduce costs of waste disposal and number of Household Waste Recycling Centres

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "EC3: Reduce costs of waste disposal and number of HWRCs".

In total, 501 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	279
This will encourage fly tipping, and the costs to deal with that will outweigh the savings made from closing sites. Fly tipping is already bad and getting worse, the county already looks dirty and run down, please don't make it any worse!. Has a risk assessment been conducted on the impact on fly tipping – Congleton and Arclid sites closures have led to an increase in fly tipping. Increased fly tipping will lead to rodent and health problems, as well as being a blight on the area for residents and the CEC Authority. It's not fair on local farmers to make them take responsibility for fly tipping because there are too few centres.	186
General opposition – this proposal makes me furious, this is a complete and utter scandal. A crazy proposal! This is an unnecessary austerity proposal.	26

We need tips, where will people go to get rid of their waste? HWRCs are essential services, it is a basic Local Authority duty to collect waste and facilities should be available locally. This is a statutory requirement. 4 sites are too few, especially given the increasing size of the population. It is important for the community to get rid of waste properly, to help recycling - removing barriers to proper waste disposal should be encouraged. It is becoming increasingly difficult to dispose of waste as it is.	23
Congleton has no HWRC and needs one, we already lost that one. Congleton residents pay more Council Tax than areas and has no tip.	15
Opposed to the closure of Bollington HWRC, it is well run and well used.	10
This doesn't represent Council Tax value for money, and is unfair on those who pay Council Tax and don't live in Alsager, Crewe, Knutsford or Macclesfield. At what point is the cost effectiveness of the Authority is called into question? Surely more housing results in more Council tax, which is additional revenue that should be spent on such services.	8
Opposed to the closure of Middlewich HWRC, it is a good site and always busy.	4
Enforcement against fly tippers seems very weak in CEC. Increase environmental crime fines to the maximum.	3
Why did you give planning permission for new developments if we don't have the infrastructure to deal with it? Increased housebuilding will only make this even worse.	3
Opposed to the closure of Knutsford HWRC.	1

Impacts of closures	166
Environmental impacts - Pollution will increase with people having to travel further, millions more unnecessary road trips will be created, increasing pollution and wear and tear on the roads, which you're already failing to maintain. This goes against council carbon and green environment pledges. The council declares a climate emergency and then expects people to drive miles to the recycling centres.	58
This proposal is short sighted – It won't save money overall, it will cost more to sort out the problems it causes. This is a false economy, it will cause more knock on effects than it is worth. Where is the impact assessment for these proposals? The proposals will affect future generations and are very selfish.	38
Brown bins – This combined with a charge for green waste collection will lead to big problems, doing both these at the same time is unbelievable – you encourage people to use these centres if they do not wish to pay for green waste and now you wish to close the centres. Score 1 for foolishness, 0 for council intelligence. Residents are already disaffected with the green waste bin charge, this will only make things worse.	33
Black bins – This proposal means more waste will be put into black bins, and will lead to less recycling. More people will disguise their waste in black bins. This will then raise costs on sorting mixed waste. People won't go to the tip if it is too far away.	18
There's already a shortage of HWRCs, this will only create more congestion at other sites. Other sits already have long queues, this will only create more and make it harder to get to sites. Can other sites handle an increase in	16

traffic? Won't more staff be needed at the sites that stay open to cope with the increase in usage?	
This will lead to more queues on roads and worsening road conditions.	2
This puts additional costs onto residents.	1

Support for the proposal	19
General support for the proposal, 4 sites should be enough.	12
Support, as long as the 4 sites and staff can cope with an increase in usage.	2
Support, but savings won't be realised this year - Due to likely termination costs with the existing provider this proposal is unlikely to deliver the required level of savings in 2024/25 with the following financial year being more realistic.	1
People don't use sites often and so can travel further.	1
Alsager residents are supportive, as long as Alsager HWRC stays open.	1
Support, as long as public transport to sites is improved.	1
Support, as long as the sites that stay open are open for longer.	1

Alternatives to closures	29
Reduce opening hours or days across all sites instead	5
Charge people to use these sites instead, perhaps a low fee such as £1 or £2 per visit would help keep sites open.	5
Monetise waste streams – Produce energy from waste.	4
Follow the Swedish model of collecting things for repair and reuse.	2
Encourage better recycling to reduce need for HWRCs.	2
Complete closure is the worst option, there needs to be a compromise.	2
Have a monthly auction to sell off stuff dumped at tips that is easily resaleable.	1
Look at Guildford HWRC as a model on how CEC site could be improved	1
Sub-contract the services to avoid the loss.	1
Sell the B&Q carpark you spent £21million purchasing in 2019.	1
Ensure only CEC residents are using sites.	1
Fund through local employers or fund raising.	1
Ask central government for more funding – MPs seem passionate about keeping the sites in election discussions.	1
Find savings elsewhere.	1

Other	8
Not enough information to give an opinion	4
Has an impact assessment been done for this proposal?	3
Comment on the decommissioning process: The proposed retained sites require a backlog of capital maintenance of hundreds of thousands of pounds which should be delivered first ahead of the proposed closures, as it is likely temporary closures will be needed at major HWRC sites. Ideally each of the retained sites would be upgraded on a phased basis ahead of decommissioning other sites so they are to cope with additional traffic and tonnage throughput. Decommissioned sites are likely to attract	1

decommissioning costs as well as implications for third party staffing at the sites and waste tonnage implications.	
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Comments about EC4: Fund libraries a different way

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “EC4: Fund libraries a different way”.

In total, 331 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	160
Don't cut library services, they are vital and should be protected. They should be accessible in all areas, and the service has already had too many cuts.	74
Libraries are safe, warm communal places, used by all walks of life.	32
Libraries are crucial for low income people and those accessing IT and online services.	26
Libraries are essential for learning, literacy and education.	23
Save money elsewhere, and stop wasting money as a council.	3
Cuts will increase health / education demands	2

Service transformation suggestions	94
Maximise revenue opportunities - Charge a membership fee, have a café, make them more of a community hub.	50
Combine other services into libraries.	19
Extend opening hours to allow more users to access them.	5
Reduce opening hours to suit demand.	5
Seek external funding, sponsorship or commercial partnerships.	4
House council staff in libraries.	3
Close libraries that are underused.	3
Close Alderley Edge library.	3
Close mobile library services.	2

Support for the proposal	34
Agree with external funding but not service cuts.	16
Support proposal as everything is available online anyway e.g. kindle etc.	10
General support for the proposal.	6
Support the proposal, depending on the 3rd parties involved.	2

Town and parish council comments	27
Town councils have already been asked for support and won't support anymore. They haven't got the money to provide more support.	10
Transfer libraries to Town Councils to run (for £1).	5
Don't transfer libraries to Town Councils to run.	4

Transfer to Town or Parish Councils would ultimately mean a charge to residents via the precept.	4
It would be deceitful to charge Parish Councils.	1
Parish councils could make more suitable use of them.	1
Town and Parish Councils have reserves that should be invested instead of saving.	1
Town and Parish Councils should contribute more.	1

Other comments	16
The proposal is unclear, more information about the proposal is needed.	9
This won't make a difference, and is short-sighted.	4
What about the library staff?	2
How does safeguarding fit in with libraries?	1

Comments about EC5: Reduce costs of street cleansing operations

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "EC5: Reduce costs of street cleansing operations".

In total, 391 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	330
CE streets are already a disgrace, we don't see any cleaning anyway, if street cleaning is reduced any more it would be non-existent.	137
We already have a problem with flooding and blocked drains, do not cut drainage services. Gutters need cleaning as it is.	52
It's important that towns and streets are well kept / kept clean.	31
This is a false economy, and will incur costs elsewhere e.g. flooding.	24
This proposal will attract more rubbish, there'll be no pride, people won't care.	23
If areas are not clean and tidy it will deter people and businesses.	15
The proposed savings are negligible.	15
This will attract rats and vermin and be hazardous for public health.	10
This is a statutory service.	8
What do we get for our Council Tax?	8
Unkept streets and roads causes problems with cars and pot holes.	7

Support for the proposal	22
Supportive of the proposal, as long as it means improving efficiencies and not scaling back.	22

Alternative service provision suggestions	27
Improve current service efficiencies: Improve bins, utilise cleaning machines you have, don't do grass cutting in winter.	8

Encourage residents to take more responsibility and take pride of their local areas.	7
Encourage and support voluntary groups to help clear litter.	6
Charge local businesses and takeaways to contribute to street cleaning.	3
Town Councils could contribute to fund this service.	3

More information needed	12
Does scaling back mean cuts?	6
Need more clarity, what are the implications?	4
What are the costs to change?	2

Comments about EC6: Reduce revenue impact of carbon reduction capital schemes

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “EC6: Reduce revenue impact of carbon reduction capital schemes”.

In total, 130 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Support for the proposal	47
General support, it makes sense. It was a pointless project and a waste of time and money	31
This is important but not a priority if funds are low, it shouldn't be a driving priority for the council	11
Support prioritising funding, why hasn't this been done already. Get funding support from Government	5

Opposition to the proposal	29
Carbon reduction has to be a priority, we need to protect the environment, we have a climate emergency	23
If truly beneficial this project needs to continue, we still need to focus on decarbonisation, we need a climate adaptation strategy and to work towards greener targets	5
General opposition – This is not thought through	1

Further information required	36
What does this actually mean, what is 'capitalisation of the carbon team'. More information needed	27
Not sure, does this mean delay or not do it at all, how will this impact net zero targets? The council need to ensure this is deliverable ahead of cutting the budget	9

Suggestions	9
Encourage active travel, staff into the office, stop felling trees, place solar panels on buildings, consider community energy schemes etc	7

Work with voluntary organisations / private businesses	2
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General / other comments	9
General negative comment, hypocrisy considering closure of HWRC sites which should be kept open	9

Comments about EC7: Increase garden waste charges to recover costs

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “EC7: Increase garden waste charges to recover costs”.

In total, 352 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	281
General opposition = Won't pay to use it, there is a lack of take-up as it is, the service should be free, charge increases achieve minimal savings	79
This will lead to fly tipping, burning of waste, waste placed in black bins, and will impact climate change	74
The charge is already higher than neighbouring councils, already too costly, we pay enough already. This will reduce the number of subscriptions, the council needs to reduce fee if they want to increase take-up	58
Only just started charging for green waste, haven't even met original subscription target, review uptake and impact first before increasing charges	38
Council Tax should cover it, this is a stealth tax. Already paid in 2023 council tax for the service.	32

Support for the proposal	29
Generally support the proposal, support a small increase and charging for actual costs. Would rather increased charges than reduced services. Base the charge on council tax bands	19
Encourage home composting, responsibility to take to the tip (need sufficient HWRC sites)	10

Suggestions	20
Introduce smaller bin for a cheaper rate, introduce alternate free of charge food waste pick up, reduce collection frequency, go back to one bin for all waste, remove bin altogether, promote garden bin sharing between neighbours	10
Save money in other areas, make efficiencies elsewhere	4
Only if service is guaranteed, service should be offered all year, consider pro-rate rata for part year collection	3
Price should be fixed for a few years	2
Work with neighbouring authorities to see if efficiencies can be made	1

Further information required	15
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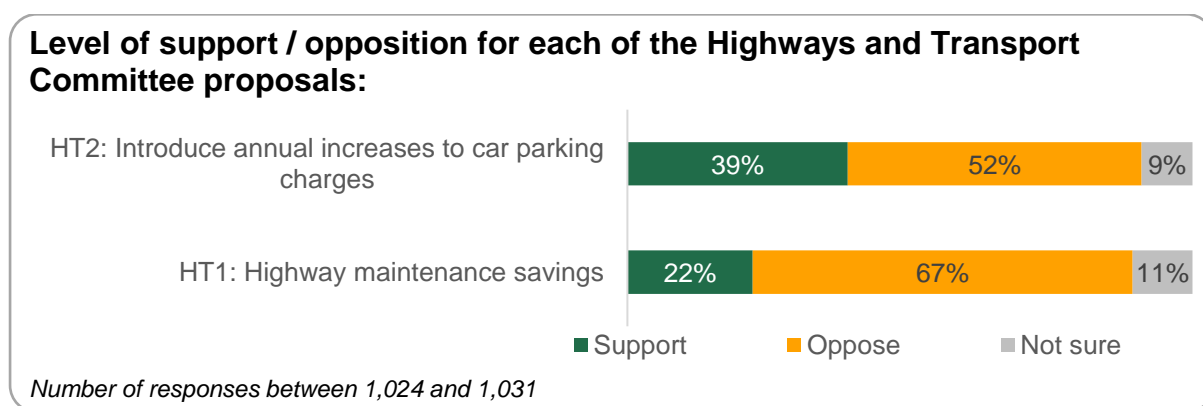
Not explained sufficiently, need more comms, how does food waste collection factor in?	7
Is it worth doing, will savings outweigh costs, how was the figure decided?	8
General / other comments	7
General negative comment	7

Highways & Transport Committee proposals

Net support or opposition for each of the Environment & Communities Committee proposals was:

- HT2: Introduce annual increases to car parking charges (-13% net opposition)
- HT1: Highway maintenance savings (-45% net opposition)

Levels of support and opposition for each of these proposals is shown in the chart below:



Comments about HT1: Highway maintenance savings

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal “HT1: Highway maintenance savings”.

In total, 540 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal – The service is already poor		262
The service and state of the roads generally is already poor. How can this be cut further, roads would become unsafe. The services needs more funding not less		146
Current issue with potholes inc. damage to cars, repeat repairs		53
Current issue with flooding due to blocked drains / gullies		42
Current issue with lack of green maintenance inc. weed control, tree maintenance, grass cutting		13
Rural areas are neglected		6
Current issue with lack of winter gritting		2
Opposition to the proposal – Roads should be a top priority / Future concerns		121

Roads need to be maintained for safety, a reduction in funding would lead to unsafe roads, with more accidents, worse potholes, flooding, overgrown areas & accessibility issues for people using wheelchairs/pushchairs	43
Highways should be a priority, service funding should not be reduced, they are critical to everyone. The council must fix potholes, empty gullies all year round, maintain verges, and maintain pavements	40
It will cost more money to fix issues than to keep them maintained in the first place, a reduction in funding will lead to increased complaints and claims for damage	28
Concern over untidy streets, crime, deteriorated areas, and the quality of environment	10

Suggestions	91
Improve equipment, management, quality of repairs (to save money in the long term). Bring the service back in house	66
Prioritise major roads, winter repairs & maintenance, and urgent repairs	8
Other suggestions: Reduce spending on CCTV, speed cameras and street lights instead; Charge new builds more; Work with volunteers & schools.	7
Improve public transport / active travel	5
Allocate money to Parish Councils to support, work with Parish Councils, work with local communities & volunteers	5

Support for the proposal	34
Support reduction in grass cutting, weed maintenance (especially in winter), more wild areas as long as safety is maintained	23
Support the need for a review generally as long as it doesn't increase the risk of flooding, that changes are safe, and it doesn't lead to a reduction in service	9
Support a reduction in winter maintenance	2

Further information required	15
What about the increase in government funding, get levelling up money, review s1206 spending	12
Not clear how savings will be achieved, where is the longevity in this	3

General / other comments	17
General negative, loss of faith, cultural shift needed, save money elsewhere	16
Spend needs to be fairly allocated across the borough	1

Comments about HT2: Introduce annual increases to car parking charges

Survey respondents were asked if they had any comments to make about the proposal "HT2: Introduce annual increases to car parking charges".

In total, 373 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Opposition to the proposal	201
This will kill of towns and highstreets, deter people from towns, impact businesses and cause loss in business rates. Towns are dead as it is – the council needs to encourage more people into towns, not deter them	134
General opposition – This is a revenue raising con, prices shouldn't be increased, all car parks should be free, save money elsewhere	34
People will park in residential areas and side streets, illegally, instead of paying to park	17
Charges are already too high, residents are struggling financially as it is	16

Support for the proposal / support if	82
Only fair if all areas have parking charges, consistency is needed – Residents should pay the same across all areas	44
Parking is fairly cheap, support the proposal	14
Charges should increase in line with inflation, that sounds fair, small increases each year are ok, but not large increases	12
Council staff should have to pay car parking too	6
Depends on which car park, and on the proposed price increase	6

Suggestions	49
Car parking should be free for a period of time e.g. first 30 minutes free, 1-3 hours free, free after 3pm, reduced costs at weekends	13
Improve the transport network, encourage more active travel and improve bike storage	12
Reduced permits for residents and staff who live / work in town centres	10
Keep small village car parks free, health centre parking free, parking free for blue badge holders, further away car parks free	6
Are all car parks needed, could some of the land be sold. Ban parking in town centres apart from disabled parking	4
Introduce electric vehicle charging facilities and charge for this	2
Hand car parks over to Town Councils	2

Further information required	24
A balance needs to be struck, what is the cost impact vs. savings e.g. loss of business rates, cost of updating machines. Has an impact assessment been conducted?	19
Where does all the money go, what potential charges, how much will the increase be?	3
Need to see impact of introducing charges before increasing further	2

General / other comments	17
General negative comment	12
A blanket approach not suitable	3
Make sure parking / ticket machines are easy to use e.g. tap and go, and passes that can be used across car parks machines	2

Overview of feedback on the 10 extra budget saving ideas

Respondents completing the consultation survey were also asked to indicate whether they supported or opposed 10 extra budget saving ideas, which were suggested over and above the 29 MTFS proposals put forward.

Net levels of support or opposition² for the 10 extra budget savings ideas varied from 83% net support, down to -48% net opposition.

8 extra budget saving ideas with net support

8 of the 10 extra budget saving ideas received net support, from “Seek further Government support” with 83% net support, down to “Reduce support offered to businesses” with 9% net support.

Details of the 8 extra budget saving ideas with net support are given in the table below.

Budget saving ideas that received net support	% Support	% Oppose	% Not sure	No. survey responses	Net Support
Seek further Government support	89%	6%	5%	1026	83%
Increase advertising income, by advertising on bus stops, roundabouts and other council property	87%	8%	5%	1040	79%
Share more services with other councils	80%	9%	11%	1032	72%
Lower the amount of Council Tax support available from 100% to pre-covid levels. Pensioners will remain on the national scheme as they do currently	70%	14%	15%	1017	56%
Review net spending and subsidy for tourism and place marketing services	64%	20%	16%	1019	44%
Transfer buildings and activities to Town and Parish Councils	56%	20%	25%	1019	36%
Review net spending and subsidy for the Arts and Culture Budget	59%	26%	15%	1026	33%

² Net levels of support or opposition are calculated by subtracting the % of respondents that oppose a proposal, from the % that support a proposal. For example, if 76% of respondents support a budget proposal and 14% oppose it, the net level of support = 62%

Reduce funding for Demand Responsive transport services (FlexiLink and Go-Too bus services) - consider a range of options including simplifying routes, changing days/hours of service and revising fares paid by passengers	50%	33%	17%	1028	18%
Increase charges for council services to ensure service users pay full costs, without any subsidy from taxation	43%	34%	23%	1008	9%
Reduce support offered to businesses	42%	34%	24%	1019	9%

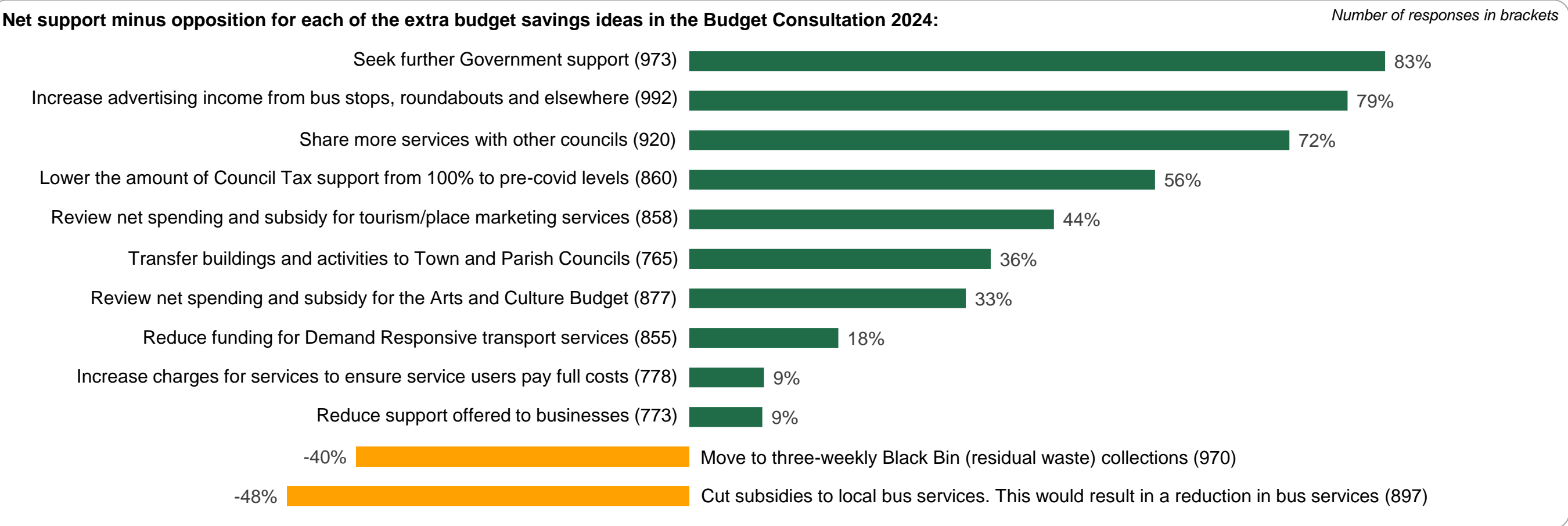
2 extra budget saving ideas with net opposition

2 of the 10 extra budget saving ideas received net opposition, and these included:

- Cut subsidies to local bus services. This would result in a reduction in bus services (-48% net opposition)
- Move to three-weekly Black Bin (residual waste) collections (-40% net opposition)

Details of the 2 extra budget saving ideas with net opposition are given in the table below.

Budget saving ideas that received net opposition	% Support	% Oppose	% Not sure	No. survey responses	Net Opposition
Cut subsidies to local bus services. This would result in a reduction in bus services	20%	68%	12%	1021	-48%
Move to three-weekly Black Bin (residual waste) collections	27%	67%	6%	1035	-40%



Making budget savings internally

Survey respondents were asked if they felt there was anything else the council could be doing to save money or to generate extra income internally.

In total, 1,136 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

Review staff and staff performance	434
Top level management – Review top level management and Councillor need, roles, performance, salaries, and value for money	181
Cut / reduce all expenses – All allowances, mileage and refreshments	84
Improve staff performance – Ensure staff are working the hours they should, working efficiently and are capable / meetings KPIs	78
Review staff pay and benefits – Freeze pay, restrict pay reviews, allow more annual leave to be purchased, reduce pension scheme contributions, review the redundancy threshold	49
Review staff numbers and hours – There are too many in some areas / teams, review the numbers, reduce hours, remove duplicity of roles	29
Offer early voluntary redundancy without reduced pension	8
Reduce staff costs – Have compacted hours or 4 day weeks	5
Be more efficient	257
Adopt more efficient ways of working – Have more Teams meetings, overhaul admin heavy tasks and processes, digitise, have meetings in council offices not off-site	64
Stop wasting money on: Unnecessary emails, meetings, licences, magazine and paper subscriptions, training and mobile phones	57
Stop wasting money on vanity projects and other projects such as HS2 and net zero	50
Reduce running costs - Allow staff to work from home, close unused offices, close offices on a Friday, close the 2nd floor of Macclesfield, close during school holidays	50
Reduce energy costs - Lighting, electricity, heating, recycling, re-use	29
Have more efficient use of building space, combine provisions into one place (e.g. children's centre and library)	7
Increase income, reduce spending	131
Generate more income - Rent out office space, generate private sector sponsorship/advertising, increase charges on services, sell services	48
Recover debts and enforce fines, collect unpaid fines, charges and Council Tax	25
Reduce spending - Reduce spending thresholds, the number of cardholders. Have stricter spending parameters.	25
Introduce parking charges - Charge equally across sites, have more pay & display	25

Control spending - Don't start projects until funds are in or other projects are finished	8
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Review contractors and consultants	142
Review contractors - Review costs, performance, value for money. Have quality control	89
Review consultants and agency staff - Cut / reduce use of, train and use council staff to do the work	44
Bring more services in-house	9

High level ideas	92
Sell off council assets and land	33
Only spend on statutory services, give us what we pay for. Review spending on non-essential services	29
Regenerate town centres, attract more businesses	10
Hand over more services to Town and Parish Councils	7
Share procurement and services with neighbouring authorities	7
Merge with other councils	3
Lobby central government for more funding	3

Don't reduce staff recruitment or training	24
Do not freeze staff training, this is short sighted with longer term impacts and reduces morale	16
Do not freeze staff recruitment, this impacts on service and will lead to impacts later down the line	8

Council Tax comments	10
Increase council tax but have means tested Council Tax charge,	7
Do not increase Council Tax, we can't afford it	3

Engage more	7
Involve staff and ask frontline staff for ideas and suggestions	4
Have honest conversations with the public about the need for cuts	3

Other comments	39
SEND taxi and school transport provision - Review and find cost savings	12
Bin collections - Make more efficient, don't cut the service, reduce fly tipping, recycling facilities are needed	10
Benefits - Ensure the system is not abused	7
Stop staff working from home	6
Improve the consultation	4

Achieving a balanced budget in future

Survey respondents were asked if they any other ideas as to how the council could increase income or reduce spending to help achieve a balanced budget in future.

In total, 516 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

High level comments	63
Lobby central government for more funding	19
Bigger picture / long term strategies	7
Provide for those most in need	7
Consider the longer term impacts of cuts	6
Look at other successful models / councils	6
Do not cut services or subsidies	6
Council Tax is poor value for money, we don't get much in return	4
Merge with Cheshire West	3
Think out of the box, think innovatively	3
Adopt S114 notice	1
Stop building new houses	1

Improve council efficiency	129
Stop wasting money on non essentials, focus on the basics, stop all capital expenditure	34
Work more efficiently, have online meetings	18
Better council management	17
Stop wasting money generally	12
Make energy saving comments e.g. turn lights off	12
Have a full review of spend versus value, get good accountants in to review finances and conduct an audit, employ commercial financial expertise	10
Simplify and review processes, reduce bureaucracy and red tape	10
Have a full review of services	9
Outsource some departments e.g. HR, Legal	3
Incentivise each department to look at better ways of working, to save target amount of £	2
Streamline / combine ICT	2

Staff & Councillor comments	110
Review performance and salaries of management, councillors and employees	53
Review and reduce staff numbers, merge jobs, remove duplication of roles, have a root and branch review of structure	28
Reduce allowances for councillors and management	11
Review pensions	8
Offer voluntary redundancy	3

No staff working from home	3
Freeze wages	2
Have more working from home, reduce the running costs of buildings	2

Generate more income	85
Lease office space, sell services	24
Improve town centres, attract more people, improve access to towns, improve public transport	11
Enforce fines	10
Increase parking charges	8
Means test tax payers, charges and subsidies, tax the wealthy more	8
Levy builders and developers to contribute more to communities / Obtain S106	7
Ensure everyone eligible is paying council tax, chase debtors	6
Get sponsorship and sell advertising	4
Attract more businesses, reduce business rates	3
Increase leisure charges	3
Raise the Council Tax precept by 1%	1

Save money	36
Sell assets	17
Encourage volunteering to help the community e.g. litter picking and hedge tidying	9
Transfer assets to Town and parish Councils	5
Stop spending money on Crewe	3
Stop subsidising businesses	2

Consultants	37
Stop using consultants	5
Stop contracting out, remove agency workers and the ad-hoc employed	10
Improve standard of work from contractors, get things right first time	14
Negotiate better contracts with providers, get better deals, use local providers	8

Specific proposal comments	45
Comments around SEND services / taxi use / save money here / review SEND budget	9
Comments about black bin collection / fly tipping	27
Comments around bus services	9

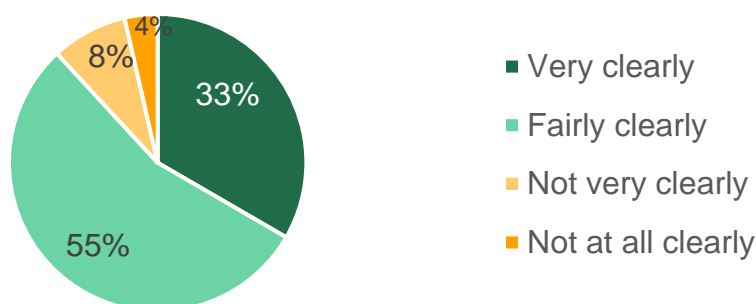
Comments on the consultation	11
Communicate to residents why there are cuts, be honest and transparent	6
Improve the consultation, the questions need improving and more information about proposals are needed	5

Final comments

Understanding of the council's current financial situation

88% of survey respondents felt they clearly understand the council's current financial situation.

Generally speaking, how clearly do you feel you understand the council's current financial situation?



Number of responses = 1,172

Final comments

Survey respondents were asked if they wanted to comment on any other aspect of this budget consultation, including detailing how the proposals may affect them.

In total, 351 comments made in response to this question have been analysed, and these comments have been grouped into categories and summarised below.

The council is not delivering, proposals affect the most vulnerable		131
Cheshire East Council not serving us, not delivering the essential services we need, not delivering value for money for the amount of Council Tax we pay.		46
Increases in charges or taxes will impact me, I already struggle to pay and couldn't afford to pay more		38
These proposals hit the most vulnerable and the most in need		32
Front line and grass roots staff have very low morale, these proposals affect them and put front line staff under immense pressure		10
Hard working people are being penalised		5
How has the council got in this mess		26
The council has gambled on projects that have cost the public, these are self inflicted mistakes which the council must learn from		14
What is the council spending money on? How has the council got into this mess? The council has plenty of money, where has it gone?		6

Make clear to residents the reasons for the cuts and for the government austerity cuts	6
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Long term planning and the impact of proposals	42
These plans are short-sighted and not long term, council planning is too last minute and too late	14
Invest in towns, infrastructure, services and roads, make Cheshire East more attractive	10
Good health care and social care is vital and an essential service	8
These proposals will impact council services and the NHS further down the line if implemented. The proposals will have long term consequences and impacts on our community	6
The proposals do not set out the potential environmental impacts	2
The council should reduce overheads, but not at detriment to services	2

Suggestions for balancing the budget	84
Review senior management salaries, roles and value for money	18
Stop wasting money, have better control of spending	13
Reduce staff numbers, duplication, review staff performance, make sure staff are not abusing annual leave, have compressed hours, get back to working in the office	11
The council needs clear and effective leadership	9
Review contractor value for money, negotiate better deals, demand better quality of work	6
Seek more funding from central government	5
Do not ask Town and Parish Councils for more help	3
Focus on revenue generation	2
Sell assets	2
Look at other successful models, countries, councils	2
Only buy what you can afford, get money in before spending	2
Benefits, subsidies and Council Tax should be means tested	2
Target social services for savings as they use most of the budget	2
Take back ownership from private companies	1
Tax the rich	1
Recover debts	1
Invest in arts and culture, this is important for community wellbeing	1
Work with charity organisations for family support	1
Have more collaboration and work together with others (e.g. highways with parish councils)	1
Review benefits recipients and clamp down on fraudsters and cheats	1

Specific proposal comments	32
Car parking charges - Have free car parking to increase footfall, don't increase charges	7
Black bin comments	7
HS2 comments	7

SEND - School support should not be reduced, SEND support needs improving including the process	5
Oppose cuts to libraries and leisure services	3
Do not reduce bus services, residents and the elderly rely on this service	2
Reduce the number of recycling sites	1

The consultation	36
The questionnaire language was confusing and difficult to understand, it used too much jargon and needs plain language and better clarity	17
The council won't listen anyway or show they have listened, they've already made up mind and won't act on results	5
Consult with and listen to Cheshire residents	5
Happy consultation has taken place	3
How many residents have seen this consultation?	3
The council has already consulted on some of these proposals, and are wasting money surveying again on them	2
Proposals need buy in from everyone (town/parish councils/residents/diocese)	1

Conclusions

Frustration during a great period of change

The council is in the midst of one of the greatest periods of change, or transformations, in its history. This rate of change is being felt by stakeholders, with exasperation among many at the changes taking place, and at the perceived worsening performance of the council.

At the most extreme, some are stating the council is not fit for purpose and are calling for it to be abolished, and while this is a small proportion now, if the council continues to force through changes which residents are opposed to, and which seemingly make the borough a worse place to live in, those calls may only increase.

Stakeholders are willing to embrace savings

That said, stakeholders are not completely against change and budget savings – of the 39 proposals and money saving ideas put forward in this consultation, respondents provided net support for 80% of them (31 out of the 39).

This indicates a level of acceptance of the current financial situation and a willingness for stakeholders to agree to savings. The council should look to deliver these proposals and ideas with net support, but carefully so, as some of these proposals will impact on some of the most vulnerable in our community.

Opposition to key service cuts without alternatives being explored

There is strong opposition to proposals that impact key services, such as highways maintenance, street cleaning, Household Waste and Recycling Centres, and local bus services.

Respondents also seem strongly opposed to proposals when service reductions or site closures are put forward as the primary option, without alternative service delivery options being explored first.

It may be that respondents see service reductions and site closures as a last resort, and this may best be evidenced with the different levels of support for Library Service proposals in recent years – Last year's Library Service proposal set out service reductions in the form of reduced opening hours and the removal of the mobile library, and had net opposition of -58%, whereas this year's Library Service proposal set out to seek alternative funding for the service, explore partnership working and generate income to keep the service going, and this received net support of +24%.

Where the council is proposing to reduce key services, it must be extremely careful with how it does so, otherwise it may lose the goodwill of stakeholders and could destroy any remaining trust that remains between the council and its taxpayers. The council should consider carefully whether to proceed with any proposals strongly opposed by respondents in their current guise, and look to seek alternative solutions where possible.

Concern about the lack of long-term planning

Respondents are also concerned about the lack of holistic and long-term planning with budget saving proposals, including the compound effects of different proposals on each other.

For example they are concerned that the implementation of the green waste charge at the same time as the closure of Household Waste and Recycling Centres will lead to significant increases in fly tipping and in the amount of waste being deposited in black bins, which they suggested would cost the council more to deal with in the long run, than the savings will realise in the short term. They also feel these proposals will lead to a worsening local appearance of the borough, particularly at the same time as cuts to street cleaning, as well as impacts on the environment with people travelling further to dispose of waste.

There are strong calls from respondents for the introduction of impact assessments for proposals, and for improved long-term planning during this period of enormous change, to ensure that changes are in the best interest of the borough long-term.

Taking residents with us

Finally it will be essential for the council to take residents and stakeholders with it as best it can through this huge transformation, ensuring stakeholders are engaged in the co-design of services, rather than the council forcing through proposals without listening stakeholders.

Appendix 1 – Event feedback

329 budget consultation events were held during January 2024:

Event	Date	No. of attendees
Trade Union Budget Briefing	22 January 2024	7
Manager Share and Support Session 1	23 January 2024	150
Cheshire East Business Forum	24 January 2024	2
Manager Share and Support Session 2	25 January 2024	60
In The Know staff session	30 January 2024	85
Town and Parish Council Network	30 January 2024	25

During these meetings members of the council's Finance Team presented an overview of this year's budget consultation document. Below summarises the number of attendees at these events, and the feedback received. Feedback has been anonymised to protect the identity of individuals.

Trade Union Briefing 22/01/2024

Q – I know we are planning towards being self-sufficient. Understand cost increases but are the cuts and income generation proposals realistic? I.e. client contributions in ASC. Fees and charges increases? People don't want to pay more so will vote against these. C&F discretionary offer to SEND – key concerns around how much we are paying out in terms of packages / legal fees charged to LA's. Key area of concern around sharing services but we are now splitting East/West ICT with £5m cost? How is that saving money?

A – In terms of being self-supporting then people have to either receive less services or pay more through council tax and fees and charges. Discretionary services – we have not been charging as much as they cost (which we should have been doing). For example green waste: to provide that service free of charge is unrealistic. Same in ASC – statutory minimum but there are other items that are undercharged for, which we are subsidising. We have low Council Tax bills in Cheshire East. If you compare our band A to 90% of other North West Local Authorities then CEC is lower. But there aren't many Band As in Cheshire so overall more Council Tax is collected but this is due to proportion of larger houses, not having a higher charge. People are demanding more services now and we can't charge as much as we need to bridge the gap. Some proposals will be unpopular. Key is the discretionary element – we have no statutory duty to provide. We charge to lessen the gap.

Shared services: Where they create efficiencies we need to look at. Ideas welcome and conversations are being had. Need to generally share overheads. The cost model for the ICT shared service model was not working. The overheads between the two councils were not being funded by the activity so they got too much. Splitting

again was a better model. Cost of change will be a one off and will save money in the long run.

Q – ICT is costing more as moving forward towards split, the specialist areas will cost us more money. I am working with them on both East/West. ICT is spending more money as each side are choosing different ways to provide the systems.

A – costs are within budget for the project overall. In year income from projects are not where they need to be to fund the cost of the service. Contractors on high salaries were causing cost pressures. We need permanent staff for long term arrangements rather than having high cost short term measures for too long.

Q – £1m more NHB income than forecast which means more homes. But proposing to cut HWRC / move to three weekly collection etc. Plus £1m saving in ASDV running. And less street cleansing? How will this work with less HWRCs and more homes? Just spent £120k to track ANSA on green spaces progress (handheld devices). Challenging proposals that don't all stack up. Where will all the extra waste go? Green waste – 80% of borough not had a letter to say costs going up? People don't look at the consultation. 900 responses to date is nothing.

A – It is a better response rate than historically. We had 2,000 last year. It's enough responses to give the members an indication on proposals. ANSA – company structure requires frequent reviews to monitor performance. Will have to look at total cost of provision of service and overheads. Green waste – The letter has gone out and 50,000 have signed up to the scheme already. As more people realise that green bins are not being collected they will get in touch and will then know they have to pay if they want service, which should increase the sign up.

HLBCs will be shared in confidence with the committees, they can be shared with Trade Unions to help articulate each proposal and provide more detail.

Q – Re. bus services the consultation is looking at decreasing subsidies for them. But as a regular bus user I can say that the bus service is already expensive, infrequent and unreliable. One of the impacts will be people going out less and spending less in local economy – less money to the council. This proposal is counterproductive. We need to improve the service but without any subsidy the service will get worse, especially in rural areas. The cut to discretionary travel support for 16+ students with SEND – there is a danger that will exclude people with SEND even more from education.

A – In relation to buses, this is a good example of what we are talking about, we don't have to fund buses. Government grants come with match funding requirements so it is a double hit if we remove the expenditure completely. But we can't afford to run the services. We just can't keep subsidising through Council Tax so people will

need to pay more to keep the service running. It's an unpleasant situation but not a statutory requirement for Local Authorities to fund buses.

A – This session is not the place to be justifying the proposals individually. We do not want to cut services, but we don't have the money to run anything but statutory services. The statutory services alone are costing so much more now and that affects non statutory services. There is some cross party representation to central government on Local Authority current funding issues, this not just a local issue.

Q – This has a negative impact on staff also which I just wanted to highlight, it's not just residents. The less services we are providing means we can't help people. Will impact on local businesses also.

A – From a staff wellbeing perspective, we are not in a great place. The impact is on our residents but it's critical to think about our staff groups also. We have over 3,000 staff and some big challenging proposals in consultation which will have personal and professional impact. There is information on the website in terms of support available. Wherever possible we will look for savings that impact the least on our ability to deliver services.

Q – The Council Tax rise of 4.99%, just for clarity, is that just for CEC or does that include Fire/Police/T&PC too?

A – That's just for the CEC portion, other council and fire/police precepts are on top of that.

A – The material and this session was for clarity and to answer any general questions. If you wish to respond as a union we can accept in any format or use link on line. You have requested a similar meeting once all results are in. Draft results are being prepped now. Something is in the diary to run through the results once available. There is also public engagement through committee meetings. The presentation will be shared with this group.

Manager Share and Support Session 1 23/01/2024

All questions were asked through Teams chat during the meeting, and answered by the meeting host.

Q – What is DSG?

A – Dedicated Schools Grant

Q – Do we know approximately how much we have spent on HS2?

A – £8.6m of £11.2m (overall spend) is capital costs which is causing the pressure.

Q – Would we save money initially if we ceased the Gemini project which seems to be costing a lot of money in time, resources, splitting ICT equipment between east and west?

A – The Gemini project has future savings in 25-26 budgets onwards i.e. its an invest to save project. We can't stop it as the costs would be abortive and be charged to the revenue budget in year.

Q – With new properties come new children and we would need more schools or at least more school places etc.

A – Agreed.

Q – You said our Ear Marked Reserves were quite healthy, can any of those be released to help the current situation?

A – Some have been used in year so balances have gone down. Any more general/ringfenced EMRs are now are likely to go into the general fund balance to help with the overall overspend. Some are very specific so cannot be released for use in this way.

Q – What are the chances of getting compensation from Government over HS2?

A – Government might give us money for other projects in place of HS2 so not cash compensation. But we would have to spend money on other things we weren't doing. Government might say we can carry on to capitalise and pay off over time to spread the cost. Still not compensation. Politicians want to lobby for the cash. If government compensate CEC then others might follow and ask for compensation. Ultimately, we don't know what will happen yet.

Q – Budget Consultation document – the savings identified clearly aren't enough to bridge budget gap. Highways & Transport not balanced. Is that the same for other service areas?

A – Targets were set for each committee based on current spending and having to provide additional funding to Childrens Services due to really high price inflation. Targets gave money to Children and Families and meant other areas had to have savings targets. Achievement against targets: Adults & Health are about balanced and Children & Families with growth were balanced. Central over budget due to interest costs. Not far off in other services so a mixed bag. They were targets only and the deficit belongs to everybody.

Q – Centranet: CEBERT update page not updated since 20 Oct. Plans to update?

A – The page was updated at 12 noon today – the refresh date doesn't always update.

Q – Are there any In the Know sessions planned for staff.

A – The In The Know session will be similar to this session.

Q – Surely you know if S114 is likely and staff would like to know if they need to prepare for that.

A – In terms of a S114 “plan to commit illegal act”. So if you spent money illegally or if you are planning to do something illegal like putting together a package of measures that didn’t agree a robust balanced budget. So S114 cant be issued while we haven’t done anything illegal. It would help if we stopped calling it bankruptcy but one thing we can all do is stop calling it that as it will put suppliers off engaging with us. The council can’t technically go bankrupt. Even if we run out of money, the government will get a plan together to get us out of the situation. Please spread the word that we are not going “bankrupt”. Reiterate that to suppliers.

Q – Do all non-essential services stop when a S114 is issued? Staff feel worried if they provide a non-statutory service. Would we be at less risk of S114 if we hadn’t been a unitary? Central government give lots of very narrow prescriptive use ringfenced grants that we cant spend somewhere else or timeframes are really tight? Makes it really hard to plan without more flexibility.

A – Key question re statutory vs non. Very complicated situation and rules are very vague – never a simple conversation. But we aim for value for money at all times. Majority of councils in difficulty are LA’s responsible for social care. Smaller districts do not provide this service. Districts have also benefitted from higher business rates income generally. Frequently having conversations with government that these grants are not funding priority services or they do not always cover all the costs. Time consuming to bid for these things. Match funding is now not really possible due to lack of funds.

Q – What is the council doing about the large capital programme. What are we doing to put accountability on the programme, gateway reviews for some of the bigger schemes. Uncertainty around interest rates and inflation. Can we borrow better/cheaper?

A – We constantly report against Capital programme. Risk items are the ones that are unfunded. Daily review of Treasury Management and use advisors to get best investments via brokers. We are usually doing very short-term borrowing at low rates. But now interest rates are higher we are more exposed as we don’t have fixed borrowing (same as most other councils). Need as much scrutiny on capital spend as we have on revenue spending. The results don’t show up as easily as they are over a longer period. Inflation on construction costs have risen sharply. We need to restrict access to risk pots.

Q – What is happening with Bright Ideas submissions?

A – Responses are being gathered and allocated out to relevant Heads of Service for a response. The Comms team are looking at how to publish responses.

Q – Large figures can be overwhelming for people to understand. Budget managers only manage smaller budgets so difficult to know how to contribute. Would be good to see inclusion in service plan template – how can services avoid growth/generate income/make savings. That would be a good place to capture ideas.

A – It's about empowerment and personal responsibility. Don't always need permission to just do things that will make a difference however small. Helps to set the culture and value that nothing is wasted and delaying spending can make a difference.

Q – Have we got a target response rate for public consultation?

A – We never set a target. We've had almost 1,000 responses so far. We received 2,000 last year in total. CWAC conducted their budget consultation which lasted 2 months and only got 74 responses. It's not a high number out of residents for us but it's a meaningful response to enable members to get a feel for sentiment towards proposals. We would encourage all to respond to the survey.

Cheshire East Business Forum 24/01/2024

Q – When does the consultation end?

A – 28th January 2024. Elected members won't vote on budget until 27th February and representation through ward members can be made any time up to then.

Q – Going back a few years, we used to do budget consultation meetings. Will they be reintroduced to give more time?

A – We much prefer to tap into your meeting structure and present to those sessions. The consultation period used to be quite lengthy, but we didn't used to get as many responses as we do now. Last year we got an increased response over a shorter period of time. In future we aim to get back to having longer budget engagements with key stakeholders.

Manager Share and Support Session 2 25/01/2024

All questions were asked through Teams chat during the meeting, and answered by the meeting host.

Q – Have we seen a notable decline in Council Tax receipts due to the cost of living?

A – We are still hitting 99% collection rate over two years. The team are good at pointing to support or managing payments over a longer period. The Council Tax

Support scheme is more generous after being changed a couple of years ago which helps.

Q – Appreciate that difficult decisions need to be taken and the consultation items do not close the gap. On the further measures suggestions – “Review of Arts and Culture”. The team knew nothing about it until filling in the survey. Goes against consultation with staff/working together? Don’t know where it came from and no comms were issued. What does review mean? What is the scope/timescale? This sits outside the process of putting forward business cases? It also prompted partners to question the funding we provide and if it will cease. This should not have been named in a public document without engagement first.

A – This is why this proposal is at the end without a value. Every service could be on the list and reviewed. Suggestions come from members and officers. Review just means looking at every way to reduce the net expenditure on a particular service. The item would then be subject to a business case if it was to proceed and consultation with partners would then take place. Understand the comments and upset and will talk to senior management.

Q – HS2: We are not the only council affected I’m sure. Are we joining with others to lobby the government about getting monies back? What is the likelihood of compensation? Will it show in our accounts this year?

A – Essentially if the government give us compensation for our speculative spend on HS2 then it could lead to others wanting the same compensation. It is difficult for them to give us the money back but they appreciate the situation. Multiple government departments would have to agree. The Department for Transport have said they will put money into other schemes but that doesn’t help if they are new schemes that we haven’t already got in our budget, won’t save us any money. Most of our letters to government are unanswered so far so no decision made yet. We are fairly unique in terms of being actually part of the project and incurring costs. Yes, likely to appear in our accounts this year.

Q – Corporate Plan: We have been going out to consult on the new priorities. are they different priorities to what is in the budget consultation? How does that work in terms of affordability vs what people want? Residents want short term fixes rather than spending on longer term investments.

A – It is possible there will be a conflict of what we can afford vs what the residents want to happen. The financial position has developed much more dramatically over the past 3 months. We wouldn’t have known things were going to be quite so severe when we started the Corporate Plan consultations. We will always try to align spending against priorities. Members will have to make final decisions on priorities and what we can afford. Transformation projects / productivity plans where there is a budget gap – we will run out of reserves if we don’t do a transformation programme.

So next year we will have to achieve all business cases alongside setting up new things that will help the council to look different to close the gap longer term. Under S114, if something is value for money then it should be able to carry on (even if it is not statutory).

Q – DSG grant: Do you think government will take a look and realise its every council that has an overspend (partly due to increased educational requirements). Funding is therefore out of date?

A – The government don't want to just give away taxpayers money. They want an awful lot of data to review the position before any money is given out. The longer they can delay a decision on funding to enable them to gather evidence the better for them. Government need to look at why some councils don't have a problem and others do. Probably will chip away rather than a wholesale bail out for all. Emergency measures may come forward to fix some councils that are particularly affected. They created the Safety Valve scheme to look at the situation.

Q – Integration work with Health and Social Care – All partners are exceeding budgets within health, there is just not enough funding. What is your view on pooled budgets?

A – Generally supportive. It gives joint accountability so everyone tries to reduce costs. It's a good thing from a professional point of view as everyone is working to the same goal/ambition. Problems come if priorities are not aligned. Councils cannot roll deficits over but others can so it could become complicated.

In The Know staff session 30/01/2024

Q – On the Centranet home page there is the deficit tracker. £12.0m currently but you mentioned £13m? As you are doing more scrutiny are you finding savings but more costs too and therefore that's why the figure is static?

A – £12.0m is against the £13m previously so it's coming down slowly. It is a dynamic position and constantly changing but moving in the right direction.

A – Many Local Authorities are suffering financially. We are responsible for statutory services and have to achieve value for money. S114 is issued if council believes it has committed an illegal act or planning to perform an illegal act. The S151 officer then has to issue a S114 notice to full council. A plan then has to be drawn up to get out of that position, whatever that is. Not being able to balance the budget with income or reserves means the budget is planning to be unbalanced which is illegal so would trigger a S114. Council would then need a plan to resolve. Central government want lengthy conversations to try to avoid these notices as they are not necessarily helpful. To be clear - It is not bankruptcy. Local Authorities cannot go

bankrupt. It also affects customers and suppliers confidence so please avoid using the term.

Q – What is likelihood of a S114?

A – We are currently estimating to cover shortfalls from reserves so not an illegal unbalance budget. But need to re look at what we are spending money on as we cannot keep funding from reserves and need to put money back in reserves. Need to review all services to make sufficient changes to how we work and manage within resources.

Q – Growing number of councils in same position not just Cheshire East. We're talking to central government re safety valve, business rates etc. We are a robust council and well managed. Do you think the government are really listening to you and others re our reputation and this situation isn't of our making? Are they working with us to resolve?

A – Different parts of public sector have different rules. Central government don't have the requirement to balance every year. NHS can also carry deficits over to next year. Don't have to annually balance, they just have to have a plan to get out of the deficit. Frequently civil servants don't understand the need to balance the budget every year. We can't borrow to pay for social care etc. Some of the partner relationships we have we need to educate more so they understand why we have to stop spending. We have had consultation responses from partner services. We do probably need to work more closely to pool budgets etc and come up with other ways of working.

Q – Liked the donuts slides. You mentioned new grant for new house building. When new houses are built, we still need to provide the services for the new residents. Predicted spending – does that include the increased number of residents?

A – We try as much as we can to include additional spend i.e. waste services for number of new homes. This can be calculated and factored in. It is not as easy in other areas, we cannot predict social care usage for example. So Council Tax income and New Homes Bonus grant may be more than services needed or may be less. Income received doesn't always cover the growth.

Q – What benchmarking do we do in terms of spend? Is it proportionate with other Local Authorities?

A – We benchmark with other statistically near neighbour councils. But we have to take into account we are different in some ways. We do benchmark well and some of our costs are lower. But our aging population means we are spending more in Adult Social Care for example. This isn't really addressed in current government funding levels as it is mainly based on deprivation statistics. We need the delayed national Fair Funding review to happen to help population/aging increases to be recognised.

Service managers can use data to help understand the detail in their own areas and assist the challenge of looking at all services we provide.

Town and Parish Council network 30/01/2024

Q – New properties create demand. Not all properties are the same so what affect does that have? Larger houses? Smaller estates? How does more social housing affect the position?

A – Houses bring in different levels of council tax. Band D is an “average”. Band H is double. Band A is two thirds of a band D for example. That’s an instant variation. One person households pay 75% for example. Waste costs are easier to identify – one bin per property so that can be predicted and will be universal. Harder to predict if the resident might need social care for example. Could maybe tell by age profile of the estate. But you couldn’t predict if social housing might have higher social care needs compared to other housing. Older persons might cost more with day care etc. Children with special needs in larger households etc. Overarching point – more net Council Tax comes from larger properties.

Q – Birmingham example: Unless we can get more grants in from government then the national picture is unsustainable. What is the position across the nation?

A – The term is S114. Many Local Authorities are suffering financially. We are responsible for statutory services and have to achieve value for money. S114 is issued if council believes it has committed an illegal act or planning to perform an illegal act. The S151 officer then has to issue a S114 notice to full council. A plan then has to be drawn up to get out of that position, whatever that is. Not being able to balance the budget with income or reserves means the budget is planning to be unbalanced which is illegal so would trigger a S114. Council would then need a plan to resolve. Central government want lengthy conversations to try to avoid these notices as they are not necessarily helpful. To be clear it is not bankruptcy. Local Authorities cannot go bankrupt. It also affects customers and supplier confidence so please avoid using the term. Different councils are closer/further away from that position. Local Government Association – maybe 1 in 5 in medium term (2-3 years). Government is very conscious that many councils accumulated a lot of reserves over recent years. Trying to make sure all councils are efficient and not just sat on reserves. But broad-brush approach doesn’t work for low reserve authorities like us. Secretary of State not changing mind on levels of funding for LA’s. Local Government Finance Settlement was set for 2 years so they are clear intentions. Inflation and interest rates having huge impact on Local Government. S114 would mean going down to statutory services and value for money only where appropriate.

Q – Last year there was £20m of unrecovered council tax. What steps are being taken to cover that? That could replace the deficit.

A – The Council Tax collection rate is around 99% over 2 years. The amount of money collected in total per annum is around £280m, so any shortfall is material in terms of value. We are at the top end of collection compared to other councils. We have good performance and efforts to collect, and the team is very highly rated. We don't stop collecting unless money is written off for various reasons e.g. death. Attachment orders even for very low sums. But still we do more – second or third placement companies to track people down wherever possible.

Q – In last year's budget, there was a proposal to close of Stanley Centre. Cost of consultation even though decision already made to close it at full council?

A – When we build a budget there is an element of risk in making assumptions. But if post budget setting full consultation changes that decision, then we would have to plug that gap with something else or reserves. Some items are subject to consultation even if approved through full Council. You can't assume no budget changes and can't assume it will definitely happen so it's a difficult position.

Q – The conservative group have put forward an alternative budget? One of the issues is the influence Tatton Park have on the budget.

A – Any Councillor can put forward proposals. Can't really comment on Tatton issue.

Q – Surprised given number of developments in Cheshire East so far that very little Council Tax has been raised from those properties? As soon as new developments are available for purchase, I would expect people to pay Council Tax. I think the income seems low from them.

A – Council Tax properties are charged based on banding projections from 1991. Council Tax is instant from the day the resident moves in. Even completion to a certain specification would prompt a bill to the developer as though they were occupied.

Q – One of our concerns is around road repairs in the area. Questioned new tarmac laid but then the roads not sealed. No direct feedback on why not as water egress would happen and damage the surface. Is the council monitoring and looking for value for money feedback on work carried out by contractors.

A – I can't comment on specifics on road surfaces, policies on what is required to be repaired in timeframes can vary the quality of the work. May not have time for the full repair. Material amount of contract negotiation goes on. Highways commissioned review of the quality of repair to check for improvements in repairs standard.

Q – We recognise the position. We are being brought in more significantly as being asked for more contributions to fill gaps in service levels. This is making it difficult. During next year can we discuss earlier what the likely issues are so we can plan. We have the same budget process, just smaller numbers. We need to talk to you

much earlier so we can help (larger towns specifically involved). You have £61m in earmarked reserves. That's quite a lot? How much is really committed and what is in scope to use?

A – Very good point and definitely need to look at earlier engagement. With Ear Marked Reserves we know we are going to spend about half this year, next year's deficit will take up another half so then after HS2 costs there won't be much left at all by the end of next year.

Q – Cheshire East Council owns quite a lot of assets. Assume you are looking at selling off assets?

A – A review is already happening through the estate rationalisation programme. We had 5 main offices: Cledford in Middlewich, Westfields in Sandbach, Municipal Buildings in Crewe, Delamere House in Crewe, and Macclesfield Town Hall. Rear offices on the Municipal Buildings are being repurposed as a technology information centre (privately owned). Cledford House is being relocated out. Corporate Policy Committee in November decided to close Westfields. So only 2 main offices left. Farms – question in consultation document asking opinion re. keep or disposal. Environment and Communities committee are looking at the future of the farms estates. It is worth money but also brings in financial returns. We need to look at the strategic purpose for every asset to justify holding each asset. Balance Sheet value of farms is c.£35m (but can't access in one go as tenanted). Estimated cost of Westfields project – £2m realised from repurpose of that asset, saving on asset per annum would be £0.5m. Sale would make one off income. Environment and Communities Committee will look at this.

Q – If the cost of Council Tax doesn't cover the cost of services would the council hold off on new developments?

A – This is no blocker to development. Development of new homes is linked to the local plan – numbers are assigned in that document. Needs to be addressed by fair funding review / business rates review to address what funding is linked to local taxation. Highly political to stall housing development as cost vs need of houses for people.

Q – Middlewich bypass: Latest figure for budget for the scheme is £102m? I am an engineer and built a few roads, I can't see how that scheme costs that much as construction costs should be around £50m. Land can't be costing that much. So what is it all being spent on. Are there any recoverable costs?

A – Costs won't be recoverable other than parcels of land for holding building equipment etc. Costs breakdown will all be available online. We will get some details.

Q – What is the current value of Cheshire East investments.

A – There are different ways to assess investments. Investment property must make a return/must be leased out, the value is around £25m (B&Q majority). Investments linked to loans/shares (e.g. Alderley Park) not material and some we couldn't sell as option to sell in future (£5m-10m). Cash balances that we temporarily invest. Cash flow that we don't just leave to sit there but will be spent on services so needs to be available (£40m on average).

Q – £20m of uncollected Council Tax. Has Cheshire East factored in the situation getting worse? Impact of news of potential S114 / services being reduced, a larger number of people may withhold if lower service levels.

A – No we haven't factored that in, we have very high collection rates. Even when we deferred payments during Covid, the money still came in. We need to avoid the term bankruptcy as Local Authorities cannot go bankrupt, we do not want suppliers to think they won't get paid.

Q – Auditors haven't signed off last few years accounts. Services in response to local taxpayers – don't think that's a good thing that they haven't been signed off.

A – Just a google of Cheshire East shows up a holding up of audit certificates due to investigations outstanding. The latest accounts are delayed due to national issues of assets and pension valuation / depreciation. This is a national issue, not a local issue. Last accounts is lack of audit capacity to meet the deadline of the accounts sign off. Again, this is a national issue. We are actually further ahead in that regard. A&GC have not identified any issues with our statements of accounts.

Q – Pupil premium. Is there going to be a cut and any chance free school meals will end?

A – Pupil premium is national funding within Dedicated Schools Grant. Uplifted with inflation and is passed on in full to schools. Free School Meals are funded by government and have not seen any intention about them being stopped. There is a proposal in budget consultation around reducing subsidy for paid school meals.

Q – The highways budget over last three years, how many times has it been reduced and by how much?

A – We would have to provide the figures. It is complicated by receiving capital funding, it is not all revenue funding. Will reply in writing.

Q – Maintaining adopted highway. Written to Edward Timpson. Maintenance in Cheshire East is broken due to lack of funding. Hard to legally maintain roads in parish rural areas. Maintenance is not there for repairs and safety funding. We have an insignificant parish budget to be able to contribute. Are you going to try to bring forward more budget for highways?

A – In current circumstances, one way to increase/maintain service is to charge users through carpark charges, lane rental schemes, stopping up orders for events for organisations that hold events etc. Second way is through more efficient use of money and use capital money to patch roads. All are being tried but lobbying government for fairer settlement is appropriate and funding formula recognises deprivation rather than road length for example. Government tends to give one off capital funding rather than recurring revenue money. We have received increased pothole money and government have committed to keeping that going. But need a bigger pie in terms of overall funding for highways.

Q – Could you tell us what consideration Cheshire East have given to using one of the options available to increase the level of Council Tax to raise the necessary gap in revenue and if rejected why?

A – We can go to referendum to ask the public if they want to go above referendum level. Public usually say no to Council Tax increases and the cost of running a referendum is about £700k and with a no answer that's very costly. Secretary of State can allow higher increase, and this has happened for those Local Authorities that are in a severe emergency situation.

Q – Are you subject to restrictions on use of capital receipts for capital expenditure? E.g. does sale of assets actually help with the operational budget challenges?

A – If we sell farms estate for example, capital receipts can't be used for day to day spend. Borrowing/selling assets is long term money so restrictions on capital receipts. But they can fund one off costs of transformation.

Q – How can we still respond to the consultation given it has closed and up to what date please?

A – You can feed back through all Councillors right up to council meeting on 27th February 2024.

Appendix 2 – Public comment, email and letter feedback

In total 44 public comments, emails and letters were received as part of this consultation, and this included 25 emails, 15 public comments and 4 letters.

The comments made in the public comments, emails and letters are summarised in the table below, with the 9 most detailed responses and those received on behalf of organisations published further down.

Summary of content	No. of comments
Opposition to proposal EC3: Reduce costs of waste disposal and number of HWRCs	13
Opposition to proposal EC4: Fund libraries in a different way	4
Opposition to proposal HT2: Introduce annual increases to car parking charges	3
Opposition to proposal CP3: Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible.	2
Opposition to proposal EC7: Increase garden waste charges to recover costs	1
Opposition to proposal HT1: Highway maintenance savings. States the roads are currently in a very bad state as it is.	1
Opposition to the proposal EC6: Reduce revenue impact of carbon reduction capital schemes	1
Comments on proposal EC4: Fund libraries in a different way. Suggests the council looks at alternative delivery models, such as those used by Derbyshire council, Staffordshire council, Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust. Suggests the council refers to the governments library good practice toolkit. Suggests making the service more efficient by reducing management and reviewing pay scales.	1
Alternative money saving ideas including: Selling the B&Q land in Crewe; Cancelling the Poynton Pool project; Reducing council employee wages; Reducing the number of Directors and Heads of Service; Increasing Council Tax by more than 4.99%; Improving council efficiency; Liaising with central government for more funding; Increasing charges for services; review the use of outside contractors;	11
Improve council efficiency, stop wasting money. Better scrutiny of council finances is needed. Find more savings from the Children and Families budget.	4
Concerns about the consultation including: Not enough information provided to give a response; feels proposals could be made clearer; feels the council needs to listen to feedback more.	3
Conduct a staffing review and skills audit. The council must take care when reducing jobs, ensuring vital skills are not lost.	2

Abolish Cheshire East Council, it is not fit for purpose, bring back smaller local councils for local people.	1
Alleged benefits fraud among parents of school children who claim free school meals.	1
Comments on the Economy and Growth Committee statement that "subsidy reductions to Tatton Park and the Visitor Centre operating model are already set to deliver savings for 2024/25 of £0.07m". States the National Trust is keen to work alongside CEC to ensure Tatton's finances are sustainable. Will continue to work with CEC to enable new forms of investment and revenue where possible.	1
Concerns around HS2 and the impacts on council finances	1
Everybody Health and Leisure Chief Executive comments on the budget consultation process and proposals, and how they clash with the recent Strategic Leisure review Consultation. Lists numerous queries regarding proposal EC2: Strategic Leisure Review (Stage 2), including that the savings target included for 2024 to 2025 is unachievable by April 2024. Wishes to proactively help find solutions, however, increasingly concerned about the short term changes being proposed. States it imperative that the council clarifies the position as soon as possible so that EHL can set its own budget and make changes as required as soon as possible.	1
General opposition to cuts	1
Improve waste collection services.	1
Market supplier comments regarding Supported Living Provider Fees/Rates for 2024/25 - Suggests there is a significant risk of market failure and contract hand-back in the Supported Living sector.	1
Opposed to ever increasing Council Taxes.	1
Rent out assets rather than selling them, to generate more long term income.	1
The Chief Executive and senior staff are paid too much.	1
The council delivers services very badly	1
The council is facing difficult decisions due to government cuts.	1
The council must think longer term, and not short term.	1
The council needs to come out of the Cheshire Pension Fund (CPF).	1
We're all in this together and need to make difficult decisions based on the information provided.	1

Published response #1

From: Anonymous respondent

Date received: 13 January 2024

Format: Email

Summary of content: Extremely detailed consultation response. Concerns about the consultation: Feels the council needs to listen to feedback more. Suggests the

council needs to come out of the Cheshire Pension Fund (CPF). Suggests a staffing review is conducted, and that staff numbers must be reduced carefully. Suggests there needs to be better scrutiny of council finances. Suggests renting out assets rather than selling them, to generate more long-term income. Suggests finding saving from the Children and Families budget. Suggests a review the use of outside contractors. Suggests improving waste collection services. Opposed to ever increasing Council Tax. Suggests improving council efficiency. Suggests the council must think longer term, and not short term.

Full content:

Dear Sir/Madam,

With regard to the above consultation. I started to respond to the online survey but after the first page found that there wasn't enough information to be able to make observations/comments in order to tick the "support, Oppose, Not Sure radials" and have therefore set out my thoughts below.

Employer Pension Contributions

Firstly, you need to come out of the Cheshire Pension Fund (CPF). Employer contributions in the private sector are 3%. The CPF is currently 21.8%. This is the very first thing you need to be looking at. Residents are being asked to pay for services they are not getting whilst staff are getting very good pensions. I'm sure there will be a lot of resistance, but this is an overly generous pension contribution which needs drastically reducing.

Staffing Levels

Undertaking a review of staffing levels to better understand who is required to carry out what tasks. You are closing down services left right and centre but so therefore staffing levels (and associated costs should be reduced).

Financial Accounts

You don't appear to have submitted an audited set of accounts for 2 years! If this were a private company you would be in serious trouble.

I would suggest an independent advisor is brought in to review your accounts and offer suggestions as to what can be done for less whilst retaining the services for residents.

You also need to tell residents what your actual debt levels are. You mention having a balanced budget. A balanced budget means to most people, retaining the services and having the costs accounted for. Whereas in your eyes a balanced budget

appears to mean to increase costs for everything and from recent “consultations” remove facilities from the north and spend it on the south.

I'm also not sure how, when HS2 hasn't been coming to the area, you feel fit to blame the Government for spending £11m? What have you spent this on especially as it wasn't even due to be extended here for another 10 years?

There needs to be better scrutiny of finances by members.

Assets

You can only sell Westfields once. If you own it, why don't you rent it out, thus securing an income in perpetuity?

Alternatively, why don't you look at converting it into accommodation? You mention pressures on housing from asylum seekers, surely this would prove more financially viable over the longer term.

Children & Families

If the pressures are on Children and Families budget, then you need to understand if there are ways to save monies that way. For example, are you paying increased costs for sending pupils out of area? If so, you should be looking at longer term solutions and thinking strategically such as building SEN schools within CE. Whilst you may be upfront costs in building a new school there are monies available from the DfE. Unfortunately, the lack of information given in this section of the consultation meant I couldn't determine how the proposed savings were going to be made or who would be impacted.

Outside Contractors

You need to review your contracts with sub-contractors, in particular roads maintenance. The roads are an absolute disgrace in this county. You report potholes and they never seem to be filled in. When they are, they are to such a poor standard that they degrade almost instantly resulting in another repair. This means that the contractor is being paid twice for the same job and costing residents more money. If it was done properly the first time round they wouldn't be paid twice.

Costs for works carried out by your contractors are above the market rate (as a Town Councillor and Quantity Surveyor I have found this when we have had to seek costs for such things as installing a bike stand). These need to be reviewed. Where you have internal contractors such as ANSA are you sure that these costs are competitive? Are you paying a dividend or premium to use them?

Refuse Services

You have recently introduced (despite overwhelming opposition from residents) a green bin tax. Aside from this I found out that the north of the borough have three bins (Black, Silver & Green) whereas a colleague in Nantwich has 4 with two separate bins for paper and bottles/tins. Surely this is more expensive to collect and further, why are there different systems within the same county?

Why don't you look at how often bins are collected. For example, remove the green bin tax and collect the green and black bins once a month removing the green bin collection from say November to February. The grey bin is always full but the green and black could last a month between collections.

Closing down waste disposal sites will result in more fly tipping. Aside from the impact on the environment from more people having to drive greater distances, I would suggest that this will cost more than you save.

Council Tax Increases

Council tax appears to constantly increase but services are reduced or removed. I cannot support an increase in the council tax without the Council undergoing a financial audit. With all the new housing built comes more council tax. Where is this going? I would also reduce council tax support back to pre-covid levels.

Efficiency

Be more efficient. In the private sector decisions are made fairly quickly. You (like most government organisations) spend a lot of time and resources on making decisions which could have been made and actioned a lot quicker.

For example, this is yet another consultation on how we think you can do things. Aside from the time taken for residents to respond, it takes staff time to prepare and review these. The questions in this survey have already been answered in other consultations. Very inefficient!

Listen

You hold these costly consultations and then appear to ignore the results. Don't!

In Poynton you are proposing the works to Poynton Pool which will cost millions. The works in the opinion of a number of experts are not required to the extent proposed. Listen to people and explore alternative solutions which may be more cost effective and less damaging to the environment. By doing so you may be able to make a saving here.

Finally, don't think short term. Think strategically and long term. Work with partners such as the NHS. Your recent leisure centre consultation is a prime example of this. You are looking at savings, whilst not looking at the longer-term picture. Closing

down services will remove facilities for the old and young to attend, add to the obesity crisis and add to strain on the NHS resulting in more monies needing to be spent on tackling health issues later.

These are just some of the suggestions but without detailed accounts and understanding how various departments operate it is difficult to come up with other suggestions.

Kind Regards

Published response #2

From: Steve Nichols (Rossendale Trust), Ian Pritchard (Alternative Futures Group), and Jeff Dawson FIC (1st Enable Ltd)

Date received: 12 January 2024

Format: PDF letter

Summary of content: Detailed budget consultation response regarding Supported Living Provider Fees/Rates for 2024/25. Suggests there is a significant risk of market failure and contract hand-back in the Supported Living sector.

Full content:

To:
Helen Charlesworth-May (Executive Director Adults, Health & Integration)
Councillor Jill Rhodes (Chair Adults & Health Committee)

Cheshire East Council
 Westfields c/o Municipal Buildings
 Earle Street
 Crewe
 CW1 2BJ

12th January 2024

Sent by email

Cheshire East - Supported Living Provider Fees/Rates for 2024/25

Dear Helen and Jill,

We write to you as a united and majority group of Supported Living Providers for Cheshire East Council. Together, we support a significant share of Cheshire East vulnerable residents with a learning disability or chronic mental health condition that are supported in their own tenancies within the locality.

In preparation, of the Council setting Supported Living provider rates for 2024/25 we would like to set out our combined position, expectations and offer of support, that will enable providers to continue to provide high quality, safe, and person-centred services to vulnerable residents in Cheshire East for the long term.

With provider costs further increasing this year due to a 10% increase in both Real Living Wage and National Living Wage, high levels of inflation throughout the year, and, persisting workforce challenges, we are concerned with the viability of our sector and the quality of provision of Supported Living services for the vulnerable residents of Cheshire East.

We highlight these significant risks to you in preparation of the Council setting its budgets and social care provider fees for 2024/25. This letter should form part of any provider consultation and feedback process and we would kindly request that its content is openly shared and discussed with all members of the Council so that they are fully aware of the seriousness of these issues when decision-making.

We believe there is a significant risk of market failure and contract hand-back in the Supported Living sector should the Council continue with a strategy of persistent provider under-funding for this forthcoming year.

1. Council Financial Situation

We are fully aware of the financial and Government funding challenges that Cheshire East Council is currently facing and we acknowledge this makes funding of statutory social care services incredibly difficult.

We note that in 2023/24 the Council received £19.4m as part of your social care grant determination and £8.7m from the Better Care Fund to support (in part) ensuring the provider market was supported. The Council also received a further £6.8m in Market Sustainability and Improvement funding to improve provider rates and workforce retention. The Council used the majority of these funds to support provider funding improvements in Elderly Care services. Legacy under-funding in other areas of social care was not addressed (e.g. Supported Living).

We are aware that the Councils proposed social care grant funding for 2024/25 is likely to be in the region of £22.6, an increase of £3.2m (16.5%), noting equalisation requirements. We are also aware that the Government has committed to funding further increases in the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund and the Workforce component fund. Previously the funding received by Cheshire East has been disproportionately spent to address market sustainability and workforce retention issues in the Elderly care sector. We strongly believe the time is now for the Council to use a higher proportion of these funds to address the unfairness, instability and risk of the Disability Supported Living sector. Funding increases are urgently required to address legacy underfunding of providers and enable market and workforce equity with that paid for Elderly Care home and Domiciliary care services.

2. Supported Living Fees

It is a matter of record that Cheshire East has been the lowest and poorest payer of Supported Living fees amongst all of its North West and ICB comparators for over 10 years. In the last 5 years the Council has twice provided an unacceptable 0% (nil) annual uplift in fees for Supported Living providers despite significant rises in National Living Wage (NLW) costs and inflation for providers.

This has resulted in a significant legacy problem in Cheshire East with Supported Living fees being the lowest in the region and significantly below a sustainable market level for providers. All Cheshire East Supported Living providers are in some form subsidising their services from their reserves, almost all organisations are making an operating loss.

For 2023/24, the Councils Supported Living day fee of £17.50 per hour is £1.86 (10.5%) behind that of Cheshire West and Chester Council, and £2.10 (12%) behind Wirral, to provide just two local examples. Furthermore, your Waking Night rate of £10.27 per hour does not even cover the National Living Wage pay rate for a care worker of £10.42 per hour, excluding employer on-costs, provider overhead costs and a return on operations. Your 9 hour Sleep-in rate of £85.06 is also significantly below market rates and thus does not attract care workers to provide this vital night time service.

The Councils strategy and fee position is therefore extremely destabilising of the provider market, highly unethical and unreasonable in its application, and, in our view a breach of the spirit, principles and various statutory terms of the Care Act (2014).

3. Fair Cost of Care

We are aware as providers that in 2021/22 the Council completed a Fair cost of Care exercise for Care Home and Domiciliary Care Services. Alongside this the Council also reviewed Supported Living provider data, however, a fair cost of care exercise for Supported Living fees was never published. We would welcome the Council sharing this with providers.

We note that following the Fair Cost of Care exercise the Council provided significant uplifts to both Care Home and Domiciliary Care service fees during 2023/24, whereas Supported Living fees received a much lower uplift, and from a much lower legacy fee base.

Domiciliary Care currently has rates of £22.50 per hour (some as high as £24.50 per hour). Compare this to Supported Living at £17.50 per hour in the day and £10.27 per hour at night. There are minimal differences in the activity/costs of provision of Domiciliary and Supported Living services, the only difference being that of travel time and travel expenses. According to the Councils fair cost of care data, travel time and expenses in Domiciliary Care accounts for only £1.89 of the total fee cost. This would mean that an equivalent rate for

Supported Living should be at least (£22.50-£1.89) £20.61. This means a current shortfall of (£20.61-£17.50) £3.11 per hour in the Supported Living hourly rate. **This outlines the legacy shortfall.**

4. Two-tier Market Funding Risks

In the Councils Market Sustainability plan, under the section relating to "Wider impact on services outside of scope" your plan states the following risks to the market; *"The impact of uplifting rates for Domiciliary care to the cost of care has implications for other types of care which sit outside the scope of the Market Sustainability Plan such as Direct Payments, Complex Care, Supported Living and Rapid Response... fee changes in one area can have a direct impact on the other due to linkages in the recruitment market"*.

We must point out that this identified risk has been realised for providers of Supported Living, with significant attraction and retention issues in all our workforces. As a Supported Living provider group we are all reporting higher (than pre-pandemic) vacancy rates and agency usage. A key driver for this is that Care Home and Domiciliary providers are able to offer improved pay and contractual terms to workers due to their improved funding levels. Care worker pay in Care Homes and Domiciliary care is typically at Real Living Wage levels (£10.90/£11 per hour 2023/24) as opposed to Supported Living services at National Living Wage levels (£10.42 per hour 2023/24).

The result of this is to unfairly unbalance and destabilise the provider market as care workers from National Living Wage paying Supported Living providers leave and move to that of (higher) Real Living Wage paying Care homes and Domiciliary care providers. The Council in its actions has effectively destabilised the local social care market and effectively created a two tier care workforce in Cheshire East. Care workers in Supported Living feel highly under-valued by the Council which is why we see high levels of increased workforce churn and higher vacancy rates. The ultimate victims of this strategy are the people supported who suffer with the quality, continuity and familiarity of care issues of an underfunded, underpaid and under-valued workforce.

The attraction and retention of care workers to Cheshire East Supported Living services at **National Living Wage levels** remains an extremely difficult and almost impossible task.

5. Subsidisation, Inequality and Discriminatory Risks

In order to maintain safe and effective levels of care and support, many Supported Living providers are having to subsidise the Council fees in order to pay Real Living Wage to attract and retain experienced care workers. This is not a sustainable situation as providers should not be using their own funds to subsidising public services. It is also likely, for Charities, to be a breach of the Charities Act (2022) to openly subsidise public statutory services.

Furthermore, the two tier market also creates a significant discriminatory risk for the Council as providers of Supported Living (typically supporting people with a Learning Disability or chronic Mental Health condition) are unable to provide the workforce continuity, high quality and safe services that Care Homes and Domiciliary Care (typically supporting Elderly people) now can. We would strongly advise the Council to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment and legal advice to identify any potential risks in relation to this policy/strategy.

The Council are reminded of their duties under the Care Act (2014) guidance and potential breaches of the Equality Act by creating a two tier, discriminatory market. Section 4.25 – *"When arranging services themselves, local authorities must ensure their commissioning practices and the services delivered on their behalf comply with the requirements of the*

Equality Act 2010, and do not discriminate against people with protected characteristics; this should include monitoring delivery against the requirements of that Act."

6. Care Act (2014)

We note the Councils comments in your Market Sustainability Plan Introduction as follows:
"The Council acknowledges its duties under the Care Act 2014. However, these cannot be viewed in isolation from other pressures on local authority resources, the duty on all Councils to deliver a balanced budget and the duty to obtain value for money as referenced in sections 4.27, 4.60 and 4.61 of the Care and support statutory guidance".

Whilst recognising the challenges of overall Council budgeting and spending, we must point out the other relevant section of the Care Act (2014) Care and Support Statutory Guidance which have been ignored and not quoted in the Market Sustainability Plan, namely:

4.30 When commissioning services, local authorities should assure themselves and have evidence that service providers deliver services through staff remunerated so as to retain an effective workforce. Remuneration must be at least sufficient to comply with the national minimum wage legislation for hourly pay or equivalent salary.

4.31 When commissioning services, local authorities should assure themselves and have evidence that contract terms, conditions and fee levels for care and support services are appropriate to provide the delivery of the agreed care packages with agreed quality of care. This should support and promote the wellbeing of people who receive care and support, and allow for the service provider ability to meet statutory obligations to pay at least the national minimum wage and provide effective training and development of staff. It should also allow retention of staff commensurate with delivering services to the agreed quality, and encourage innovation and improvement. Local authorities should have regard to guidance on minimum fee levels necessary to provide this assurance, taking account of the local economic environment. This assurance should understand that reasonable fee levels allow for a reasonable rate of return by independent providers that is sufficient to allow the overall pool of efficient providers to remain sustainable in the long term.

4.35 Local authorities should consider the impact of their own activities on the market as a whole, in particular the potential impact of their commissioning and re-commissioning decisions... Local authorities must not undertake any actions which may threaten the sustainability of the market as a whole, that is, the pool of providers able to deliver services of an appropriate quality, for example, by setting fee levels below an amount which is not sustainable for providers in the long-term.

We believe that the above statutory guidance is being ignored in respects of the Councils policy and practices towards the Supported Living sector, favouring that of achieving the Councils wider financial goals. We must point out that the Councils Supported Living fees are **not even sustainable to pay National Living Wage**. Moreover, the market dynamics in Cheshire East require providers to pay Real Living Wage in order to retain an effective workforce and the delivery of safe, high quality and effective care.

7. A Sustainable Supported Living Provider Rate for 2024/25

As set out in section 5 of the Care Act 2014, *"Local authorities have a duty to promote the efficient and effective operation of a market in services for meeting care and support needs, with a view to ensuring services are diverse, sustainable, and high quality for the local population".*

To achieve this for Supported Living, we believe a provider rate equivalent to that of the current Domiciliary Care (minus travel time/costs) should be paid.

For 2023/24 this would be at least £20.61 per hour for both daytime and night-time support (we currently receive £17.50 day/£10.27 night). For 2024/25 an anticipated 10% rate increase to at least £22.73 per hour to reflect the 10% increase in Real Living Wage costs (from £10.90 to £12.00).

This would enable providers to pay care workers in Supported Living services the Real Living Wage thus providing a level playing field and equitable social care market for workforce pay, attraction and retention.

8. Importance of Real Living Wage

The above issues and risk presented provide an unquestionable case for Cheshire East paying Supported Living provider fees that supports payment of at least the Real Living Wage (£12.00 per hour 2024/25) for care workers.

In your own Medium Term Financial Strategy you quote data collected by you in 2022/23 as follows – *"Pay information submitted by providers indicates that hourly rates of pay for care workers have risen above this to a range of £11.04 per hour to £13.77 per hour as they seek to compete with other sectors including retail and hospitality"*.

This data cannot be continually ignored. The Council must give full consideration for ALL care workers in Cheshire East to be paid at least the Real Living Wage in 2024/25 of £12.00 per hour, not least in recognition and acknowledgement for the amazing work they do for vulnerable residents of Cheshire East.

The ongoing cost of living crisis has also hit all care workers hard and many surviving only on National Living Wage (or less) have found themselves in dire situations of hardship and poverty. Cheshire East have a duty of care to ALL their care workers as much as they do to their vulnerable residents. Care workers make up a significant proportion of the working economy in Cheshire East as well as being significant drivers of wider social health determinants across the borough.

9. Our Offer of Support and Collaboration

As a significant group of Supported Living providers in Cheshire East we remain fully open and willing to work strategically with the Council to identify areas for service improvement, service re-modelling, and cost reduction that could support future increased funding for providers. We understand that overall funding must be sustainable and affordable for the Council against a backdrop of increasing demand.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with your team and plan strategically, together, to meet our joint challenges for a more sustainable future. Collaboration is the only viable solution for such challenges and must start with a stable provider market.

10. Summary

In this letter, we have outlined our combined provider position and view on the current status of Supported Living funding in Cheshire East. Our collective view is that of a local sector in funding crisis and significant risk of contract hand back.

We have also outlined the significant operational challenge we face as providers and the serious risks to our provision resulting from legacy and continued underfunding, plus the recent policy, strategy and practice in creating a two tier, discriminatory, funding market.

We unequivocally state to you that the Supported Living provider market in Cheshire East is not sustainable on the current fees and funding being provided. Cheshire East provider rates are not sufficient to provide high quality, safe and person-centred support. Nor are they even remotely comparable with fees paid by other neighbouring Local Authorities in the region.

Providers are currently subsidising Cheshire East Supported Living services by many millions of pounds annually in order to protect their services, maintain continuity of care to people supported, and attract and retain a highly-valued workforce. This is wholly unacceptable and highly unethical for you to expect us to do this.

In this letter, we have outlined our expectations as to what we believe is a fair, sustainable and appropriate provider rate for Supported Living. More detailed cost model information can be provided to support this, however, we believe the Council already know the appropriate rate from your fair cost of care exercise. Similarly, other Local Authorities cannot be wrong in their significantly higher rates of provider funding.

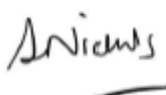
Costs of service provision have increased significantly this year already and will again further by at least 10% on 1st April 2024 when the National Living Wage increases. Our expectation and polite request is that the Council seeks to address the under-funding and legacy rate issue once and for all and establish for 2024/25 a fully-funded Supported Living provider rate of at least £22.73 per hour. A sustainable provider rate that allows payment of the Real Living Wage to our (and your) dedicated care workers.

Failure to address the underfunding issues in 2024/25 is likely to have a catastrophic impact on Supported Living provider market and risk large-scale contract hand-back in Cheshire East. Contract hand-back is extremely impactful on vulnerable adults and their families and is an outcome we wish to seek to avoid.

As a group of providers we kindly request to meet with you face to face to discuss and resolve the funding issues for 2024/25. We are also open to working collaboratively and strategically with you to create a mid to long-term sustainability plan for the sector. We believe working together will provide the best long-term benefit for the Council, your local care workers, and the residents we support on your behalf.

We look forward to hearing from you with some potential meeting dates in January.

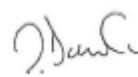
Yours sincerely,



Steve Nichols
CEO
Rossendale Trust




Ian Pritchard
CEO
Alternative Futures Group

Jeff Dawson FIC
Managing Director
1st Enable Ltd



Published response #3

From: Jack Price-Harbach, Liberal Democrat Parliamentary candidate for Mid-Cheshire

Date received: 20 January 2024

Format: PDF letter

Summary of content: Opposition to the closure of Middlewich Household Waste and Recycling Centre (proposal EC3). Opposition to an increase in garden waste costs (proposal EC7). Opposition to proposed highways maintenance savings (proposal HT1). Concerns around proposals CF1 and CF4. Support for proposals CF3, CF5 and CF7.

Full content:



Jack Price-Harbach For Mid Cheshire

jack4midcheshire@gmail.com | jackpriceharbach.co.uk

Research and Consultation
Cheshire East Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Delivered via e-mail

Saturday, 20th January 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Budget Consultation for 2024-2025

I am not a resident of Cheshire East Council, however, I am writing in my capacity as the Liberal Democrats Parliamentary Candidate for the Mid Cheshire General Election constituency, which includes Middlewich within its boundaries.

I am writing to raise my concerns regarding the following proposals:

Proposal EC3: Reduce costs of waste disposal and number of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC)

I understand that this proposal would result in the closure of the Middlewich Recycling Centre. This would not only be of great inconvenience to my constituents, but I fear that the consequences of this decision would impact on the £750,000 you plan to save as part of your budget.

Firstly, my constituents may be less motivated to sort their waste into recyclables and non recyclables due to the inconvenience of having to travel further distances to dispose of excess waste.

Secondly, reducing your overall number of recycling centres across the country will likely see an increase in fly tipping. Obviously, I do not support such egregious offending due to the negative impact it has on local communities, but more instances of fly tipping will also have an adverse impact on your annual budget.

Proposal EC7: Increase garden waste charges to recover costs

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Jack Price-Harbach For Mid Cheshire

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I have opposed similar measures in my resident council of Cheshire West & Chester, where my constituents will have a 20% hike on the cost of their Green Bin collections imposed on them this year. Families that are struggling financially are having to make difficult choices to balance their own budgets and I anticipate that green bin collections may not be high on their list of priorities. Again, my concerns are the same with regards to constituents being motivated to do their bit and recycle waste which can be repurposed into green energy solutions.

I have also noticed that as part of this consultation, you are asking residents if they would support moving to 3 weekly bin collections. I would like to think that most residents would oppose such measures and if that is the case, I would urge the council to respect their wishes. Such a move would again have a negative environmental impact and lead to a potential increase in fly tipping.

Proposal HT1: Highway maintenance savings

I have acknowledged that the council plans to achieve a saving of £750,000 by reducing service levels. I and many of my constituents have had to endure long delays between potholes being reported and roads being resurfaced across all of Cheshire. It is a common bug bear for us all and one which carries not only an increased risk of road traffic accidents and breakdowns, but also a potential increase in compensation payments to impacted drivers. I fear that this medium term reduction in operational costs could prove to be more costly in the long term.

Children's & Families Services Proposals

Finally, I also wish to express my concerns with regards to CF1 and CF4, which concern provisions made available to children with disabilities and young adults with special educational needs. As they are discretionary in nature, I fear that young people who once benefited from these provisions, would see a substantial detriment to their social mobility if said benefits are withdrawn.

However, in principle, I do agree with proposals CF3, CF5 and CF7 with regards to Children's and Families services. I am aware of the huge impact that statutory spending increases have on local councils. Any measures that avoid unnecessary repetition or duplication, properly functioning and integrated shared services and less dependence on the private sector would receive my support, provided that there is no negligible impact on the provisions of Children's & Families Services.



jack4midcheshire |



@JPH4MidCheshire |



jackpriceharbach |



@jack4midcheshire



Published response #4

From: Disley Parish Council

Date received: 21 January 2024

Format: Email

Summary of content: Concerns about the consultation process, feels proposals could be made clearer. Opposition to a reduction in election costs and increase in charges where possible (proposal CP3). States Disley Parish Council would be unable to cover such costs. Opposition to the closure of Bollington and Poynton Household waste and recycling Centres (proposal EC3). Concern re. the proposal to fund libraries differently (proposal EC4) – States the parish council would be unable to contribute more to the running of the local library. Opposition to the proposal re. increasing car parking charges (proposal HT2).

Full content:

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing on behalf of Disley Parish Council regarding the Cheshire East Council (CEC) Budget Consultation. We appreciate the opportunity to provide our input and trust that our response will be carefully considered.

Before delving into specific aspects of the consultation, we would like to express concerns about the consultation process itself. Firstly, the proposed changes appear considerably more drastic than previous CEC budget proposals, and the allocated time for response does not seem proportionate to the gravity of the changes. It is likely that the Council has been aware of the necessity for these proposals for some time, given the nature of the topic.

Secondly, we believe that the impact of the proposals should be made clearer to respondents. For instance, Proposal EC3 mentions an emergency reduction of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) to four core sites (Alsager, Crewe, Knutsford, and Macclesfield), but it does not explicitly specify the fate of our local site in Poynton – whether it will close partially, fully, or permanently.

Thirdly, several proposals seem to overlap with ongoing or recently concluded consultations, such as car parking charges, libraries, HWRCs, and green bin charges. We feel that consistent and coherent decision-making is crucial, as perpetual changes undermine the integrity of the consultation process with residents.

Now turning to specific proposals, we have reservations about the following:

Proposal CP3: Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible. Ensure full cost recovery for all elections carried out by the council on behalf of other organisations, including charging Parishes for all Parish-related election costs.

Parish Council elections held concurrently with Cheshire East or national elections are highly efficient and should be encouraged. It is challenging to envision how costs could be fairly allocated to the Parish Council, given its subordinate status to

Cheshire East and Parliamentary elections. Disley Parish Council lacks the budgetary provisions to cover such costs.

Proposal EC3: Reduce costs of waste disposal and the number of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC). Mitigate the impact of contract inflation and tonnage growth through new or revised contracts and a review of commissioner contract risk budgets. Emergency reduction of Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) to four core sites at Alsager, Crewe, Knutsford, and Macclesfield from 1 April 2024.

As previously mentioned, the proposal implies potential closures of Poynton and Bollington sites, necessitating Disley and Newtown residents to endure a one-hour/32-mile round trip to Macclesfield. We feel this is particularly punitive to our residents. Cheshire East Council should be concerned about the increase in emissions, and inevitable rises in fly-tipping and pollution and fire risk caused by an increase in on site incineration. Disley already has an Air Quality Management Area and is at the far reaches of the Cheshire Fire Service provision.

Proposal EC4: Fund libraries differently. Seek alternative funding to maintain either current or a reduced level of service delivery, including partnership working with Town and Parish Councils to secure contributions towards safeguarding service provision in their local area.

This proposal should be considered on a case by case basis. A very recent consultation highlighted residents views regarding the importance of the library within the Community Hub in Disley and the Health & Wellbeing benefits. The outcome was to maintain the library service in Disley. CEC officers will be aware that the Community Centre, the asset, was transferred to DPC to avoid the closure of the Centre and library. DPC has worked hard to ensure that the building is run efficiently and the formation of the community hub has been extremely successful and important to residents of all ages. This is an example of an asset that the parish council in Disley has already taken over by significantly raising the parish precept. Further demands on the parish budget at this time would not be affordable or sustainable.

Proposal HT2: Introduce annual increases to car parking charges.

Cheshire East Car Parks in Disley are currently free. We have provided detailed reasons for advocating the continuation of this arrangement.

Common across many of the proposals are an inference that Parish and Town councils may absorb costs relating to services currently funded by Cheshire East. Its should be stressed that the Parish precept for 2024/25 has already been agreed. It is therefor too late to ask or expect Disley Parish Council to contribute to Cheshire East funding shortfall in the 2024/25 year. It should further be noted that as part of its

24/25 budget Disley Parish Council has already taken on costs related to the maintenance of several green spaces, previously managed by Cheshire East.

Finally, we would like to draw attention to the overall impact on rural communities, such as ours. Residents here do not benefit from the plethora of CEC services more urban communities receive. Urban communities also benefit from choice and more access to private provision. We feel not enough attention has been given to preserving what are very often vital services in rural communities and instead exploring options to rationalise those provided in more urban settings. A good example here would be leisure centre provision, where a urban leisure centre would be far more attractive to a private operator than a more rural one.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our concerns and feedback. We trust that these points will be considered during the decision-making process.

Yours sincerely,

Published response #5

From: Rainow Parish Council

Date received: 26 January 2024

Format: Email

Summary of content: Opposition to proposal EC3: Reduce costs of waste disposal and number of HWRCs, specifically the site at Bollington. Opposition to proposal CP3: Reduce election costs and increase charges where possible.

Full content:

Rainow Parish Council would respond to the consultation as follows:

1. Members object to closure of the refuse site in Bollington as this would have a detrimental impact on Rainow residents particularly due to the charges on green bins.
2. Regarding the proposal to charge Parish Councils for administering local elections, Members would object to this proposal with the following specific comments:
 - Rainow Parish Council have a very small precept of £14k so, it is likely that a charge for elections would require a disproportionate increase in the precept.
 - We have not been informed as to what the likely range of costs would be.
 - We would have no control over the CEC costs.
 - The costs could potentially be highly variable depending on whether or not the election is contested.

- Would the Parish Council have the choice to resource the administration by other means?

Published response #6

From: Goostrey Parish Council

Date received: 26 January 2024

Format: Email

Summary of content: Concerns about the consultation including: Not enough information provided to give a response.

Full content:

Good afternoon,

Goostrey Parish Council has discussed its response to the budget consultation and have found that it is unable to provide a considered response. The consultation gives a high-level overview of the issues but doesn't provide enough detail on which to base responses. For example:

- Proposal EC4: Fund libraries a different way. There is not enough detail here about what contributions may be required from Town/Parish Councils to provide an answer.
- Proposal EC5: Reduce costs of street cleansing operations. The one-line proposal is to "Revise street cleansing operations boroughwide to secure operational efficiencies" without suggesting what this might entail.

Overall, the questions posed and the statements provided are too general and lack details.

Published response #7

From: A Sandbach resident

Date received: 27 January 2024

Format: Email

Summary of content: Comments on proposal EC4: Fund libraries in a different way. Suggests the council looks at alternative delivery models, such as those used by Derbyshire council, Staffordshire council, Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust. Suggests the council refers to the governments library good

practice toolkit. Suggests making the service more efficient by reducing management and reviewing pay scales.

Full content:

To whom it may concern

I write with reference to the latest CEC Budget Consultation 2024 to 2025 published recently.

I write in particular about the delivery and operation of library services in Cheshire East.

I write to suggest that Cheshire East Council look closely, in detail, at the ways in which other authorities propose to deliver library services in the future, such as Derbyshire County Council & Staffordshire County Council (see links below).

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/libraries-for-derbyshire/interested-in-running-a-library/interested-in-running-a-library.aspx>

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Libraries/managed-libs/Community-managed-libraries.aspx>

Unique community managed libraries partnership to expand :: Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (mpft.nhs.uk)

Unique community managed libraries partnership to expand :: Midlands Par...

MPFT, award-winning manager of several community libraries in Staffordshire has been appointed to run another

In line with the above, I suggest that Cheshire East Council proactively invite a wide & varied range of community groups & potentially interested parties to talks & discussions to run community managed library services.

Groups interested in running library services may come from a wide & varied section of the community.

Groups such as U3A (University of the third Age) for example or 'Friends of' groups are some possible examples.

There is an online toolkit produced by the U.K. Government to help Cheshire East Council with the above process.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-libraries-good-practice-toolkit/community-libraries-good-practice-toolkit>

I would also strongly encourage Cheshire East Council give serious consideration to:

(a) a significant reduction in 'management hours' attributed to the running and operation of what is, a relatively small library service as has happened in neighbouring councils such as Cheshire West & Chester.

(b) initiate a review of the pay scale of CEC library managers.

Managing a library is not a professional role as a professional is not essential to carry out this role.

However, the salary scale paid to library managers at CEC is scale 9.

This is higher than the pay scale offered by Cheshire East Council to experienced social workers. Experienced social workers are usually paid at scale 7 or in some cases, with a high degree of responsibility, scale 8.

A Social Worker is a professional role. To work as a social worker requires a professional qualification as essential. There appears to be a disparity.

At CEC, library managers are paid more than junior doctors, working for the NHS.

Local authorities are able to initiate a review of services and a review of salary scales and in some cases increase or decrease salary scales as appropriate.

As a Sandbach resident & Cheshire East council taxpayer, I would be pleased to receive an acknowledgement of my email.

Published response #8

From: Thomas Barton, Chief Executive , Everybody Health & Leisure

Date received: 28/01/2024

Format: Email

Summary of content: Everybody Health and Leisure Chief Executive comments on the budget consultation process and proposals, and how they clash with the recent Strategic Leisure review Consultation. Lists numerous queries regarding proposal EC2: Strategic Leisure Review (Stage 2), including that the savings target included for 2024 to 2025 is unachievable by April 2024. Wishes to proactively help find solutions, however, increasingly concerned about the short term changes being proposed. States it imperative that the council clarifies the position as soon as possible so that EHL can set its own budget and make changes as required as soon as possible.

Full content:

FAO: CEC R&C Team, CEC Finance Team;

I am writing to you to record the response to the current MTFS consultation (2024-2028) on behalf of Everybody Health & Leisure:

1. Timing & Process

We recognise the challenge of the Council's current and emerging financial pressures. However, it is difficult as a key stakeholder to understand the changes (i.e. targeted savings values) and timings of the separate public consultations; in particular the recent leisure services (targeting £479k across the 4 years) and the current MTFS (targeting £1.3m in 1 year under EC2).

The leisure consultation process (re MTFS:90) closed on 7th January 2024 and the 2024/25 MTFS CEC consultation was launched on 9th January 2024 – to the above corresponding changes in savings targets and respective accompanying narrative.

As a result of the above, despite some officer conversations, it is difficult to truly interpret this consultation proposal(s) and/or to respond. Furthermore, residents have responded to the leisure services process based on the savings target of £479k over 4 years – therefore we would ask if this is truly meaningful consultation to all parties at this time given the potential service implications such savings could ultimately result in.

I have attached the letter in response to the leisure services consultation, which we would also like to be confidentially considered as part of this process – given the reference to EC2.

2. Contents & queries

The actual details contained in the current MTFS consultation in relation to Leisure are very limited, given the increased target savings value for 2024/25. As such, we would like to make the following points and/or queries:

- The 4 year 2023-2027 full MTFS is still set out in the consultation document and includes SLR year growth in 2024/25; having removed £1.29m in 2023/24. This was despite all our concerns set out in our email correspondence in January-March 2023 with key officers. Please refer to all our points raised at that time.
- The specific reference to 'potential savings of £1.3m' seems extremely difficult to achieve – with or without major service reductions. Even if we can negotiate or help with one off-savings we cannot currently see how such a level could be achieved for April 2024.
- Presumably the above savings would include a combination of CEC FM costs and the ongoing targeted reduction of the EHL Management Fee. However this is difficult to interpret with limited visibility of the CEC full FM costs. This past year is the first time numbers have ever been disaggregated after 9

years incorporating into corporate landlord base. As such we may have expected those savings to be achieved under the corporate services budget area. This is difficult to comment on though, as we are yet to receive clarity of the actual costs in year, further to our outstanding queries on the different information/values.

- Capital schemes are still shown for the 2023-27 document. Clearly the Poynton expenditure wasn't applied in 2023/24, as we expected & set out this time last year. We are advised that despite the detailed business case being approved and capital funds allocated - that this could no longer be applied at the same cost of borrowing – agreed at the time it was put into the MTFS.
- The Environment & Communities Committee is due to consider the SLR on 11th March 2024 we believe. As such a series of key revenue & capital decisions will be subject to decisions on 11/3/24 by this Committee – after the Council is due to sign off its annual budget on 27th February ?

From the limited consultation question and one area referenced in the document at EC2 (and related to MTFS90) we would like to clarify the following points against the brief descriptive areas of suggested savings;

- “reviewing pricing for leisure services across the borough” – As discussed extensively with officers and now members – this is our policy to set under the contract. Of course like we have every year; we will continue to actively engage with CEC officers to consider all CEC commissioning requests & policies. Currently the use of pricing is required to be utilised to offset our considerable growth cost pressures for our charity to safely operate (e.g. pay for NLW and considerable increases in supplies and services). All the details of which have been set out to officers for 2024/25.
- “reduction in corporate landlord costs via asset transfer” – We understand and support that this should be explored in some instances. However there is considerable complexity and therefore capacity needed to realise any sustainable changes in 2024/25 and at best only part year effect could be achieved; alongside the cost of change required. EHL have considerable commitments and liabilities aligned to all sites which must be considered accordingly.
- “exploring potential invest to save capital schemes removing all current programme allocations that cannot be delivered on an invest to save basis” - We continue to work with officers to present a range of opportunities to make pocket investments and improvements to CEC assets. However these are subject to various deployment conditions for corresponding ‘reductions of management fee’ to be achieved. The removal of previous schemes including Poynton is very disappointing given the opportunity cost. We believe the Middlewich scheme still has viability and is deliverable with the planning approval granted in March 2023. The removal of all schemes leaves ongoing challenges for us to manage and if now ceased (rather than paused) there will

be some residual direct close-down charges potentially required for both Poynton and Middlewich projects.

- “removal of historical subsidies relating to free car parking” – This area is extremely concerning, as set out last year. We are unable to agree such a change without CEC underwriting the financial risk of income losses which we would envisage for both Crewe and Nantwich sites, should such a policy actually be implemented. This is currently net-nil for CEC as the parking dept receipt all the income – to the same value CEC leisure commissioning re-imburse. This would not achieve the same value of parking income if this policy changed in any event i.e. less people would likely use and/or pay to park at those sites. We do not believe £70k is an achievable savings target related to this proposed change.
- “use of public health and other one off grants” – We believe that different sums have been applied for previous years. Our charity delivers considerable public health benefit and we encourage the approach for consideration of such funding now and in the future to protect the leisure estate and align public health investment against its output/outcomes realised.
- “partnership working with Town Councils to secure contributions towards safeguarding provisions in their local area” – We are in conversations with CEC officers about this approach and understand contributions would be made to the FM/estate costs directly to CEC. We will continue to work to consider and support this approach where possible.

3. Key Considerations

We want to proactively help find solutions to the CEC financial challenges, whilst protecting the highly valued current leisure estate, and of course ensuring the viability of our charity, which was set up by Cheshire East for Cheshire East in 2014. We hope to achieve a long-term sustainable plan with you for leisure delivery in Cheshire East.

However we are increasingly concerned about the decreasing timeframe, in the short-term, to achieve tangible savings/changes for 2024/25. We hope to find a mutually agreeable arrangement but at this stage believe it would be prudent to ensure there is financial provision in place for the contractual default value for 2024/25. Our cost base is increasing (as set out).

We have to present a draft balanced budget to our finance and risk committee on 12th February and the full board of trustees on 27th February. Also we have deferred negotiations with the trade unions and need to make a proposed formal offer to them by 8th February for which they will ballot their members on for 21-28 days thereafter. Also we must advise our customers of pricing changes in early March (due to bank DD requirements etc) and must configure systems before then too.

Therefore it is paramount we accelerate any relevant discussions and hopefully achieve an agreed position as soon after this consultation closes, as possible.

Regards,

Thomas Barton, MBA, FCIPD, Chief Executive , Everybody Health & Leisure

Published response #9

From: Kirsten Warren, Assistant Director of Operations, North West, National Trust

Date received: 29 January 2024

Format: Email

Summary of content: Comments on the Economy and Growth Committee statement that “subsidy reductions to Tatton Park and the Visitor Centre operating model are already set to deliver savings for 2024/25 of £0.07m”. States the National Trust is keen to work alongside CEC to ensure Tatton’s finances are sustainable. Will continue to work with CEC to enable new forms of investment and revenue where possible.

Full content:



kirsten.warren1@nationaltrust.org.uk

Mobile: 07971 107172

27/01/2024

Research and Consultation,
Cheshire East Council,
Westfields,
Middlewich Road,
Sandbach,
CW11 1H

Dear CEC Consultations team,

Re: National Trust response to Budget Consultation for 2024

I would like to submit feedback from the National Trust on Cheshire East's 2024 Budget consultation.

We make these comments as a conservation charity and visitor business with significant interests in Cheshire East. In particular, as the owners of Tatton Park we work constructively with Cheshire East Council to supporting management of this major attraction, which the Council holds on a long lease. The National Trust also directly manages Lyme Park, Quarry Bank, and Little Moreton Hall, as well as popular countryside sites such as Alderley Edge and Hare Hill.

The National Trust truly appreciates the challenging times faced by all local authorities and the consequent need to reduce expenditure and raise income. We also know from feedback from our local members, communities, and visitors, how much people in Cheshire East value the rich mix of nature, beauty, and history on their doorstep. Visitors to the area are attracted by these assets too, contributing to jobs and growth.

Therefore, we will continue to work with the Council to protect the historic and natural environment and support Cheshire East's 'fairer, greener' vision.

Comments on specific proposals

- **Economy and Growth Committee proposals**

We note that reductions in the subsidy towards Tatton Park, which is owned by the National Trust, are included in the agreed savings of £0.07m (alongside changes to Visitor Centres). As set out in previous budget consultation responses, we are keen to

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President: His Majesty The King
Regional Chair: Janet Haddock-Fraser
Director of Region: Mike Innerdale

Registered office:
Heelis, Kemble Drive, Swindon
Wiltshire SN2 2NA
Registered charity number 205846



work alongside CEC to ensure that Tatton's finances are sustainable and that the Council is able to fulfil its statutory requirements with regard to conservation. We will continue to work with CEC to enable new forms of investment and revenue where it is sympathetic to the overall conservation of Tatton.

Thank you for giving the National Trust the opportunity to contribute to this consultation. I look forward to continuing to work with the Council on behalf of the people of Cheshire East.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Warren', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kirsten Warren
Assistant Director of Operations, North West

Cont/d

2

Appendix 3 – Social media engagement

9 posts advertising the consultation were posted on X, Facebook and LinkedIn during the consultation on corporate council accounts (@CheshireEastCouncil).

In total there were 1,105 social media engagements during the consultation period.

X engagement

4 posts issued:

- 8,594 impressions (number of times posts were displayed to users on X)
- 453 engagements, including 195 link clicks through to the consultation survey

Facebook engagement

4 posts issued:

- 19,764 people reached (number of users seeing posts)
- 592 total engagements including 246 link clicks through to the consultation survey

LinkedIn engagement

1 post issued:

- 963 impressions and 60 clicks

Appendix 4 – Newspaper Articles

A total of 17 newspaper articles were published throughout the duration of the consultation – these are listed below.

Date	Source	Article link
10/01/2024	BBC	Tip closures among Cheshire East Council's budget plans
10/01/2024	Nantwich News	Cheshire East plans ANOTHER 4.99% Council Tax rise
10/01/2024	Cheshire East Council	Cheshire East Council launches its budget consultation – protecting essential services for those most in need
10/01/2024	Wilmslow.co.uk	Council's budget proposals include closing tips and increasing new garden waste collection charge
11/01/2024	Local Gov	Leaderships posts left vacant to cut costs
12/01/2024	Northwich Guardian	Cheshire East Council budget plan reveals 29 cost-cutting measures
12/01/2024	Northwich Guardian	Cheshire East Council issues statement on bankruptcy speculation
13/01/2024	Nantwich News	Cheshire East battling to avert bankruptcy and Section 114 notice
14/01/2024	Cheshire Live	Cheshire East Council planning to axe tips and increase green bin fee on top of tax hike
14/01/2024	Manchester Evening News	Council planning to axe tips and increase green bin fee on top of tax hike
17/01/2024	Northwich Guardian	Cheshire East makes savings by leaving 12 per cent of posts vacant
17/01/2024	Knutsford Guardian	Knutsford Town Council sets aside £100k to help keep services afloat
17/01/2024	Nantwich News	LETTER: Cheshire East Council Budget Consultation 2024-25
21/01/2024	Stoke Sentinel	Cash-strapped council proposing tip closures and green bin price hike
22/01/2024	BBC	Cheshire East: Council aims to avoid financial distress notice - leader
22/01/2024	Nantwich News	Adult social care costs rocketing with £5m overspend likely
22/01/2024	Northwich Guardian	Cheshire East pays £9k a week for some adult care as costs soar

Appendix 5 – Council Committee feedback

Throughout January and February 2024 budget sessions were held at all council Committees, to discuss the budget consultation proposals. Follow the below links to listen to the sessions, or to view the meeting minutes.

Date	Budget Session Committee links
26/01/2024	Economy and Growth Committee
30/01/2024	Highways & Transport Committee
30/01/2024	Environment and Communities Committee
31/01/2024	Children and Families Committee
31/01/2024	Finance sub-Committee
01/02/2024	Corporate Policy Committee
02/02/2024	Adults and Health Committee

Appendix 6 – Survey respondent demographics

Respondent type

80% of survey respondents were Cheshire East residents, 15% were Cheshire East Council employees. 24 local Councillors responded to the survey.

Respondent type:	Count	Percent
As a resident of Cheshire East	942	80%
As a Cheshire East Council employee	171	15%
As a Town or Parish Councillor	16	1%
As a Cheshire East Council Ward Councillor	8	1%
As a visitor to Cheshire East	6	1%
On behalf of a group, organisation, club or local business	6	1%
Other	27	2%
Total valid responses	1,176	20%

Gender

49% of survey respondents were female, 42% were male.

Gender	Count	Percent
Female	550	49%
Male	471	42%
Prefer not to say	99	9%
Other	13	1%
Total valid responses	1,133	100%

The 13 “other” responses comprised of the below which have been printed verbatim in alphabetical order:

- “Being male or female is not a ‘gender identity’ - it’s a biological sex.”
- “Cybernaught”
- “Fluid”
- “GOD”
- “Household - male and female”
- “Irrelevant to this survey”
- “None of your business”
- “Prefer to self describe” x3
- “Sex, not gender”

- “Straight, white male”
- “Why does this matter?”

Age group

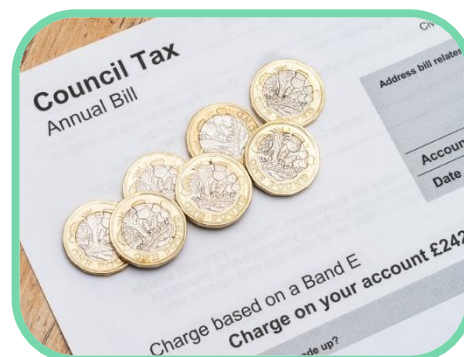
Survey respondent numbers by age group were as follows:

Age Group	Count	Percent
16-24	11	1%
25-34	65	6%
35-44	187	16%
45-54	240	21%
55-64	276	24%
65-74	178	16%
75-84	82	7%
85 and over	1	0%
Prefer not to say	96	8%
Total valid responses	1,136	100%

Health or disability status

Survey respondent numbers by health or disability status were as follows:

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? This includes problems related to old age.	Count	Percent
Yes	166	15%
No	860	76%
Prefer not to say	111	10%
Total valid responses	1,137	100%



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OPEN

Council

27 February 2024

**Council Tax 2024/25 - Statutory
Resolution**

**Report of: Alex Thompson – Director of Finance and Customer
Services (Section 151 Officer)**

Report Reference No: C/17/23-24

Ward(s) Affected: All Wards

Purpose of Report

- 1 The Council is required by legislation to disclose its calculations of its Budget Requirement and Council Tax for 2024/25 under statutory resolutions and to approve the formal Council Tax Resolution for 2024/25.

Executive Summary

- 2 Cheshire East Council, as a billing authority, is responsible for the billing and collection of Council Tax due from local taxpayers and must therefore make a resolution to set the overall Council Tax level. This means that the Authority also collects Council Tax income to cover not only its own services but also precepts set by other authorities.
- 3 The Council Tax levied is therefore made up of four elements:
 - Cheshire East Borough Council element
 - Town & Parish Council precepts
 - Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire precept
 - Cheshire Fire Authority precept.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:

1. Approves a Council Tax for Cheshire East Council for the financial year 2024/25, at £287,086,013 in accordance with the formal resolutions as shown in paragraphs 20-24 of the report.
2. Notes that the council tax precept of Cheshire Fire Authority, Police Crime and Commissioner for Cheshire, and each Town and Parish Council have been approved and notified to the Council in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by sections 72 to 79 of the Localism Act 2011.
3. Notes the average Council Tax for the Cheshire East Borough is £2,217.19 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by sections 72 to 79 of the Localism Act 2011.

Background

- 4 The Council Tax levied is made up of four elements as follows:
- 5 The Council Tax Base for 2024/25 - Appendix A.
- 6 The statutory calculation required to arrive at the amount of Council Tax for each area in respect of Borough Council, Town and Parish Council requirements - Appendices B and C.
- 7 The precepts issued by Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire and Cheshire Fire Authority under Section 40 of the Act – paragraphs 17 and 18 of the report.
- 8 The statutory calculation of the aggregate of the Borough Council, Parish Councils, Police & Crime Commissioner and Cheshire Fire Authority amount of Council Tax for each of the categories of the dwelling for each Council Tax area - Appendix D.

Council Tax Base

- 9 The Council Tax base was agreed at the Cheshire East Council meeting of 13 December 2023 as 160,151.52 for the year 2024/25. A breakdown of the calculation by Parish is attached at Appendix A.

General Fund Budget

- 10 On 13 February 2024 Corporate Policy Committee recommended a General Fund Budget of £375,709,515. The calculation reflects the detailed Medium-Term Financial Strategy prepared through consultation, which included all service Committees.

Cheshire East Borough Council Tax

- 11 The Council Tax Requirement for the Borough Council is £287,086,013.
- 12 The Band D Council Tax is therefore £1,792.59 (the requirement of £287,086,013 divided by the tax base of 160,151.52).
- 13 Growth in the local taxbase supports the ambition in the Corporate Plan of creating economic independence from government grant. In 2024/25, there continues to be minimal general government grant support to the revenue budget of Cheshire East Council (£0.4m). When increases in demand related to protecting vulnerable people and inflation in costs are taken into account, this creates a requirement to continue to increase Council Tax levels in-line with government expectations.
- 14 The ability to raise additional Council Tax for use solely on Adult Social Care (ASC) was accepted in each of the years 2017/18 (3%), 2018/19 (3%), 2020/21 (2%), 2021/22 (3%), 2022/23 (1%) and 2023/24 (2%). The Provisional Finance Settlement in December 2023 confirmed a further 2% ASC precept could be levied in 2024/25 to help alleviate the continuing growth pressure.
- 15 The provisional local government finance settlement also announced the referendum limit on base increases was to be maintained at to 3%, as such, it is proposed that Council Tax is increased by 4.99% (including 2% ringfenced for Adult Social Care pressures) for 2024/25 to give a Band D charge of £1,792.59 for 2024/25.

Parish Council Precepts

- 16 Each Parish Council has notified the Council with its precept requirement for the year. The total amount of these special items is £11,462,101 which produces an average Band D Council Tax of £71.57.

Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire precept

- 17 The precept demand issued by Police & Crime Commissioner is £42,110,241 which produces a Band D Council Tax of £262.94. This represents a 4.99% (£12.50) increase on the 2023/24 Band D Council

Tax level. The Police & Crime Commissioner has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:

Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
175.29	204.51	233.72	262.94	321.37	379.80	438.23	525.88

Fire Authority Precept

- 18 The precept demand issued by Cheshire Fire Authority is £14,428,051 which produces a Band D Council Tax of £90.09. This represents a (2.99%) increase on the 2023/24 Band D Council tax level. Cheshire Fire Authority has stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwelling shown below:

Valuation Bands							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
60.06	70.07	80.08	90.09	110.11	130.13	150.15	180.18

Total Council Tax

- 19 The average Council Tax to be charged to taxpayers in Band D can be summarised as follows:

Element	Charge
	£
Cheshire East Borough Council	1,792.59
Average for Parish Councils	71.57
Average Local Council Tax	1,864.16
Police & Crime Commissioner	262.94
Cheshire Fire Authority	90.09
Total Council Tax	2,217.19

Formal Resolution

- 20 That it be noted that on 13 December 2023 the Council calculated the Council Tax base 2024/25.
 - (a) for the whole Council area as 160,151.52 (item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”)).
 - (b) for individual parishes, as in **Appendix A**.
- 21 Calculated that the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2024/25 (excluding Parish precepts) is £287,086,013.
- 22 That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2024/25 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - a. £819,159,543 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
 - b. £520,611,429 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
 - c. £298,548,114 being the amount by which the aggregate at 14.3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 14.3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act).
 - d. £1,864.16 being the amount at 14.3(c) above divided by the amount at 14.1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts).
 - e. £11,462,101 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act
 - f. £1,792.59 being the amount at 14.3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 14.3(e) above by the amount at 14.1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates.

- g. **Appendix A** being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulations 3 and 6 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its total council tax base for the year and council tax base for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.
 - h. **Appendix B** being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (f) above, the amounts of special items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided by in each case the appropriate tax base from Appendix A, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(3) of the 1992 Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of the area to which one or more special items relate. (Band D charges for each Parish area).
 - i. **Appendix C** being the amounts given by multiplying the amount at (h) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the 1992 Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the 1992 Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands (Local charges for all Bands).
 - j. **Appendix D** being the aggregate of the local charges in (i) above and the amounts levied by major precepting authorities, calculated in accordance with Section 30(2) of the 1992 Act (The total Council Tax charge for each band in each Parish area).
- 23 To note that the Police & Crime Commissioner and the Fire Authority have issued precepts to Cheshire East Council in accordance with section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area as shown in paragraphs 17 and 18.
- 24 Determine whether Cheshire East Council's basic amount of Council tax for 2024/25 is excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB and 52ZC of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Consultation and Engagement

- 25 The recommendation in this report reflects the results of the 2024/25 Budget Consultation process.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 26 In accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by sections 72 to 79 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council is required to set the amounts of the Council Tax for 2024/25 for each of the categories of dwelling in the Council Tax area. This requirement is achieved by approving the statutory resolution shown in this report.

Other Options Considered

- 27 As the local billing authority the Council has a duty to set the Council Tax for the Cheshire East Council area. The recommendations in this report reflect the results of a comprehensive consultation process to support the decision making process and ensure it is compliant with relevant legislation. No further options are therefore being considered as part of this report.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 28 As covered in the report.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 29 As covered in the report.

Policy

- 30 None.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 31 None.

Human Resources

- 32 None.

Risk Management

- 33 The steps outlined in this report will address the main legal and financial risk to the Council's financial management in the setting of a legal Council Tax level for 2024/25.

Rural Communities

- 34 None.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

- 35 None.

Public Health

- 36 None.

Climate Change

- 37 None.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Alex Thompson Director of Finance and Customer Services (Section 151 Officer) alex.thompson@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix A - Council Tax Base 2024/25 Appendix B – Council Tax - Band D per Parish 2024/25 Appendix C – Local Council Tax per Band 2024/25 (Borough Council and Town and Parish Council) Appendix D – Total Council Tax per Band 2024/25 (including Police and Fire)
Background Papers:	Budget Consultation released 9 January 2024

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	Tax Base
Adlington	635.50
Alderley Edge	2,718.11
Alpraham, Calveley	386.35
Alsager	5,672.85
Arclid	196.97
Ashley	173.88
Aston-by-Budworth	209.13
Audlem	1,034.93
Barthomley	103.95
Betchton	297.64
Bickerton, Egerton	166.90
Bollington	3,174.32
Bosley	219.73
Bradwall	93.80
Brereton	852.04
Brindley, Faddiley	151.27
Buerton	256.91
Bulkeley, Ridley	227.00
Bunbury	726.80
Burland, Acton, Edleston, Henhull	534.60
Chelford	839.66
Cholmondeley, Chorley	158.60
Cholmondeston, Wettenhall	195.40
Chorley	281.80
Church Lawton	865.53
Church Minshull	208.06
Congleton	11,207.02
Cranage	683.23
Crewe	14,409.43
Disley	2,068.04
Dodcott-cum-Wilkesley	213.17
Doddington, Blakenhall, Bridgemere, Checkley-cum-Wrinehill, Hunsterson, Lea	307.60
Eaton	182.35
Gawsworth	822.89
Goostrey	1,088.46
Great Warford	456.23
Handforth	2,494.68
Hankelow	177.96
Haslington	2,767.44
Hassall	113.14
Hatherton, Walgherton	254.61
Haughton	102.93
Henbury	422.22
High Legh	898.43
Higher Hurdsfield	329.12
Holmes Chapel	2,893.18
Hough, Chorlton	1,013.26
Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths	324.03
Kettleshulme, Lyme Handley	243.71
Knutsford	5,999.20
Leighton, Minshull Vernon, Woolstanwood	2,340.25
Little Bollington, Agden	202.49
Little Warford	38.05
Lower Peover	72.47
Lower Withington	322.78
Macclesfield	19,046.67
Macclesfield Forest, Wildboarclough	122.04
Marbury-cum-Quoisley, Norbury, Wirswall	287.66

OFFICIAL

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	£
Adlington	1,824.06
Alderley Edge	1,856.97
Alpraham, Calveley	1,846.53
Alsager	1,899.78
Arclid	1,814.07
Ashley	1,827.10
Aston-by-Budworth	1,806.94
Audlem	1,868.11
Barthomley	1,831.00
Betchton	1,801.31
Bickerton, Egerton	1,807.57
Bollington	1,882.37
Bosley	1,814.33
Bradwall	1,813.81
Brereton	1,822.64
Brindley, Faddiley	1,815.73
Buerton	1,819.15
Bulkeley, Ridley	1,813.03
Bunbury	1,850.58
Burland, Acton, Edleston, Henhull	1,826.10
Chelford	1,853.27
Cholmondeley, Chorley	1,812.49
Cholmondeston, Wettenhall	1,818.18
Chorley	1,810.32
Church Lawton	1,838.80
Church Minshull	1,823.83
Congleton	1,898.08
Cranage	1,825.52
Crewe	1,884.93
Disley	1,877.81
Dodcott-cum-Wilkesley	1,825.43
Doddington, Blakenhall, Bridgemere, Checkley-cum-Wrinehill, Hunsterson, Lea	1,802.50
Eaton	1,821.68
Gawsworth	1,832.86
Goostrey	1,840.90
Great Warford	1,816.61
Handforth	1,860.74
Hankelow	1,799.19
Haslington	1,825.37
Hassall	1,832.36
Hatherton, Walgherton	1,815.55
Haughton	1,801.09
Henbury	1,847.06
High Legh	1,806.50
Higher Hurdsfield	1,815.38
Holmes Chapel	1,883.70
Hough, Chorlton	1,818.25
Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths	1,832.71
Kettleshulme, Lyme Handley	1,842.55
Knutsford	1,912.52
Leighton, Minshull Vernon, Woolstanwood	1,814.27
Little Bollington, Agden	1,812.34
Little Warford	1,792.59
Lower Peover	1,829.86
Lower Withington	1,827.11
Macclesfield	1,857.15
Macclesfield Forest, Wildboarclough	1,792.59
Marbury-cum-Quoisley, Norbury, Wirswall	1,823.88

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LOCAL COUNCIL TAX (BOROUGH + PARISH)

	VALUATION BAND							
	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Adlington	1,216.04	1,418.72	1,621.38	1,824.06	2,229.40	2,634.75	3,040.10	3,648.12
Alderley Edge	1,237.98	1,444.31	1,650.64	1,856.97	2,269.63	2,682.28	3,094.95	3,713.94
Alpraham, Calveley	1,231.02	1,436.19	1,641.36	1,846.53	2,256.87	2,667.20	3,077.55	3,693.06
Alsager	1,266.52	1,477.61	1,688.69	1,899.78	2,321.95	2,744.12	3,166.30	3,799.56
Arclid	1,209.38	1,410.95	1,612.50	1,814.07	2,217.19	2,620.32	3,023.45	3,628.14
Ashley	1,218.07	1,421.08	1,624.09	1,827.10	2,233.12	2,639.14	3,045.17	3,654.20
Aston-by-Budworth	1,204.63	1,405.40	1,606.17	1,806.94	2,208.48	2,610.02	3,011.57	3,613.88
Audlem	1,245.41	1,452.98	1,660.54	1,868.11	2,283.24	2,698.37	3,113.52	3,736.22
Barthomley	1,220.71	1,424.17	1,627.61	1,831.07	2,237.97	2,644.87	3,051.78	3,662.14
Betchton	1,200.87	1,401.02	1,601.16	1,801.31	2,201.60	2,601.89	3,002.18	3,602.62
Bickerton, Egerton	1,205.05	1,405.89	1,606.73	1,807.57	2,209.25	2,610.93	3,012.62	3,615.14
Bollington	1,254.91	1,464.07	1,673.21	1,882.37	2,300.67	2,718.97	3,137.28	3,764.74
Bosley	1,209.55	1,411.15	1,612.73	1,814.33	2,217.51	2,620.69	3,023.88	3,628.66
Bradwall	1,209.21	1,410.74	1,612.27	1,813.81	2,216.88	2,619.94	3,023.02	3,627.62
Brereton	1,215.09	1,417.61	1,620.12	1,822.64	2,227.67	2,632.70	3,037.73	3,645.28
Brindley, Faddiley	1,210.49	1,412.24	1,613.98	1,815.73	2,219.22	2,622.71	3,026.22	3,631.46
Buerton	1,212.77	1,414.90	1,617.02	1,819.15	2,223.40	2,627.65	3,031.92	3,638.30
Bulkeley, Ridley	1,208.69	1,410.14	1,611.58	1,813.03	2,215.92	2,618.81	3,021.72	3,626.06
Bunbury	1,233.72	1,439.34	1,644.96	1,850.58	2,261.82	2,673.05	3,084.30	3,701.16
Burland, Acton, Edleston, Henhull	1,217.40	1,420.30	1,623.20	1,826.10	2,231.90	2,637.69	3,043.50	3,652.20
Chelford	1,235.51	1,441.44	1,647.35	1,853.27	2,265.10	2,676.94	3,088.78	3,706.54
Cholmondeley, Chorley	1,208.33	1,409.72	1,611.10	1,812.49	2,215.26	2,618.03	3,020.82	3,624.98
Cholmondeston, Wettenhall	1,212.12	1,414.14	1,616.16	1,818.18	2,222.22	2,626.25	3,030.30	3,636.36
Chorley	1,206.88	1,408.03	1,609.17	1,810.32	2,212.61	2,614.90	3,017.20	3,620.64
Church Lawton	1,225.87	1,430.18	1,634.49	1,838.80	2,247.42	2,656.04	3,064.67	3,677.60
Church Minshull	1,215.89	1,418.54	1,621.18	1,823.83	2,229.12	2,634.41	3,039.72	3,647.66
Congleton	1,265.39	1,476.29	1,687.18	1,898.08	2,319.87	2,741.66	3,163.47	3,796.16
Cranage	1,217.01	1,419.85	1,622.68	1,825.52	2,231.19	2,636.86	3,042.53	3,651.04
Crewe	1,256.62	1,466.06	1,675.49	1,884.93	2,303.80	2,722.67	3,141.55	3,769.86
Disley	1,251.87	1,460.52	1,669.16	1,877.81	2,295.10	2,712.39	3,129.68	3,755.62
Dodcott-cum-Wilkesley	1,216.95	1,419.78	1,622.60	1,825.43	2,231.08	2,636.73	3,042.38	3,650.86
Doddington, Blakenhall, Bridgemere, Checkley-cum-Wrinehill, Hunsterson, Lea	1,201.67	1,401.95	1,602.22	1,802.50	2,203.05	2,603.60	3,004.17	3,605.00
Eaton	1,214.45	1,416.87	1,619.27	1,821.68	2,226.49	2,631.31	3,036.13	3,643.36
Gawsworth	1,221.91	1,425.56	1,629.21	1,832.86	2,240.16	2,647.46	3,054.77	3,665.72
Goostrey	1,227.27	1,431.81	1,636.35	1,840.90	2,249.99	2,659.07	3,068.17	3,681.80
Great Warford	1,211.07	1,412.92	1,614.76	1,816.61	2,220.30	2,623.99	3,027.68	3,633.22
Handforth	1,240.49	1,447.25	1,653.99	1,860.74	2,274.23	2,687.73	3,101.23	3,721.48
Hankelow	1,199.46	1,399.37	1,599.28	1,799.19	2,199.01	2,598.82	2,998.65	3,598.38
Haslington	1,216.91	1,419.74	1,622.55	1,825.37	2,231.00	2,636.64	3,042.28	3,650.74
Hassall	1,221.57	1,425.17	1,628.76	1,832.36	2,239.55	2,646.74	3,053.93	3,664.72
Hatherton, Walgherton	1,210.37	1,412.10	1,613.82	1,815.55	2,219.00	2,622.45	3,025.92	3,631.10
Haughton	1,200.73	1,400.85	1,600.97	1,801.09	2,201.33	2,601.57	3,001.82	3,602.18
Henbury	1,231.37	1,436.61	1,641.83	1,847.06	2,257.51	2,667.97	3,078.43	3,694.12
High Legh	1,204.33	1,405.06	1,605.77	1,806.50	2,207.94	2,609.38	3,010.83	3,613.00
Higher Hurdfield	1,210.25	1,411.97	1,613.67	1,815.38	2,218.79	2,622.21	3,025.63	3,630.76
Holmes Chapel	1,255.80	1,465.10	1,674.40	1,883.70	2,302.30	2,720.89	3,139.50	3,767.40
Hough, Chorlton	1,212.17	1,414.20	1,616.22	1,818.25	2,222.30	2,626.35	3,030.42	3,636.50
Hulme Walfield, Somerford Booths	1,221.81	1,425.44	1,629.07	1,832.71	2,239.98	2,647.24	3,054.52	3,665.42
Kettleshulme, Lyme Handley	1,228.37	1,433.10	1,637.82	1,842.55	2,252.00	2,661.45	3,070.92	3,685.10
Knutsford	1,275.01	1,487.52	1,700.01	1,912.52	2,337.52	2,762.52	3,187.53	3,825.04
Leighton, Minshull Vernon, Woolstanwood	1,209.51	1,411.10	1,612.68	1,814.27	2,217.44	2,620.61	3,023.78	3,628.54
Little Bollington, Agden	1,208.23	1,409.60	1,610.97	1,812.34	2,215.08	2,617.82	3,020.57	3,624.68
Little Warford	1,195.06	1,394.24	1,593.41	1,792.59	2,190.94	2,589.29	2,987.65	3,585.18
Lower Peover	1,219.91	1,423.23	1,626.54	1,829.86	2,236.49	2,643.12	3,049.77	3,659.72
Lower Withington	1,218.07	1,421.09	1,624.09	1,827.11	2,233.13	2,639.15	3,045.18	3,654.22
Macclesfield	1,238.10	1,444.45	1,650.80	1,857.15	2,269.85	2,682.54	3,095.25	3,714.30
Macclesfield Forest, Wildboardclough	1,195.06	1,394.24	1,593.41	1,792.59	2,190.94	2,589.29	2,987.65	3,585.18
Marbury-cum-Quoisley, Norbury, Wirswall	1,215.92	1,418.58	1,621.22	1,823.88	2,229.18	2,634.49	3,039.80	3,647.76
Marton	1,214.21	1,416.59	1,618.95	1,821.32	2,226.05	2,630.79	3,035.53	3,642.64
Mere	1,208.19	1,409.55	1,610.91	1,812.28	2,215.01	2,617.73	3,020.47	3,624.56

LOCAL COUNCIL TAX (BOROUGH + PARISH)

	VALUATION BAND							
	BAND A £	BAND B £	BAND C £	BAND D £	BAND E £	BAND F £	BAND G £	BAND H £
Middlewich	1,275.61	1,488.21	1,700.81	1,913.41	2,338.61	2,763.81	3,189.02	3,826.82
Millington, Rostherne, Tatton	1,221.39	1,424.96	1,628.52	1,832.09	2,239.22	2,646.35	3,053.48	3,664.18
Mobberley	1,215.81	1,418.45	1,621.08	1,823.72	2,228.99	2,634.26	3,039.53	3,647.44
Moston	1,223.23	1,427.10	1,630.97	1,834.84	2,242.58	2,650.32	3,058.07	3,669.68
Mottram St Andrew	1,207.77	1,409.07	1,610.36	1,811.66	2,214.25	2,616.84	3,019.43	3,623.32
Nantwich	1,295.31	1,511.20	1,727.08	1,942.97	2,374.74	2,806.51	3,238.28	3,885.94
Nether Alderley	1,255.11	1,464.30	1,673.48	1,882.67	2,301.04	2,719.41	3,137.78	3,765.34
Newbold Astbury-cum-Moreton	1,222.83	1,426.63	1,630.43	1,834.24	2,241.85	2,649.45	3,057.07	3,668.48
Newhall	1,201.84	1,402.15	1,602.45	1,802.76	2,203.37	2,603.98	3,004.60	3,605.52
North Rode	1,206.33	1,407.39	1,608.44	1,809.50	2,211.61	2,613.72	3,015.83	3,619.00
Odd Rode	1,228.94	1,433.77	1,638.58	1,843.41	2,253.05	2,662.70	3,072.35	3,686.82
Ollerton, Marthall	1,216.95	1,419.78	1,622.60	1,825.43	2,231.08	2,636.73	3,042.38	3,650.86
Over Alderley	1,207.93	1,409.25	1,610.57	1,811.89	2,214.53	2,617.17	3,019.82	3,623.78
Peckforton	1,222.51	1,426.26	1,630.01	1,833.76	2,241.26	2,648.76	3,056.27	3,667.52
Peover Superior, Snelson	1,237.97	1,444.31	1,650.63	1,856.96	2,269.61	2,682.27	3,094.93	3,713.92
Pickmere	1,225.57	1,429.83	1,634.09	1,838.35	2,246.87	2,655.39	3,063.92	3,676.70
Plumley with Toft and Bexton	1,228.37	1,433.11	1,637.83	1,842.56	2,252.01	2,661.47	3,070.93	3,685.12
Pott Shrigley	1,213.29	1,415.51	1,617.72	1,819.94	2,224.37	2,628.80	3,033.23	3,639.88
Poynton with Worth	1,258.77	1,468.57	1,678.36	1,888.16	2,307.75	2,727.34	3,146.93	3,776.32
Prestbury	1,239.81	1,446.45	1,653.08	1,859.72	2,272.99	2,686.26	3,099.53	3,719.44
Rainow	1,210.43	1,412.17	1,613.90	1,815.64	2,219.11	2,622.58	3,026.07	3,631.28
Rope	1,200.10	1,400.12	1,600.13	1,800.15	2,200.18	2,600.21	3,000.25	3,600.30
Sandbach	1,252.95	1,461.78	1,670.60	1,879.43	2,297.08	2,714.73	3,132.38	3,758.86
Shavington-cum-Gresty	1,254.23	1,463.28	1,672.31	1,881.35	2,299.42	2,717.50	3,135.58	3,762.70
Siddington	1,209.28	1,410.83	1,612.37	1,813.92	2,217.01	2,620.10	3,023.20	3,627.84
Smallwood	1,203.17	1,403.71	1,604.23	1,804.76	2,205.81	2,606.87	3,007.93	3,609.52
Somerford	1,228.50	1,433.25	1,638.00	1,842.75	2,252.25	2,661.74	3,071.25	3,685.50
Sound, Austerson, Baddiley, Baddington, Broomhall, Coole Pilate	1,201.88	1,402.20	1,602.50	1,802.82	2,203.44	2,604.07	3,004.70	3,605.64
Spurstow	1,209.66	1,411.27	1,612.88	1,814.49	2,217.71	2,620.92	3,024.15	3,628.98
Stapeley, Batherton	1,199.75	1,399.72	1,599.67	1,799.63	2,199.54	2,599.46	2,999.38	3,599.26
Stoke, Hurleston	1,220.87	1,424.36	1,627.83	1,831.31	2,238.26	2,645.22	3,052.18	3,662.62
Styal	1,212.33	1,414.39	1,616.44	1,818.50	2,222.61	2,626.72	3,030.83	3,637.00
Sutton	1,210.27	1,411.98	1,613.69	1,815.40	2,218.82	2,622.24	3,025.67	3,630.80
Swettenham	1,222.43	1,426.17	1,629.90	1,833.64	2,241.11	2,648.58	3,056.07	3,667.28
Tabley	1,205.01	1,405.85	1,606.68	1,807.52	2,209.19	2,610.86	3,012.53	3,615.04
Twemlow	1,214.27	1,416.66	1,619.03	1,821.41	2,226.16	2,630.92	3,035.68	3,642.82
Wardle	1,207.49	1,408.74	1,609.98	1,811.23	2,213.72	2,616.21	3,018.72	3,622.46
Warmingham	1,218.94	1,422.10	1,625.25	1,828.41	2,234.72	2,641.03	3,047.35	3,656.82
Weston, Basford, Crewe Green	1,225.07	1,429.26	1,633.43	1,837.61	2,245.96	2,654.32	3,062.68	3,675.22
Willaston	1,217.20	1,420.07	1,622.93	1,825.80	2,231.53	2,637.26	3,043.00	3,651.60
Wilmslow	1,219.92	1,423.24	1,626.56	1,829.88	2,236.52	2,643.15	3,049.80	3,659.78
Wincle	1,195.06	1,394.24	1,593.41	1,792.59	2,190.94	2,589.29	2,987.65	3,585.18
Wistaston	1,208.66	1,410.11	1,611.54	1,812.99	2,215.87	2,618.76	3,021.65	3,625.98
Worleston, Poole, Aston Juxta Mondrum	1,205.69	1,406.65	1,607.59	1,808.54	2,210.43	2,612.33	3,014.23	3,617.08
Wrenbury-cum-Frith	1,221.07	1,424.59	1,628.09	1,831.61	2,238.63	2,645.65	3,052.68	3,663.22
Wybunbury	1,227.89	1,432.55	1,637.19	1,841.84	2,251.13	2,660.43	3,069.73	3,683.68

TOTAL COUNCIL TAX

	VALUATION BAND							
	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Adlington	1,451.39	1,693.30	1,935.18	2,177.09	2,660.88	3,144.68	3,628.48	4,354.18
Alderley Edge	1,473.33	1,718.89	1,964.44	2,210.00	2,701.11	3,192.21	3,683.33	4,420.00
Alpraham, Calveley	1,466.37	1,710.77	1,955.16	2,199.56	2,688.35	3,177.13	3,665.93	4,399.12
Alsager	1,501.87	1,752.19	2,002.49	2,252.81	2,753.43	3,254.05	3,754.68	4,505.62
Arclid	1,444.73	1,685.53	1,926.30	2,167.10	2,648.67	3,130.25	3,611.83	4,334.20
Ashley	1,453.42	1,695.66	1,937.89	2,180.13	2,664.60	3,149.07	3,633.55	4,360.26
Aston-by-Budworth	1,439.98	1,679.98	1,919.97	2,159.97	2,639.96	3,119.95	3,599.95	4,319.94
Audlem	1,480.76	1,727.56	1,974.34	2,221.14	2,714.72	3,208.30	3,701.90	4,442.28
Barthomley	1,456.06	1,698.75	1,941.41	2,184.10	2,669.45	3,154.80	3,640.16	4,368.20
Betchton	1,436.22	1,675.60	1,914.96	2,154.34	2,633.08	3,111.82	3,590.56	4,308.68
Bickerton, Egerton	1,440.40	1,680.47	1,920.53	2,160.60	2,640.73	3,120.86	3,601.00	4,321.20
Bollington	1,490.26	1,738.65	1,987.01	2,235.40	2,732.15	3,228.90	3,725.66	4,470.80
Bosley	1,444.90	1,685.73	1,926.53	2,167.36	2,648.99	3,130.62	3,612.26	4,334.72
Bradwall	1,444.56	1,685.32	1,926.07	2,166.84	2,648.36	3,129.87	3,611.40	4,333.68
Brereton	1,450.44	1,692.19	1,933.92	2,175.67	2,659.15	3,142.63	3,626.11	4,351.34
Brindley, Faddiley	1,445.84	1,686.82	1,927.78	2,168.76	2,650.70	3,132.64	3,614.60	4,337.52
Buerton	1,448.12	1,689.48	1,930.82	2,172.18	2,654.88	3,137.58	3,620.30	4,344.36
Bulkeley, Ridley	1,444.04	1,684.72	1,925.38	2,166.06	2,647.40	3,128.74	3,610.10	4,332.12
Bunbury	1,469.07	1,713.92	1,958.76	2,203.61	2,693.30	3,182.98	3,672.68	4,407.22
Burland, Acton, Edleston, Henhull	1,452.75	1,694.88	1,937.00	2,179.13	2,663.38	3,147.62	3,631.88	4,358.26
Chelford	1,470.86	1,716.02	1,961.15	2,206.30	2,696.58	3,186.87	3,677.16	4,412.60
Cholmondeley, Chorley	1,443.68	1,684.30	1,924.90	2,165.52	2,646.74	3,127.96	3,609.20	4,331.04
Cholmondeston, Wettenhall	1,447.47	1,688.72	1,929.96	2,171.21	2,653.70	3,136.18	3,618.68	4,342.42
Chorley	1,442.23	1,682.61	1,922.97	2,163.35	2,644.09	3,124.83	3,605.58	4,326.70
Church Lawton	1,461.22	1,704.76	1,948.29	2,191.83	2,678.90	3,165.97	3,653.05	4,383.66
Church Minshull	1,451.24	1,693.12	1,934.98	2,176.86	2,660.60	3,144.34	3,628.10	4,353.72
Congleton	1,500.74	1,750.87	2,000.98	2,251.11	2,751.35	3,251.59	3,751.85	4,502.22
Cranage	1,452.36	1,694.43	1,936.48	2,178.55	2,662.67	3,146.79	3,630.91	4,357.10
Crewe	1,491.97	1,740.64	1,989.29	2,237.96	2,735.28	3,232.60	3,729.93	4,475.92
Disley	1,487.22	1,735.10	1,982.96	2,230.84	2,726.58	3,222.32	3,718.06	4,461.68
Dodcott-cum-Wilkesley	1,452.30	1,694.36	1,936.40	2,178.46	2,662.56	3,146.66	3,630.76	4,356.92
Doddington, Blakenhall, Bridgemere, Checkley-cum-Wrinehill, Hunsterson, Lea	1,437.02	1,676.53	1,916.02	2,155.53	2,634.53	3,113.53	3,592.55	4,311.06
Eaton	1,449.80	1,691.45	1,933.07	2,174.71	2,657.97	3,141.24	3,624.51	4,349.42
Gawsworth	1,457.26	1,700.14	1,943.01	2,185.89	2,671.64	3,157.39	3,643.15	4,371.78
Goostrey	1,462.62	1,706.39	1,950.15	2,193.93	2,681.47	3,169.00	3,656.55	4,387.86
Great Warford	1,446.42	1,687.50	1,928.56	2,169.64	2,651.78	3,133.92	3,616.06	4,339.28
Handforth	1,475.84	1,721.83	1,967.79	2,213.77	2,705.71	3,197.66	3,689.61	4,427.54
Hankelow	1,434.81	1,673.95	1,913.08	2,152.22	2,630.49	3,108.75	3,587.03	4,304.44
Haslington	1,452.26	1,694.32	1,936.35	2,178.40	2,662.48	3,146.57	3,630.66	4,356.80
Hassall	1,456.92	1,699.75	1,942.56	2,185.39	2,671.03	3,156.67	3,642.31	4,370.78
Hatherton, Walgherton	1,445.72	1,686.68	1,927.62	2,168.58	2,650.48	3,132.38	3,614.30	4,337.16
Haughton	1,436.08	1,675.43	1,914.77	2,154.12	2,632.81	3,111.50	3,590.20	4,308.24
Henbury	1,466.72	1,711.19	1,955.63	2,200.09	2,688.99	3,177.90	3,666.81	4,400.18
High Legh	1,439.68	1,679.64	1,919.57	2,159.53	2,639.42	3,119.31	3,599.21	4,319.06
Higher Hurdfield	1,445.60	1,686.55	1,927.47	2,168.41	2,650.27	3,132.14	3,614.01	4,336.82
Holmes Chapel	1,491.15	1,739.68	1,988.20	2,236.73	2,733.78	3,230.82	3,727.88	4,473.46
Hough, Chorlton	1,447.52	1,688.78	1,930.02	2,171.28	2,653.78	3,136.28	3,618.80	4,342.56
Hulme Walfield, Somerford Booths	1,457.16	1,700.02	1,942.87	2,185.74	2,671.46	3,157.17	3,642.90	4,371.48
Kettleshulme, Lyme Handley	1,463.72	1,707.68	1,951.62	2,195.58	2,683.48	3,171.38	3,659.30	4,391.16
Knutsford	1,510.36	1,762.10	2,013.81	2,265.55	2,769.00	3,272.45	3,775.91	4,531.10
Leighton, Minshull Vernon, Woolstanwood	1,444.86	1,685.68	1,926.48	2,167.30	2,648.92	3,130.54	3,612.16	4,334.60
Little Bollington, Agden	1,443.58	1,684.18	1,924.77	2,165.37	2,646.56	3,127.75	3,608.95	4,330.74
Little Warford	1,430.41	1,668.82	1,907.21	2,145.62	2,622.42	3,099.22	3,576.03	4,291.24
Lower Peover	1,455.26	1,697.81	1,940.34	2,182.89	2,667.97	3,153.05	3,638.15	4,365.78
Lower Withington	1,453.42	1,695.67	1,937.89	2,180.14	2,664.61	3,149.08	3,633.56	4,360.28
Macclesfield	1,473.45	1,719.03	1,964.60	2,210.18	2,701.33	3,192.47	3,683.63	4,420.36
Macclesfield Forest, Wildboardclough	1,430.41	1,668.82	1,907.21	2,145.62	2,622.42	3,099.22	3,576.03	4,291.24
Marbury-cum-Quoisley, Norbury, Wirswall	1,451.27	1,693.16	1,935.02	2,176.91	2,660.66	3,144.42	3,628.18	4,353.82
Marton	1,449.56	1,691.17	1,932.75	2,174.35	2,657.53	3,140.72	3,623.91	4,348.70
Mere	1,443.54	1,684.13	1,924.71	2,165.31	2,646.49	3,127.66	3,608.85	4,330.62

TOTAL COUNCIL TAX

	VALUATION BAND							
	BAND A	BAND B	BAND C	BAND D	BAND E	BAND F	BAND G	BAND H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Middlewich	1,510.96	1,762.79	2,014.61	2,266.44	2,770.09	3,273.74	3,777.40	4,532.88
Millington, Rostherne, Tatton	1,456.74	1,699.54	1,942.32	2,185.12	2,670.70	3,156.28	3,641.86	4,370.24
Mobberley	1,451.16	1,693.03	1,934.88	2,176.75	2,660.47	3,144.19	3,627.91	4,353.50
Moston	1,458.58	1,701.68	1,944.77	2,187.87	2,674.06	3,160.25	3,646.45	4,375.74
Mottram St Andrew	1,443.12	1,683.65	1,924.16	2,164.69	2,645.73	3,126.77	3,607.81	4,329.38
Nantwich	1,530.66	1,785.78	2,040.88	2,296.00	2,806.22	3,316.44	3,826.66	4,592.00
Nether Alderley	1,490.46	1,738.88	1,987.28	2,235.70	2,732.52	3,229.34	3,726.16	4,471.40
Newbold Astbury-cum-Moreton	1,458.18	1,701.21	1,944.23	2,187.27	2,673.33	3,159.38	3,645.45	4,374.54
Newhall	1,437.19	1,676.73	1,916.25	2,155.79	2,634.85	3,113.91	3,592.98	4,311.58
North Rode	1,441.68	1,681.97	1,922.24	2,162.53	2,643.09	3,123.65	3,604.21	4,325.06
Odd Rode	1,464.29	1,708.35	1,952.38	2,196.44	2,684.53	3,172.63	3,660.73	4,392.88
Ollerton, Marthall	1,452.30	1,694.36	1,936.40	2,178.46	2,662.56	3,146.66	3,630.76	4,356.92
Over Alderley	1,443.28	1,683.83	1,924.37	2,164.92	2,646.01	3,127.10	3,608.20	4,329.84
Peckforton	1,457.86	1,700.84	1,943.81	2,186.79	2,672.74	3,158.69	3,644.65	4,373.58
Peover Superior, Snelson	1,473.32	1,718.89	1,964.43	2,209.99	2,701.09	3,192.20	3,683.31	4,419.98
Pickmere	1,460.92	1,704.41	1,947.89	2,191.38	2,678.35	3,165.32	3,652.30	4,382.76
Plumley with Toft and Bexton	1,463.72	1,707.69	1,951.63	2,195.59	2,683.49	3,171.40	3,659.31	4,391.18
Pott Shrigley	1,448.64	1,690.09	1,931.52	2,172.97	2,655.85	3,138.73	3,621.61	4,345.94
Poynton with Worth	1,494.12	1,743.15	1,992.16	2,241.19	2,739.23	3,237.27	3,735.31	4,482.38
Prestbury	1,475.16	1,721.03	1,966.88	2,212.75	2,704.47	3,196.19	3,687.91	4,425.50
Rainow	1,445.78	1,686.75	1,927.70	2,168.67	2,650.59	3,132.51	3,614.45	4,337.34
Rope	1,435.45	1,674.70	1,913.93	2,153.18	2,631.66	3,110.14	3,588.63	4,306.36
Sandbach	1,488.30	1,736.36	1,984.40	2,232.46	2,728.56	3,224.66	3,720.76	4,464.92
Shavington-cum-Gresty	1,489.58	1,737.86	1,986.11	2,234.38	2,730.90	3,227.43	3,723.96	4,468.76
Siddington	1,444.63	1,685.41	1,926.17	2,166.95	2,648.49	3,130.03	3,611.58	4,333.90
Smallwood	1,438.52	1,678.29	1,918.03	2,157.79	2,637.29	3,116.80	3,596.31	4,315.58
Somerford	1,463.85	1,707.83	1,951.80	2,195.78	2,683.73	3,171.67	3,659.63	4,391.56
Sound, Austerson, Baddiley, Baddington, Broomhall, Coole Pilate	1,437.23	1,676.78	1,916.30	2,155.85	2,634.92	3,114.00	3,593.08	4,311.70
Spurstow	1,445.01	1,685.85	1,926.68	2,167.52	2,649.19	3,130.85	3,612.53	4,335.04
Stapeley, Batherton	1,435.10	1,674.30	1,913.47	2,152.66	2,631.02	3,109.39	3,587.76	4,305.32
Stoke, Hurleston	1,456.22	1,698.94	1,941.63	2,184.34	2,669.74	3,155.15	3,640.56	4,368.68
Styal	1,447.68	1,688.97	1,930.24	2,171.53	2,654.09	3,136.65	3,619.21	4,343.06
Sutton	1,445.62	1,686.56	1,927.49	2,168.43	2,650.30	3,132.17	3,614.05	4,336.86
Swettenham	1,457.78	1,700.75	1,943.70	2,186.67	2,672.59	3,158.51	3,644.45	4,373.34
Tabley	1,440.36	1,680.43	1,920.48	2,160.55	2,640.67	3,120.79	3,600.91	4,321.10
Twemlow	1,449.62	1,691.24	1,932.83	2,174.44	2,657.64	3,140.85	3,624.06	4,348.88
Wardle	1,442.84	1,683.32	1,923.78	2,164.26	2,645.20	3,126.14	3,607.10	4,328.52
Warmingham	1,454.29	1,696.68	1,939.05	2,181.44	2,666.20	3,150.96	3,635.73	4,362.88
Weston, Basford, Crewe Green	1,460.42	1,703.84	1,947.23	2,190.64	2,677.44	3,164.25	3,651.06	4,381.28
Willaston	1,452.55	1,694.65	1,936.73	2,178.83	2,663.01	3,147.19	3,631.38	4,357.66
Wilmslow	1,455.27	1,697.82	1,940.36	2,182.91	2,668.00	3,153.08	3,638.18	4,365.82
Wincle	1,430.41	1,668.82	1,907.21	2,145.62	2,622.42	3,099.22	3,576.03	4,291.24
Wistaston	1,444.01	1,684.69	1,925.34	2,166.02	2,647.35	3,128.69	3,610.03	4,332.04
Worleston, Poole, Aston Juxta Mondrum	1,441.04	1,681.23	1,921.39	2,161.57	2,641.91	3,122.26	3,602.61	4,323.14
Wrenbury-cum-Frith	1,456.42	1,699.17	1,941.89	2,184.64	2,670.11	3,155.58	3,641.06	4,369.28
Wybunbury	1,463.24	1,707.13	1,950.99	2,194.87	2,682.61	3,170.36	3,658.11	4,389.74

COUNCIL MEETING – 27TH FEBRUARY 2024**PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024/25****RECOMMENDATION**

That

- 1. the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 be approved; and**
 - 2. for the Pay Policy Statement 2024/25, any in-year changes be approved by the Monitoring Officer and published accordingly.**
-

Extract from the Minutes of the Corporate Policy Committee meeting on 18th January 2024

68 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2024/25

The Committee considered a report which outlined the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 for the Corporate Policy Committee to recommend to Council.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Committee

1. notes the changes to the 2023/24 Pay Policy Statement as outlined in section 10 of the report; and
2. recommends to Council:
 - (a) that the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 be approved; and
 - (b) that for the Pay Policy Statement 2024/25, any in-year changes be approved by the Monitoring Officer and published accordingly.

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Corporate Policy Committee**18 January 2024****Pay Policy Statement 2024/25****Report of: Alex Thompson, Director of Finance and Customer Services****Report Reference No: CP/36/23-24****Ward(s) Affected: Not applicable****Purpose of Report**

This report outlines the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 for the Corporate Policy Committee to recommend to Council.

Executive Summary

- 1 Section 38 of the Localism Act (2011) requires Local Authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement by 31 March on an annual basis. Regard continues to be given to any guidance from the Secretary of State in producing this statement and the Local Government Transparency Code (2015).
- 2 The Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25 reflects the expected position at 1 April 2024 and is attached as Appendix 1. Changes since last year's Statement are outlined in section 10 of this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Corporate Policy Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the changes to the 2023/24 Pay Policy Statement as outlined in section 10 of this report.

The Corporate Policy Committee recommends to Council:

2. That Council approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25.
3. That for the Pay Policy Statement 2024/25, any in year changes are approved by the Monitoring Officer and published accordingly.

Background

- 3 The purpose of the Pay Policy Statement is to increase accountability, transparency, and fairness regarding the Council's approach to pay with particular focus on its Chief Officers.

Consultation and Engagement

- 4 The Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 will be shared with Trade Unions.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 5 A Pay Policy Statement has been required to be produced annually since 2012/13 under Section 38 of the Localism Act (2011). Local Authorities must have their Pay Policy Statement approved by full Council and published on their website no later than the 31 March prior to the financial year to which it relates.

Other Options Considered

- 6 Not applicable

Key Updates to the Pay Policy Statement

- 7 The Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 follows the style and format of the Statement published in 2023/24. The Statement focuses on the broad principles and policies regarding pay and has links to further information and statistical data available on the Council's website and associated policies.
- 8 The Statement has again been designed to be user friendly for public consumption and should require minimal updates each subsequent year.
- 9 The links to further information including the link to pay multiples will be updated as appropriate through the coming year.
- 10 Changes since the last Pay Policy Statement are as follows:
- (a) Included that the Council also employs staff on Soulbury and Youth and Community Workers terms and conditions (see page 4).
 - (b) Removed reference to SCP1 in the section on 'NJC Employees' as this has now been deleted from the NJC pay spine (see page 4).
 - (c) Removed the reference to a decision being taken 'each year' in relation to running MARS. It now reads: *a decision is taken whether to run the scheme by the Chief Executive and due*

regard will again be given to the statutory guidance on exit payments (see page 7).

- (d) The salary range for the Chief Executive has been updated and is included in section 4.1, page 4. The updated range is £170,000 to £190,000 and was approved by Council at its meeting on 18th October 2023.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 11 The Council is required to produce and publish a Pay Policy Statement agreed by full Council each year, under Section 38 of the Localism Act (2011).
- 12 In addition, the Local Government Transparency Code (2015) requires information on organisational structure, senior salaries and pay multiples to be published annually each year.
- 13 This report and the accompanying Pay Policy Statement, with associated links in Appendix 1, once approved and adopted ensures that Cheshire East Council complies with these requirements.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 14 There are no direct financial implications associated with approving the updated Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 and no budgetary adjustments are proposed in relation to this report.

Policy

- 15 Any decisions relating to the pay and remuneration of Chief Officers must comply with the Pay Policy Statement in place at the time for that financial year. Whilst the Statement can be amended during the year should the need arise, in-year changes are subject to approval by the Council's Monitoring Officer.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 16 There are no direct equality implications associated with approving the updated Pay Policy Statement 2024/25, any potential implications relating to pay are addressed within the relevant pay policies.

Human Resources

- 17 Associated pay policies and HR support must comply with the Pay Policy Statement.

Risk Management

- 18 If the Council does not follow specific aspects of the guidance issued by DCLG and therefore does not achieve appropriate levels of openness and accountability, DCLG can take steps to require the Council to adapt particular policies.

Rural Communities

- 19 There are no direct implications for rural communities.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

- 20 There are no direct implications for children and young people.

Public Health

- 21 *There are no direct implications for public health.*

Climate Change

- 22 There are no direct implications on climate change.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Sara Barker, Head of HR Email: sara.barker@cheshireeast.gov.uk phone: 01270 686328
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Draft Pay Policy Statement 2024/25
Background Papers:	None



Pay Policy Statement

2024/25

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

1. Introduction and Purpose

Under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the “power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions as the authority thinks fit”. This Pay Policy Statement (the ‘statement’) sets out the Council’s approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of Section 38-43 of the Localism Act 2011 and due regard to the associated Statutory Guidance including the Supplementary Statutory Guidance issued in February 2013, and guidance issued under the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

The purpose of the statement is to provide transparency with regard to the Council’s approach to setting the pay of its senior employees (excluding teaching staff, employees working in local authority schools and academies, and alternative service delivery vehicles) by identifying:

- The methods by which salaries of all employees are determined.
- The detail and level of remuneration of its most senior employees, i.e. ‘Chief Officers’, as defined by the relevant legislation.

“Remuneration” for the purposes of this statement includes three elements; basic salary, pension and all other allowances arising from employment.

Once approved by full Council, this policy statement will come into effect on the 1st April 2024 superseding the 2023/24 statement and will be subject to review on a minimum of an annual basis, the policy statement for the next year being approved by 31st March each year.

2. Background

In determining the pay and remuneration of all its employees, the Council takes account of the need to ensure value for money in respect of the use of public expenditure. This is balanced against the need to recruit and retain employees in an increasingly competitive market who can deliver the Council’s commitments and meet the requirements of providing high quality services, which are delivered effectively and efficiently and at times at which those services are required.

The Council complies with all relevant employment legislation and codes of practice. This includes legislation such as the Employment Rights Act 1996, Equality Act 2010, The Part Time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 and where relevant, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 and the National Minimum Wage Regulations 2015. The Council seeks to ensure there is no pay discrimination within its pay structures and that all pay differentials can be objectively justified using job evaluation mechanisms and the application of key criteria, which directly establish the relative levels of posts in grades according to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of the role.

3. Senior Management ('Chief Officers') Remuneration

3.1 Principles

There are a number of overriding principles which govern the Council's approach to senior management reward:

- The policy will be affordable; with reward being commensurate with individual and corporate performance.
- Reward policy for senior post-holders will be transparent, clearly defined and readily understood.
- The policy will offer the flexibility to reward for job size, capability and market rates (where these may be relevant, with evidence).
- Reward for senior roles will be fair and proportionate by comparison to reward for the wider workforce.

3.2 Reward components

Reward will comprise basic salary and a range of benefits as follows:

- **Basic salary:** This is guaranteed fixed cash remuneration, paid monthly. The level of basic salary is contractual. For some jobs, this remuneration may increase by annual increments until the maximum of the grade is reached, i.e. Grade 13 and 14. These two grades contain three increments in each with annual incremental progression on the anniversary of the appointment.
- **Benefits:** The Council provides a range of benefits. The principal benefits are holidays and access to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Further details can be found on the [Council's website](#).

3.3 Job Evaluation and Banding

The Council uses the Hay Group job evaluation scheme to position roles into the Cheshire East Senior Management pay bands. The bands are linked to Hay Job Evaluation points ranges which have been determined as part of the Council's operating model.

4. Pay and Grading Structure

4.1 Senior Managers (JNC)

This defined pay structure determines the salaries of senior managers on JNC (Joint National Council for Chief Officers) conditions of service. A score is produced from the HAY job evaluation process which equates to a pay band on the Council's senior manager pay structure.

The current pay structure for senior managers who are on JNC conditions of service can be seen by accessing the [pay and grading structure](#).

In addition, there is a very small number of public health employees who transferred under TUPE to the Council on NHS Pay and Terms and Conditions on 1st April 2013 and these employees remain on the terms and conditions of their previous

NHS employer. The council also employs staff on Soulbury and Youth and Community Workers terms and conditions.

When applying the senior manager pay structure, for the purposes of this statement, the definition of Chief Officers is as set out in Section 43 of the Localism Act. The details of the salary packages are as follows:

Tier 1 (Chief Executive)

- The current salary package falls within a range of £170,000 to £190,000

Tier 2 (direct reports to the Chief Executive)

- The salary package falls within a range of £128,008 to £145,193

Tier 3 (direct reports to Tier 2 managers)

- The salary package falls within a range of £83,788 to £113,001

4.2 NJC Employees

The NJC pay framework comprises 44 salary points, between SCP 2 (£22,366 per annum) and SCP 45 (£59,346 per annum) for a full-time employee (based on a 37-hour week).

The current pay and grading structure for employees who are on NJC conditions of service can be seen by accessing the [pay and grading structure](#).

5. Recruitment of Chief Officers

The Council's policy and procedures with regard to the recruitment of Chief Officers are set out in the Council's Constitution and are undertaken by the Appointments Committee in accordance with arrangements set out in the Constitution (see Chapter 2). Full Council approval will be sought in relation to decisions affecting the remuneration of any new post whose remuneration is or is proposed to be or would become £100,000 per annum or more.

Key statutory posts (Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer) are Council appointments.

When recruiting to all posts, the Council will take full and proper account of all provisions of relevant employment law and its own Recruitment Policy and Procedure, Disability Confident commitment, Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme Employer, Redeployment Procedure and Equality in Employment Policy.

The remuneration to be offered to any newly appointed Chief Officer will be in accordance with the pay structure and relevant policies in place at the time of recruitment and in line with this Pay Policy Statement. New appointments will normally be made in accordance with the JNC pay structure, any variation to this approach will be by exception and based on objectively justified criteria supported by appropriate evidence. An appointee's existing pay and their relevant experience and qualifications may be included in any consideration but would need to take account of any equal pay implications that could arise within the Council.

From time to time, it may be necessary to take account of the external pay levels in the labour market and to pay market-related supplements to attract and retain employees with particular experience, skills and capacity. Where necessary, the Council will ensure the requirement for such additional payments is objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence of relevant market comparators, using data sources available from within the local government sector and outside, as appropriate. Any such payments will be reviewed at least annually to ensure their ongoing suitability and appropriateness.

Where the Council is unable to recruit Chief Officers, or there is a need for interim support to provide cover for a substantive Chief Officer post, the Council will, where necessary, put in place the most effective arrangements to engage individuals. These arrangements will comply with HMRC IR35 requirements, relevant procurement processes and ensure the Council is able to demonstrate maximum value for money.

6. Additions to Chief Officers' Salaries

The following payments can be applied to Chief Officers' salaries:

- Returning and Deputy Returning Officers' Fees
- Travel Allowances and Expenses
- Salary Sacrifice Lease Car Scheme (only applicable for salary sacrifice vehicles ordered before 7th September 2020 as this scheme ended on 15th September 2020)
- Relocation Expenses
- Professional Fees and Subscriptions

Further details of [Additions to Chief Officers' salaries](#) are published in the Council's Transparency Data and in the Statement of Accounts.

7. Pension Contributions

Eligible employees are automatically enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The Council is required to make a contribution to the scheme based on a percentage of the pensionable remuneration due under the contract of employment of that employee. The employer contribution rate is set by the Actuary advising the Cheshire Pension Fund (the name of the LGPS in Cheshire) in order to ensure the scheme is appropriately funded. Employee contribution rates are set in bands and are defined by statute.

Details of the [Local Government Pension Scheme](#) discretions exercised, contribution bands, actuarial rates and discretions policy application are available.

8. Redundancy Payments and Payments on Termination

The Council's policy on compulsory redundancies, including redundancy payments, is set out in the Organisational Change Policy and Procedure. If employees have two or more years' service, they may be entitled to a redundancy payment. The payment is based on the statutory formula (on actual weekly pay). Any overtaken leave/flexi will be deducted from their final salary. Where there is an outstanding leave entitlement, this must be taken during their notice period and before their employment ends.

In order to minimise the need for compulsory redundancies and in conjunction with other measures, e.g. restricting recruitment, the Council may consider requests from employees to be made redundant (voluntary redundancy). Employees who leave on grounds of voluntary redundancy will normally be entitled to receive a redundancy payment in accordance with the statutory formula (on actual weekly pay) plus an additional severance payment of 0.8 times the statutory payment, bringing the total payment to 1.80 times the statutory formula and up to a maximum of 50 week's pay.

The Council's current approach to statutory and discretionary payments on termination of employment of Chief Officers, prior to reaching normal retirement age and for those eligible for retirement, is set out in the Leaving the Council Policy & Procedure and in accordance with the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations 2006 and Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2007.

All payments under this section are subject to the approval process set out in the Organisational Change Policy & Procedure, the Leaving the Council Policy & Procedure and [CEC Constitution](#).

The Council reserves the right to change all discretionary elements. The Council will also take into consideration the Government's [statutory guidance on the making and disclosure of Special Severance Payments by local authorities in England - GOV.UK](#) and will implement any government changes to exit payments when they become law.

9. Early Retirement and Severance on the Grounds of Business Efficiency

In line with the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006, the Council also operates a voluntary scheme to facilitate early retirement or severance on grounds of business efficiency to enable the Council to continue to achieve effective use of resources and provide value for money. The terms of this are set out in the Leaving the Council Policy and Procedure and due consideration will again be given to the statutory guidance on exit payments.

10. Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS)

The Council has operated a Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS) which enables individual employees, including Chief Officers, in agreement with the

Council, to choose to leave their employment voluntarily in return for a discretionary 'severance' payment. This scheme creates resourcing flexibility to avoid compulsory redundancies in future, enable the redeployment of resources to higher priority areas of work and reduce costs in lower priority areas. MARS is non contractual and has no pension liabilities. A decision is taken whether to run the scheme by the Chief Executive and due regard will again be given to the statutory guidance on exit payments.

11. Settlement Agreements

The Council uses settlement agreements for all voluntary redundancies/severance and MARS severance payments, for all employees, including Chief Officers. The use of settlement agreements on this basis minimises any risk of future claims against the Council and can ensure that any potential or pending legal proceedings and their associated legal costs can be avoided. The Council follows the current guidance for public sector settlement agreements in these circumstances.

12. Pay Multiples

The Council publishes a range of information to meet the Transparency Code requirements and has used the recommended formulae in the code guidance and Local Government Association (LGA) guidance to calculate the relationship between the rate of pay for the lowest paid, median and Chief Officers, known as [pay multiples](#).

13. Re-employment or re-engagement

Any decision to re-employ an individual (including Chief Officers) already in receipt of a Local Government Pension (with same or another local authority) will be made on merit, considering the use of public money and the exigencies of the Council.

In particular, the Voluntary Redundancy Scheme provides that former Cheshire East/Legacy Authority employees who left their employment on grounds of voluntary retirement, redundancy or severance will not be re-employed in any capacity, except in exceptional circumstances and subject to the agreement of the Head of HR in consultation with the Chair of the Corporate Policy Committee. Re-engagement includes all types of contractual relationships whether they are a contract of employment, contract for service etc. and whether the individual is appointed as an employee or engaged as an interim, direct consultancy or via an agency or other supplier.

14. Publication and access to information

Upon approval by the full Council, this Statement will be published on the Council's website (www.cheshireeast.gov.uk). Additionally, in line with Code of Practice and Accounts and Audit Regulations, salary, allowances and bonus compensation and employers pension contributions will be published for:

- a) Senior employees whose salary is £150,000 or more (who will also be identified by name).

b) Senior employees whose salary is £50,000 or more.

The Council will also publish, on an annual basis, Gender Pay Gap data in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Prepared by: HR Policy and Reward

Date: December 2023

Review date: March 2025

Annex 1 – Links

All the relevant policies and procedures as referred to in the Pay Policy Statement can be found using the links in section 1 below. Please email humanresources@cheshireeast.gov.uk should you have any difficulties accessing this information.

Section 1: Additional information

Link 1 – [Pay and grading structure for senior managers and employees](#)

Link 2 – [Additions to Chief Officers' salaries](#)

Link 3 – [Local Government Pension Scheme](#)

Link 4 – [Pay multiples](#)

[Statement of Accounts](#)

Section 2: Internal intranet links to the further relevant policies, procedures and other relevant information

- [Payment of a Market Supplement](#)
- [Pay and Allowances Policy](#)
- [Pensions Discretions Policy](#)
- [Organisational Change Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Leaving the Council Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Recruitment Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Redeployment Procedure](#)
- [Equality in Employment Policy](#)
- [Relocation and Excess Travel Policy and Procedure](#)

For those seeking to access copies of policies and procedures externally, please email humanresources@cheshireeast.gov.uk to request copies of the relevant documents.

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COUNCIL MEETING – 27 FEBRUARY 2024**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COROPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE: TRANSFER OF LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP FUNCTIONS TO LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTROL****RECOMMENDATIONS: That Council**

1. agree the retention of the partnership approach between Warrington Borough Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire East Council in respect of sub-regional functions.
2. agree that Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (including Marketing Cheshire) functions should continue to be delivered by a Company jointly owned by all three Councils, based on the business case set out in Appendix A.
3. agree to set up a Joint Committee (JC) by 1 April 2024 with Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix B.
4. agree that a Cheshire and Warrington Business Advisory Board be created to ensure a continued influential business voice in sub-regional economic strategy and priorities following the end of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Board. Terms of Reference be agreed by the Joint Committee.
5. that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Growth, in conjunction with the Council's Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, to effect non-material changes to the proposed changes to the Articles of Association of Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership as referenced in Appendix C of this report.
6. recommend to the Joint Committee that they then make changes to the Articles of Association and that the name of Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership be changed to Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington (ECW).
7. agree the findings of the due diligence report undertaken and set out in Appendix D, including finances, risks and liabilities that the Council will incur in respect of LEPCo.
8. recommend to the Joint Committee that when established, one officer from Cheshire East Council, with appropriate corporate skills and experience is appointed as a Director of LEPCo. That the officer is identified through consultation with the Council's Monitoring Officer, Place Director and Section 151 Officer.

9. agree to enter into a Service Agreement with Cheshire West and Chester Council, Warrington Council and LEPCo on the terms set out in Appendix E, and to delegate final approval of the terms of the Service Agreement to the Director of Governance and Compliance in consultation with the Place Director and S151 Officer.
 10. recommend the Business Plan of the LEPCo to the Joint Committee as set out at Appendix F.
 11. agree that Cheshire East Council should continue to be the Accountable Body for the purposes of funding, and that the Director of Governance and Compliance be authorised to make any necessary changes to the Collaboration Agreement.
 12. agree that the Council's Monitoring Officer be given the authority to make any consequential changes to the Council Constitution to give effect to these recommendations.
-

Extract from the Minutes of the Corporate Policy Committee meeting on 13 February 2024

10 **TRANSFER OF LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP FUNCTIONS TO LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTROL**

The Committee considered a report which set out the changes needed to implement the requirements of government guidance on Local Enterprise Partnership functions, which would become the responsibility of Local Authorities from 1 April 2024.

The Committee debated the report and queried the member oversight and scrutiny of the proposals. It was confirmed that member briefings had taken place in September 2023 and January 2024 to provide members of the council with an overview of the direction of travel. Members noted that a joint committee would be established with representation across the three local authorities.

Cllr O'Leary queried the objectives of the LEP to provide subsidy. Officers committed to providing a written response.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That the Corporate Policy Committee recommends that full Council:

13. Agree the retention of the partnership approach between Warrington Borough Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire East Council in respect of sub-regional functions.

14. Agree that Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (including Marketing Cheshire) functions should continue to be delivered by a Company jointly owned by all three Councils, based on the business case set out in Appendix A.
15. Agree to set up a Joint Committee (JC) by 1 April 2024 with Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix B.
16. Agree that a Cheshire and Warrington Business Advisory Board be created to ensure a continued influential business voice in sub-regional economic strategy and priorities following the end of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP Board. Terms of Reference be agreed by the Joint Committee.
17. That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Growth, in conjunction with the Council's Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, to effect non-material changes to the proposed changes to the Articles of Association of C&W LEP as referenced in Appendix C of this report.
18. Recommend to the Joint Committee that they then make changes to the Articles of Association and that the name of Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership be changed to Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington (ECW).
19. Agree the findings of the due diligence report undertaken and set out in Appendix D, including finances, risks and liabilities that the Council will incur in respect of LEPCo.
20. Recommend to the Joint Committee that when established, one officer from Cheshire East Council, with appropriate corporate skills and experience is appointed as a Director of LEPCo. That the officer is identified through consultation with the Council's Monitoring Officer, Place Director and Section 151 Officer.
21. Agree to enter into a Service Agreement with Cheshire West and Chester Council, Warrington Council and LEPCo on the terms set out in Appendix E, and to delegate final approval of the terms of the Service Agreement to the Director of Governance and Compliance in consultation with the Place Director and S151 Officer.
22. Recommend the Business Plan of the LEPCo to the Joint Committee as set out at Appendix F.
23. Agree that Cheshire East Council should continue to be the Accountable Body for the purposes of funding, and that the Director of Governance and Compliance be authorised to make any necessary changes to the Collaboration Agreement.
24. Agree that the Council's Monitoring Officer be given the authority to make any consequential changes to the Council Constitution to give effect to these recommendations.

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OPEN.

Corporate Policy Committee

13 February 2024

Transfer of Local Enterprise Partnership Functions to Local Authority Control

Report of: Peter Skates, Acting Executive Director Place

Report Reference No: CP/64/23-24

Ward(s) Affected: All

Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) functions become the responsibility of Local Authorities from 1st April 2024.
- 1.2 Those functions are currently provided by the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (referred to as LEPCo in this report) and this report sets out proposals for how they could be transferred to the Council.
- 1.3 This report supports our corporate priorities of; An open and enabling organisation – *Look at opportunities to bring more income into the Borough* and A thriving and sustainable place – *thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all.*

Executive Summary

- 2.1. This report sets out the changes needed to implement the requirements of Government guidance on Local Enterprise Partnership functions. An options appraisal was undertaken to determine the optimum way of delivering the functions and this report sets out its conclusion and the suggested way forward.
- 2.2. It advises that the Council should increase its shareholding in the LEPCo and that it should be a company which is controlled by the three Councils across Cheshire and Warrington i.e. Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Borough Councils.
- 2.3. To ensure that the changed company structure is able to be effective and has the correct governance arrangements, a number of structural changes and agreements should be put in place between the parties.

- 2.4. A new Joint Committee should be formed between the Councils with a new Board appointed alongside the creation of a new Business Advisory Board.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Corporate Policy Committee recommend that Council:

1. Agree the retention of the partnership approach between Warrington Borough Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire East Council in respect of sub-regional functions.
2. Agree that Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (including Marketing Cheshire) functions should continue to be delivered by a Company jointly owned by all three Councils, based on the business case set out in Appendix A.
3. Agree to set up a Joint Committee (JC) by 1 April 2024 with Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix B.
4. Agree that a Cheshire and Warrington Business Advisory Board be created to ensure a continued influential business voice in sub-regional economic strategy and priorities following the end of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP Board. Terms of Reference be agreed by the Joint Committee.
5. That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Growth, in conjunction with the Council's Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, to effect non-material changes to the proposed changes to the Articles of Association of C&W LEP as referenced in Appendix C of this report.
6. Recommend to the Joint Committee that they then make changes to the Articles of Association and that the name of Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership be changed to Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington (ECW).
7. Agree the findings of the due diligence report undertaken and set out in Appendix D, including finances, risks and liabilities that the Council will incur in respect of LEPCo.
8. Recommend to the Joint Committee that when established, one officer from Cheshire East Council, with appropriate corporate skills and experience is appointed as a Director of LEPCo. That the officer is identified through consultation with the Council's Monitoring Officer, Place Director and Section 151 Officer.

9. Agree to enter into a Service Agreement with Cheshire West and Chester Council, Warrington Council and LEPCo on the terms set out in Appendix E, and to delegate final approval of the terms of the Service Agreement to the Director of Governance and Compliance in consultation with the Place Director and S151 Officer.
10. Recommend the Business Plan of the LEPCo to the Joint Committee as set out at Appendix F.
11. Agree that Cheshire East Council should continue to be the Accountable Body for the purposes of funding, and that the Director of Governance and Compliance be authorised to make any necessary changes to the Collaboration Agreement.
12. Agree that the Council's Monitoring Officer be given the authority to make any consequential changes to the Council Constitution to give effect to these recommendations.

Background

3.1 The Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership has supported economic growth across the sub-region since 2011. Over that period it invested almost £250 million into the sub-region, facilitating the Northgate development in Chester, the Congleton Link Road and the Omega development in Warrington; created one of the most successful Enterprise Zones in the country and UK's largest and best invested bioscience campus; helped position Cheshire & Warrington to become the first place in the world to have a decarbonised industrial cluster; and established the Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission to advise on how Cheshire and Warrington could become the healthiest most sustainable, inclusive and growing place in the Country.

3.2 In August 2023 the UK Government confirmed that the functions currently carried out by LEPs would become the responsibility of Local Authorities by April 2024. Those functions are set out more fully in Appendix A, but in summary are;

*a. Embedding a strong, independent, and **diverse local business voice** into local democratic institutions.*

*b. Carrying out **strategic economic planning** in partnership with local leaders that clearly articulates their area's economic priorities and sectoral strengths.*

*c. Continuing to **deliver a number of functions [programmes]** on behalf of government departments, shaped by the local business voice where relevant.*

*d. Where appropriate, **helping to broker and support new or deeper devolution deals**, where requested by local partners.*

3.3 The Guidance provides that how those functions should be implemented would be decided locally. However, it sets out that wherever possible local authorities should work together to deliver LEP functions within a 'Functional Economic Area'. A Functional Economic Area is defined as 'the area over which the local economy and its key markets operate' and it requires a population of 500,000+.

3.4 Cheshire East Council has historically delivered these functions through the Cheshire and Warrington LEP, which is set up as a company limited by guarantee. Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Councils together with the Chair and Vice-Chair (two business sector persons) each have 20% ownership.

3.5 During Summer 2023, officers considered a number of options for the Councils to deliver LEP functions. These options were evaluated against the backdrop of the importance of delivering Council-led sub-regional economic development and growth as well as ensuring Member oversight and control.

Business Case and Options Appraisal

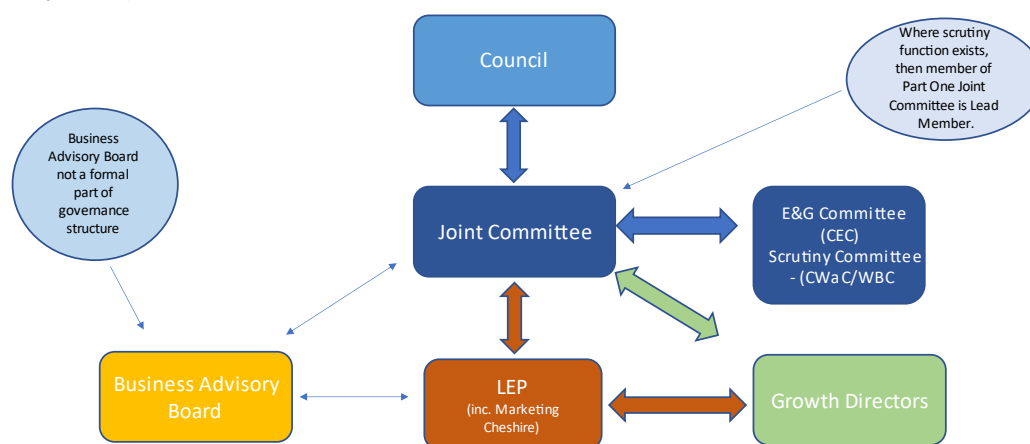
4.1 The LEP commissioned an external consultant to consider options for the future. Following detailed analysis as set out in the Business Case and Options Appraisal set out in Appendix A, the preferred operating model for Cheshire and Warrington is to transfer full ownership and control of the LEP to the three Cheshire and Warrington Councils i.e. each Local Authority will increase their existing ownership of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP from 20% to c.33% per Council. The business case also includes detail on Marketing Cheshire, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP.

Governance

5.1 To support the jointly owned company structure, officers are recommending a Joint Committee comprised of two members from all three Councils. This will provide joint Council oversight and control of sub-regional economic development work and act as a 'shareholder committee'. The Joint Committee would be a formal committee of the Councils and align to the current governance structure as follows:

Diagram 1: Proposed governance structure

Diagram 1- Proposed Governance Structure



OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE Legal

5.2 The Joint Committee is split into Part One and Part Two business, as set out in the proposed Terms of Reference at Appendix B. For Part One business, one elected Member on the Joint Committee will be responsible for exercising the functions of the shareholder for Cheshire East Council. For Part Two, all three members on the Committee will provide strategic leadership for sub-regional economic growth. This includes acting as the strategic body across economic growth priorities for Cheshire and Warrington, providing a coherent single position on the major economic strategic issues for the sub-region.

5.3 Members of the Committee will be supported by the existing Cheshire and Warrington Growth Directors Group, comprising senior officers from the three Councils and led by the three Council's Growth Directors. This group will act as the operational "client" for LEPCo, ensuring that it delivers the sub-regional priorities agreed by the Joint Committee. Scrutiny oversight will be undertaken through existing Council scrutiny arrangements for Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Borough Councils, and through the Economy and Growth Committee for Cheshire East Council, as set out in Diagram 1 above.

5.4 It is proposed to create a Business Advisory Board to support the governance structure. The Terms of Reference could be agreed by the Joint Committee and aligned to guidance as set out by Government. To maintain the current practice of excellent business engagement and influence in the sub-regional economic agenda for Cheshire and Warrington, the Chair of the Business Advisory Board could be a non-voting member of the Joint Committee, following a model already adopted in a number of other areas including Liverpool, Manchester and in West and North Yorkshire.

5.5 Scrutiny of the functions would be undertaken by the Economy & Growth Committee, as this is within its terms of reference i.e. the LEPCo will become a local authority controlled company, and not an external body. Finance Sub-Committee may wish to consider what, if any, role they would want to have in providing oversight and will be responsible for appointment to the Joint Committee.

5.6 The current board of C&W LEP comprises the Leaders of the three Councils (or their nominees) and two business persons as Chair and Vice Chair, and eight other business representatives. It is proposed that all current directors will resign by 31st March 2024. In the new structure, the Councils themselves would retain more control over the company through changes to the Articles, as proposed at Appendix C, and the Councils will exercise that control through the Joint Committee. A new board will need to be appointed to the LEPCo and this could be comprised of officers, including the Chief Executive and Finance Director of LEPCo who have the relevant expertise. It is also recommended that appropriate officers from each Council are appointed to the Board of LEPCo.

5.7 It should be noted that the existing arrangement of the LEP as the sole shareholder of Marketing Cheshire will remain in place – albeit that the LEP will be wholly council-owned. The current board of Marketing Cheshire comprises one councillor from each Council, the Chief Executive and Finance Director from the LEPCo and seven business representatives. No changes are proposed to the Board at this time.

Due Diligence

6.1 As members will note from the due diligence note at Appendix D, the LEPCo is set up as a company limited by guarantee. This structure has 'Members' as opposed to 'Shareholders' and the three Members will be the Councils. The Council already owns a 20% share of LEPCo, and as its share will increase to 33%, we have considered whether the Council will be taking on additional liabilities/risks as a result. As this is a company limited by guarantee, then the Councils' liabilities to the LEPCo are limited to £1, and the Members of the LEPCo would have to choose whether to e.g. find additional funding for the company in the event of financial failure. Similarly, as it is a company limited by guarantee there is no distribution of any dividend.

Accountable Body

7.1 The S151 Officer for Cheshire East Council is the Accountable Officer for the Cheshire and Warrington LEP and has to provide an Annual Assurance Statement to Government as part of that role. For the year 2022/23 the assurance framework for the Cheshire and Warrington LEP was found to be 'satisfactory'. Those matters which were raised were classed as 'minor' and will

be completed or no longer be applicable as a result of the restructure of the LEPCo.

7.2 Cheshire East Council entered into a Collaboration Agreement with the LEPCo for the provision of accountable body services. To allow for continuity, we are proposing that this arrangement continue for 2024/25 but the Collaboration Agreement will need updating to allow for the structural changes to the LEPCo.

Service Agreement

8.1 To ensure that the LEPCo and the Councils are clear on expectations and outcomes, we propose that a Service Agreement be put in place between all parties on the terms set out at Appendix E. To allow for negotiation and flexibility between the parties, authority should be delegated to officers to finalise the terms and conditions.

Business Plan for the LEPCo

9.1 The LEPCo will report to the local authorities of Cheshire and Warrington, with the primary goal of supporting the realisation of the agreed sub-regional vision: *"to be the healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive, and growing economy in the UK."*

9.2 Objectives are concentrated at the sub-regional level, complementing the efforts of each individual authority in the following areas:

1. Strategic Economic Planning:

- Completing and publishing the Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Plan.
- Updating and publishing new strategic transport and skills plans for Cheshire and Warrington.
- Putting in place a new programme co-ordination and oversight body to ensure the successful delivery of the world's first net zero industrial cluster .
- Supporting elected leaders to put in place a Fair Employment Charter for Cheshire and Warrington.

2. Economic Insight and Delivery:

- Provide high-quality, forward-thinking evidence and insight to support the work undertaken by the LAs and LEPCo to make Cheshire and Warrington the healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive and growing place in the country
- Development and promotion of the Cheshire Science Corridor as a key national innovation hub.
- Ensure that people have the skills they need to realise the opportunities available to them in Cheshire and Warrington and

that businesses are able to access the people they need including by funding 640 training places for shortage occupations.

- Working with regional partners to ensure that the £260 million available in Life Sciences and Evergreen investment funds supports the development of the Cheshire and Warrington economy as effectively as possible. Support all 84 secondary schools to deliver first class careers education for their students.

3. Marketing Cheshire:

- As the Visit England designated Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) for Cheshire and Warrington, lead on marketing Cheshire and Warrington as a great place to visit, live, work, invest and study.
- Develop and publish a Destination Management Plan alongside the Strategic and Inclusive Economic Plan.
- Support the creation of a Tourist Business Improvement District (TBID) in the Chester area
- Further strengthen the delivery of visitor information in Cheshire and Warrington but implementing the recommendations of the sub-region's review of visitor information.
- Offering excellent sub-regional communications and PR services.

9.3. A draft Business Plan for 2024/5 is attached at Appendix F. Within the draft Plan are detailed activities for the year and a headline budget (including anticipated budget for 2025/26). This confirms both Teckal compliance and a balanced budget.

9.4 Rural Economy and Rural Communities will remain a focus LEPCo to ensure consistency of approach, and the promotion of key rural issues that need support at local, regional and government level.

9.5 The UK Government's commitment to engaging with economic functional areas is outlined in the Levelling Up White Paper (2022) and subsequent guidance associated with Local Enterprise Partnership transition arrangements in England. By focusing on these functional areas, which represent key sectors and industries, the government aims to optimise regional strengths and capitalise on unique economic potential. Through targeted engagement at scale, policymakers can tailor policies and interventions to address specific challenges and opportunities within each functional area, thereby promoting innovation, productivity, and job creation. This approach of intervention at economic functional areas is a policy shared across the main political parties – with recent Labour Party communications also highlighting the approach, for example, within the 2023 'Renewing our Democracy and Rebuilding our Economy' Commission Report.

Consultation and Engagement

10.1 The proposals set out in this report have not been subject to consultation. There is no requirement to undertake any statutory consultation in relation to the matters contained within this report.

Reasons for Recommendations

11.1 The Options Appraisal is contained in the Business Case set out at Appendix A. The recommended option of increasing the shareholding in the current LEPCo provides an outcome which Officers consider to be the most cost efficient, with the least risk and most speed for the Council.

11.2 The proposed governance solutions offer a shared model for the Councils to continue to deliver effective sub-regional economic development. They provide a formal, democratic-led governance structure in accordance with government guidance as well as clarity on roles and responsibilities.

11.3 Maintaining a strong business voice to support sub-regional priorities is also a local and national priority, and the creation of a Business Advisory Board will support this by ensuring that there is representation by local businesses.

Other Options Considered

12. The options appraisal contained in Appendix A sets out in full the other options considered and reasons for discounting them.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

13.1. The legal implications are set out in this report and its appendices, including the summary of due diligence undertaken. Members should note the need for the LEPCo to ensure Teckal compliance, as it will be delivering services direct for the Council without these being tendered. More information on this area is set out in Appendix A, but the use of a Service Agreement and the level of control which the Councils have over the Board will help to support the LEPCo with Teckal compliance. Care will need to be taken to ensure that it does not breach the 20% threshold for services which are being delivered to third parties and this should be monitored by the Board.

13.2. It will be necessary for the Council to ensure that the relationship between the Councils as owners of the LEPCo is clearly set out and documented, through changes to the Articles. This will ensure that the Councils have adequate control over the company and its Board of Directors. This will need

to be agreed by the first meeting of the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee terms of reference provide that all three Councils need to agree certain matters, for example loans or guarantees to be taken out by the LEPCo, or borrowing or raising any money.

13.3. A Joint Committee will need to be set up and serviced, in accordance with the terms of reference set out in Appendix B. The Councils are enabled to set up Joint Committees under Part VI of the Local Government Act 1972 and Part I Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000. Local Authorities are permitted to have non-voting members on their committees, and this will allow for the Chair of the proposed Business Advisory Board to sit on the Joint Committee.

13.4. The proposed Business Advisory Board will not be set up as a committee of the Councils and will not form part of our constitutional arrangements. It will however need to be serviced, with appropriate arrangements made for a lead officer, with a forward plan for both to ensure that the work is both manageable and meaningful.

13.5. A range of Service Level Agreements will also be needed to ensure that LEPCo receives, and pays for, any services it receives from the Councils. This will also help to avoid issues with Teckal compliance as set out in the Business Case.

13.6 The Constitution may also need to be changed to ensure that committee terms of reference and the scheme of delegation are still suitable, given the additional functions which the Council is taking on.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

14.1. Cheshire East Council is the Accountable Body for the LEP. The recommendations include that Cheshire East should continue to act in an accountable body role under the new structures; consequently this will ensure continuity of financial oversight and assurance, with regard to management of the pre-existing funding streams and associated programmes, as well as for the new arrangements reflecting the more direct role of the local authorities.

14.2 Members will be aware that the existing arrangements include the Enterprise Zones, a long-term initiative whereby the LEP retains business rates from those zones, for reinvestment in economic development activities and projects; and that the local authorities have each provided a £10m loan facility to 'pump-prime' particular projects (with the loans being repayable from future retained business rates generated).

14.3 By far the majority of funding for the LEP comes from Government, either in the form of 'core'-type funding (for LEP management and administration) or for specific programmes of activity. Only a relatively small proportion of funding comes from the local authorities as annual 'subscriptions'; though in addition

any interest earned on grant monies held by Cheshire East is also passed on to the LEP.

14.4 At the end of December 2023 the Government informed local authorities that it would provide core funding of £240,000 in 2024/25 towards the cost of functions undertaken by LEPs until March 2025. This funding will be paid to Cheshire East as the Accountable Body for these functions in Cheshire and Warrington. This is a reduction of £10,000 on the core funding provided to the LEP in 2023/24. Any Government funding beyond 2024/25 will be subject to future Spending Review decisions.

14.5 It should be noted that the Government revenue support of £240,000 is a relatively small part of the 'LEP' company model's total expected income in 2024/25 of £8.845 million, which is made up of: funding from the Departments for Education, Business and Trade and Energy Security and Net Zero to deliver specified programmes; retained business rates via the Enterprise Zones; grants for 'interest on balances' held by Cheshire East as accountable body; and some £30,000 each from the three Councils as 'local authority subscriptions'.

14.6 It should also be noted that with regard to Marketing Cheshire, the funding model is based on around 35% traded services, and that income via trading is a requirement of Local Visitor Economic Partnerships status.

14.7 A draft operating budget for the new Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington company for 2024/25 is shown below. It is worthy of note that this budget does not require any more funding from local authority revenue budgets than is currently provided (the 'LA Grants' line reflects both local authority subscriptions and the passing on of core Government grant funding).

ECW FIRST DRAFT BUDGET 2024/25 – LEP AND MARKETING CHESHIRE

	LEP	MC	TOTAL
INCOME			
LA Grants	£ 333k	£ 282k	£ 615k
Government Programme Grants	£ 4335k	£ 170k	£4505k
Commercial Income	£ 0k	£ 425k	£ 425k
Enterprise Zone	£ 2500k	£ 200k	£2700k
Interest on balances with bank and Cheshire East	£ 600k	£ 0k	£ 600k
TOTAL INCOME	£ 7768k	£ 1077k	£8845k
EXPENDITURE			
LEP and MC Running Costs	£ 2501k	£ 1098k	£3599k
EZ Loan Repayments	£ 1427k	£ 0k	£1427k
Programme Expenditure	£ 3459k	£ 0k	£3459k
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£7387k	£ 1098k	£8485k
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	£ 381k	(£ 21k)	£ 360k

14.8 2024/25 will be a transitional year, with a reduced level of Government core funding support. In preparing the business plans and budgets for future years, the new local authority company will need to manage and plan for its activities within budget envelopes created by available funding streams and its use of reserves, as core and project-based funding from Government continues to reduce.

14.9 Further details on the finances of the existing LEP can be found in the annual accounts published on their website:

<https://cheshireandwarrington.com/how-we-work/transparency/finance-and-funding/>

14.10 There is no cost to the Council with regard to increasing its shareholding. With regard to accounting for new local authority-owned company, we will need to determine the extent to which the accounts are consolidated and/ or disclosed in the statutory accounts for Cheshire East (and of Cheshire West & Chester and Warrington Councils) for the 2024/25 year onwards.

Policy

An open and enabling organisation <i>Ensure there is transparency in our decision making</i>	A thriving and sustainable place <i>A great place for people to live, work and visit</i> <i>Thriving urban and rural economies</i>
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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

15. There are no direct equality implications as a result of this report. The services are currently provided by LEPCo – it is proportion of company ownership which is changing.

15.2 In respect of the functions which are transferring to the Council, it will need to ensure that in delivering the functions it undertakes any necessary EIA for the future or ensures that this is undertaken by LEPCo and that LEPCo comply with all equalities duties.

Human Resources

16.1 The staff will remain the responsibility of LEPCo and will continue to be employed on their existing terms and conditions. However, some harmonisation of HR policies with the Council(s) over time might be helpful, and it will be important to manage any reputational risk around staffing.

16.2 The LEPCo may be considered to be a local authority ‘associated company’ for purposes of equal pay legislation. As part of the due diligence,

work has been undertaken to ensure that there are no equal pay issues which may arise as a result of the increase in shareholding. *Equal pay issues are currently being checked by each Council as C&W LEP Directors are predominantly male.*

Risk Management

17.1. The Council is increasing its shareholding from 20% to 33%, and already has some share of responsibility for the risks of the C&W LEP, which are set out in this report and appendices.

17.2. There is a risk of disputes with the other Councils over the future direction of the company, or that one Council will want to withdraw from the arrangements. These risks can be mitigated by ensuring that they are covered within the Articles and providing that any Council who wishes to withdraw has to indemnify the others against subsequent losses and give one year's notice.

17.3. There is a risk that the company will lose its Teckal compliant status due to trading by Marketing Cheshire. This can be mitigated by close monitoring of their finances. The agreements which we are proposing to put in place, and the changes to the Articles to provide greater control to the Councils, will help to ensure Teckal compliance over the 'control' limb of the Teckal test.

17.4. There is a reputational risk with Council staff over the pay and staffing levels in LEPCo – even if there are not equal pay/discrimination issues. C&W LEP staff earn significantly more than Council staff, although that they do not receive an LGPS pension, and they could be considered to have a greater staff number in their area compared to the Councils.

17.5. There is a risk that the Board of Marketing Cheshire (currently made up of a business owners and councillors) and the shareholders will not agree on the future direction of the business. This can be mitigated by changing the Board of Marketing Cheshire for the future, or collapsing it into the LEPCo, but this is not without reputational risk and will need to be managed sensitively.

17.6. There is a risk that the Chair and Vice Chair of the C&W LEP and other board members do not resign. This could lead to reputational risk as the Councils would have to remove the Chair and Vice-Chair, to access their share of the LEPCo. They would also have to remove the Board to ensure control.

17.7. There is a risk that the representatives on the Business Advisory Board do not feel that they are making a valid contribution or their views are not being considered. This can be mitigated by ensuring a proper appointment process and induction, being clear about the role and responsibilities.

17.8. There is a risk of Government funding and programmes ceasing, but this risk would be in place without the Councils' increasing their share in the LEPCo.

17.9. There is a risk that the Councils do not appropriately manage the LEPCo and leave themselves exposed to financial risks. Whilst in law the Councils' liability is limited to £1, there would be significant reputational risk if the Councils failed to meet the debts of the LEPCo. However this proposal is increasing the level of shareholding and so the Council already has some exposure to this risk. The governance arrangements should provide greater control and focus to help mitigate the risk.

17.10 A risk register is included in the Business Case at Appendix F.

Rural Communities

It is important that the Rural Economy and Rural Communities remain a focus sub regionally to ensure consistency of approach, and the promotion of key rural issues that need support at local, regional and government level. The new LEPCo structure will continue to focus on the opportunities to support Rural Communities, supported by the Joint Shareholder Committee and the local authorities.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

There are no direct implications for children and young people as a result of this report.

Public Health

There are no direct public health implications but decision making by the Joint Committee and the Board should have regard to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Climate Change

There are no direct climate change implications as a result of this report.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Deborah Upton, Legal Services Deborah.upton@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix A: Business Case and Options Appraisal Appendix B: Joint Committee Terms of Reference Appendix C: Proposed changes to the Articles of Association Appendix D: Due diligence report Appendix E: Heads of Terms – service agreement Appendix F: Business Plan
Background Papers:	Government Guidance dated August 2023 and December 2023

Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (C&W LEP)

Transition to a Council-owned Company Model: Business Case

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DRAFT

A. INTRODUCTION

A1. In March 2023, and subsequently via letter and guidance from Minister Davison in August 2023¹, the Government confirmed its decision to cease core funding for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and, where appropriate, to integrate and transfer functions to local authorities from April 2024.

A2. Following a detailed options analysis, due diligence and informal discussion with Council Lead Members, Chief Executives and Senior Officers from Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Borough Councils – as well as private sector C&WLEP and Marketing Cheshire representatives - the option of a Council-owned company model is recommended as the preferred approach for LEP transition. This has also been discussed in detail with Government officials.

A3. It was agreed that a business case should be developed as part of a wider suite of documents to ensure Members have detailed background information to support final decision-making for the future of LEP functions.

A4. This business case takes account of both the existing Cheshire and Warrington LEP Company and Marketing Cheshire (a wholly owned subsidiary of the C&W LEP).

B. BACKGROUND

B1. In August 2023 the UK Government confirmed that LEP functions would become the responsibility of Local Authorities by April 2024. How those functions should be implemented would be decided locally. However, Government guidance set out that wherever possible local authorities should work together to deliver LEP functions within functional economic areas with a minimum population of 500,000².

B2. The Guidance also states that if authorities wish to continue using the LEP as a vehicle to deliver these core functions, or if they wish in due course to pursue integration of a LEP, they are free to do so – the nature and status of such arrangements is a decision for each local authority. However, any future contracting that is not in place before 1 April 2024 would be subject to normal commercial procedures i.e. tendering, unless a Teckal exemption (see *below*) is in place.

B3. In relation to the **transfer of functions**, the following are detailed as the primary functions of LEPs ‘as funded by government’:

- a. Embedding a strong, independent, and **diverse local business voice** into local democratic institutions.*
- b. Carrying out **strategic economic planning** in partnership with local leaders that clearly articulates their area’s economic priorities and sectoral strengths.*

¹ The full guidance can be found [here](#).

² None of the three Cheshire and Warrington Councils meet this threshold individually.

- c. Continuing to **deliver a number of functions [programmes]** on behalf of government departments, shaped by the local business voice where relevant.*
- d. Where appropriate, **helping to broker and support new or deeper devolution deals**, where requested by local partners.*

B4. Councils across Cheshire and Warrington have historically delivered these functions through the C&W LEP, which is set up as a company limited by guarantee in which Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Councils each have a 20% share, with two business sector shareholders (being the Chair and Vice Chair of the LEP) having 20% each.

B5. Since August 2023, officers, in consultation with lead Members, Government Officials and private sector representatives, have been working through a number of options for LEP transition, as well as aligned due diligence and further detail on legal, financial and governance implications. This business case should be read in conjunction with the wider suite of documents contained as appendices as part of the February 2024 LEP Transition Council Report.

B6. Officers consider that the preferred option is to retain the current company model with amended shareholding so that it is wholly owned equally across the three Councils of Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington. This would use the existing C&W LEP Company structure, which is limited by guarantee and wholly owns its subsidiary, Marketing Cheshire. Articles of Association would be changed to increase the Councils collective ownership from 60% to 100%, using a Teckal exemption³ and changing the name to Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington (EC&W) – whilst maintaining the Marketing Cheshire name and brand.

B7. A Joint Committee, comprised of Elected Members from each Council, would maintain direction and oversight of the company as well as provide strategic sub-regional leadership. A new board of directors would be established, replacing the role of the current LEP Board – but only insofar as company legal requirements need to be upheld. A Business Advisory Board would be created to maintain a business voice across sub-regional economic matters following the dissolution of the current LEP Board.

C. CASE FOR CHANGE

C1. The UK Government's commitment to engaging with sub-regional economic functional areas is outlined in the Levelling Up White Paper (2022) and subsequent guidance associated with Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) transition arrangements in England. By focusing on these functional areas (with populations of 500,000 or more), which represent key sectors and industries, the government aims to optimise regional strengths and capitalise on unique economic potential. Through targeted engagement at scale, policymakers can tailor policies and interventions to address specific challenges and opportunities within each functional

³ A Teckal exemption means that Councils must control the company and its activities in the same way as they do their own departments – with at least 80% of the work of the company being for the controlling Councils. This allows Councils to pass work directly to their company without having to tender it. This is explained further in Appendix A.

area, thereby promoting innovation, productivity, and job creation. This approach of intervention at economic functional areas is a policy shared across the main political parties – with recent Labour Party communications also highlighting the approach, for example, within the 2023 ‘Renewing our Democracy and Rebuilding our Economy’ Commission Report.

C2. To support the assessment of LEP transition options for Cheshire and Warrington, the case for change has been based on the following shared values and principles as discussed during background consultation. These include:

- ⇒ Supports sub-regional working to achieve the best economic outcomes for Cheshire and Warrington
- ⇒ Achieved at pace
- ⇒ Minimises complexity and achieves a simplified solution
- ⇒ Minimises transition cost (to Councils)
- ⇒ Maximises capacity and resources – achieving further economies of scale and maximising efficiencies – as well as retaining staff knowledge and expertise.
- ⇒ Minimises liabilities (to Councils)
- ⇒ Maximises Council-led control/accountability

C3. A due diligence analysis including the impacts legal, financial, commercial, operations and HR issues is also set out to help inform Members and to support the overall outcomes evaluation.

C4. It should also be noted that HMG LEP Transition Guidance sets out that decisions, where appropriate, on the transfer of assets should be agreed by the LEP, its Accountable Body, and respective local authorities **by March 2024**, though the practical integration and transfer process may stretch beyond that date. There are a number of procurement complications from 1st April 2024 that put additional emphasis on the need for pace.

D. OVERVIEW OF SERVICES

D1. As noted above, **core functions** that are viewed as the primary functions of LEPs ‘as funded by government’ include:

- a. Embedding a strong, independent, and **diverse local business voice** into local democratic institutions.*
- b. Carry out **strategic economic planning** in partnership with local leaders that clearly articulates their area’s economic priorities and sectoral strengths.*
- c. **Delivering a number of functions [programmes]** on behalf of government departments, shaped by the local business voice where relevant.*

D2. In terms of Cheshire and Warrington and priority functions, the primary goal of the Council-owned company would be to support the realisation of the agreed sub-regional vision developed alongside the Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission (2020): “to be the healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive, and growing economy in the UK.”

D3. Objectives of Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington (EC&W) would be concentrated at the sub-regional level, complementing the efforts of each individual authority in the following areas:

A. Strategic Economic Planning:

- Completing and publishing the Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Plan.
- Updating and publishing new strategic transport and skills plans for Cheshire and Warrington.
- Putting in place a new programme co-ordination and oversight body to ensure the successful delivery of the world's first net zero industrial cluster .
- Supporting elected leaders to put in place a Fair Employment Charter for Cheshire and Warrington.

B. Economic Insight and Delivery:

- Provide high-quality, forward-thinking evidence and insight to support the work undertaken by the LAs and ECW to make Cheshire and Warrington the healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive and growing place in the country
- Development and promotion of the Cheshire Science Corridor as a key national innovation hub.
- Ensure that people have the skills they need to realise the opportunities available to them in Cheshire and Warrington and that businesses are able to access the people they need including by funding 640 training places for shortage occupations.
- Working with regional partners to ensure that the £260 million available in Life Sciences and Evergreen investment funds supports the development of the Cheshire and Warrington economy as effectively as possible. Support all 84 secondary schools to deliver first class careers education for their students.

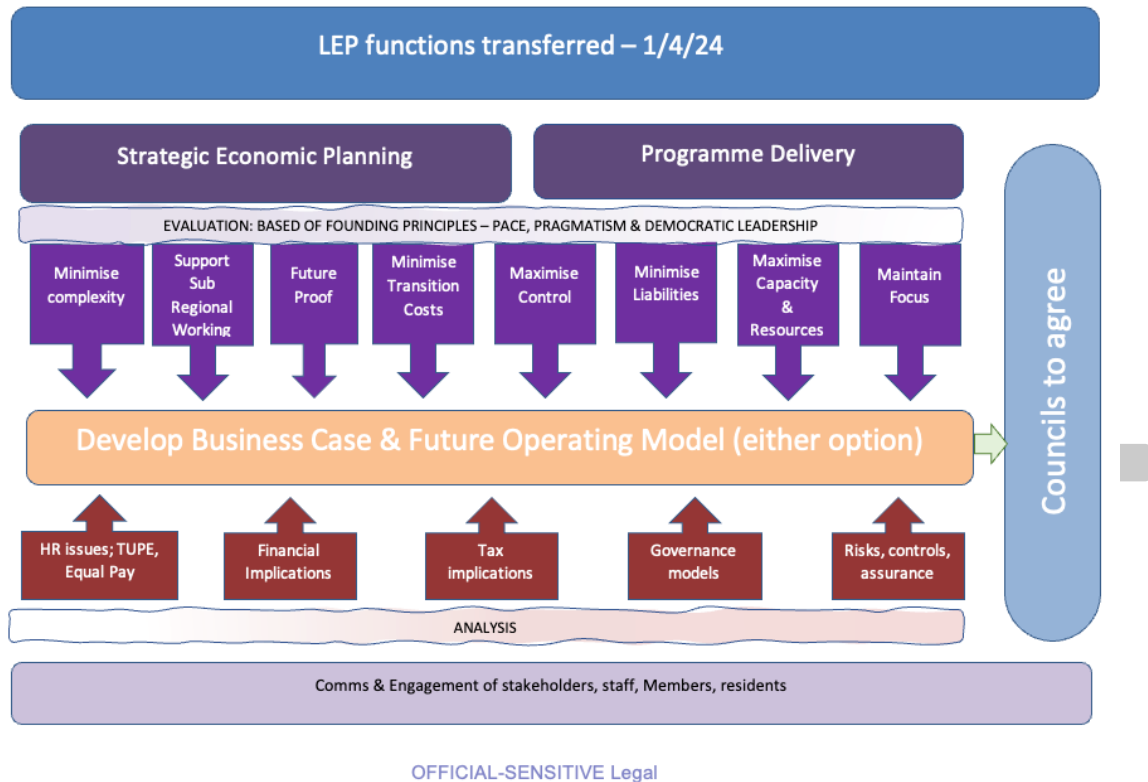
C. Marketing Cheshire:

- As the Visit England designated Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) for Cheshire and Warrington, lead on marketing Cheshire and Warrington as a great place to visit, live, work, invest and study.
- Develop and publish a Destination Management Plan alongside the Strategic and Inclusive Economic Plan.
- Support the creation of a Tourist Business Improvement District (TBID) in the Chester area
- Further strengthen the delivery of visitor information in Cheshire and Warrington but implementing the recommendations of the sub-region's review of visitor information.
- Offering excellent sub-regional communications and PR services.

D4. A suggested annual business plan accompanies this business case. If report recommendations are agreed, the Joint Committee will be asked to agree the business plan at its first meeting.

E. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

E1. To ensure a consistent approach to analysis, a detailed options appraisal was conducted in early Autumn 2023. This overarching analysis can be summarised in the following diagram:



E2. Summary of options analysis (benefits/risks) across main models considered:

Delivery Model	Benefits	Risks
Status Quo (Limited Company model with 60:40 split in shares – Class A (Councils) and B (Private Sector Directors))	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure already in place Capacity/Team in place Recognised 'brand' with national profile Is an option in HMG guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will be required to tender for all new activity (and potential re-tendering for existing). This is likely to be a complex and expensive/ time consuming arrangement from April 2024 Significant changes to funding model – with cost implications. Not achieving the transfer of functions to Local Authorities

Delivery Model	Benefits	Risks
Winddown LEP with no agreed forward strategy/next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear what benefits arise from this course of action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counter to HMG LEP Transition guidance Significant changes to 'dismantle' existing contracts and work – high cost implications. Contingent risks and liabilities will be transferred direct to Councils. Government (and opposition) policy heavily 'geared' to sub-regional opportunities, including investment. Likely to lead to future disadvantages for Council investment prospects
Hosted Shared Sub-Regional Service. I.e. All LEP functions hosted by one Council but working towards sub-regional activities agreed by a Joint Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model of shared service is well known to local authorities (Joint Committee to be established to oversee) Avoids need to change Articles of current LEP company and set up shareholder/client/director processes. Sub-regional functions would sit within a shared service model – therefore eliminating commercial risks associated with (Teckal) company. Transferred (TUPE) staff will transfer existing T's and C's. Councils have more experience working collectively through a shared service model than a joint-Teckal (and/or joint trading company). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will need to wind down LEP co. Staff would need to TUPE to host local authority with negative cost and time implications. The transfer process is potentially lengthy therefore creating hiatus in programme delivery and increasing risk of losing staff to undertake the programme delivery. Potentially greater up-front set-up costs to complete all transfers An equal inter authority agreement to share financial liabilities across the 3 Councils would need to be agreed. Various contingent liabilities with financial impacts transferred to host Council (albeit indemnified by 3 x Council agreement) Tax implications of asset transfer

Delivery Model	Benefits	Risks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liabilities shared equally across Councils via Inter Authority Agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May need a trading company in place for Marketing Cheshire (with subsequent legal process for shareholder, director, client) or trading function within shared service. Risk of losing LVEP status if not trading.
Council-owned Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to be faster in the short term to integrate the LEP into a local authority controlled (Teckal) company • Maintains current capacity/resource and sub-regional approach. • No TUPE impacts • Liabilities across the Councils will be 'ring-fenced' within the limited company although in practical terms the Council will have to consider liabilities. • Joint (Shareholder) Committee gives control to local authorities across all reserved matters • Company Board of Directors appointed by Councils give direct accountability over operation of company. • Joint Committee holds Board to account. • Marketing Cheshire can remain within the controlled company structure • Joint Committee provides strategic direction and agrees business plan (and single sub-regional voice). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential risk to local authorities from having a controlled company within their accounts • Contingent state aid/subsidy control risks • More complex governance structure than current – conflicts of interest need to be managed, new governance structure to be created • Services can only be provided through Teckal exemption and so new operating model will be needed to meet control tests

Delivery Model	Benefits	Risks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Client function and Councils appointed Board of Directors will ensure business plan is delivered 	

F. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

F1. In consideration of the Council-owned company model options analysis, a number of legal considerations were undertaken.

F2. Section 102 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables two or more local authorities to set up a Joint Committee (JC) to discharge their functions jointly. These arrangements must comply with the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2000. JCs may be decision-making or advisory. The Councils Agree the terms of reference of the JC. JCs have no legal status, cannot impose financial obligations on their constituent authorities and have no powers to levy council tax. JCs are not a separate legal entity therefore they cannot own assets, have liabilities, raise taxes, enter into contracts or employ staff.

F3. Section 95 of the Local Government Act 2003 enables local authorities to provide on a commercial basis, anything that is related to a function of the authority. The powers under the Act enable Local Authorities to trade with private bodies and persons for profit (i.e. charges fixed at more than the cost recovery) through a company. Surpluses on commercial operations under the section 95 trading power would be available to individual authorities. This legislation has been further strengthened by the Localism Act 2011, which expands Local Authority's trading activities to areas not related to their existing functions and removes geographical boundaries so trading can take place for a variety of service provisions and anywhere in the UK through a company. A local authority has statutory powers to form companies jointly with other local authorities under Section 73 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

F4. Normally, the provision of services over certain values from a company to a local authority is subject to the public procurement regime set out in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. There is an exception to this rule that means, in certain circumstances, a contract let by a local authority to a company it owns will not be deemed to be a contract for the purposes of the public procurement regime. This exception is known as the "Teckal" exemption and was established by a European legal case but is now set out in section 12 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

F5. In order for the Councils to be able to pass the work direct to a company model without tendering it, the **Teckal exemption** will have to be met. This will be broadly the same test under the new Procurement Act 2022 (when enacted) but it should be noted that there may be changes once finalised. It sets out:

- (a) The Councils must control the company and its activities in the same way they do their own departments
- (b) The company must predominantly undertake work for its controlling councils (an 80% test currently in the Procurement Bill 2022).

F6. Using the Teckal exemption will mean that a new operating model will need to be considered to ensure that it meets the 'control' test under Teckal. This will also give the opportunity of economies of scale.

F7. Pursuing a **non-Teckal** company structure would have significant procurement issues and would subject the company to the same commercial pressures and market risk as any other private sector entity competing in that market (if it is indeed in a 'market'). So the commercial relationship between the Councils and the company will be key if the Councils are seeking to establish a company for which they could use an exemption for its Council-led activities.

F8. The articles of the company can provide that it is used as a **joint Teckal-compliant** company, thereby enabling the Councils (x3 - via the Joint Committee) to make direct decisions to deliver functions, thereby saving time and cost compared with running a procurement exercise.

F9. Headline issues to note include:

- As a Teckal-compliant entity, it is essentially the same as one of the Councils' own departments
- Teckal will enable **Marketing Cheshire** impacts to be managed. As a subsidiary of the Council-owned company, Marketing Cheshire would fall within the overall Teckal turnover limits. It will, however, be necessary to monitor the turnover of the companies as a group structure, i.e. including Marketing Cheshire, to ensure that at least 80% of its income is derived from work via the Councils.
- The basic Teckal test covers the following:
 - Control – Council (x3) control which is similar to that which it exercises over its own departments. "Control" will be established where all of the following conditions are fulfilled:
 - (a) it exercises a decisive influence over both strategic objectives and significant decisions of the controlled legal entity, or
 - (b) the control is exercised by another legal entity which is itself controlled in the same way by the contracting authority.
 - Essential activities - more than 80% of the activities of the controlled legal entity are carried out in the performance of tasks entrusted to it by the controlling authority (Joint Committee) or by other legal persons/entities controlled by that authority. In this context, "activities" refers to the average total turnover or an appropriate alternative activity-based measure such as costs incurred by the relevant legal entity with respect to services, supplies and works for the 3 preceding years.

- Where there is more than one controlling contracting authority in a Teckal vehicle, this is referred to as "**joint Teckal**" and the control and essential activities tests are modified slightly:
 - Control - the contracting authorities exercise jointly a control over that legal entity which is similar to that which they exercise over their own departments. "*Joint control over that legal entity*" will be established where all of the following conditions are fulfilled:
 - the decision-making bodies of the controlled legal entity are composed of representatives of all participating authorities (although individual representatives may represent several or all of the participating authorities);
 - those authorities are able to jointly exert decisive influence over the strategic objectives and significant decisions of the controlled legal entity; and
 - the controlled legal entity does not pursue any interests which are contrary to those of the controlling authorities.
 - Essential activities - more than 80% of the activities of that legal entity are carried out in the performance of tasks entrusted to it by the controlling authorities or by other legal entities controlled by the same contracting authorities.

G. Corporate Structure and Governance

G1. To ensure liabilities remain limited, the current **Company Limited by Guarantee** (CLG) structure would remain in place.

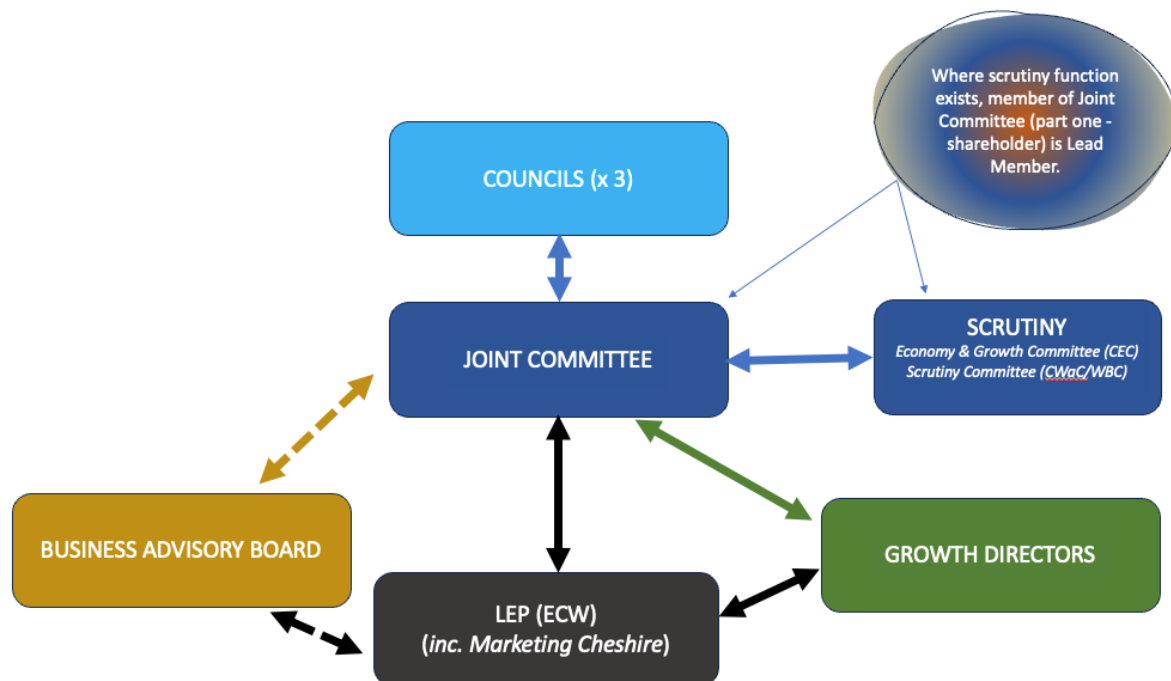
- There is a lower administrative burden for maintaining a CLG
- A CLG is a very well established structure that is used for not-for-profit entities, that also has flexibility to convert, if circumstances change in the future
- A CLG is a separate legal entity and enables the potential for ring-fencing of liabilities. On paper, the "limited by guarantees" structure limits the Councils liabilities. However, there is a question as to the extent to which the Councils would realistically allow a company to fail without meeting their liabilities. This would carry significant reputational risk. Consideration would be needed with regard to what interventions the Councils would make should the company(s) make significant losses.
- Within a Teckal-compliant company structure, owned by the three Councils equally as shareholders, Marketing Cheshire would remain as a subsidiary of the 'group' and should fall within the overall Teckal turnover limits (*which is currently the case*). It will, however, be necessary to monitor the turnover of the company (group) to ensure that at least 80% of its income is derived from the Councils.
- There is the potential to run a full trading company as a subsidiary of the group should issues over turnover make Teckal exemptions unviable.

G2. The company's governance framework will need to be designed and implemented to ensure compliance with the "control" limb of the Teckal test and various measures will need to be put in place to ensure accountability e.g. performance indicators.

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G3. To support the jointly owned company structure, a Joint Committee comprised of all three Councils could be put in place. This would provide joint Council oversight and control of sub-regional economic development work and the work of council-owned company (with a recommended name of **Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington**). The Joint Committee would be a formal committee of the Councils and align to the current governance structure as follows:



G4. The Joint Committee sets the strategic direction and would need to:

- sign off a periodic business plan – this may be an annual plan or a multi-year plan updated on a rolling basis; and
- exercise control over key decisions through the requirement for unanimous approval of certain "reserved matters".
- the Joint Committee will have the right to appoint, remove and replace board directors – and will hold the company board to account.

G5. Members of the Committee would be supported by a Management Group, comprising senior officers from the three Councils and led by the three Council's Growth Directors. This group would act as the operational "client" for the council-owned company, ensuring, via a service agreement that it delivers the sub-regional priorities agreed by the Joint Committee.

G6. The Scrutiny function can be undertaken by the Councils, through the Member on the Joint Committee being the lead accountable member.

G7. Following the formal end of the current C&W LEP Board a Business Advisory Board would be created. To maintain the current practice of excellent business engagement and influence in the sub-regional economic agenda for Cheshire and Warrington, it is proposed that the Chair of the Business Advisory Board would sit as a non-voting member of the Committee.

G8. Whilst the Joint Committee would have matters reserved to it i.e. that only the shareholders can agree, there also needs to be a board of directors to comply with company regulations. The purpose of this board would only be to deal with essential legal elements of a company board. Overall direction of the council-owned company will be led by the Joint Committee supported by senior Officers of the three Councils owners. As a consequence of that, it is proposed that Council Officers, with corporate experience and expertise, will sit on the company board.

G9. An accountable body for the company will need to be in place – Cheshire East Council are the current accountable body and are prepared to remain in that role.

H. Analysis

H1. The following section highlights the findings of the detailed options analysis conducted in Autumn 2023, focusing on the implications of the preferred company model option for both C&W LEP and Marketing Cheshire. The elements of this analysis that could be primary areas of risk to the Councils are detailed further in the accompanying due diligence report, in particular legal, financial, commercial and HR risks.

H2. C&W LEP to Council owned company model:

Analysis	Advantages	Disadvantages
<i>Legal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some contracts may not need to be novated (some may, as functions have transferred) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration may be needed to support future devolution – including TUPE/contract novation to a combined authority if established. Company structure may have more administrative burden (operating model tbc)
<i>Financial</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountable body function will still be in place (Cheshire East Council) to assure across appropriate spend 'Reverse Teckal' back office recharge facility may prove more cost effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insolvency risk remains (low) Teckal financial limits will need to be monitored (note MC within group 20%). <i>(Note changes to Procurement Act currently going through Parliament may impact).</i> Future EZ loan repayments reliant on future business rates growth VAT treatment tbc.
<i>Commercial</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely to be faster in the short term to integrate the LEP into a local authority controlled (Teckal) company Resolves the Marketing Cheshire impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential risk to local authorities from having a controlled company within their accounts Contingent state aid/subsidy control risks

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Analysis	Advantages	Disadvantages
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group Teckal structure will need to be monitored to ensure Marketing Cheshire within Teckal limits.
HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No TUPE impacts at this stage. Employment contracts continue with the existing company and the liabilities associated with the contracts would need to be settled by the company. <i>(Figures for the LEP and MC on Payments in Lieu of Notice and Redundancy have been provided separately).</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councils may be exposed to equal pay claims, although analysis conducted highlights this as a low risk.
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint (Shareholder) Committee gives control to local authorities across all reserved matters Company Board of Directors appointed by Councils give direct accountability over operation of company. Marketing Cheshire can remain within the controlled company structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More complex governance structure than current – conflicts of interest need to be managed, NED board to be set up etc. Performance indicators need to be set up and managed, control measures to be put in place to comply with Teckal.
Strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Committee provides strategic direction and agrees business plan (and single sub-regional voice). Client function and Councils appointed Board of Directors will ensure business plan is delivered 	
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less disruptive model in short to medium term enables focus on operational delivery Company will work to an agreed business plan and PIs and be subject to agreed performance measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services can only be provided through Teckal exemption and so new operating model will be needed to meet control tests
Risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liabilities across the Councils will be 'ring-fenced' within the limited company although in practical terms the Council will have to consider liabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full risk register across all impacts (via due diligence) is still to be completed. <i>(*NB: Post due diligence there are no significant/critical issues to report – these are outlined in section J)</i>

Analysis	Advantages	Disadvantages
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of company failure.
<i>Accountability/ transparency</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint-Teckal compliance will require additional Councils' control – i.e. the company will need to operate primarily as a shared Council (sub-regional) department Joint Committee holds Board to account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountable body for Teckal company will need to be agreed
<i>Programme</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programmes could continue to deliver seamlessly – noting that the JC and Board may want to change emphasis or direction where appropriate. As due diligence is not yet complete, there may be opportunities related to programme delivery that provide additional benefits under this model. (*NB: Post due diligence there are no significant issues to report) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As due diligence is not yet complete, there may be issues related to programme delivery that could prove problematic, particularly under a Teckal relationship. (*NB: Post due diligence there are no significant issues to report)

H3. Marketing Cheshire to Council owned company model:

Analysis	Advantages	Disadvantages
<i>Legal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited changes to Articles MC remains within the controlled company structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will need to monitor Teckal exemption limit for trading activities (NB: will lose LVEP status if no trading).
<i>Financial</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will need to monitor turnover figures to ensure Teckal compliance (current figures fall comfortably within limits as part of 'Group structure'). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires minimum trading income of £300k p.a.
<i>Commercial</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to maintain trading status (and retain LVEP). Board will retain commercial oversight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential risk to local authorities from having a controlled company within their accounts
<i>HR</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains current staff expertise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councils may be exposed to equal pay claims although analysis conducted highlights this as a low risk.
<i>Governance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains consistency and oversight on corporate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship with MC Board and new governance to be confirmed.

Analysis	Advantages	Disadvantages
	governance with an aligned company board (to EC&W). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains content expertise with an external advisory board. 	
<i>Strategic</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Committee ensures single voice for sub-regional strategy Maintains an advisory function for sector experts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for disconnect between commercial and corporate imperatives and strategic direction.
<i>Operational</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lose LVEP status if MC not trading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New operating model will be needed to meet control tests (Teckal)
<i>Risk management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full risk register across all transfer impacts (via due diligence) is still to be completed. (*NB: Post due diligence there are no significant/critical issues to report – these are outlined in section J) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full risk register across all transfer impacts (via due diligence) is still to be completed. (*NB: Post due diligence there are no significant/critical issues to report – these are outlined in section J)
<i>Accountability/ transparency</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint Committee acts a shareholder and controlling committee. Maintains relationship to Advisory Board. 	
<i>Programme</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited impacts to programme (BAU in the main) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will need to maintain focus on commercial income limits (Teckal). Note – as subsidiary well within limits).

I. FINANCIAL CASE

I1. At the end of December 2023 the Government informed LAs that it would provide core funding of £240,000 in 2024/5 towards the cost of functions undertaken by LEPs until March 2025. This funding will be paid to Cheshire East as the Accountable Body for these functions in Cheshire and Warrington. This is a reduction of £10k on the core funding provided to the LEP in 2023/4. Funding beyond this point will be subject to future Spending Review decisions.

I2. It should be noted that the HMG revenue support of £240k is a relatively small part of the council-owned company model's total expected income in 2024/5 of £8.605 million, which is made up of funding from the Departments for Education, Business and Trade and Energy Security and Net Zero to deliver specified programmes, retained business rates, interest on capital balances grants from Cheshire and Warrington Councils to Marketing Cheshire and £30k each from the three Councils. It should also be noted that the Marketing Cheshire

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funding model is based on around 35% traded services. Income via trading is a requirement of LVEP⁴ status.

- ⇒ The current funding model of the LEP (and Marketing Cheshire as its subsidiary) could effectively transfer to Teckal company arrangements - although the Councils would have to consider how to find the shortfall from the withdrawal of Government funding .
- ⇒ If current suppliers are not transferred, to comply with Teckal, any back office support should be recharged at cost (reverse Teckal implications)
- ⇒ Financial implications of any equal pay claims would have to be carefully evaluated and the risks assessed.
- ⇒ There may be further funding model considerations at a point in the future when new devolution structures might be agreed.

13. A revised budget will form a key part of the Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington business plan for Members approval. However, in summary, and for the purposes of the considerations behind this business case, the following examines budget implications for a Council-owned company model based on the 2022-23 budget for both the C&WLEP and Marketing Cheshire (as a wholly owned subsidiary of the C&WLEP):

	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
1	General Grant from Government	<p>Sub-regional economic intelligence, policy development and creation of supporting plans and corporate governance.</p> <p>Activity covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Plan • Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission 	£250	<p>Letter from department inviting application for funding.</p> <p>Until 2022-23, it was a condition to receive the grant that local match funding of a minimum of 50% of the grant (i.e., £125k) was obtained. For 2023-24, that condition was</p>	Broadly, continues "as is". Board and or officers likely to have delegated authority from shareholders (tbc).

⁴ Marketing Cheshire is the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Cheshire and Warrington (C&W) and in 2023 became one of the first Local Visitor Economic Partnerships (LVEPs) in the UK in 2023 within the Visit England programme.

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	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing C&W as world's first Net Zero Hub Strategic Transport Developing proposals for tax incentive zones (e.g. Freeports, Investment Zones) Developing proposals for investment subsidies (e.g. to retain major employers) Housing Pathfinders Support on priorities for sub-region and devolution. Fair Employment Charter Digital Connectivity Workforce, Labour market analysis and Skills 		removed (but it had been planned for and agreed by LA)	
2	Local Authority Subscriptions	<p>Sub-regional economic intelligence, policy development and creation of supporting plans</p> <p>Activity covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Plan 	£94 (3 x £31)	Agreed with LA as part of annual budget setting process	Business plan agreed by Joint Committee.

BUSINESS CASE LEP TRANSITION

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	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission • Establishing C&W as world's first Net Zero Hub • Strategic Transport • Developing proposals for tax incentive zones (e.g. Freeports, Investment Zones) • Developing proposals for investment subsidies (e.g. to retain major employers) • Housing Pathfinders • Support on priorities for sub-region and devolution. • Fair Employment Charter • Digital Connectivity • Workforce, Labour market analysis and Skills 			
3	Retained Business Rates Local Authority Match	<p>Sub-regional economic intelligence, policy development and creation of supporting plans</p> <p>Activity covers:</p>	£94	Agreed with LA as part of annual budget setting process	Functions agreed by shareholder joint committee and budget recommended to Councils.

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CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT #6 17/01/24

	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Plan Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission Establishing C&W as world's first Net Zero Hub Strategic Transport Developing proposals for tax incentive zones (e.g. Freeports, Investment Zones) Developing proposals for investment subsidies (e.g. to retain major employers) Housing Pathfinders Support on priorities for sub-region and devolution. Fair Employment Charter Digital Connectivity Workforce, Labour market analysis and Skills 			
4	Management fees charged to administer investment programmes.	Programme Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring reports on Local Growth 	£0	Fee is an agreed sum with government department. The capital sums	Broadly, continues "as is".

BUSINESS CASE LEP TRANSITION

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT #6 17/01/24

	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
		Fund investments (bi-annual) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring reports on Local Growth Fund Skills projects. • Monitoring reports on Getting Building Fund projects. 		are granted by the LA (CEC) to the recipient	
5	Management fees charged to administer skills bootcamps programmes.	Programme Management of grant programme entering its' third year in 2024-25. Total grant allocation ca. £3M over three rounds of funding. Currently involves more than 20 bootcamps being delivered by 15 training providers, each covered by a separate grant contract.	£155	Fee is an agreed sum with DfE. DfE pays to CEC for the CWLEP. The training grant sums are granted by the LA (CEC) to the recipient.	Broadly, continues "as is".
6	Grant for Digital Skills Partnership	Programme Management Funding stops in 2022-23, but it is a requirement to develop a "legacy" plan beyond August 2023. DfE may therefore seek progress reports.	£55	Grant Agreement which runs over two financial years (Sept to Aug)	Broadly, continues "as is".

BUSINESS CASE LEP TRANSITION

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT #6 17/01/24

	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
7	Grant for Skills Advisory Panel	<p>Programme Management</p> <p>Funding stops in 2022-23, but it is a requirement to develop a “legacy” plan beyond August 2023. DfE may therefore seek progress reports.</p>	£55	Grant Agreement which runs over two financial years (Sept to Aug)	Broadly, continues “as is”.
8	Grant for the Growth Hub	<p>Growth Hub</p> <p>Activities cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of business support on a range of business issues; start up; access to finance, grant funding, export, recruitment etc. • Signposting of enquiries to advisors • Gathering business intelligence; confidence levels, data on business activities. 	£231 - £260	Grant Agreement	Broadly, continues “as is”.
9	Grant for Inward Investment	Inward Investment	£68	Grant Agreement	Broadly, continues “as is”.

BUSINESS CASE LEP TRANSITION

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	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
10	Careers and Enterprise Company Grant. These grants include capacity funding, careers hub fund, teachers engagement fund.	Programme Management Activities cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement with 85+ schools in C&W to enhance careers information offer, join up schools with prospective employers. 	£300	Grant Agreement which runs over two financial years (Sept to Aug).	Broadly, continues "as is".
11	Pledge (ESF Grant administered by DWP)	Programme Management	£60	Delivery partner on a programme led by Changing Young Lives (YouthFed). Finishes November 2023.	Broadly, continues "as is".
12	Pledge (NHS Contribution)	Programme Management	£67	Correspondence between LEP and NHS and that the pledge will use all the funding provided to deliver outcomes specified by NHS.	Broadly, continues "as is".
13	Grant for North West Net Zero capacity	Programme Management	£65	Grant Agreement between Liverpool City Region and the LEP	Broadly, continues "as is".
14	Grant for North West	Project Funds	£50	Grant Agreement between	Broadly, continues "as is".

BUSINESS CASE LEP TRANSITION

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT #6 17/01/24

	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
	Net Zero projects			Liverpool City Region and the LEP	
15	Grant UKRI (for Net Zero)	Programme Management	£100	Grant Agreement	Broadly, continues “as is”.
16	Supplementary Revenue Grants (arising from interest earned by CEC on balances held by them)	<p>Programme Management, Sub-regional economic intelligence, policy development and creation of supporting plans and corporate governance</p> <p>Activity covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Plan • Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission • Establishing C&W as world’s first Net Zero Hub • Strategic Transport • Developing proposals for tax incentive zones (e.g. Freeports, Investment Zones) • Developing proposals for investment subsidies (e.g. to retain major employers) • Housing Pathfinders 	£400	Collaboration Agreement between Cheshire East and LEP dated 15.6.2022	Broadly, continues “as is”.

BUSINESS CASE LEP TRANSITION

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	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support on priorities for sub-region and devolution. Fair Employment Charter Digital Connectivity Workforce, Labour market analysis and Skills 			
17	Retained Business Rates to fund the EZ Science Corridor Programme	<p>Programme Management of the Cheshire Science Corridor Enterprise Zone</p> <p>Activities cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of potential investment projects Estimation of “funding gap” Liaison with other funders of developments Negotiation of Grant terms Independent due diligence of construction costs and assessment of future business rates income 	£300	Agreed with LA as part of annual budget setting process.	Broadly, continues “as is”.

	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of preparation of legal agreements – grant agreements, performance agreements, intercreditor agreements etc • Securing authorisation from board and credit committee • Drawing project loan • Compliance checking claims from developers • Authorising payment of grant claims • Monitoring performance of outputs. <p>Grant agreements in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glasshouse • Blocks 22-24 • Helix • Aviator • Newport Rhino • Quadrant phase 2 • Vortex <p>Approx value £15.5M</p>			

BUSINESS CASE LEP TRANSITION

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	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
		Growth Corridor Plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Pathfinders • Regeneration schemes • HS2 opportunities • Organising C&W presence at UKREiFF 			
18	Retained Business Rates to fund the LEP's loan repayments	Investment in Enterprise Zone Projects	£1,200	Each project loan and the associated repayment schedule are agreed by the LA Credit Committee. The total value required for loan instalments is agreed with LA as part of annual budget setting process.	Broadly, continues "as is".
19	Retained Business Rates to fund specific projects	Sub-regional economic development (e.g. business case fund, place marketing)	£200	Agreed with LA as part of annual budget setting process.	Broadly, continues "as is".
20	Retained Business Rates to fund policy development	Sub-regional economic intelligence, policy development and creation of supporting plans	£470	Agreed with LA as part of annual budget setting process.	Broadly, continues "as is".
21	Income from realisations within the	Investment in two Life Science Funds and	£216	The fund governing documentation	Broadly, continues "as is".

	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
	investment funds	<p>monitoring of the funds</p> <p>Investor, as a partner, and oversight, as member of the Investment Advisory Panel, of Life Sciences Fund 1 and Life Sciences Fund 2. (Value £50M)</p> <p>Including setting the strategic objectives and investment operating guidelines for the funds, procuring fund managers, negotiation of legal documents pertaining to the funds, monitoring performance of the fund managers, securing relevant approvals, managing LEP contributions to the funds during the investment and follow on periods, managing funds returned from the fund.</p>			
22	Income relating to NP11	<p>Activity covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting the Chair with briefings, policy material etc Recruitment and 	£500	The LEP provides a contracting function for NP11 which is not a legal entity in its' own right.	Broadly, continues "as is".

BUSINESS CASE LEP TRANSITION

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	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company
		employment contracts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement and contracting of various services 			
23	Partner Contributions towards specific operating activities E.g. Jobs Portal, some consulting contracts		£50	LEP is the contracting body for a service but agrees contributions toward it from other partners.	Broadly, continues "as is".
24	Overhead recovery from Programmes	Corporate Functions e.g. Finance, IT, HR, Procurement, Office Services	£200	Internal financial policy that programmes contribute towards the costs of services they require to function.	Broadly, continues "as is".

14. Marketing Cheshire

	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual Nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company model
1	Local Authority Grant (CWaC)	Promote the visitor economy	£86	5 year grant contract – renewed Oct 2022	Can remain a subsidiary of NewCo and continue to

BUSINESS CASE LEP TRANSITION

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	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual Nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company model
					operate broadly as is.
2	Local Authority Grant (CEC)	Promote the visitor economy	£55	SLA	Broadly, continues “as is”.
3	Local Authority Grant (WBC)	Promote the visitor economy	£17k	SLA	Broadly, continues “as is”.
4	Visit England Grant (Heritage Action Zone)	Promote the visitor economy	£15k	Grant agreement	Broadly, continues “as is”.
5	Local Authority Grant (CWaC)	Support of Visitor Information Centre	£72	5 year grant contract – renewed Oct 2022	Broadly, continues “as is”.
6	Commercial Retail	VIC Merchandise	£150	Retail transactions	Broadly, continues “as is”.
7	Commercial – Ticket Commission	VIC Merchandise	£10	Agreements with attractions and transport providers	Broadly, continues “as is”.
8	Commercial – Partnership Membership Subscriptions	Visitor Economy Services Press Engagement to promote area and attractions.	£70	Annual subscriptions	Broadly, continues “as is”.
9	Commercial – Events, Guides etc	Commercial Services Tourism Awards	£110	Ad-hoc contracts	Broadly, continues “as is”.
10	“SLA” LEP	Marketing, PR, Website Management, LEP Events	£135	Informal agreement that MC provides certain functions to the LEP.	Broadly, continues “as is”.

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	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual Nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company model
11	Retained Business Rates - Sub-regional projects	Place Marketing	£200	Informal agreement that MC provides certain functions to the LEP.	Broadly, continues "as is".
12	Destination Chester – contributions	A "partnership" to promote the Chester visitor economy	£50-£100	Contributors include CWaC, Tourism for Wales, Arriva Trains	Broadly, continues "as is".
13	Corporate Services	Activity covers: All aspects of finance, payroll, banking pensions management, insurance, audit, company secretarial, HR policy and operations, IT and mobile communications provision including cyber security, GDPR, procurement and commercial, legal support, office accommodation and facilities management.		Jointly contracted with the LEP for accounting software, HR, IT.	Broadly, continues "as is".
14	Capacity and Solvency	Continuing to exist			Integration with the LEP has allowed MC to perform contracts which, without the financial backing of

	Income Source	Functions	2022-23 Value (£000)	Contractual Nature relating to income source	Potential implications for Council-owned company model
					the LEP, it could not finance (e.g. Welcome Back Fund) or when during Covid, as a stand-alone entity it would likely have become insolvent.

J. RISK (Note detail also contained within due diligence report)

RISK	MITIGATION	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT
Potential risk to local authorities from having a controlled company within their accounts.	Maintain as a company limited by guarantee under Teckal arrangements. Note Councils already have 20% share (which is increasing to 33%)		
Risk of disputes with the other shareholder Councils over the future direction of the Council-owned company or that one Council will want to withdraw from the Council-owned company.	These risks can be mitigated by ensuring that they are covered within the shareholder agreement/Articles and providing that any Council who wishes to withdraw has to indemnify the others against subsequent losses and give one year's notice.		
There is a risk that Council-owned company will lose its Teckal compliant status as a result of trading by Marketing Cheshire.	This can be mitigated by close monitoring of their finances. (Overseen by Accountable Body).		
As a Council-owned company there may be an issue of equal pay as it could potentially be	The C&W LEP have provided a list of their current establishment and the Councils have considered this against their own establishment to		

BUSINESS CASE LEP TRANSITION

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RISK	MITIGATION	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT
considered an 'associated company'.	ascertain whether there are any potential equal pay issues. CEC/WBC/CWAC have/have no equal pay risks from the staffing at the C&W LEP but this should be kept under review.		
There is a risk that the Board of Marketing Cheshire (currently made up of a number of business owners and councillors) and the shareholders will not agree on the future direction of the business	This can be partly mitigated by ensuring the Councils work as closely as possible with the Board to identify approaches that reflect both the views of Board members and the Councils as owners of the business		
There is a risk that the representatives on the Business Advisory Board do not feel that they are making a valid contribution or their views are not being considered	This can be mitigated by ensuring a proper appointment process and induction, being clear about the role and responsibilities.		
There is a risk of Government funding and programmes drying up	This risk would be in place without the increased shareholding. The C&W LEP has developed a number of programmes (including 'evergreen investment') which will support in-going activity for local economic growth.		
Contingent liabilities/risks to the Councils.	The C&W LEP have provided a copy of their risk register, which discloses that their highest risks relate to the current uncertainty in the transition to local authority ownership. These risks will be mitigated if the Councils' shareholding is increased. Due diligence has not highlighted any other major risks in this area.		
There is a risk that the Councils do not appropriately manage the Council-owned company and leave themselves exposed to financial risks.	Creating a Council-owned company is increasing the level of existing shareholding – therefore Councils already have some exposure to this. Proposed governance arrangements		

BUSINESS CASE LEP TRANSITION

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RISK	MITIGATION	LIKELIHOOD	IMPACT
	should provide greater control and focus		

		Impact →				
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
Likelihood ↑	Very Likely	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi	High	High
	Likely	Low	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi	High
	Possible	Low	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi	Med Hi
	Unlikely	Low	Low Med	Low Med	Medium	Med Hi
	Very Unlikely	Low	Low	Low Med	Medium	Medium

DRAFT

JOINT COMMITTEE DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Warrington Council have established an Executive Joint Committee known as the Cheshire and Warrington Joint Committee ("the Committee") for the purpose of discharging the functions mentioned in Annex A. The Councils are enabled to set up Joint Committees under Part VI of the Local Government Act 1972 and Part I Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000.
2. Each Council is entitled to appoint one voting member in respect of the business to be carried out in Part One of Appendix A (Subscriber Members), and one further voting member in respect of the business to be carried out in Part Two of Appendix A (Joint Committee Members). In the event of a voting member of the Committee ceasing to be a member of the Council which appointed him/her, the Council shall forthwith appoint another voting member in his/her place. Only a voting member is entitled to be elected as Chair or Vice-Chair of the Committee.
3. Each Council may appoint members as substitute for the members appointed under (i) above to attend meetings of the Committee in the absence for any reason of the members appointed under (i) above, in accordance with their own constitutional requirements. The substitute members shall be treated in all respects if they were appointed under (i) above.
4. The Chair of the Business Advisory Board ('BAB') shall be an ex officio member of the Committee and may speak at meetings of the Committee but not vote. The Chair of the Business Advisory Board may present reports to the Committee from the BAB.
5. The Committee shall maintain a two-year rolling Chair and Vice-Chair from among the Subscriber Members. The Chair will rotate every two years in the following order CWaC (until May 2025), CEC (until May 2027) WBC (until May 2029) and shall continue in that rotation. The Vice-Chair shall be from CEC (until May 2025) and shall rotate in the same order as the chairmanship every two years.
6. Three voting members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the business set out in Part One of Appendix A. Four voting members shall constitute a quorum for the business set out in Part Two of Appendix A. Except as otherwise provided by statute, all questions shall be decided by a majority of

Appendix B: LEP Transition

the votes of the voting members present, the Chair having the casting vote in addition to his/her vote as a member of the Committee.

7. The Committee shall meet as agreed at its AGM and at least three times each year. However, a meeting of the Committee may be convened at any time by the Committee Clerk in consultation with the Chair. A meeting of the Committee must also be convened by the Chair within 28 days of the receipt of a requisition of any two Subscriber Members of the Committee addressed to the Committee Clerk. **The Chair of the Board may request a meeting of the Committee by notice in writing addressed to the Committee Clerk, but may not requisition one.** All requisitions shall be in writing and no business other than that specified in the requisition shall be transacted at such a meeting.
8. **The Committee shall adopt the standing orders of Cheshire East Council** but it may agree to vary these and from time to time make such standing orders for the carrying on of the business of the Committee as the Committee shall deem necessary and or desirable.
9. For the avoidance of doubt and subject to there being no changes to the law on this issue, where a Council is operating executive arrangements pursuant to the Local Government Act 2000 (and any regulations made under it), it will be a matter for the Executive of the Council to appoint any voting member, or substitute member of the Committee as long as that member is a member of the appointing Councils Cabinet. Where a Council is operating committee system arrangements pursuant to the Local Government Act 2000, it will be a matter for the Council to appoint any voting member and substitute member to the Joint Committee.
10. The Committee shall from time to time appoint such sub-committees to consider and deal with any of the functions of the Committee as may be thought desirable.
11. The Committee Clerk and such other officers as may be deemed necessary for the due conduct of the business of the Committee shall be provided **by Cheshire East Council** and the costs of this shall be met by the Council-owned company (*Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington – NB: name subject to Member approval*).
12. **The first meeting of the Committee shall be held at Cheshire East Council and the venue shall then rotate between the Councils in alphabetical order, unless otherwise directed by the Committee.**

Appendix B: LEP Transition

13. As and when required by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or other Committee or an Audit Committee of any of the Councils, the Subscriber Member for the Council whose Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Committee or Audit Committee has instigated an investigation shall take the lead responsibility for accounting for the activities of the Committee to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Committee or Audit Committee and shall attend such meetings of those committees of its Council as necessary, and no other member of the Committee shall be required to attend.
14. The Committee Clerk shall:
 - a. Be responsible for preparing the agenda and submitting reports prepared by either the Councils or other bodies to the Committee and minutes of the Committee.
 - b. Be responsible for making arrangements for publishing in accordance with Access to Information requirements all meetings, agenda, agenda items and minutes as appropriate.
15. The relevant Standing Orders for the Committee are those of Cheshire East Council.
16. In the event that an urgent decision is needed for the discharge of any of the functions of this Committee, other than those functions which by law can be discharged only by the Councils or a specific Committee, then the Growth Director of each Council is entitled to act on behalf of the Committee. A decision will be urgent where any delay would seriously prejudice the legal or financial position of the Councils or the interests of residents. This delegation is subject to the conditions that any urgent action:-
 - (a) should be reported to the Committee
 - (b) shall take the advice of the Monitoring Officer and S151 officer of each Council
 - (c) shall be exercised in consultation with the three Subscriber members of the Committee
 - (d) shall be exercised within each Councils own financial and other constitutional requirements

Appendix A – Terms of Reference

Part One - Shareholder Functions of the Committee

1. To approve the business plan and budget of LEPCo/Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington (ECW)¹ and any required variations
2. Ensuring that LEPCo/ ECW deliver against their business plan and budget, holding them to account for such delivery and directing the LEPCO/ECW Board to take remedial action where necessary;
3. To appoint directors to the LEPCo/ECW Board
4. To approve any capital expenditure to be made in excess of £100k unless agreed under the business plan
5. To approve the entering into of any lease or licence for the occupation of land or premises
6. To approve the appointment of members of LEPCo/ECW management team
7. To approve the entering into of any contract in excess of £100k unless agreed under the Business Plan
8. To approve the entering into or giving of any loan, guarantee, surety or indemnity by LEPCo/ECW other than the giving of grant by LEPCo/ECW as part of its business plan
9. To approve the opening or closing of any bank account by the Company
10. To approve any changes to the Articles of Association of the Company
11. To approve any staffing or other material policy changes or new policies to be implemented

Part Two - Other Functions of the Committee

1. To receive reports from the Business Advisory Board, any Sub Committee of the Joint Committee and the Growth Directors (management) Group.
2. Any time review and agree proposed changes to the Functions of the Committee and seek approval of the same from the three Councils.
3. To agree and approve any proposed governance and or reporting structure that the Committee sees fit.
4. To act as a strategic body; setting and reviewing objectives for strategic economic development across Cheshire and Warrington, including;

¹ Name subject to Member approval

Appendix B: LEP Transition

- a. Providing a coherent single position on major strategic issues;
- b. agreeing major economic priorities across Cheshire and Warrington;
- c. consider recommendations made by any Sub Committee, the Business Advisory Board or Growth Directors (management) Group;
- d. agreeing Lead and/or Accountable Body status for LEPCo/ECW and any projects undertaken;
- e. influence and align government investment in order to boost economic growth across Cheshire & Warrington;
- f. have regard to the duty to cooperate and the Joint Committee's overall function as set out above;
- g. to ensure alignment between decision making on areas of policy such as land use, transportation, economic development and wider regeneration;
- h. co-ordinate and align decision making on transport across Cheshire and Warrington ensuring that business views are taken on board and that the Councils' adopted plans are reflected in strategic priorities;
- i. deciding on capital expenditure programmes which are delivered across Cheshire & Warrington and ensuring policy and programmes are delivered effectively through LEPCo/ECW

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PROPOSED CHANGES TO ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION ENTERPRISE CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON¹

Article to be changed	Current Position	Proposed Change
Membership (Art.28)	Membership of Company is 1 Member from each Local Authority (Class A Members) + Chair & Vice Chair of Board (Class B Members). This equates to 20% membership for each Council.	There will be no Class B Members. There will be one Member from each local Council. This equates to 33.3% membership for each Council.
Termination (Art.29)	A Member may resign on 7 days notice.	If any Council wishes to resign from the Company then they shall give not less than 12 months' notice to the remaining Councils. They shall indemnify the remaining Councils any actual or anticipated loss, liability, damage, claim or expense which would be incurred by the remaining Councils. Any Council wishing to resign from the Company is not entitled to any distribution of the profits/reserves in the Company.
Powers (Art.50)	Power to amalgamate with any company having similar objects	Not to form any subsidiary or amalgamate/merge subsidiaries or participate in any partnership or joint venture without consent of the Councils
	Powers reference the Local Enterprise Partnership	Remove all references to Local Enterprise Partnership as this will not longer exist as a function recognised by Government
Directors (Art.4)	Currently a maximum of 20 Directors allowed, Class A (Local Authority) and Class B (other)	Directors to be appointed by the Councils, being the CEO and Finance Director of the Company and one officer from each local authority
Directors Remuneration (Art.23)	Board Directors are currently remunerated	Local authority officers will not receive remuneration for carrying out this role as it will form part of their duties.

¹ Name subject to Member approval

Appendix C: LEP Transition

Article to be changed	Current Position	Proposed Change
Chair & Deputy Chair of the Board (Art.25)	Currently are Class B Members	Officers of the Company will not be eligible to hold these positions
Chief Executive (Art.26)	Currently appointed by the Board	All senior management positions to be agreed by the Joint Committee
Secretary (Art.27)	Currently appointed by the Board	Appointed by the Joint Committee
Members Reserve Power (Art.7)	Members have the right to ask the Board to take or refrain from an action	Members to reserve the powers as set out below:

Powers reserved to the Councils and exercised through the Joint Committee:-

- (a) Approve the business plan and budget and consider whether to agree any variations
- (b) Approve projects which do not form part of the business plan
- (c) Chair to rotate every two years in the following order CWaC (until May 2025), CEC (until May 2027) WBC (until May 2029) and to continue in that rotation
- (d) Nominate the Vice-Chair from CEC (until May 2025) and to then rotate in the same order as the chairmanship every two years.
- (e) Set the level and request that the Councils fund the contributions (the amount to ensure that the Company has sufficient funds to meet its running costs)
- (f) Appoint the Secretary
- (g) Ensure that the Company deliver against their business plan and budget, holding them to account for such delivery and directing the Board to take remedial action where necessary
- (h) Appoint and/or remove directors to the Board
- (i) Approve any capital expenditure to be made in excess of £100,000 outside of the business plan
- (j) Approve the entering into of any lease or licence for the occupation of land or premises
- (k) Approve the employment of any person earning in excess of £100,000 p.a. and the use of any contractors for projects
- (l) Approve the entering into of any contract in excess of £100,000 outside of the business plan
- (m) Approve the entering into or giving of any loan, guarantee, surety or indemnity by ECW
- (n) Agree any policy or procedure for the operation and management of the Company
- (o) Approve the opening or closing of any bank account by the Company
- (p) Approve any changes to the Articles of Association
- (q) Meet at least once in every three calendar months or at such lesser or greater frequency as the Members shall in their discretion decide.

DUE DILIGENCE

This appendix sets out the current company structure, liabilities and risks as provided by the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (C&W LEP). The Council already has a 20% shareholding (membership) of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP and is proposing to take an additional 13% (and re-name the company Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington).

This due diligence therefore is based on the increase in shareholding and not as a new venture for the Council.

1. Company Structure

- 1.1 The C&W LEP is a company limited by guarantee, not having share capital, incorporated in England and Wales. It therefore has 'Members' and not 'Shareholders'.
- 1.2 Members of a company limited by guarantee do not make any contribution to the company's capital so long as the company remains a going concern. As the purpose of C&W LEP is to provide services to its Members and not to make a profit, then this is considered to be a suitable vehicle.
- 1.3 The C&W LEP has a subsidiary company, CWTB (trading as Marketing Cheshire), whose purpose is to promote commerce and marketing within the Councils' area. There are currently 12 Directors and the only Member is C&W LEP. CWTB is also set up as a Company Limited by Guarantee.

2. Memorandum & Articles of C&W LEP

- 2.1 The following are the main provisions of the Articles of Association of C&W LEP

(a) **Objects (Art.3) & Powers (Art.50).** The objects for which the Company is established are the promotion and furtherance of:

- the economic, cultural and social well-being of,
- investment and growth in, and
- economic development and regeneration and employment in, the Councils' area

The C&W LEP has a wide range of powers including; to raise and lend money, purchase or lease property, sponsor various activities, amalgamate with others and provide indemnities.

- 2.2 **Powers of Directors (Art. 6-9).** The Board has the power to make all decisions in relation to running the C&W LEP, unless the Members resolve that the Company shall take, or refrain from, a specific action. Therefore the current powers of the C&W LEP Board are very wide.
- 2.3 **Members (Art.29).** The 'Members' of the C&W LEP are the three Councils i.e. Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington, and not individual councillors. There are also 2 non-local authority Members, who are the Chair

Appendix D: LEP Transition

& Vice-Chair of the Board. Each Member has a 20% share of the C&W LEP. Members may resign on 7 days' notice.

- 2.4 **Directors (Art. 4-5).** The Directors of the Company are divided into Class A & Class B Directors. Class A Directors are the Council Leaders or their nominees. Class B Directors are appointed by the Board. There can be up to 20 Directors in total (Class A & B) and Class B Directors are appointed for a three-year term.
- 2.5 **Quorum (Art. 14).** The quorum for a Board meeting is 50% of the Board members present, and there must be at least 4 Class B Directors (i.e. non-local authority) to form the quorum.
- 2.6 **Directors Remuneration (Art. 23).** Directors can be remunerated. The Company currently has 13 Directors and 2, the Chair and Deputy Chair, are remunerated at £26k and £10k p.a. respectively.
- 2.7 **Chair/Vice-Chair (Art. 25).** The Chair and Vice Chair are appointed from the Class B (i.e. non-local authority) Directors. They are then automatically Members of the company by virtue of this position.

3. Memorandum & Articles of CWTB

The following are the main provisions of the Articles of CWTB, a wholly owned subsidiary of C&W LEP:-

3.1 Objects (Art. 6)

The objects for which the Company is established shall be the promotion of commerce and:

- i. to encourage, stimulate, support and advise on and manage the development of the administrative areas of Cheshire and Warrington in order to maximise the social and economic benefits;
- ii. in co-operation with sub-regional organisations, local authorities, commercial members and other bodies to formulate, develop, maintain and update regularly a coordinated strategic marketing plan for the sub-region and an action or destination management Plan for the Sub-region;
- iii. to carry on any other business of any description which may be advantageously carried on in connection with or ancillary to the above objects of the Company;

3.2 Powers of Directors (Art. 46)

The Board has the power to make all decisions in relation to running the CWTB, unless the Member resolves that the Company shall take, or refrain from, a specific action. Therefore the current powers of the CWTB Board are very wide and include the power to borrow money.

3.3 Member (Art. 11-14)

The sole Member of the CWTB is the C&W LEP.

Appendix D: LEP Transition

3.4 Directors (Art. 38-45)

There are up to 20 Directors, with one from each Council. No more than 4 Directors can be from the public sector (i.e. one from each Council plus the Chair). There are currently 12 Directors. Directors may be appointed by the Board but with the prior approval of C&W LEP as the sole Member. Appointments are for a three year term with the possibility of a further three year extension.

4. Contracts**Operational Contracts:**

The C&W LEP have provided a list of their contractual obligations which extend beyond 1 April 2024. Only two contracts continue beyond this date:-

- i. Insurance expiring November 2024
- ii. Project Management Software expiring 1 July 2025
- iii. There are no outstanding invoices or disputes on either contract and they are low value i.e. approx. £15k or less.

Investment Contracts:

The C&W LEP is a partner in two Life Sciences Funds. The funds invest in start-up Life Sciences businesses. Life Sciences Fund 1 was established in 2016 and is expected to run until 2031. No further investment contributions are required to this fund. Life Sciences Fund 2 was established in 2022 and is expected to run until 2037. C&W LEP is committed to investing £5 million in this fund and £3.75 million remains outstanding. This commitment is expected to be funded from the returns of Life Sciences 1 or, if returns have not been received in time, temporarily from the C&W LEP administered Growing Places Fund.

C&W LEP has also entered into grant agreements with developers to facilitate the construction of commercial properties within the Enterprise Zone. The grants have been funded by C&W LEP borrowing from the respective Local Authority depending on the location of the development (see section 8). C&W LEP will repay the borrowing from the resulting “pool” of additional retained business rates. Repayment of individual project loans may take until 2039. The grant agreements place conditions on the developers which protect the expected business rate income until the loans are repaid.

5. Staffing

As a local authority-controlled company, there may be an issue of equal pay as C&W LEP could potentially be considered an ‘associated company’. Equal pay means that someone must not be paid less compared to someone who is of the opposite gender when they are doing equal work for the same or an “associated” employer. Therefore, even if C&W LEP is deemed an associated company and pays a higher rate of pay for a similar job role to the Councils,

Appendix D: LEP Transition

that won't give rise to an equal pay claim unless the reason for the difference in pay is linked to sex.

For a successful equal pay claim, a Council employee would have to be working in the same work or work that has been graded the same. They would then need to show that the disparity in pay disproportionately affects female or male employees. The C&W LEP have provided a list of their current establishment and the Councils have considered this against their own establishment to ascertain whether there are any potential equal pay issues. CEC/WBC/CWAC have no equal pay risks from the staffing at the C&W LEP but this should be kept under review.

The C&W LEP have different terms and conditions to the Councils. They have advised that there are no outstanding disciplinary issues or claims from staff.

6. Subsidy Control

A subsidy is where a public body provides support to an organisation that gives them an economic advantage, meaning equivalent support could not have been obtained on commercial terms. A function of the C&W LEP is to provide grants to external organisations. Grant agreements therefore place responsibility on recipients to seek a subsidy control opinion, to only use the funds for the purposes awarded, and to indemnify the LEP should there be a requirement for the subsidy to be repaid. However there is a risk that an organisation would be unable to repay any subsidy given to them, and the C&W LEP would be responsible for repayment. C&W LEP also takes independent legal advice on subsidy control prior to making grants.

7. Risks disclosed by C&W LEP

The C&W LEP have provided a copy of their risk register, which discloses that their highest risks relate to the current uncertainty in the transition to local authority ownership. These risks will be mitigated if the Councils' shareholding is increased.

8. Loans from the Councils

Each of the Councils provided the C&W LEP with a £10 million loan facility. Individual project loans are drawn under this facility and there are currently six separate project loans with a total outstanding principal value of ca. £10 million. They make repayments on this loan through the retention of the business rates in the Enterprise Zone. There is a risk that if the collection rate goes down, then the loan repayments will not be met. However, this risk already exists and is regardless of the amount of the Councils shareholding. The C&W LEP mitigates this risk by carrying a significant reserve of retained business rates (£1.5-2 million)

9. C&W Development Limited Partnership/C&W DF (GP) Limited

The Council also has a Limited Liability Partnership with C&W LEP, for the management of EDRF fundings totalling £20M. As part of the necessary arrangements to manage the funds and investments, a Limited Partnership (Cheshire and Warrington Development Limited Partnership) was established. A limited company (Cheshire and Warrington DF (GP) Limited); owned by the Council; was set up as the general partner. The Council is the sole shareholder in the Limited Company and is the 'limited partner' in the Partnership. The Council received external legal advice from Addleshaws in 2020 regarding the governance arrangements, and this advice has yet to be implemented. The current directors of the CEC limited company (as opposed to the limited partnership) are the Growth Director from Warrington Council and the CEO of the LEP, and CEC has not yet taken up its representation.

10. Accountable Body

A number of funding streams which the LEP has received have required the money to be held and assurance given by an 'accountable body'. This function has been provided by Cheshire East Council for many years and most recently is covered by an Agreement with C&W LEP dated 15 June 2022, by which CEC takes on the role of accountable body for some of the C&W LEP funding streams and takes responsibility for the following:-

- i. Ensuring that the decisions and activities of the C&W LEP in relation to devolved funding conform with legal requirements with regard to equalities, social value, environment, subsidy control, public procurement etc;
- ii. Ensuring (through the Council's s151 Officer) that the funds are used appropriately and in accordance with the conditions placed on the grant. It is acknowledged that the revenue derived from funds includes management fees and interest, paid over as fee income. The use of those funds is approved as part of the LEP's annual budget setting process;
- iii. Ensuring that the Assurance Framework, as approved, is being adhered to;
- iv. Maintaining the official record of decisions relating to devolved funding;
- v. Ensuring that there are arrangements for local audit of funding allocated by C&W LEP at least equivalent to those in place for local authority spend.

On the understanding that Cheshire East Council will remain the accountable body, this Agreement should be reviewed and amended if necessary post 1 April 2024 to ensure it reflects the new governance arrangements.

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DRAFT Heads of Terms
Service Agreement between Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington
(ECW) ¹
and
Cheshire East Council
Cheshire West and Chester Council
Warrington Borough Council

1. Business Plan and Finances

1.1 ECW to prepare and submit an annual business plan and any request for financial support to the Joint Committee for approval no later than **January** in each year.

1.2 ECW will provide the services in the business plan within the agreed budget and will report on its performance, budget and risk to the Joint Committee on a quarterly basis.

1.3 ECW will attend monthly meetings of the Growth Directors Group (GDG) to advise on progress against the business plan and other areas as decided by the GDG.

2. Staff

2.1 Any staff will be employed on **the standard terms and conditions of the Company**. Any changes to terms and conditions must be approved by the Joint Committee **in accordance with its terms of reference**.

2.2 Any formal disciplinary action take by the Company which may lead to a dismissal of a member of ECW staff should be supported by **xx Council**.

2.3 **ECW will consult the GDG on any changes to their staffing structure. The GDG may refer the matter to the Joint Committee if they feel it would have a material impact on the performance of ECW.**

3. Policies and Procedures

3.1 To consult the GDG or Joint Committee (as relevant) prior to adopting any policy or procedure for the operation and management of ECW

3.2 The Joint Committee may require that the Company adopts certain policies or procedures in its operation.

¹ On the basis that this name is approved by Members

Appendix E: LEP Transition

4. Council Services

4.1 Annual accounts will be supplied by ECW to the Councils **by 30 May** or as soon as is reasonably practicable in each calendar year.

4.2 The S151 Officer of each Shareholder Council shall have access at all reasonable times and with due notice to the financial records of ECW, and any appropriate authorised staff or third-party organisations for the purposes of carrying out an audit.

4.3 The Shareholder Councils may provide support services to ECW and the relevant Council and **ECW will enter into a separate service level agreement for these services, and the Company will reimburse the relevant Council for any services provided.**

4.4 An annual programme of internal audits will be agreed by the Joint Committee, and those audits will be undertaken by **one of the Councils on behalf of all three**, and reported to the Joint Committee and each Council's Audit Committee (if appropriate). The costs of those internal audits will be recharged to ECW.

4.5 Cheshire East Council will provide the secretariat services for the Joint Committee

5. Other

5.1 ECW will maintain adequate insurance in respect of public liability, employers liability and indemnity insurance.

5.2 The liability of the Councils in respect of the Company is limited to £1. In the event that the Councils agree to meet all losses, claims, expenses, actions, demands and liabilities which cannot be met by ECW, the shall be shared by the Subscriber Councils in equal proportions.

6. Disputes

6.1 Internal Dispute – officers to try and resolve in first instance at the lowest operational level. If no resolution, then escalated to GDG and then to CExs, and in default of agreement, to the Joint Committee.

HIGH LEVEL DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN FOR ENTERPRISE CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON

2024/25

Draft as at 16th January 2024: NB: Name subject Member approval. Also note that around half on Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington's (ECW) income derives from Government funded programmes. The LEP/ECW is not usually informed of the funding that will be provided for those programmes until close to the start of the financial year to which they apply. Where this is the case funding and targets for 2024/5 have been set at 2023/4 levels.

ENTERPRISE CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON: ROLE

- Reporting to the Cheshire and Warrington local authorities the role of Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington (ECW) is to support Cheshire and Warrington's elected members to make C&W the healthiest, most sustainable inclusive and growing place in the country by
 - providing strategic economic planning;
 - delivery of key government programmes; and
 - ensuring that a strong, independent business voice is reflected in the advice ECW provides to elected members.
- ECW is also responsible for promoting Cheshire and Warrington as a great place to visit, live, work, invest and study through Marketing Cheshire, which is an integral part of ECW and is designated by Visit England as the sub-region's Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP).

ENTERPRISE CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON: KEY OBJECTIVES 2024/5

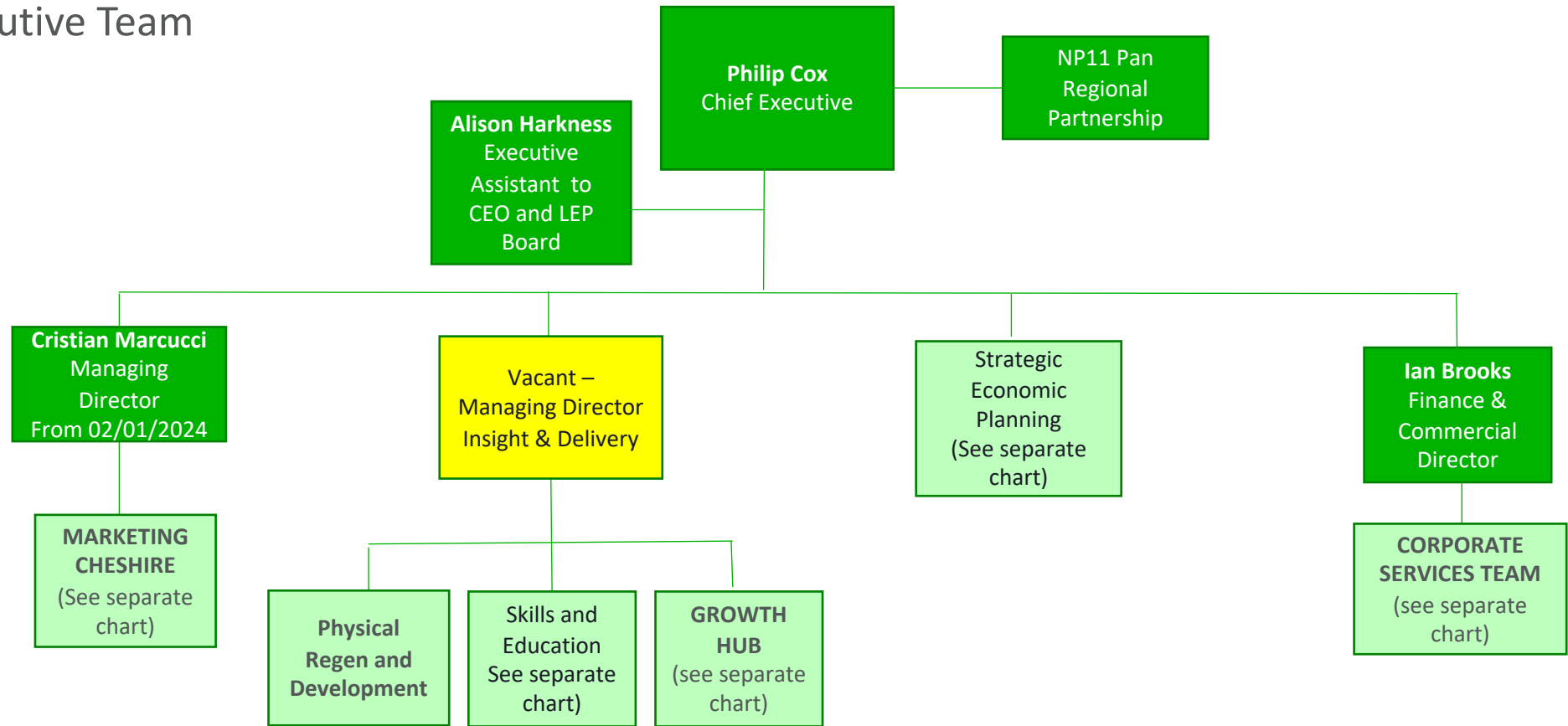
In 2024/5 ECW will:

- Produce a Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Plan (SIEP) through to 2045;
- Produce a strategic transport and a workforce and skills plan;
- Support elected members to launch a Fair Employment Charter for C&W;
- Lead the establishment of an industry body that will co-ordinate and facilitate the delivery of the £30 billion industrial cluster decarbonisation programme. The body will also lead a programme of community engagement and communication about the programme;
- Support elected members to deliver their vision for C&W, including through exploring how these might be supported by future devolution to C&W;
- 640 Skills Bootcamp training places for shortage occupations;
- Working closely with Youth Fed, support all secondary schools in C&W to work with employers to help every young person find their best next step;
- As part of the Growth Hub network, provide all businesses across C&W with access to advice and support via a free, impartial, 'single point of contact'
- Ensure that C&W's £260 million suite of investment programmes is invested to support the delivery of leaders' key objectives for the C&W economy;
- Deliver the recommendations of Marketing Cheshire's review of visitor information services;
- Support the creation of a Tourism BID for Chester;
- As the body responsible for the funding provided by Government, lead the establishment of a Pan Regional Partnership for the North

ENTERPRISE CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON: STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

- ECW will deliver its objectives through three divisions:
 - Strategic Economic Planning
 - Economic Insight and Delivery
 - Marketing Cheshire
- These teams are supported by a Finance and Corporate Services division that provides finance, HR, accommodation and business support to ECW.
- ECW has 36.5 full time equivalent staff and an operational budget of £3.6 million. It is responsible for £3.5 million pa of programme funding; manages (with partners) a suite of investment funds of £260 million; and is responsible for managing, on behalf of the sub-region, income from the Cheshire Science Corridor Enterprise Zone expected to total £60 million over its remaining lifetime.

Executive Team



ECW FIRST DRAFT BUDGET 2024/5 – 2025/6 (including Marketing Cheshire)

	2024/5	2025/6	
INCOME			
LA Grants	£ 615k	£ 375k	incl. in 2024/25 £240k from Central Government
Government Programme Grants	£ 4505k	£ 4505k	incl. Bootcamps £2.459M, NP11 £1M
Commercial Income	£ 425k	£ 425k	
Enterprise Zone	£ 2700k	£ 3800k	
Interest on balances with bank and Cheshire East	£ 600k	£ 500k	
TOTAL INCOME	£ 8845k	£ 9605k	
EXPENDITURE			
LEP and MC Running Costs	£ 3599k	£ 3599k	
EZ Loan Repayments	£ 1427k	£ 1427k	
Programme Expenditure	£ 3459k	£ 3459k	incl. Bootcamps £2.459M, NP11 £1M
Sub-Regional Programmes	£ 440k	£ 750k	e.g. Transport Strategy, Fair Employment Charter
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£8925k	£ 9235k	
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(£ 80k)	£ 370k	

ECW FIRST DRAFT BUDGET 2024/5 – LEP AND MARKETING CHESHIRE

	LEP	MC	TOTAL	
INCOME				
LA Grants	£ 313k	£ 282k	£ 615k	incl. £240k Central Government
Government Programme Grants	£ 4335k	£ 170k	£4505k	
Commercial Income	£ 0k	£ 425k	£ 425k	
Enterprise Zone	£ 2500k	£ 200k	£2700k	
Interest on balances with bank and Cheshire East	£ 600k	£ 0k	£ 600k	
TOTAL INCOME	£ 7768k	£ 1077k	£8845k	
EXPENDITURE				
LEP and MC Running Costs	£ 2501k	£ 1098k	£3599k	
EZ Loan Repayments	£ 1427k	£ 0k	£1427k	
Programme Expenditure	£ 3459k	£ 0k	£3459k	
Sub-Regional Programmes	£ 440k	£ 0k	£ 440k	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£7827k	£ 1098k	£8925k	
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(£ 59k)	(£ 21k)	(£ 80k)	

ECW FIRST DRAFT BUDGET 2024/5 – LEP AND MC “DEPARTMENTAL” ANALYSIS

LEP/MC Budget 2024-25 - Departmental Analysis						
	LEP & MC GROUP SUMMARY					
	Strategic Economic Planning incl. NWNZ	Insight & Delivery incl. EZ, GH, DiT, SBC, Pledge	MC	Corporate Services incl. Fund Management	Total (ex NP11)	Total (incl.NP11)
Income / Funding						
Total Income	1,095,815	5,056,340	1,076,400	666,595	7,895,150	8,845,150
Expenditure						
Programme Development	90,000	68,000	406,500	-	564,500	1,324,500
Strategy Projects	440,000	300,000	-	-	740,000	740,000
Commissioned Activities	530,000	368,000	406,500	-	1,304,500	2,064,500
Staff and related costs	451,775	1,079,443	563,063	364,075	2,458,356	2,647,756
Operating costs	157,500	49,818	109,500	156,600	473,418	474,018
Governance and overhead	-	82,000	18,500	120,300	220,800	220,800
Total Expenses	1,139,275	1,579,261	1,097,563	640,975	4,457,074	5,407,074
Loan Instalments	-	1,427,000	-	-	1,427,000	1,427,000
Grant Payments	-	2,091,000	-	-	2,091,000	2,091,000
Financial Expenses	-	3,518,000	-	-	3,518,000	3,518,000
Surplus / (Deficit)	(43,460)	(40,921)	(21,163)	25,620	(79,924)	(79,924)



ECW BALANCE SHEET : 1 APRIL 2024

Long Term Assets

EZ Rights to future business rates (2024-41)	£ 60000k
Growing Places Fund	£ 10223k
Life Sciences Funds	£ 13250k

Short Term (Cash & Near Cash) Assets

EZ Fund	£ 1500k
Net Operating Assets (working capital)	£ 748k

TOTAL **£ 85721k**

Liabilities

EZ Loans (2024-41)	£ 12800k
GPF Loan (to fund LSF 2)	£ 4700k

TOTAL **£ 17500k**

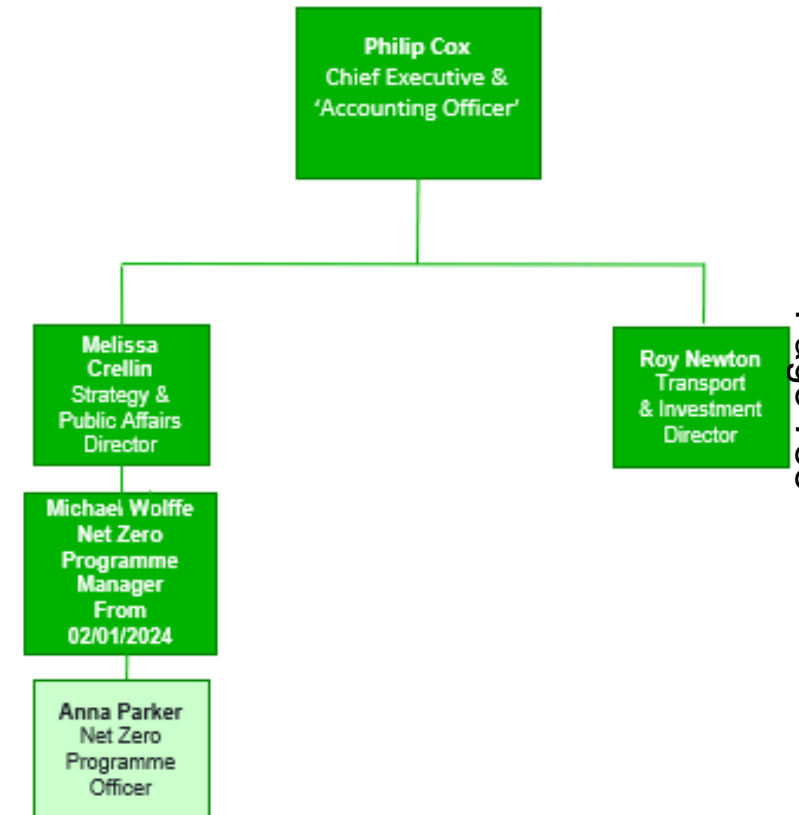
NB: ECW also shares responsibility with Manchester and Lancashire for oversight and deployment of the £210 million Evergreen Suite of funds. These do not appear on ECW's balance sheet.

ENTERPRISE CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON: DIVISIONAL BREAKDOWN

Strategic Economic Planning

Provides sub-regional economic planning resource for C&W

- Completion and publication of C&W Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Plan (SIEP)
- Putting in place a new programme co-ordination and oversight body to ensure the delivery in C&W of world's first Net Zero industrial cluster
- Ongoing delivery of the recommendations of the Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission (SIGC)
- Providing support and drawing advice from the Business Advisory on strategic economic and transport issues
- Completion, implementation and ongoing management of C&W's Fair Employment Charter
- Provide sub-regional input and co-ordination of C&W's response to the cancellation of HS2 and the introduction of the Network North programme
- Updating C&W's strategic transport plan to reflect the SIEP
- Ensure that the sub-region is maximising its influence with inter alia National Highways, DfT, and the rail industry;
- Advice to LAs on development of any plans for devolution in C&W

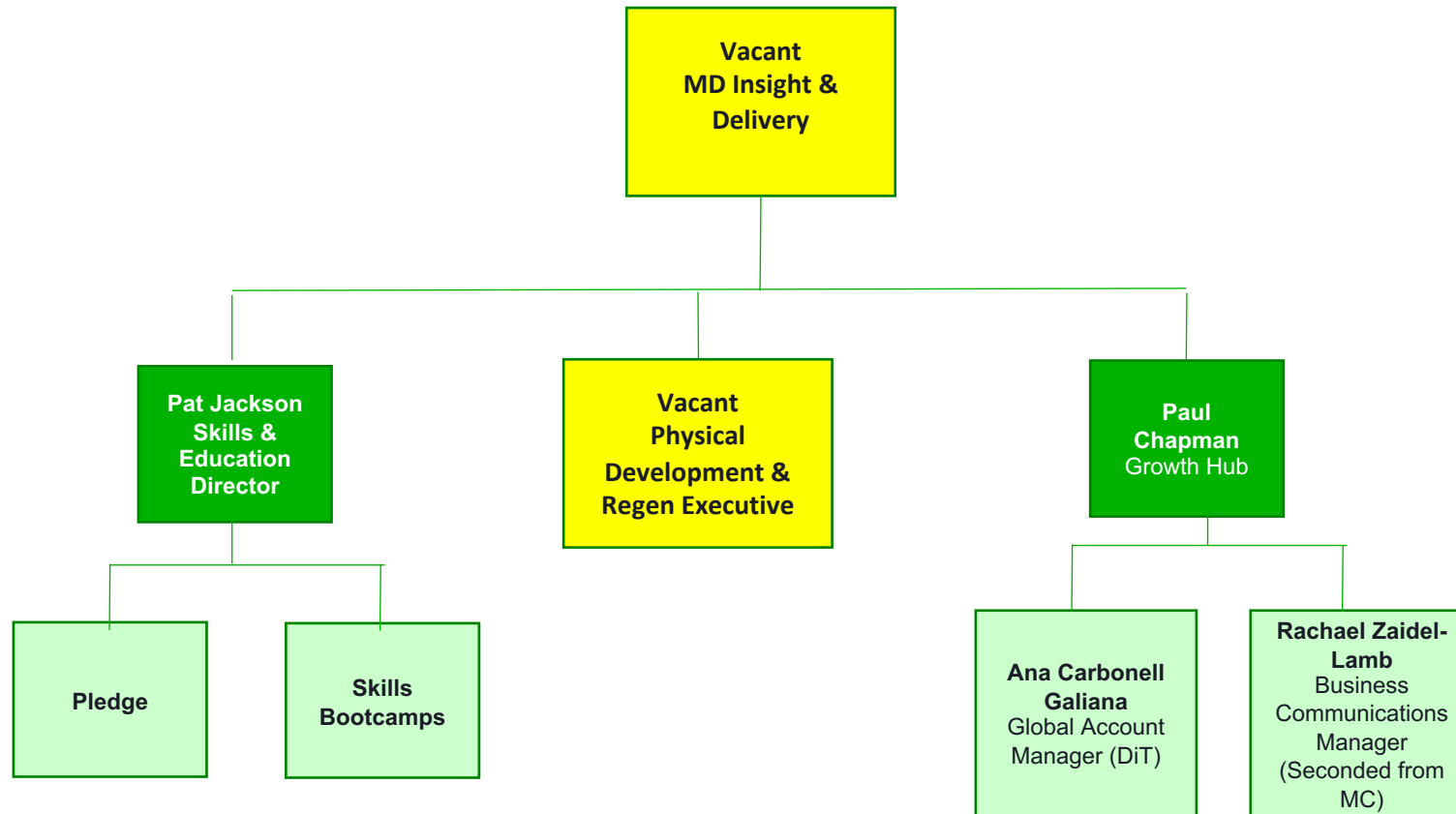


Economic Insight and Delivery

Provision of insight and intelligence about the C&W economy and the delivery of ECW's Government funded programmes

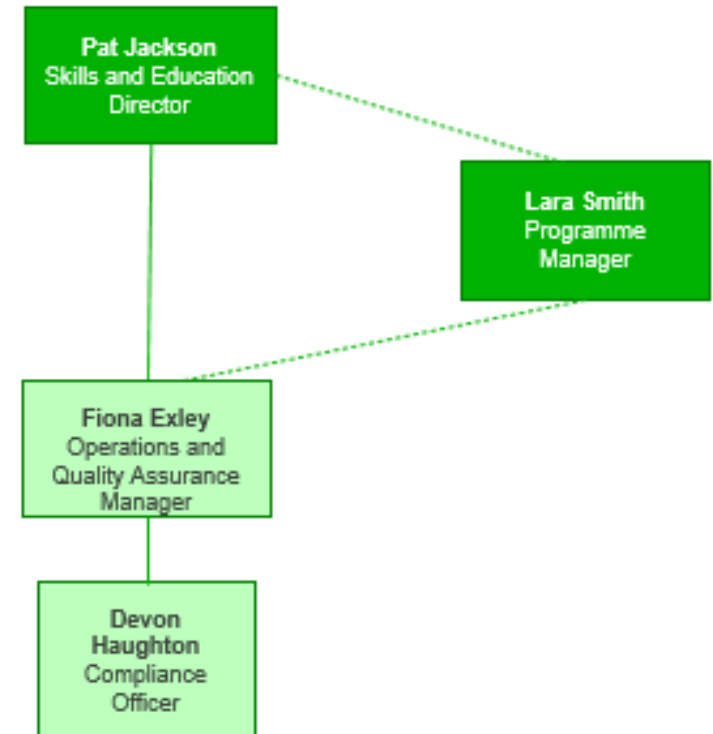
- Provide elected members with comprehensive timely support and advice to enable them to provide well informed direction to the land Property, Employment and Skills and Business Support programmes.
- Support the LAs and elected members in the development of any sub-regional devolution propositions and the sub-region's transition to more sub-regional working.
- Lead engagement with C&W's Business Advisory Board, providing support to its members to enable them to provide strong independent advice to LA leaders.
- Delivery of C&W's Careers and Skills Bootcamp programmes, delivering 640 training places in shortage occupations and supporting all 84 state funded secondary schools to achieve an average of five Gatsby benchmarks with no school achieving less than three.
- Investment and ongoing management of the EZ programme, in particular retained business rate income of £60 million over the period to 2024 – 2041, using the associated £30 million loan facility to promote further development at all EZ locations.
- In conjunction with other LA/CA and private sector partners, lead on policy and investment of C&Ws £260 million of investment funds.
- Development and promotion of C&W as a key hub for innovation through active management and promotion of the Cheshire Science Corridor.
- Provision of advice and support to leaders and LAs on land and property aspects of LA and sub-regional economic development plans, potentially including the development of proposals for Investment Zones in C&W.
- Leadership and delivery of sub-region's input into UKREiif.
- Provision of policy support for C&W's Housing Board.
- Through the C&W Growth Hub, provide direct support to SMEs and account manage foreign owned firms located in C&W.
- Develop and strengthen the sub-region's economic insight and intelligence, ensuring that plans for the development and promotion of C&W (including by Marketing Cheshire) are informed by the best available insight and intelligence, drawn from National Statistics through to local intelligence gathered from the Business Advisory Board and direct engagement with businesses in C&W.

Economic Insight & Delivery Team



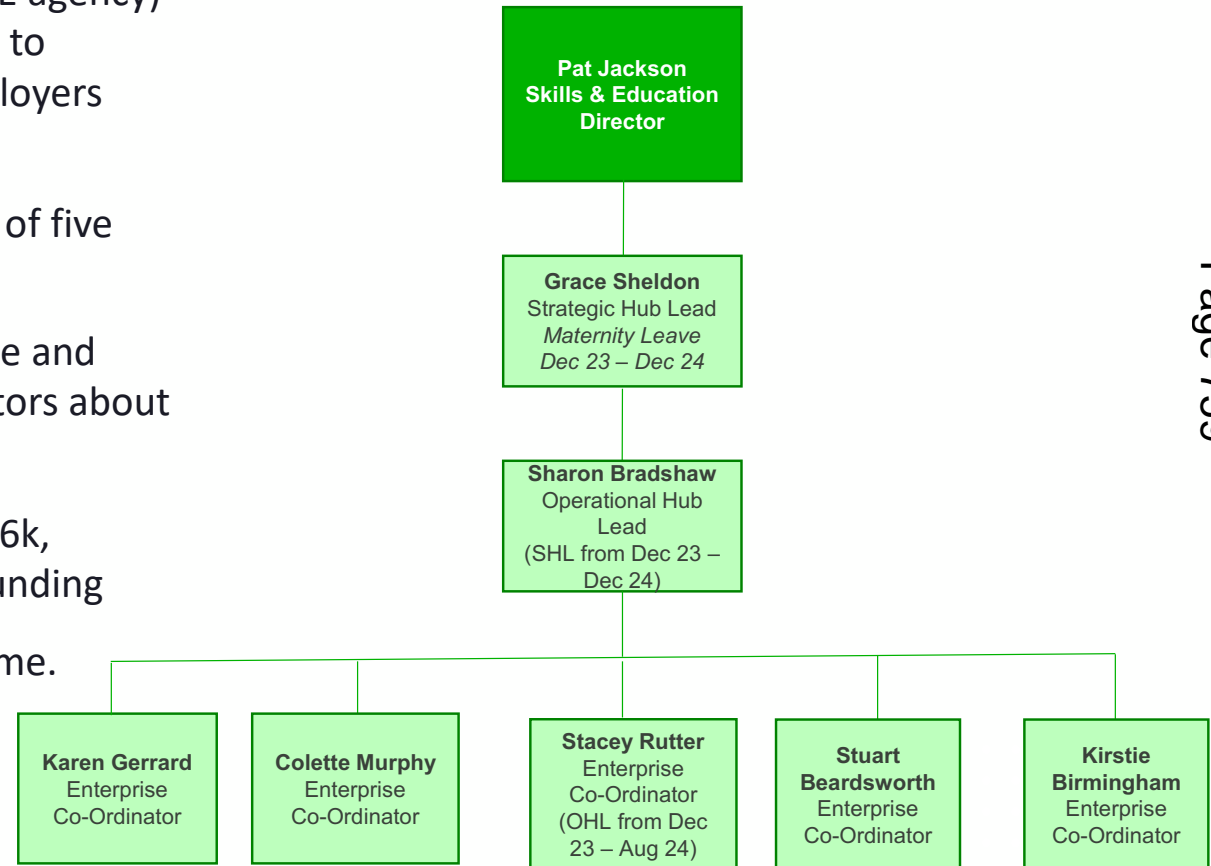
Skills Bootcamps

- Delivery of DfE's Skills Bootcamp Programme in C&W;
- Provide grants for 640 adult training places in shortage occupations through ca. 20 training providers, ensuring that at least [x%] of trainees obtain a new role that uses the skills gained from the courses;
- Ensure the Bootcamp programme is informed by strong intelligence on the key skills shortages in C&W;
- Grant from DfE in 2024/5 expected to be £2.459 million;
- Funding covers costs of 3 FTE, two member of staff employed full time on programme, two others spend part of their time on programme.



Careers Pledge

- Grant from Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) (a DfE agency) to meet the costs of providing Enterprise Co-ordinators to improve careers education by bringing schools and employers together;
- Ensure all 84 secondary schools in C&W achieve average of five Gatsby Benchmarks and a minimum of three;
- Amplify technical and vocational routes for young people and develop innovative Teacher Encounters to upskill educators about employer needs and inform curriculum;
- Total budget for academic year (Sept – Aug) 2023/4 £406k, comprising £365k CEC grant and £41k required match funding
- 6.9 FTE working in conjunction with Youth Fed programme.



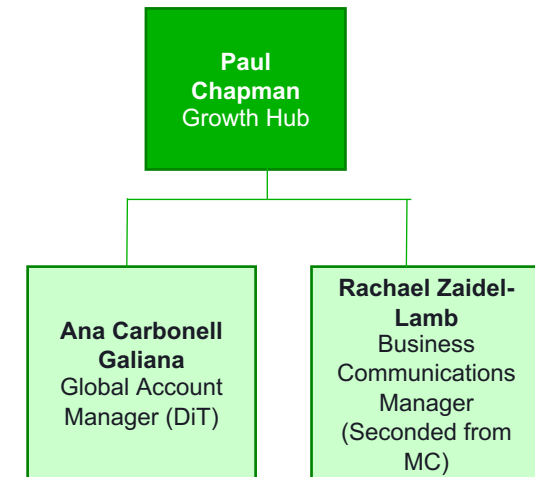
Physical Development and Regeneration

Being delivered by Cushman & Wakefield pending appointment of replacement for postholder that left in December 2023

- Investment and ongoing management of the EZ programme including retained business rate income of £60 million over the period to 2024 – 2041, deploying the £30 million EZ loan facility to promote and facilitate further development within the Zone;
- Provide support to private sector to realise prospective further development across all site within the EZ;
- In conjunction with other LA/CA and private sector partners, lead on policy and investment of C&Ws £260 million of investment funds;
- Development and promotion of C&W as a key hub for innovation through active management and promotion of Cheshire Science Corridor;
- Provision of advice and support to LA members and officers on land and property aspects of LA and sub-regional economic development plans, potentially including the development of proposals for Investment Zones in C&W;
- Leadership and delivery of sub-region's input into UKREiiF.

Growth Hub

- Deployment of £329k grant from DBT to provide key account management services for foreign owned firms to encourage them to invest in C&W and to provide support and advice to SMEs across C&W;
- Provide DBT with intelligence on new and emerging economic opportunities or shocks and a monthly report highlighting new or emerging information on local economic conditions, local business needs and concerns;
- Promote and encourage simplification and coordination of the local business support ecosystem, to provide clarity for local businesses and partner, bringing together organisations involved in the provision of business support from across the public, private and third sectors;
- 3 FTE

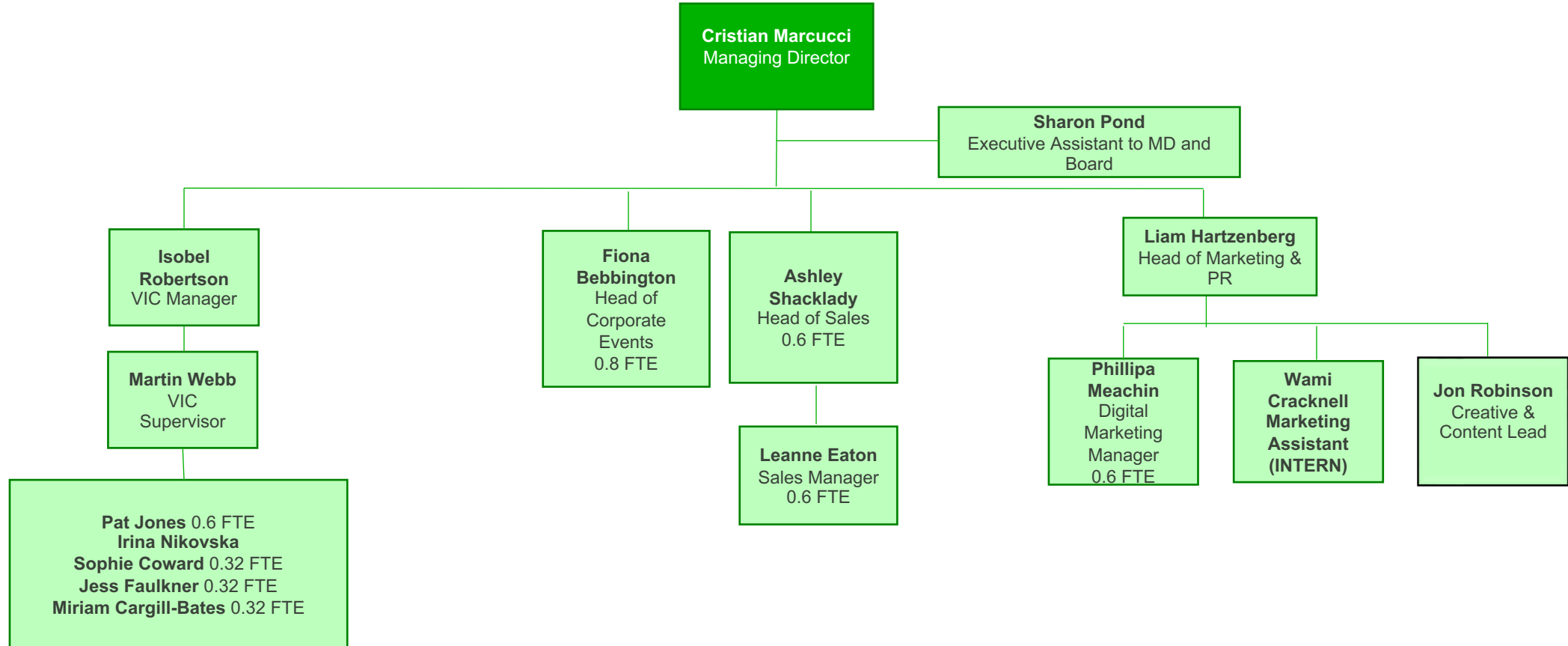


Marketing Cheshire

Provides Visitor and Place Marketing for C&W, the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in Chester plus LEP PR and Comms;

- Inspiring visitors, residents and businesses to visit, live, work and invest in C&W;
- Support the delivery of a Business Improvement District for the accommodation sector in Chester;
- Implement the conclusions of the review of Visitor Information;
- Publish a Destination Management Plan for C&W;
- Working closely with the Insight and Delivery team, ensure that C&W has a strong presence at UKREiiF;
- Promote the Cheshire Science Corridor as a great place to locate science based businesses;
- 11 FTE (of whom 4.5 FTE in VIC)

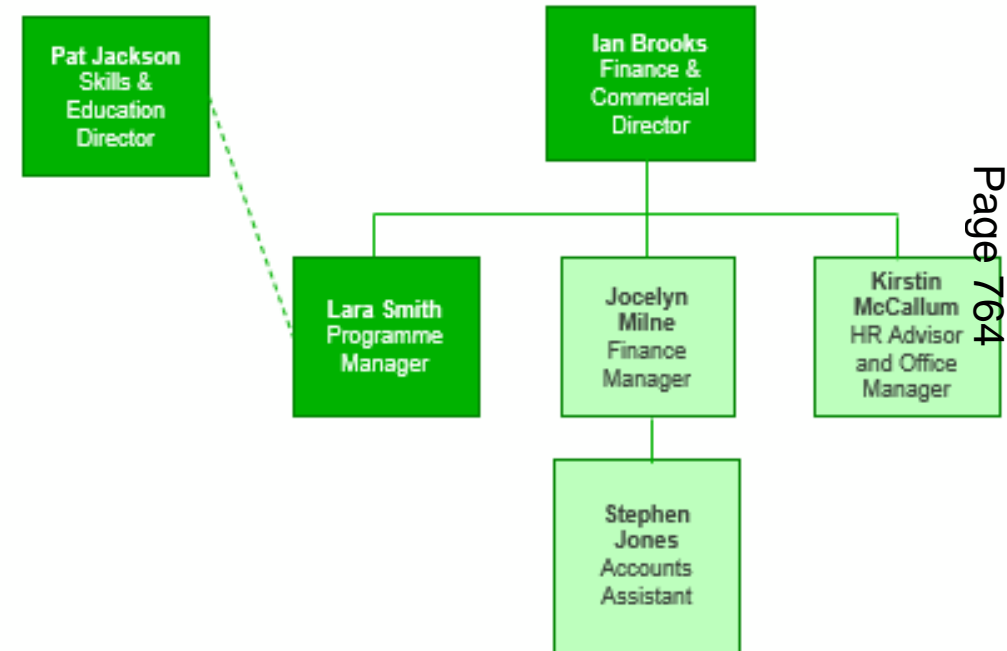
Marketing Cheshire Organisation Chart



Finance and Corporate Services

Provides ECW's finance, IT, HR and other corporate services

- Provides Finance, Company and Board Secretarial, HR, Procurement, accommodation and IT services to LEP/ECW/MC.
- Programme Management oversight of ECW's programme
- Administration of ECW's legal obligation to monitor ERDF (C&W UDF) until 2030. Also responsible for C&W's ongoing obligation to monitor LGF and GBF until 2026.
- Provision of financial expertise and administration to support C&W's investment fund portfolio (including the Evergreen suite, Life Science Fund and Growing Places Fund)
- 4.4 FTE



NP11

- C&W LEP acts as the Accountable Body for NP11 group of Northern LEPs which will become the Pan-Regional Partnership (PRP) for the North. NP11 staff are legally employed by C&W and NP11 contracts are issued in the LEP's name;
- Launch of new PRP at Convention of the North in February 2024 to "Grow the North's Global Footprint";
- £1 million grant from DLUHC in 2024/5 of which £50k retained by ECW to cover cost of services provided to NP11 / PRP



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COUNCIL MEETING – 27 FEBRUARY 2024**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE: CHESHIRE EAST ELECTORAL REVIEW - WARDING PROPOSALS****RECOMMENDATIONS: That Council**

- 1 approve the proposals for the future warding of Cheshire East, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, as the Council's submission to the Boundary Commission; with the following amendment: that Wilmslow East" ward name be changed to "Wilmslow East and Dean Row", to retain the identity of Dean Row.**
- 2 that the Electoral Review Sub-Committee be granted delegated authority:**
 - (a) to make any further changes to the proposals arising from the Council meeting on 27th February, or which become necessary after that meeting; and**
 - (b) to respond on the Council's behalf to any further informal or formal consultation by the Boundary Commission which relates to the second period of consultation.**

Extract from the Minutes of the Corporate Policy Committee meeting on 13 February 2024

5 CHESHIRE EAST ELECTORAL REVIEW - WARDING PROPOSALS

The Committee considered the recommendations of the Electoral Review Sub-Committee in respect of warding proposals for Cheshire East, which was undertaken in response to an electoral review of Cheshire East Council's electoral arrangements by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The final approval of the Council's submission was intended to be given by full Council on 27th February 2024.

A number of visiting members addressed the committee in relation to the proposals, summarised below.

Councillors Liz Wardlaw, Sally Holland and David Brown each addressed the committee in relation to the proposals for Congleton. Each councillor highlighted the positive benefits of maintaining the current two-ward arrangements for Congleton (as the Sub-Committee's recommendations would). This arrangement was felt to be inclusive, well known amongst local communities and promoted improved social, economic and health benefits, as well as evenly dividing elector numbers and councillor workloads. It was stated that any splitting of wards would create a division within communities and therefore committee

members were encouraged to support the warding proposals for Congleton, as recommended by the Electoral Review Sub Committee.

Councillors Sarah Bennett-Wake, Liz Braithwaite, Mary Brooks, Brian Puddicombe, Judy Snowball, Rob Vernon each spoke against the proposals for Macclesfield, as recommended by the Electoral Review Sub Committee and urged the committee to support the proposed amendment to be put forward by Cllr Wilson (Warding Option 1), which was supported by 9 out of the 12 Macclesfield Ward Councillors. Members highlighted the impact that both proposals for Macclesfield would have on local communities and on Councillors' workloads and asked the committee to take into consideration the views of local ward members and residents.

Councillor David Edwardes addressed the committee on behalf of Councillor Emma Gilman and stated that both local ward councillors for Tytherington were in support of the proposals of the Electoral Review Sub Committee. Councillor Edwardes indicated that supporting the proposed amendment for Macclesfield (Option 1) would have a detrimental impact on Tytherington resulting in a loss of community identity.

Councillor Ken Edwards spoke in relation to the proposed Bollington and Rainow ward. Councillor Edwards spoke against the proposals of the Electoral Review Sub Committee which he felt would divide Bollington between two wards, reduce electoral equality and reduce the sense of community cohesion.

Members debated the proposals put forward by the Electoral Review Sub Committee and a number of amendments put forward by committee members in relation to Macclesfield, Knutsford and Wilmslow. It was proposed, seconded and subsequently resolved that the proposed "Wilmslow East" ward name be changed to "Wilmslow East and Dean Row" to retain the identity of Dean Row.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That the Corporate Policy Committee:

1. Recommends to Council that Council approve the proposals for the future warding of Cheshire East as set out in Appendix 1 to the report as the Council's submission to the Boundary Commission; with the following amendment: that Wilmslow East" ward name be changed to "Wilmslow East and Dean Row", to retain the identity of Dean Row.
2. Delegates authority to the Electoral Review Sub-Committee to make any further required changes to the proposals, and to approve any outstanding proposals and to deal with any matters which arise, following the Corporate Policy Committee's meeting and prior to the consideration of the proposals by full Council, and also in respect of any outstanding proposals which have not been finalised in time for consideration by Council.

3. Recommends to Council that the Electoral Review Sub-Committee be granted delegated authority:
 - (a) to make any further changes to the proposals arising from the Council meeting on 27th February, or which become necessary after that meeting; and
 - (b) to respond on the Council's behalf to any further informal or formal consultation by the Boundary Commission which relates to the second period of consultation.

Note: since the meeting of the Corporate Policy Committee the Warding Proposals Report and the map of the proposed ward have been updated to reflect the proposed change of ward name from "Wilmslow East" to "Wilmslow East and Dean Row". The updated versions are included with this minute.

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CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE – 13TH FEBRUARY 2024

CHESHIRE EAST ELECTORAL REVIEW - WARDING PROPOSALS

RECOMMENDATION

That the Corporate Policy Committee

- 1. approve the proposals for the future warding of Cheshire East as recommended by the Electoral Review Sub-Committee and set out in Appendix 1 for recommendation to full Council on 27th February 2024 as the Council's submission to the Boundary Commission;**
- 2. delegate authority to the Electoral Review Sub-Committee to make any further required changes to the proposals, and to approve any outstanding proposals and to deal with any matters which arise, following the Corporate Policy Committee's meeting and prior to the consideration of the proposals by full Council, and also in respect of any outstanding proposals which have not been finalised in time for consideration by Council; and**
- 3. recommend to Council that the Electoral Review Sub-Committee be granted delegated authority**
 - (a) to make any further changes to the proposals arising from the Council meeting on 27th February, or which become necessary after that meeting; and**
 - (b) to respond on the Council's behalf to any further informal or formal consultation by the Boundary Commission which relates to the second period of consultation.**

Extract from the Minutes of the Electoral Review Sub-Committee meeting on 31st January 2024

15 CHESHIRE EAST ELECTORAL REVIEW - WARDING PROPOSALS

The Sub-Committee considered a report on proposed future warding arrangements for Cheshire East Council, which was in response to an electoral review of Cheshire East by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

In presenting the report, Mr Reed reminded the Sub-Committee that the review was being conducted by the Boundary Commission, and that the Council was being consulted with a view to submitting its own proposals to the Commission. The Sub-Committee was being asked to consider the draft Council proposals and to make

recommendations to the Corporate Policy Committee on 13th February 2024. The final approval of the Council's submission would be by full Council on 27th February 2024.

The report set out the Boundary's Commission's timetable for conducting the electoral review. It also set out the criteria that the Commission would apply to its consideration of the future warding arrangements for Cheshire East: electoral equality, community identity, and effective and convenient local government. Any proposals by the Council would need to conform to those criteria.

The Sub-Committee had met informally on a number of occasions between late November and mid-January to consider in detail proposals for future warding. In addition, individual members of the Sub-Committee had consulted informally with local ward members and within their political groups. Local ward members had attended the meetings and had been afforded the opportunity to speak in relation to the warding proposals for their areas.

Appendix 1 to the report included the vast majority of warding proposals upon which informal agreement had been reached. A number of warding proposals remained unresolved, and the options relating to those proposals were set out in Appendix 2. Detailed maps of the proposals were set out in the appendices and large scale printed versions were available at the meeting.

The officers advised that once the Sub-Committee had approved proposals from among the options in Appendix 2, those proposals would be incorporated into the main set of proposals at Appendix 1 for the Corporate Policy Committee meeting. The officers would also take the opportunity to correct a number of typographical errors that had become apparent in the warding proposals report.

The Sub-Committee was also recommended, for the reasons set out in the report, to seek delegated authority from the Corporate Policy Committee, and then from Council, for the Sub-Committee to make any further changes to the warding proposals following the Corporate Policy Committee and Council meetings, and to respond to any further consultation by the Boundary Commission before or during the second round of consultation between July and October.

The Chair acknowledged the huge amount of work that had been undertaken over the last few weeks and placed on record his thanks to the officers, and in particular to Nick Billington. He also congratulated the Sub-Committee on having secured agreement on the vast majority of warding proposals, with only three areas remaining to be resolved by the day of the meeting.

The Sub-Committee proceeded to consider the proposals set out in the report, including the options for the as yet unresolved areas set out in Appendix 2 relating to Macclesfield and Bollington, Shavington and Rope, and Congleton.

With regard to Knutsford, which was raised under public speaking, the Chair suggested that Mr Godden, who was still present, might wish to work with Mr Billington to see if an appropriate arrangement could be brought forward in time for consideration by the Corporate Policy Committee.

With regard to the optional proposals for Macclesfield, Councillors S Bennett-Wake, L Braithwaite, M Brooks, B Puddicombe and J Snowball spoke as visiting members in support of Option 1 in Appendix 2. Councillor D Edwardes spoke as a visiting member in support of Option 2. Councillors K Edwards and J Place spoke as visiting members in support of the proposed boundary for the Bollington ward under the Macclesfield Option 1 proposal where the ward boundary with Tytherington remained south of the Silk Road.

With regard to the optional proposals for Shavington and Rope, Councillor L Buchanan spoke as a visiting member in support of a single, two-member ward.

Councillor Clowes read out the comments of Councillor M Simon regarding the boundary between the proposed Wistaston and Rope wards. The Chair asked Mr Billington to take away Councillor Simon's comments to ascertain what exactly was being proposed and what the implications might be, and to circulate the results of his analysis to members of the Sub-Committee and the Corporate Policy Committee before the Committee's meeting.

Before the Sub-Committee considered the proposals for Congleton, the Chair reported that Councillor L Smetham had submitted comments, expressing concern about what she referred to as the piecemeal attacks on the edges of her ward, with illogical boundaries not aligning with parishes.

With regard to Congleton, Councillor S Holland spoke as a visiting member against the proposal for three two-member wards. Councillor Clowes reported the comments of Councillor L Wardlaw that she and other Congleton members supported the alternative proposal for two three-member wards.

The Sub-Committee gave detailed consideration to the merits of the various options in Appendix 2 and, following a number of indicative votes and proposed amendments, arrived at a final set of recommendations to the Corporate Policy Committee.

RESOLVED

That the Sub-Committee

1. approves the following proposals on warding for recommendation to the Corporate Policy Committee on 13th February 2024, with a view to these being recommended to Council on 27th February 2024:
 - (a) the proposals set out in Appendix 1 in full, and the proposals relating to Gawsorth and Sutton set out in Appendix 2;

(b) the following proposals set out in Appendix 2:

Macclesfield and Bollington – Option 2 as detailed in the Appendix, subject to the following amendments:

- The whole of the area comprising Polling District 4CBR to be included in the Macclesfield South ward; and
- The whole of the area comprising Polling District 4AF2 to be included in the Macclesfield West ward.

Shavington and Rope – that there be a single, two-member ward as detailed in Appendix 2.

Congleton – that there be two three-member wards as detailed in Appendix 2.

2. agrees to seek delegated authority for the Sub-Committee:

- (c) to make any further required changes to these proposals, and to approve any outstanding proposals and to deal with any matters which arise, following the Corporate Policy Committee's meeting and prior to the consideration of the proposals by full Council, and also in respect of any outstanding proposals which have not been finalised in time for consideration by Council;
- (d) to make any further changes to the proposals arising from the Council meeting on 27th February, or which become necessary after that meeting; and
- (e) to respond on the Council's behalf to any further informal or formal consultation by the Boundary Commission which relates to the second period of consultation.

Note: The warding proposals agreed by the Electoral Review Sub-Committee for recommendation to this Committee as set out in Resolutions 1 (a) and (b) above have been incorporated into a single set of proposals in the Warding Proposals Report and supporting maps attached at Appendix 1.

Electoral Review Sub-Committee

31st January 2024

Cheshire East Electoral Review – Warding Proposals

Report of: David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance

Report Reference No: ER/15/23-24

All Cheshire East Council wards are affected

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to consider the proposed warding arrangements for Cheshire East Council for recommendation to the Corporate Policy Committee and full Council.
2. This is to enable the Council to respond as a consultee to the second stage of the electoral review being conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
3. In responding to the review, the Council will be fulfilling its Corporate Plan objective, to be “open” by providing strong community leadership and by working transparently with residents, businesses and partners, to deliver the Council’s ambitions within the Borough.

Executive Summary

4. The Council has previously approved its proposals for future council size and submitted them to the Boundary Commission in line with its deadline of 18th December 2023. This report now deals with the second stage of the electoral review, in which the Council is invited to submit proposals for future warding arrangements. The factors which the Commission will apply in considering any warding proposals are set out in the report.

RECOMMENDATION

The Sub-Committee is recommended:

1. to approve the draft proposals on warding set out in **Appendix 1**, and to agree proposals in respect of the remaining areas, for recommendation to the Corporate Policy Committee on 13th February 2024, with a view to these being recommended to Council on 27th February 2024; and
2. to seek delegated authority for the Sub-Committee:
 - (a) to make any further required changes to these proposals, and to approve any outstanding proposals and to deal with any matters which arise, following the Corporate Policy Committee's meeting and prior to the consideration of the proposals by full Council, and also in respect of any outstanding proposals which have not been finalised in time for consideration by Council;
 - (b) to make any further changes to the proposals arising from the Council meeting on 27th February, or which become necessary after that meeting; and
 - (c) to respond on the Council's behalf to any further informal or formal consultation by the Boundary Commission which relates to the second period of consultation.

Background

5. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (the Commission) is an independent body set up by Parliament. Its main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England. The Commission is undertaking a review of the Council's electoral arrangements. This Council is being asked to respond to the review as a consultee. The Commission will ultimately determine the outcome of the review, and its recommendations will be laid before Parliament for approval.
6. The electoral review is in two stages. The first stage, now complete, addressed the size of the Council: the number of councillors that Cheshire East Council should have in future. The second stage addresses the warding arrangements: the number of wards, their boundaries and the number of councillors for each ward.
7. The Commission met on 16th January to consider the Council size, but has set out the following timetable for the second stage of the review:

- Commission to consult on warding patterns: 23 January-1 April 2024
 - Commission to meet to discuss draft recommendations: 16 July 2024
 - Commission to consult on draft recommendations: 30 July – 7 October 2024
 - Commission to meet to discuss final recommendations: 17 December 2024
 - Final recommendations published: 14 January 2025
 - Order laid before Parliament: early 2025
 - Order made: spring 2025
 - Implementation: 2027
8. The Electoral Review Sub-Committee was appointed by the Corporate Policy Committee at its meeting on 11th July 2023 ‘to make recommendations to the Corporate Policy Committee in respect of all matters relating to the Cheshire East Council Electoral Review’.
9. The Sub-Committee has already made recommendations on the first part of the review regarding council size and has therefore completed this part of its work. The Council, at its meeting on 13th December 2023, approved the Council’s submission on council size which was submitted to the Boundary Commission by its deadline of 18th December. This report deals with the second stage of the review. It presents, for the Sub-Committee’s consideration and approval, the Council’s draft proposals on future warding arrangements.
10. In order to conduct the review, a model has been prepared which has generated forecasts of future electorate numbers up to the start of 2030, for various geographical tiers. Officers have also prepared a detailed technical report that explains the forecasting methodology. A copy of this report was sent to the Commission during the early stages of the review, prior to submitting the council size submission.
11. In considering future warding arrangements, the Sub-Committee must have regard to the statutory warding criteria used by the Commission in its review.
12. The Boundary Commission has three main criteria, as set out below, derived from legislation, which it must follow when producing a new pattern of wards:
1. Delivering electoral equality for local voters
- This means ensuring that each local councillor represents roughly the same number of people so that the value of a vote is the same regardless of where a person lives in the local authority area.

Electoral equality is the only criterion which the Commission can measure with precision. It will therefore take a firm view on the extent to which the Council's proposals meet the ambition to deliver electoral fairness. Decisions are based on the number of electors in a ward and not the total population.

2. Reflecting the interests and identities of local communities

This means establishing electoral arrangements which, as far as possible, maintain local ties, and where boundaries are easily identifiable.

Unlike electoral equality, it is not possible for the Commission to measure levels of community identity. The Commission will therefore be looking for evidence on a range of issues, such as the existence of communication links and facilities, with an explanation of how local people use those facilities; identifiable boundaries such as rivers, major roads and railway lines, and parish boundaries. The Commission will also have regard to urban, suburban and rural characteristics, such areas having different needs and interests.

3. Promoting effective and convenient local government

This means ensuring that the new wards or electoral divisions can be represented effectively by their elected representative(s) and that the new electoral arrangements as a whole allow the local authority to conduct its business effectively. In addition, the pattern of wards must reflect the electoral cycle of the Council.

Where a council holds whole-council elections every four years, the Commission is able to propose any pattern of wards or divisions that it believes best meets its statutory criteria. This is usually a mixture of single-, two- and three-member wards or divisions.

The Commission will also consider the geographic size of wards, to ensure that they are not so large that it would be difficult for a councillor to represent them.

In addition, the Commission will consider the names of wards which are often important to local people. The Commission rarely has strong views on this aspect of a review and will usually use names which have been proposed by local people.

13. The Commission's decisions on new wards and boundaries will always be based on these criteria. The Commission is therefore much more likely to accept the Council's proposals if they are based on one or more of the criteria.

14. Occasionally, it will not be possible for the Commission to put forward a boundary proposal that clearly meets all the statutory criteria which can sometimes contradict one another, for example where a proposed ward might reflect the shape of local communities but deliver poor levels of electoral equality. In such cases, the Commission will use its discretion, and the quality of the evidence presented to it, to reach a conclusion.
15. In accordance with the electoral review timetable, the Council's proposals on future warding arrangements must be submitted to the Commission by the end of March. The submission must therefore be approved by full Council, following a recommendation of the Corporate Policy Committee. The final scheduled Council meeting before the Commission's deadline is 27th February, which means that the Sub-Committee's recommendations on warding must be submitted to the Corporate Policy Committee no later than 13th February. The agenda for the meeting on 13th February must be published by 5th February. This timescale has been determined by the Commission and cannot be changed. Members will understand that this presents significant challenges to the Council in developing, progressing and finalising warding proposals during the time available before the 27th February Council meeting. For this reason, the Council needs a mechanism by which any remaining proposals or changes to proposals can be agreed by the Electoral Review Sub-Committee, after both the meeting of the Corporate Policy Committee and the Council meeting.
16. The Electoral Review Sub-Committee has met informally on a number of occasions between late November and mid-January to consider in detail proposals for future warding. Members of the Sub-Committee have also been consulting informally with local ward members and within their political groups.
17. The warding proposals report and its supporting maps are set out at **Appendix 1**. This shows that agreement has been reached on the vast majority of warding proposals. However, there are a number of areas of the Borough where, at the time of agenda publication, some aspects of the warding proposals remain to be resolved. These are highlighted in the warding proposals report and are the subject of a separate set of maps at **Appendix 2** (to follow). It may be possible that in some cases, counter proposals will be submitted in relation to these areas at or before the meeting.
18. The Sub-Committee is recommended to approve the proposals set out in **Appendix 1**, and to agree proposals in respect of the remaining areas, for recommendation to the Corporate Policy Committee.

19. The Sub-Committee is also recommended to seek delegated authority from the Corporate Policy Committee, and then from Council, to make any further changes to the warding proposals following the Corporate Policy Committee and Council meetings:
- a. arising from any amendments agreed by the Committee or at Council;
 - b. arising from any relevant feedback which might be received from the Boundary Commission prior to or after the Council meeting;
 - c. and to finalise any warding proposals which, for whatever reason, have not been ready to present to the Committee or to Council.
20. As mentioned in paragraph 7 of this report, the Boundary Commission will be meeting on 16th July 2024 to discuss its draft recommendations. It will then publish its draft recommendations on 30th July 2024 and there will be a further period of consultation on those recommendations which will end on 7th October 2024. This presents a difficulty for the Council in that the nearest Corporate Policy Committee meeting is scheduled to take place on 11th July 2024, which will not allow sufficient time for the Commission's draft recommendations to be fully analysed and a Council response formulated. In addition, full Council would not meet until 16th October, which is after the second consultation deadline. It is therefore proposed that the delegation to the Electoral Review Sub-Committee should include the ability for the Sub-Committee to respond to any informal or formal consultation by the Commission between 16th July and 7th October.

Consultation and Engagement

21. The Council will not undertake any consultation work on the review, except internally, with its own Members. The review is being led by the Commission, not the Council, and the Commission has a clearly identified programme of consultation which it is understood will include the list of stakeholders that the Commission has requested from the Council.

Reasons for Recommendations

22. The recommendation of this report seeks to ensure that the Council responds to the Boundary Commission's review of the Council's electoral arrangements in a timely way in accordance with the timetable laid down by the Commission.
23. In responding to the review, the Council will be fulfilling its Corporate Plan objective of being "open" by providing strong community leadership

and by working transparently with residents, businesses and partners, to deliver the Council's ambitions within the Borough.

Other Options Considered

24 The Council could choose not to engage with the Commission's review, but this would be an unhelpful approach and would deprive the Council of the important opportunity to make submissions, and to influence its electoral arrangements which will apply from 2027.

25 *Impact assessment:*

Option	Impact	Risk
Do nothing (ie do not engage with the review)	The Council would be deprived of the important opportunity to make representations	The review would not secure the benefit of the Council's input as the key respondent. The resulting electoral review order, which will be implemented in 2027 would not be informed by the Council's views.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

26 The main piece of legislation governing the review is the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). This consolidates and amends provisions previously contained in the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1992 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

27 Section 56 of the 2009 Act requires that the Commission carry out reviews 'from time to time', of every principal local authority in England and make recommendations about electoral arrangements (but not their external boundaries) (Period Electoral Reviews or PERs). In addition, the Commission can at any time review the arrangements for all or any parts of a principal local authority's area if it appears to the Commission to be desirable.

28 Subsections 56(1) and (4) require the Commission to recommend whether a change should be made to the electoral arrangements for that area. Electoral arrangements include the total number of councillors to be elected to the council (known as 'council size'); the number and

boundaries of wards/divisions; the number of councillors to be elected for each ward/division; and the name of any ward/division.

- 29 In making its recommendations, Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act requires the Commission to have regard to—
- (a) the need to secure that the ratio of the number of local government electors to the number of members of the district council to be elected is, as nearly as possible, the same in every electoral area of the council,
 - (b) the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities and in particular—
 - (i) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable, and
 - (ii) the desirability of fixing boundaries so as not to break any local ties,
 - (c) the need to secure effective and convenient local government,

Further information on the legal implications of the review can be found in the Commission's Technical Guidance:

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/technical-guidance-2021.pdf>

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 30 There will be no impact on the council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The proposal will be funded from within existing Democratic Services budgets, aided by internal officer resource contributions from various other departments, and it is not anticipated that any external spend will be required in order for the Council to respond to the review.

Policy

- 31 The key policy implication of this report is that, in responding to the review, the Council will be meeting one of its most fundamentally important objectives: providing strong community leadership and by working transparently with residents, businesses and partners, to deliver the Council's ambitions within the Borough. In doing so, the Council will be fulfilling the objective of empowering and caring about people within the Borough. The electoral representation of the Council is of key importance in this regard.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 32 Given that this report is a response to the Commission's review of the Council's electoral arrangements, and that it simply recommends the

means by which the Sub-Committee will make recommendations upon Council size, there would appear to be no equality, diversity and inclusion implications.

- 33 However, in developing its recommendations, the Sub-Committee will be mindful of these important considerations. Undoubtedly, the Commission will be equally mindful of these matters when making its final recommendations on the Council's electoral arrangements.

Human Resources

- 34 There are no direct human resources implications.

Risk Management

- 35 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report, other than the matters referred to within it. However, the risks associated with any decision of the Council not to engage with the review are set out above.

Rural Communities

- 36 There are implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of rural communities. These implications have been given careful consideration as the Sub-Committee committee has developed its proposals.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

- 37 There are no such direct implications.

Public Health

- 38 No direct public health implications arise from the recommendations of this report.

Climate Change

- 39 There are no direct climate change implications, which arise from the recommendations of this report.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Contact Officer: Brian Reed Brian.reed@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Background Papers:	<p>Background Papers:</p> <p>Report to Council on 13th December 2023 approving the council size submission</p> <p>Local Government Boundary Commission for England website</p>
Appendices	<p>Appendix 1 – Warding proposals report and maps of agreed proposals</p> <p>Appendix 2 – maps of unresolved warding proposals (to follow)</p>

Cheshire East Council

Electoral Review 2023-24:

Warding Proposal Report

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1 Introduction

Cheshire East Council is keen to ensure that the Local Government Boundary Commission's current Electoral Review produces electoral arrangements that:

- enable the Council to deliver public services effectively and efficiently;
- allow an even division of councillors' workloads, taking into factors such as rurality and deprivation, as well as the numbers of electors;
- reflect the interests and identities of the Borough's communities;
- give electors a fair (broadly equal) say in the Council's decision-making and resource allocation.

The Council therefore welcomes the opportunity to submit proposals for future warding arrangements, as part of the Commission's consultation on warding.

This report sets out in detail the Council's warding proposals, along with the approach taken in developing those proposals. As such, this report will form the basis of the Council's intended response to the warding consultation.

The rest of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 outlines the Council's approach to developing its warding proposals.
- Section 3 provides a table of electoral statistics for each ward: the proposed number of councillors or 'seats'; elector numbers; electors per councillor ratios (referred to subsequently as 'electors per seat' ratios); and the variances of these ratios from the Borough average. As can be seen in this section, it is proposed that there should be a mixture of single-, two- and three-Member wards, and a total of 82 seats (no change from the current total), as recommended by the Commission. The Council proposes a total of 48 wards, which would be four fewer than at present.
- Section 4 provides detailed information on the geographical area that each ward would cover, how these differ from existing ward boundaries, and the rationale for the proposed boundaries and ward names.
- Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), which is a separate document accompanying this main report, includes detailed maps for each of the proposed wards and an overview map of the proposed ward boundaries for the Borough as a whole. Apart from the overview map, the Appendix A maps are displayed in alphabetical order (by proposed Borough ward name).

2 Approach

Under the Council's Constitution, Full Council is responsible for "approving the Council's response to any issues or proposals in relation to local government boundaries including Electoral Wards, the conduct of elections and community governance functions".

The Council's Corporate Policy Committee appointed the Electoral Review Sub-Committee to make recommendations upon all matters relating to the Boundary Commission's Review. These recommendations will be considered by the Corporate Policy Committee, prior to the Committee making recommendations to Council.

Officers have provided advice to Members throughout the Review process.

In developing these warding proposals, the Sub-Committee has focused on the criteria laid out in the Commission's guidance¹, namely:

- Delivering **electoral equality** for local voters, which means ensuring that each local councillor represents roughly the same number of people.
- Reflecting the **interests and identities of local communities**, which means establishing electoral arrangements which, as far as possible, maintain local ties and where boundaries are easily identifiable.
- Promoting **effective and convenient local government**, which means ensuring that the new wards can be represented effectively by their elected representative(s) and that the new electoral arrangements as a whole allow the local authority to conduct its business effectively.

In assessing potential warding arrangements against the first of the Commission's criteria, electoral equality, the Council has taken account of:

- The electoral forecasts for 2023-30 that it (the Council) produced to inform this Review, and which the Commission has accepted as being fit for purpose.²
- The fact that the Commission tries to ensure that, for all wards, the electors per councillor ratio at the end of the Review's forecast period (2030 in this case) is no more than 10% different from the Borough average. (In the interests of concise wording, this submission subsequently refers to the number of councillors as the number of 'seats' and to the electors per councillor ratio as the 'electors per seat' ratio.)

¹ 'How to propose a pattern of wards', LGBCE: https://www.lgbce.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/how_to_propose_a_pattern_of_wards_2018.pdf

² The base date for the forecasts is 1 July 2023, as (at the time the forecasts were produced) this was the date of the most recently available Electoral Register data. The Commission's guidance on electorate forecasts highlights a requirement for an electoral review to consider changes in the electorate that are likely to occur within five years of the release of the review's final recommendations. The Commission intends to publish its final recommendations for the current review in January 2025. Hence forecasts are required up to January 2030. The resulting forecasts are therefore for the period from mid-2023 (1 July 2023) to the start of 2030 (January 2030).

- The Commission's recommendation, announced on 23 January 2024 at the start of the first public consultation stage of this Review, that the future (post-Review) number of councillors should be 82, the same as now. This is the number proposed in the 'council size' submission that Cheshire East sent to the Commission in December 2023.

In email correspondence about the range of ratios that would meet the electoral equality criterion, the Commission has confirmed to Cheshire East that its usual cut-off point is 10% variance from the Borough average after rounding: so a variance of 10.499%, for example, is acceptable, but 10.5% is (generally) seen as too high.

The Council's forecast is that the number of electors will be 337,339 by 2030. Assuming, as indicated above, a total of 82 Members, this implies an average of 4,113.89 electors per seat (337,339 divided by 82) as of 2030.

Therefore, for all proposed wards to have ratios within the +/-10% range usually sought by the Commission, the number of electors per seat for each ward has to be:

- a minimum of 3,682 ($4,113.89 \times 0.895$, rounded up to the nearest whole number); and
- a maximum of 4,545 ($4,113.89 \times 1.105$, rounded down to the nearest whole number).

Besides the Commission's criteria outlined above, the Council's warding proposals are based on the following broad principles, though with the understanding that exceptions to this general approach are appropriate in some circumstances:

- Ward boundaries should, in general, follow parish boundaries, as the Council has only recently undertaken a Community Governance Review of the whole Borough (with final recommendations approved in April 2022 and implemented in April 2023). Therefore the current parish boundaries are a good reflection of local communities' interests and identities. In other words:
 - Warding in areas with smaller, more rural parishes, should in general use individual parishes as building blocks.
 - Warding in larger towns should, in general, aim to create wards that are subdivisions of the town council area, rather than wards that consist of part of the town council area and part of another (adjacent) town or parish council. However, the level and nature of neighbouring areas' ties to town council areas should also be considered, as well as the fact that Cheshire East Council and its Borough ward councillors have different functions and responsibilities to town and parish councils and their councillors. In addition, it may not always be possible to meet the Commission's electoral equality criterion by 'constraining' Borough ward boundaries to town council boundaries. These factors may mean in some instances that making Borough ward boundaries coterminous with town council boundaries is not necessarily the best warding arrangement.

- In those cases where parish boundaries are unsuitable building blocks for wards, parish wards or else polling districts are likely to be the most suitable alternative building blocks to use.
- Whilst existing electoral geographies should be used as building blocks where practical, splitting individual existing polling districts may be necessary in some cases, in order to best meet all the Commission's warding criteria.
- A mixture of single-, two- and three-Members (as Cheshire East currently has) works well and better meets the Commission's criteria than would a more rigid arrangement under which all wards had the same number of Members. In the more rural parts of the Borough, where settlements are often very small and dispersed and where travel can be challenging because of factors such as more limited road networks and settlements at higher elevations, single-Member wards are the only practical option: two-Member wards in these locations would cover too large a geographical area to enable effective and convenient local government and manageable workloads for Members. Even in more densely populated parts of the Borough, single- or two-Member wards often better reflect community identity and allow Members to focus more on specific local issues.

In developing its warding proposals, the Council has drawn on a wide range of evidence, including the following:

- The Council's electorate forecasts for 2023-30, as noted above. These forecasts were produced for various electoral tiers: polling districts, parish wards, parishes, town/ parish councils, current Borough wards and the local authority as a whole.³
- The Council's corporate mapping software system (QGIS).
- A wide array of map data, including Ordnance Survey data, existing (and possible future) ward boundaries and boundaries for other electoral tiers.
- Data on the locations and extents (boundaries) of sites where housing development has occurred in recent years (2010 onwards), or where housing development is currently ongoing or expected to begin before 2030 – and on the (net) number of homes being developed on each of these sites. This housing completions data formed a key input into the electorate forecasts.
- Data relating to different settlements' and communities' services and amenities (for example, the locations of schools, GP practices, convenience stores and community centres/ village halls). Much of this comes from a recent review undertaken by the Council of Cheshire East's settlement hierarchy.

³ In cases where a proposed ward included a subdivision (rather than the whole) of a particular polling district, additional calculations were necessary, given that the electorate forecasts were not produced below polling district level. In such cases, the number of electors in that subdivision of the polling district was estimated by counting the number of existing residential properties in that subdivision (using Ordnance Survey data), then adding on expected net housing completions in that subdivision up to 2030, and then multiplying the resulting 2030 housing stock estimate by a modelled estimate of the average number of electors per residential property (as of 2030) for the (current) local Borough ward.

- The Community Governance Review (CGR) Final Recommendations Assessment Report (2022)⁴, which has detailed evidence – submitted as part of the autumn 2021 consultation on the CGR Draft Recommendations - on community ties within the Borough.
- Relevant evidence gathered (during summer and autumn 2023) from town/ parish council websites. These websites often include information on services and amenities available within the town or parish council area and sometimes on community ties (or other links) to neighbouring town and parish councils.
- Recent (2023) information, taken from the Borough Council and operators' websites, on current bus and train service routes.
- Members' and officers' local knowledge.

⁴ Cheshire East Council Community Governance Review Final Recommendations Assessment Report, March 2022:
<https://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/documents/s94017/Appendix%203%20-%20CEC%20CGR%20Final%20Recommendations%20Assessment%20Report%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

3 Summary of the proposals

Table 3.1 below lists the elector numbers, ratios (electors per seat) and variances (percentage variation of the ward's ratio from the Borough average) for each of the proposed wards, for both 2023 and 2030. As can be seen, the proposed warding ensures that all but one of these wards will (by 2030) have variances that are no more than 10% from the Borough average.

Table 3.1: electoral statistics for the proposed wards

Ward name	Council seats	Electors, Jul 2023	Electors, Jan 2030	Electors per seat ratio, Jul 2023	Electors per seat ratio, Jan 2030	Ratio's % variance (from Borough average), Jul 2023	Ratio's % variance (from Borough average), Jan 2030
Alderley Edge	1	4,055	4,091	4,055	4,091	+6%	-1%
Alsager	3	11,567	12,503	3,856	4,168	0%	+1%
Audlem	1	4,306	4,428	4,306	4,428	+12%	+8%
Bollington & Rainow	2	7,437	7,585	3,719	3,793	-3%	-8%
Brereton	1	3,361	4,121	3,361	4,121	-12%	0%
Bunbury	1	3,840	4,021	3,840	4,021	0%	-2%
Chelford	1	3,827	3,977	3,827	3,977	0%	-3%
Congleton East	3	11,910	12,171	3,970	4,057	+3%	-1%
Congleton West	3	11,631	12,386	3,877	4,129	+1%	0%
Crewe East	2	8,845	8,824	4,423	4,412	+15%	+7%
Crewe Maw Green	1	2,802	3,855	2,802	3,855	-27%	-6%
Crewe North	2	8,457	8,564	4,229	4,282	+10%	+4%
Crewe South	2	7,284	7,653	3,642	3,827	-5%	-7%
Crewe St Barnabas	1	3,546	4,038	3,546	4,038	-8%	-2%
Crewe West	2	8,000	8,061	4,000	4,031	+4%	-2%
Dane Valley	2	8,714	8,905	4,357	4,453	+14%	+8%

Ward name	Council seats	Electors, Jul 2023	Electors, Jan 2030	Electors per seat ratio, Jul 2023	Electors per seat ratio, Jan 2030	Ratio's % variance (from Borough average), Jul 2023	Ratio's % variance (from Borough average), Jan 2030
Disley	1	4,245	4,253	4,245	4,253	+11%	+3%
Gawsworth	1	3,197	4,324	3,197	4,324	-17%	+5%
Handforth	2	5,881	7,241	2,941	3,621	-23%	-12%
Haslington	1	4,258	4,387	4,258	4,387	+11%	+7%
High Legh	1	3,647	3,704	3,647	3,704	-5%	-10%
Knutsford	3	10,413	11,639	3,471	3,880	-10%	-6%
Leighton	2	5,463	7,707	2,732	3,854	-29%	-6%
Macclesfield Central	2	7,380	7,640	3,690	3,820	-4%	-7%
Macclesfield East	1	3,620	4,106	3,620	4,106	-6%	0%
Macclesfield Hurdsfield	1	4,042	4,024	4,042	4,024	+5%	-2%
Macclesfield South	2	6,686	8,055	3,343	4,028	-13%	-2%
Macclesfield Tytherington	2	7,672	8,093	3,836	4,047	0%	-2%
Macclesfield West	3	12,909	13,488	4,303	4,496	+12%	+9%
Middlewich	3	11,301	12,626	3,767	4,209	-2%	+2%
Mobberley	1	3,948	3,980	3,948	3,980	+3%	-3%
Nantwich North & West	2	7,723	8,400	3,862	4,200	+1%	+2%
Nantwich South & Stapeley	2	8,549	8,833	4,275	4,417	+11%	+7%
Odd Rode	2	8,137	8,237	4,069	4,119	+6%	0%
Poynton	3	11,765	12,097	3,922	4,032	+2%	-2%
Prestbury	1	4,206	4,239	4,206	4,239	+10%	+3%
Sandbach East & Central	2	8,300	8,660	4,150	4,330	+8%	+5%
Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath	2	7,695	7,966	3,848	3,983	0%	-3%
Shavington	2	8,549	8,784	4,275	4,392	+11%	+7%
Sutton	1	3,059	3,982	3,059	3,982	-20%	-3%
Weston	1	2,117	4,286	2,117	4,286	-45%	+4%
Wheelock & Winterley	1	3,756	3,852	3,756	3,852	-2%	-6%
Wilmslow East & Dean Row	2	8,255	8,484	4,128	4,242	+8%	+3%
Wilmslow Lacey Green	1	3,684	3,758	3,684	3,758	-4%	-9%

Ward name	Council seats	Electors, Jul 2023	Electors, Jan 2030	Electors per seat ratio, Jul 2023	Electors per seat ratio, Jan 2030	Ratio's % variance (from Borough average), Jul 2023	Ratio's % variance (from Borough average), Jan 2030
Wilmslow West	2	8,362	8,450	4,181	4,225	+9%	+3%
Wistaston	2	8,520	8,553	4,260	4,277	+11%	+4%
Wrenbury	1	3,865	4,026	3,865	4,026	+1%	-2%
Wybunbury	1	3,895	4,282	3,895	4,282	+1%	+4%

4 Details of the proposals for individual wards

4.1 Alderley Edge

Proposed ward name	Alderley Edge		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,091	4,091	-1%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Addition of the parish of Chorley (polling district 3DD1)		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The parishes of Alderley Edge and Chorley		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 3DD1, 3DF1, 3DG1, 3DH1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>This proposal improves the electoral equality of the ward by adding the parish of Chorley (forecast to have 380 electors by 2030), giving the ward an electors per seat ratio very close to the Borough average (without Chorley, the ratio's variance would be 10% below average).</p> <p>The proposal would also reflect interests and identities of local communities, as Chorley does not identify with or have significant ties to Wilmslow (with part of which it is currently warded). As detailed in the Council's Community Governance Review (CGR) Final Recommendations Assessment Report (2022), the CGR consultation stage generated substantial evidence to demonstrate the limited nature of Chorley's ties to Wilmslow.</p> <p>Chorley is geographically very close to Alderley Edge (the two were previously warded together) and is well connected to it by road, making its larger neighbour an important centre for many key services and amenities (Alderley Edge has a supermarket, GP practice, pharmacy, library and a large number of retail outlets).</p>		

	<p>The proposal also promotes effective and convenient government by enabling the elected Member to work with two geographically close and linked communities, rather than a more dispersed and less cohesive group of settlements.</p> <p>Adding any of the other adjacent rural parishes to the ward (instead of Chorley) would not meet the Commission's warding criteria as well as the proposed arrangement. In particular, Alderley Edge shares only a very narrow border with the parish of Mottram St Andrew (525 electors by 2030) and the settlements in the parishes of Over Alderley (406 electors) and Nether Alderley (818) are dispersed and very different in character to Alderley Edge. Adding any of these parishes to the ward would greatly enlarge its geographical extent and disproportionately increase the time required to travel between the ward's communities. It should also be noted that Alderley Edge is a relatively self-contained community and it has a distinct character that separates it from most of the neighbouring areas.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects community identity, as Alderley Edge is the main settlement within the area.</p>

4.2 Alsager

Proposed ward name	Alsager		
Proposed number of seats	3		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	12,503	4,168	+1%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Addition of polling districts 2GDT (from the current Haslington Borough ward) and LAWT (from the current Odd Rode Borough ward)		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	Alsager Town Council		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 2GDT, ALEA, ALEB, ALEC, ALED, ALEE, ALEF, ALEG, LAWT		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>This proposal would align the Alsager Borough ward boundary with the post-Community Governance Review (CGR) boundaries between Alsager Town Council and Haslington Parish Council, and bring the new housing development on the western edge of Alsager within the Borough ward that contains the town. Similarly, it would align the Alsager Borough ward boundary with the post-CGR boundaries between the Town Council and Church Lawton Parish Council, and bring the whole of the housing development on Local Plan site LPS 21 (the estate including Richard Woodcock Way and roads accessed from it) within Alsager Borough ward.</p> <p>These boundary changes would better reflect local communities' interests and identities, as these new housing developments are intended to support Alsager's outward expansion. The new western boundary, following the M6, would offer a clearer boundary line than the existing one. The proposal also promotes effective and convenient government by enabling the elected Members to work with a single parish council and one community. In addition, the proposed ward would have good electoral equality, with an electors per seat ratio very close to the Borough average.</p> <p>It is essential that the Alsager Borough ward boundary does <u>not</u> extend into the triangular area between LPS 21 and the B5077/ A5011 crossroads, as this includes part of the Church Lawton</p>		

	Barrows: an ancient burial of archaeological importance and which is a key part of Church Lawton's heritage and identity. This triangular area of land falls within Church Lawton Parish Council.
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects community identity, as the ward would consist solely of the Alsager Town Council area.

4.3 Audlem

Proposed ward name	Audlem		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,428	4,428	+8%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	No changes proposed		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The current Borough ward area		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 1FH1, 1FH6, 1GK1, 3EA1, 3EL1, 3EU6, 3EV6, 3EW6, 3FH3, 3FH4, 3FH7		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>Although the proposed (and current) Borough ward is forecast to have an above-average electors per seat ratio (8% above the Borough average by 2030), this ratio is within the range usually sought by the Commission and is expected to decline between 2023 and 2030. This ratio could in theory be brought closer to the Borough average by transferring part of the current Borough ward to another ward. However, keeping the existing combination of parishes in this Borough ward would best reflect the interests and identities of the local communities and is therefore proposed. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The village of Audlem is relatively well endowed with services and amenities. Unlike the other parishes in the Borough ward, it has a supermarket, convenience store, GP surgery, nursery/ creche and pharmacy and is the nearest location for these services for Hankelow, Buerton and parts of Dodcott cum Wilkesley and Sound & District. • Buerton, Hankelow and the main settlements in the parish of Dodcott cum Wilkesley are in the catchment for Audlem St James' Church of England Primary School. • The catchment area for Sound & District Primary School includes the five Sound & District Parish Council parishes that are already in Audlem Borough ward (Austerson, Baddington, 		

	<p>Broomhall, Coole Pilate and Sound) and the main settlements in the parish of Newhall (Newhall and Aston).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound, Buerton, Audlem and Hankelow are on the same bus route. <p>Besides its above-average electors per seat ratio, there are other good reasons for not expanding the Audlem Borough ward area to include other parishes, as these other parishes' community ties lie mainly elsewhere:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Though also in Sound & District, Baddiley is on the opposite side of the railway line and its properties are outside the catchment area for Sound & District Primary School. • The village of Wrenbury has a number of key services and amenities, so is not dependent on Audlem. • The settlements of Bridgemere and Hunsterson (in Doddington & District parish) are in the Bridgemere Church of England Primary School catchment. • Hatherton and Walgherton are geographically closer to Stapeley and Wybunbury (than to Audlem) and are in the catchment areas for Wybunbury/ Stapeley primary schools. For Hatherton and Walgherton, the nearest convenience store is in Wybunbury. • The settlements in Marbury & District are geographically much closer to Wrenbury and its services (and in its primary school catchment). <p>The proposed ward would also promote effective and convenient government by enabling the elected Member to serve an entirely rural area that (apart from excluding Baddiley parish, for the reasons explained earlier) consists of whole parish councils and settlements that have community links with each other.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects community identity, as the village of Audlem is the main settlement in the proposed ward and the one where key services and amenities are concentrated, making it a focal point for the ward.</p>

4.4 Bollington & Rainow

Proposed ward name	Bollington & Rainow		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	7,585	3,793	-8%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Transfer (removal) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The parish of Higher Hurdsfield (polling district 4FC1) to the proposed Macclesfield Hurdsfield Borough ward. Part of 4EE1 (a polling district within Bollington Town Council's West ward) to the proposed Macclesfield Tytherington Borough ward (see below for further details). <p>Addition of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The parish of Pott Shrigley (4FE2), from Poynton East & Pott Shrigley Borough ward. The parish of Sutton (4FF1), from Sutton Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The parishes of Pott Shrigley and Rainow and all of the Bollington Town Council area except for the part south of the Silk Road.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts 4EA1, 4EB1, 4EC1, 4ED1, 4EDT, 4EE1 (part only), 4FE2, 4FF1.</p> <p>The part of 4EE1 to be included in the proposed Bollington & Rainow Borough ward would be the part <u>north</u> of the Silk Road (A523).</p> <p>The part of 4EE1 <u>south</u> of the Silk Road (including the properties on Dumbah Lane, Tytherington Lane, Ball Lane, Springwood Way, Webbs Close, Woodward Close, Goodwin Close, Livesley Road, Patterson Close, Monk Close, Hetherington Square, Edgell Close and Wesley Close) would be part of the proposed Macclesfield Tytherington Borough ward.</p> <p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of 4EE1 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying</p>		

	<p>this main report. This map is the one titled ‘Macclesfield Tytherington: close-up of Springwood Way area’.</p>
<p>Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding</p>	<p>The current Poynton East & Pott Shrigley Borough ward has too few electors to meet the Commission’s electoral equality criterion. As of 2023, its electors per seat ratio was 19% below the Borough average and is forecast to be 23% below that average by 2030.</p> <p>In addition, Pott Shrigley, along with the other rural parish in the current Poynton East & Pott Shrigley Borough ward (Kettleshulme & Lyme Handley), covers a wide geographical area. Travel times will account for a significant proportion of Members’ working hours and accessibility to parts of the Peak Park area (which spans much of Pott Shrigley and Kettleshulme & Lyme Handley) is more difficult in winter weather. The Park’s different planning policy regime can potentially also add to the complexity of the workload for Members serving this area.</p> <p>For these reasons (and others), as noted in the subsection on Poynton, it is proposed that there should be a single ‘Poynton’ Borough ward, with three Members, covering only the area within the Town Council boundary.</p> <p>Consequently, Pott Shrigley has to be included in another ward. The parish’s main settlement, the village of Pott Shrigley itself, is geographically close to Bollington and well connected to the town by road. Bollington and Pott Shrigley are also on the same bus route. For Pott Shrigley residents, Bollington is therefore the most convenient location for key services such as food shopping, a library, GP surgery and pharmacy. Given their ties and proximity, it is therefore proposed that Bollington and Pott Shrigley be warded together.</p> <p>As noted in the subsection of this report that covers Sutton:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current Sutton Borough ward’s electors per seat ratio is forecast to increase to 11% above the Borough average by 2030. • Given the rural nature of that ward, with many of its communities living in remote, dispersed locations, often at high elevations, the workload for the Sutton Member would be relatively high, even if the ratio were close to the Borough average.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to the Sutton ward boundary are therefore required, to reduce it to a more manageable size that meets the Commission's criteria. As the subsection on Sutton explains in detail, removing the parish of Rainow from Sutton Borough ward is considered to be the only practical solution to this. <p>Therefore Rainow also has to be included in another ward – and warding it with Bollington (and Pott Shrigley) is what the Borough Council proposes. There are a number of reasons for warding Bollington and Rainow together. Although they have a number of differences, there are common issues affecting Bollington and Rainow, such as balancing housing development pressures against the need to protect the natural environment. One residential street, Ingersley Vale, has a number of properties on both sides of the parish boundary. For Rainow residents, Bollington is the nearest location (other than central Macclesfield) with key services such as a leisure centre, library, post office, food stores (Bollington's retail provision includes a supermarket), a GP surgery and pharmacy. Therefore it is considered that having both parishes represented by the same Member would reflect their local communities' interests and ties.</p> <p>Warding Bollington with Rainow and Pott Shrigley would also address the fact that the current Bollington Borough ward has too few electors to meet the Commission's electoral equality criterion. The current Borough ward's electors per seat ratio is forecast to decline to 15% below the Borough average by 2030, whereas the proposed Bollington & Rainow Borough ward would have a ratio (as of 2030) that was much closer to (8% below) the Borough average. Although this ratio would still be relatively low compared to most of the other proposed wards, Rainow and Pott Shrigley cover a large, very rural area, much of it in the Peak Park and with some isolated communities on high ground. Hence these factors will add significantly to the elected Members' workloads and so a below-average ratio is justified.</p> <p>The parish of Higher Hurdsfield is currently warded with Bollington and the two communities have some ties and a good working relationship. However, Higher Hurdsfield's population is largely concentrated in the Roewood Lane estate, which is adjacent to the current Macclesfield Hurdsfield Borough ward and that ward's residential areas. Higher Hurdsfield is on the opposite side of the canal to Macclesfield Hurdsfield, but there is a road link over the canal in this location. Hence residents on both sides of the parish boundary are within a very short walking distance of</p>
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	<p>each other and people in Higher Hurdsfield can easily access services in the Hursfield and more central parts of Macclesfield. Even now, Higher Hurdsfield residents frequently approach the Macclesfield Hurdsfield Borough ward Member about local issues. In addition, the current Macclesfield Hurdsfield Borough ward has too few electors, with its electors per seat ratio forecast to be 17% below the Borough average by 2030. It is therefore proposed that Higher Hurdsfield should in future be warded with Macclesfield Hurdsfield, not Bollington. This would give the expanded Macclesfield Hurdsfield Borough ward an electors per seat ratio very close to (2% below) the Borough average, as well as ensuring that Higher Hurdsfield's interests and identity are still reflected. This change would also help to promote effective and convenient local government, given the relative proximity of (and the road link between) Higher Hurdsfield and Macclesfield Hurdsfield.</p> <p>The current Borough ward boundary between Bollington and Macclesfield Tytherington is the same as the current boundary between Bollington and Macclesfield town councils. This boundary divides the Springwood Way estate, with residents on some of the estate's streets being in a different Borough ward to those on adjacent streets and properties on some roads (such as Hetherington Square) being divided between the two wards. However, the responses to the Community Governance Review's (CGR) draft recommendations consultation stage revealed evidence of ties between Springwood Way estate residents and the part of Bollington north of the Silk Road. Therefore the CGR final recommendations left the town council boundary unchanged, rather than aligning it with the Silk Road.</p> <p>Nevertheless, a Borough ward boundary that divides the estate and individual streets (and in some cases runs through individual properties) does not reflect the local community's identity and interests, nor does it promote effective and convenient local government. Springwood Way residents are part of the same community and it is more practical for them all to be included in the same Borough ward, so that residents are clear about whom to approach about local matters and so issues related to the estate do not require liaison between Members from different wards. The Silk Road represents a natural boundary and there is also a sizeable green gap between that road and the town of Bollington itself. In contrast, the residential streets south of Tytherington Business Park (such as Cotton Crescent and Tytherington Drive) are relatively close to the Springwood Way estate, with footpaths connecting the southern end of the estate to Tewkesbury</p>
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	<p>Drive and Tytherington Drive. Many of the estate's properties (those within the current Macclesfield Tytherington Borough ward boundary) are in the catchment for the Marlborough Primary School on Tytherington Drive. The B5090 and A538 also provide easy access from the estate to the areas of Tytherington further south.</p> <p>Given the advantages of placing the entire Springwood Way estate in a single ward, the estate's ties to the parts of Tytherington further south, and the merits of the Silk Road as a natural boundary, it is therefore proposed that the whole estate be warded with Macclesfield Tytherington.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>Bollington is the largest settlement in the proposed ward and is its main centre for key services and amenities. However, the proposed ward would cover a large rural area with its own identity, with the parish of Rainow containing most of this rural area's land and population, as well as its largest village, Rainow itself. It is appropriate that the ward's name reflects both its urban and rural communities and the key settlements within each. The name would also provide clarity for local residents on the geographical extent of the ward.</p>

4.5 Brereton

Proposed ward name	Brereton		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,121	4,121	0%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (Brereton Rural) (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Transfer (removal) of the following (from the current 'Brereton Rural' Borough ward):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> polling district BRET to the proposed Middlewich Borough ward. BRET2 to the proposed Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath Borough ward. the Bluebell Green estate area (part of BRE1) to the proposed Dane Valley Borough ward. all of Somerford Booths parish ward (AST5) and all of the parish of Swettenham (DAN4) of to the proposed Gawsworth Borough ward. the part of Hulme Walfield parish ward (AST4) that lies south of Congleton Link Road and east of Giantswod Lane, to the proposed Congleton West Borough ward. the rest of Hulme Walfield parish ward (AST4) to the proposed Gawsworth Borough ward. the parishes of Betchton (LAW3), Hassall (LAW4) and Smallwood (AST6) to the proposed Odd Rode Borough ward. <p>Addition of COWT from the current Congleton West Borough ward.</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	Most of the parish of Brereton (all except the Bluebell Green estate area) and the parishes of Arclid, Bradwall, Moston, Somerford and Warmingham.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts 3FK6, AST3, BRE1 (part only), BRE2, BRE3, BRE4, COWT.</p> <p>The part of BRE1 to be included would be all of this polling district, except for: the Bluebell Green housing estate (Bluebell Road and the roads accessed from it); Field View Close; Paddock Close; numbers 130 & 132 on the west (even) side of London Road; the properties on the Dunkirk Farm site.</p>		

	<p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of BRE1 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled 'Dane Valley: close-up of boundary in Bluebell Green area'.</p>
<p>Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding</p>	<p>Due to major housing development, the population of the current Brereton Rural Borough ward has grown rapidly and the area is forecast to see a further large increase in population up to 2030. As a result, its electors per seat ratio was 63% above the Borough average by 2023 and forecast to be 127% above average by 2030. The proposed new warding would address this major imbalance in electoral equality and involve a new 'Brereton' ward with an electors per seat ratio very close to the Borough average.</p> <p>There are good reasons for warding these parishes together, as Somerford and Arclid have links and common interests with Brereton (and shared challenges). Bradwall is also rural and geographically close (with direct road links) to Brereton. Moston and Warmingham are, like Bradwall, rural areas with small populations and are more connected to the rural parishes to their east than to those further west. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The settlements of Brereton Heath and Somerford are adjacent. Whilst most of their residential properties are in the parish of Brereton, those on the east side of Holmes Chapel Road (the A54) are in the parish of Somerford, as is Somerford Park Farm (which adjoins the village of Brereton Heath). • Arclid is in the catchment for Brereton Church of England Primary School and is a relatively short distance by road (the A50) to the village of Brereton Green (in Brereton parish). • Although the parish of Arclid extends some way to the south of the rest of the proposed ward, the village and most residential properties are at the northern edge of the parish. • Arclid is the only settlement in the area with a convenience store, which is a conveniently close location for residents in the adjacent (Brereton Green) part of Brereton. • Brereton Green is the nearest village with any amenities to the village of Bradwall.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultation on the Community Governance Review (CGR) draft recommendations generated extensive evidence that the residents of the new housing developments in the southeast of Somerford parish have a strong rural/ semi-rural identity and do not see themselves as part of Congleton. (This includes residents of the COWT polling district that was part of Congleton up until the implementation of the CGR final recommendations.) There are also good road links from this part of Somerford parish to Brereton's main settlements and to Arclid. • Warmingham is relatively well endowed with amenities for its small size (having a school, pub, village hall and church) and there is no direct road access between it and the parish of Minshull Vernon to its west. Including it in the same ward as Moston (which has no amenities and so is dependent on Warmingham or nearby towns) is therefore more appropriate. <p>The parishes of Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths and Swettenham, though part of the current Brereton Rural Borough ward, are on the opposite side of the River Dane to the rest of that ward. There is only one road crossing along this long stretch of the river, meaning that there are no community ties or other significant links between Somerford and its eastern neighbours. In addition, the new housing development in the southeastern part of Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths is intended to meet Congleton's housing need and is adjacent to the Town Council's residential areas and their key services and amenities. Hence the proposal that this southeastern part of Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths be warded with Congleton West, but that the rest of Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths, along with the parish of Swettenham, be warded with Gawsworth. (The subsections on Congleton West and Gawsworth provide further details on the rationale for this.)</p> <p>Similarly, the parishes of Betchton, Hassall and Smallwood have links to parts of the current Odd Rode Borough ward, rather than to Brereton or Somerford (see the proposals for the new Odd Rode Borough ward for further details).</p> <p>Although the CGR draft recommendations consultation revealed substantial evidence of Bluebell Green having ties to the rest of Brereton, it lies immediately outside the village of Holmes Chapel and is dependent on Holmes Chapel for the many key services unavailable in Brereton.</p>
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	<p>Similarly, BRET and BRET2 were developed to meet the housing needs of Middlewich and Sandbach and lie on the outskirts of those towns. The CGR resulted in the Middlewich and Sandbach Town Council boundaries being extended to include these new housing areas. Including these areas in, respectively, the proposed Middlewich and Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath Borough wards would therefore align Borough ward and Town Council boundaries and best reflect local community identity and interests.</p> <p>The proposal also promotes effective and convenient government by enabling the elected Member to work with a group of largely rural communities with similar characters and identities, but covering a somewhat smaller geographical area than the current Brereton Rural ward.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>Brereton is one of the two larger parishes (in population terms) in the proposed Borough ward and 'Brereton' features in the names of some of its main settlements (Brereton Green and Brereton Heath). Use of 'Brereton' in the ward name for this area is also well-established.</p> <p>Although Somerford parish also has a sizeable population, the vast majority of its residents live in the southeastern part of the parish, rather than in the settlement of Somerford itself.</p>

4.6 Bunbury

Proposed ward name	Bunbury		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,021	4,021	-2%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Transfer (removal) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> polling district 3FBT, which is the Kingsley Fields housing development, to the proposed Nantwich North & West Borough ward. Burland & Acton Parish Council's Acton & Henhull parish ward (polling districts 3FA5 and 3FA7), to the proposed Wrenbury Borough ward. The parish of Minshull Vernon (3FJ7) to the proposed Leighton Borough ward. <p>Addition of the parishes of Haughton (3EP6) and Spurstow (3EP7) from the current Wrenbury Borough ward.</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The following parishes: Alpraham & Calveley; Aston juxta Mondrum; Bunbury; Cholmondeston; Church Minshull; Haughton; Poole; Spurstow; Stoke & Hurleston; Wardle; Wettenhall; Worleston.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 3EB1, 3ED1, 3EF1, 3EH6, 3EJ6, 3EJ7, 3EN6, 3EN7, 3EP6, 3EP7, 3ES1, 3FB7, 3FB8, 3FB9		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>Major housing development in part of the current Borough ward (the Kingsley Fields development just outside the current Nantwich North & West Borough ward) has resulted in substantial population growth in Bunbury Borough ward, with this forecast to continue. For the current ward area, the electors per seat ratio was 30% above the Borough average as of 2023 and predicted to be 41% above average by 2030. The proposed new warding would however bring this ratio close to the Borough average and also meet the Commission's other warding criteria.</p> <p>The proposal would reflect local communities' identities and interests by:</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligning the Borough ward boundary between Bunbury and the Nantwich Borough wards with the post-Community Governance Review (CGR) boundaries between Nantwich Town Council, Burland & Acton Parish Council and Worleston & District Parish Council, and bring the Kingsley Fields housing development (on Local Plan site LPS 46) within the Borough ward that contains the adjacent part of the town of Nantwich. Reflecting Haughton's and Spurstow's ties to Bunbury. The two settlements are geographically close to Bunbury, with a direct road link. A small part of Bunbury village is actually on the Spurstow side of the parish boundary. Both Haughton and Spurstow are in the catchment for Bunbury Aldersey Church of England Primary School. Bunbury is also the nearest settlement to Haughton and Spurstow for key services and amenities such as a GP surgery, convenience store and community centre. <p>There are also good reasons – again related to community identity and interests - for keeping Alpraham & Calveley, Cholmondeston & Wettenhall, Stoke & Hurleston and Wardle in the same Borough ward (as they are currently):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alpraham and Calveley are affected by issues relating to traffic going on the A51 to and from Wardle Industrial Estate. The A51 runs through Alpraham, Calveley, Wardle and the settlement of Barbirdge (which is in the parish of Stoke), so they are well connected by road. Wardle and Barbridge are within walking distance of each other. Cholmondeston and Wettenhall are in the catchment for Calveley Primary Academy. Consultation responses to the CGR highlighted the links (related to the importance locally of agriculture and the canal) between Wardle, Stoke and Cholmondeston. <p>Similarly, there is logic in keeping Worleston & District's parishes (Aston juxta Mondrum, Poole and Worleston) and Church Minshull in the same Borough ward. Church Minshull is in the catchment for St Oswald's (Worleston) Church of England Primary School and Worleston is relatively well endowed with other amenities, including a store, village hall and Post Office, making it a convenient destination for Church Minshull residents requiring some of these services.</p>
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	<p>However, Minshull Vernon is relatively distant from most of the other parishes in the current (and proposed) Bunbury ward and has significant ties to Leighton and Woolstanwood, with all three parishes forming parts of the same parish council. Hence the proposal (detailed later) that Minshull Vernon be warded with these parishes instead.</p> <p>The parish of Burland & Acton is currently divided between Bunbury and Wrenbury Borough wards, despite the evidence of ties between its two main settlements: Burland (currently in Wrenbury) and Acton (currently in Bunbury). At the time of the CGR draft recommendations consultation, the then Burland Parish Council noted that many Burland residents identified strongly with Acton. The proposed new warding would better reflect community identity by placing the whole parish within Wrenbury Borough ward.</p> <p>The proposal also promotes effective and convenient government by enabling the elected Member to work with an entirely rural area that involves groups of parishes with shared issues and ties.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>Bunbury is the largest settlement in the proposed ward and – because of its size and large number of services and amenities - a key focal point for many of the other parishes in the proposed ward. The use of Bunbury as the local ward name is also well established.</p>

4.7 Chelford

Proposed ward name	Chelford		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	3,977	3,977	-3%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Transfer of the parish of Ollerton with Marthall to the proposed Mobberley Borough ward.</p> <p>Addition of the parish of Over Alderley, from the current Prestbury Borough ward.</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	<p>The following parishes and parish ward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parishes of Chelford, Nether Alderley Over Alderley, Peover Superior & Snelson and Plumley with Toft & Bexton. • Peover Inferior parish ward, which is the part of Lower Peover Parish Council that falls within Cheshire East. (The other parish ward, Nether Peover, is in Cheshire West & Chester and therefore outside the scope of this Review.) 		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 3CD1, 3CN1, 3CR1, 3CS1, 3DA1, 3DA2, 3DB1, 3DC1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>Plumley with Toft and Bexton, Peover Inferior and Peover Superior & Snelson have very strong ties to each other and to Chelford, involving shared services, common school catchments and other longstanding links, so it is important they remain warded together.</p> <p>Nether Alderley and Over Alderley have a number of shared interests. In particular, Alderley Park, one of the main development sites in Cheshire East, is split between the two parishes. Hence, under current ward boundaries, issues relating to the site require the involvement of both the Chelford and Prestbury councillors. The proposed warding would allow these issues to be addressed more efficiently, by bringing the whole site within Chelford Borough ward.</p> <p>Whilst Ollerton with Marthall is currently part of Chelford Borough ward, it has no significant ties to Chelford or any shared services. The issues Ollerton with Marthall faces are more similar to</p>		

	<p>those for Great Warford, which is in Mobberley Borough ward and would remain so under the Council's warding proposals.</p> <p>The proposals would therefore better reflect the identities of the affected communities. They would also enable more effective and convenient local government, for example regarding Alderley Park issues - and the net impact of the changes would mean the electors per seat ratio remains close to the Borough average.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects community identity, as Chelford is the main settlement within the proposed Borough ward and an important local centre for key services and amenities.</p>

4.8 Congleton East

Proposed ward name	Congleton East		
Proposed number of seats	3		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	12,171	4,057	-1%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polling district 4CGT2 (the part of Buglawton that moved into Congleton Town Council as part of the Community Governance Review changes), from the current Gawsorth Borough ward. • Part of COC1 (see below for further details). 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The Town Council's North East and South East wards (which collectively cover the current Congleton East Borough ward area plus 4GCT2), and the part of the Kestrel Close estate not currently in the Congleton East Borough ward.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts 4GCT2, COB1, COB2, COC1 (part only), CON1, CON2, CON3, COS1, COS2, COS3, COS4.</p> <p>The part of COC1 to be included would be the part to the south of the line (using the middle of the road in each case) running (from west to east) along Vale Walk, Priestly Fields/ The Vale, Moody Street, Chapel Street, Albert Place, High Street and Lawton Street.</p> <p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of COC1 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled 'Congleton East: close-up of Canal Street/ Kestrel Close area'.</p>		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	The current Congleton East Borough ward is a little too small when judged against the Commission's electoral equality criterion. Its electors per seat ratio is forecast to change from 6% below the Borough average (in 2023) to 11% below average by 2030.		

	<p>Boundary changes are therefore necessary to bring the ward's ratio within the usually-required range (plus/ minus 10% variance from the Borough average).</p> <p>The Borough Council therefore proposes the addition of 4CGT2 and part of COC1, as detailed above. This would give the resulting ward an electors per seat very close to (1% below) the Borough average as of 2030. These changes would also reflect local communities' identities and interests and promote effective and convenient local government, as they would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place the whole of the Kestrel Close estate area (Local Plan site LPS 32) within the same (East) ward and avoid a need for Members from two wards to liaise over issues relating to the estate. • Place the whole of Buglawton within the same (Congleton East) Borough ward and align the Congleton East Borough ward boundary in this location with the Town Council boundary. <p>The proposed warding also uses the River Dane as a natural boundary (like now) between the parts of the East and West wards that lie north of town centre.</p> <p>This proposed warding, in tandem with the proposed arrangements for Congleton West, would also ensure that both Congleton wards had very similar numbers of electors. As such, the proposals help balance Member workloads within the town.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and indicates the geographical area of the town that the ward would cover.

4.9 Congleton West

Proposed ward name	Congleton West		
Proposed number of seats	3		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	12,386	4,129	0%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4GCT (the parts of Local Plan sites LPS 29 and LPS 30 that moved into Congleton Town Council as part of the Community Governance Review [CGR] changes), from Gawsworth Borough ward. The part of AST4 (Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths Parish Council's Hulme Walfield parish ward) that lies to the east of Giantswood Lane and south of the Congleton Link Road. <p>Removal (transfer) of COWT (the Turnstone Grange estate that transferred from Congleton Town Council to Somerford Parish Council under the CGR).</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	All of the area covered by the Congleton Town Council's Central, North and West wards (which includes 4GCT), plus the part of AST4 (Hulme Walfield parish ward) that lies to the east of Giantswood Lane and south of the Congleton Link Road.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts 4GCT, AST4 (part only), CNW2, CNW3, COC1 (part only), COC2, COC3, COCT, COW1, COW2, COW3, COW4.</p> <p>The part of AST4 to be included would be the area that lies to the east of Giantswood Lane and south of the Congleton Link Road (namely Local Plan site LPS 28, the part of site LPS 29 that falls within this polling district, and the properties on the east side of Giantswood Lane that lie immediately southwest of the LPS 28 development).</p>		

	<p>The part of COC1 to be included would be the part to the north of the line (using the middle of the road in each case) running (from west to east) along Vale Walk, Priesty Fields/ The Vale, Moody Street, Chapel Street, Albert Place, High Street and Lawton Street.</p> <p>Maps showing a close-up of the proposed divisions of AST4 and COC1 and the resulting boundary lines can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. These maps are the ones titled 'Congleton East: close-up of Canal Street/ Kestrel Close area' (which shows the division of COC1) and 'Congleton West: close-up of Link Road area' (which shows the division of AST4).</p>
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>As noted in the subsection on Congleton East, the proposed warding for the two Congleton Borough wards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensures both wards have electors per seat ratios close to the Borough average (each of them less than 2% different from the Borough average as of 2030). • better reflects community identity and promotes effective and convenient local government, by bringing the Kestrel Close estate within a single (East) Borough ward. • uses the River Dane as a natural boundary (like now) between the parts of the East and West wards that lie north of town centre. <p>The housing on 4GCT (parts of Local Plan sites LPS 29 and LPS 30) was developed to meet Congleton's housing needs and residents there are adjacent to other residential areas of Congleton and dependent on the town for key services. (This area was transferred from Eaton Parish Council to Congleton Town Council as part of the CGR changes in 2023.) Therefore it is proposed that 4GCT be included in the Congleton West Borough ward.</p> <p>The reasons for including the part of AST4 described above (and excluding other new housing development areas outside the Town Council boundary) in the Congleton West Borough ward are as follows (and are also set out in this report's subsection on Gawsorth):</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LPS 28 (where construction is now complete) and LPS 29 are adjacent to residential areas that are already part of the Town Council. There are no physical barriers in this area that prevent residents of the LPS 28 and LPS 29 developments from engaging in the same community activities and using the same local services in the adjacent part of the Town Council. Residents on these new housing sites will be relatively dependent on Congleton for key services, as the village of Hulme Walfield to the north has no such provision. • The situation is different in some respects for the LPS 27 site (the part of AST4 that is south of the Link Road but west of Giantswood Lane). At the time of writing, construction in this location has not yet started, but the areas of LPS 27 set aside for housing development are separated from the nearest Town Council residential areas because Congleton Business Park and other non-residential development and the River Dane (and Westlow Mere, which will remain as a protected green space) are in between. • The number of electors in the LPS 28 and LPS 29 and established (east side) Giantswood Lane properties is forecast to be 790 by 2030, whilst the number on the west (LPS 27) side is forecast to reach 1,113 by then. Including the properties on the west (LPS 27) side in the Gawsworth Borough ward ensures that Gawsworth's electors per seat ratio is high enough to be within the range usually sought by the Commission. However, if the properties on the west side were included in the proposed Congleton West ward, Gawsworth would have to cover a much wider rural area in order for its ratio to be within the required range – but this would mean including parishes in the Gawsworth ward that are relatively distant and have no community links to the rest of that ward.
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and indicates the geographical area of the town that the ward would cover.

4.10 Crewe East

Proposed ward name	Crewe East		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,824	4,412	+7%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Division of the current three-Member Crewe East ward into two smaller wards, with the boundary between the two wards running (from west to east) along Broad Street, Remer Street, Sydney Road and finally the southern boundary of the new housing development on Local Plan site LPS 7. Along the section of Sydney Road west of the railway line, the proposed ward boundary follows rear property boundaries (on the west side of Sydney Road), in order to align with the boundary between polling districts 1CE1 and 1CF1.</p> <p>The proposed new Crewe East ward would be the one lying to the south of this dividing line, with the proposed new Crewe Maw Green Borough ward being the one covering the rest (the northern part) of the current Crewe East Borough ward.</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	See description above.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>1AC1, 1AD1, 1CD1 (part only), 1CE1, 1CF1 (part only), 1DF1, 1DF2 (part only), 1DF3, 1DG1.</p> <p>The part of 1CD1 to be included would be the part south of Broad Street: the properties on the south (odd numbers) side of Broad Street and those on Lime Street, Britannia Close, Crossway, Greenway, Middlewich Street, Russet Close and The Haven.</p> <p>The part of 1CF1 to be included would be the part south of Remer Street: the properties on the south (odd numbers) side of Remer Street and those on Acer Avenue, Prunus Road, Cherry Tree Road, Almond Avenue, Ash Road, Hawthorn Grove and Maple Grove.</p>		

	<p>The part of 1DF2 to be included would be all of this polling district, except for: the part of Local Plan site LPS 7 that falls within 1DF2 and the other new development that falls between LPS 7, Sydney Road and the railway line (including numbers 116 to 140 Sydney Road).</p> <p>Maps showing close-ups of the proposed division of 1CD1, 1CF1 and 1DF2 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. These are the maps titled 'Crewe Maw Green: close-up of southeastern boundary' and 'Crewe Maw Green: close-up of southwestern boundary'.</p>
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The current Crewe East is large and unwieldy, spanning a geographically wide and diverse area covering various communities and the large business park/ industrial estate areas and the Higher Education site (the Apollo Buckingham Health Science Campus) in the southeast of the town.</p> <p>As such, it does not enable convenient and effective local government and needs to be divided into two smaller, more manageable areas.</p> <p>The Maw Green area to the north and east of Sydney Road and Remer Street has housing of a different character to that further south. The development on Local Plan site LPS 7 is more similar to the Maw Green properties than to the established residential areas to its south. Consequently the proposed placement of the Maw Green and LPS 7 areas in a separate Crewe Maw Green ward would better reflect local communities' identities and interests whilst reducing councillors' overall workloads. The proposed division would also ensure electoral equality, with both the new wards having electors per seat ratios within 10% of the Borough average.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>The name reflects the geographical area of Crewe covered by the ward and it is a well-established and accepted ward name locally.</p>

4.11 Crewe Maw Green

Proposed ward name	Crewe Maw Green		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	3,855	3,855	-6%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Division of the current Crewe East ward into two smaller wards, with the boundary between the two wards running (from west to east) along Broad Street, Remer Street, Sydney Road (as far as the railway line) and finally the southern boundary of the new housing development on Local Plan site LPS 7. Along the section of Sydney Road west of the railway line, the proposed ward boundary follows rear property boundaries (on the west side of Sydney Road), in order to align with the boundary between polling districts 1CE1 and 1CF1.</p> <p>The proposed new Crewe Maw Green ward would be the one lying to the north of this dividing line, with the proposed new Crewe East Borough ward being the one covering the rest (the southern part) of the current Crewe East Borough ward.</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	See description above.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>1CD1 (part only), 1CF1 (part only), 1DF2 (part only).</p> <p>The part of 1CD1 to be included would be the part north of Broad Street, including properties on the north (even numbers) side of Broad Street (numbers 280 to 334).</p> <p>The part of 1CF1 to be included would be the part north of Remer Street, including properties on the north (even numbers) side of Remer Street (numbers 4 to 180a).</p> <p>The part of 1DF2 to be included would be the part of Local Plan site LPS 7 that falls within 1DF2 and the other new development that falls between LPS 7, Sydney Road and the railway line (including numbers 116 to 140 Sydney Road).</p>		

	Maps showing close-ups of the proposed division of 1CD1, 1CF1 and 1DF2 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. These are the maps titled 'Crewe Maw Green: close-up of southeastern boundary' and 'Crewe Maw Green: close-up of southwestern boundary'.
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	See the Crewe East section of this report, as that sets out the rationale for both that proposed Borough ward and the new Crewe Maw Green ward.
Rationale for the proposed name	Maw Green is the name of the area of Crewe that much of the new ward would cover and it is a well-established and widely recognised name.

4.12 Crewe North

Proposed ward name	Crewe North		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,564	4,282	+4%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Merger of the current Crewe Central and Crewe North Borough wards into a new, enlarged ward called Crewe North		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The current Crewe Central and Crewe North Borough wards		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 1AB1, 1AE1, 1AF1, 1CB1, 1CB2, 1CC2		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The current Crewe Central ward has an electors per seat ratio that is more than 20% above the Borough average and which is expected to still be more than 20% above by 2030. In contrast, the current Crewe North's ratio (already 6% below average) is forecast to be 13% below average by 2030.</p> <p>Merging the two into a new, two-Member ward would result in the new ward having an electors per seat ratio close to the Borough average.</p> <p>It would also mean that warding in this part of Crewe continued to reflect local communities' identities and interests. The current Central ward is a very diverse community, including a wide range of migrant workers, as well as older residents who have lived in the area a long time. The current North has growing communities of varying nationalities, so it now has some similarities to the current Central ward.</p> <p>The proposal would therefore promote effective and convenient government by enabling the elected Members to serve areas of the town with increasingly similar demographics and facing similar issues.</p>		

Rationale for the proposed name	The name broadly reflects the geographical area of Crewe covered by the ward and it is a well-established and accepted ward name locally. Whilst the new ward would include the central area of the town, it would be less accurate to call the ward 'Central', given that it would extend to the northern outskirts of Crewe.
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4.13 Crewe South

Proposed ward name	Crewe South		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	7,653	3,827	-7%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Transfer of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polling district 1BD2 to the proposed Crewe West Borough ward. • Shavington Parish Council's Gresty Brook parish ward (1GM2) to the proposed Shavington Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	All of the current Crewe South Borough ward, except for Gresty Brook and 1BD2. This equates to all of the current South ward on Crewe Town Council, except for 1BD2.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 1BD3, 1DA1, 1DB1, 1DC1, 1DE1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>Given the positions of the railway lines running through Crewe, and the relatively few crossings over these, the Borough Council considers that any changes to the current Crewe South ward boundary should be limited to the Crewe West area (which is bounded by the same pair of railway lines) and the parish of Shavington to the south. The railway forms a natural boundary between the South ward and the East and Central wards and alternative boundary lines in those locations would split local communities or merge residential areas that have few ties to each other.</p> <p>Like other current Crewe wards, the current South ward has areas of significant deprivation. However, as noted in Cheshire East Council's proposed council size submission for this Review, the South has an electoral registration rate (registered electors per adult) that is unusually low (under 0.8, against 0.87 or more in all but one of the Borough's other wards). Hence the 2030 electorate forecast numbers alone probably significantly understate the South ward Members' future workloads.</p>		

	<p>Despite this, the current South ward is forecast to have an electors per seat ratio 5% above the Borough average by 2030.</p> <p>The proposed transfer of Gresty Brook would bring this ratio down to 2% below the Borough average, but the current West ward (where the registration rate is not unusually low), if left with its current boundary, would have a ratio 7% below average. Therefore the proposal also involves moving 1BD2 from the South ward to the West, as the variances in the two wards' ratios would then be reversed (to South 7% below, West 2% below). This would be a better reflection of the South's low registration rate, as well as providing a clearer ward boundary line in this area (Nantwich Road).</p> <p>As explained in the subsection of this report on Shavington, Gresty Brook's ties and interests lie with the rest of the Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council area and with the urban area of Rope to the south (which is part of the same housing estate as Gresty Brook), not with Crewe. Therefore the proposal to move Gresty Brook from Crewe South to the proposed Shavington Borough ward also reflects local communities' identities and interests.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The name broadly reflects the geographical area of Crewe covered by the ward and it is a well-established and accepted ward name locally.

4.14 Crewe St Barnabas

Proposed ward name	Crewe St Barnabas		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,038	4,038	-2%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	No changes proposed		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The current Crewe St Barnabas Borough ward		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 1BE1, 1BER, 1CA1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>Merging St Barnabas with the adjacent North or Central wards (or changing the boundaries between St Barnabas and these wards) is not considered appropriate. The current Central ward is a very diverse community (a mixture of migrant workers and older, more established local residents) and diversity is growing in the North. St Barnabas is very different to these areas. It has its own distinct identity, with St Barnabas church on West Street being a key element of that and the Bentley Motors site being an important feature. Local residents see themselves as West Enders and have a different allegiance to people in the current North ward.</p> <p>Furthermore, St Barnabas' electors per seat ratio is currently within 10% of the Borough average and is expected to converge with the average up to 2030, so the existing boundary ensures electoral equality.</p> <p>Therefore the Commission's criteria are best achieved by leaving the current ward boundary unchanged.</p>		
Rationale for the proposed name	The name is well-established and accepted and St Barnabas is an area with a distinct identity.		

4.15 Crewe West

Proposed ward name	Crewe West		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,061	4,031	-2%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Addition of polling district 1BD2, from the current Crewe South Borough ward.		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The current Crewe West Borough ward, plus 1BD2		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 1BA1, 1BAR, 1BB2, 1BC1, 1BD1, 1BD2, 1BF1, 1DD1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	See the Crewe South section of this report, as that sets out the rationale for both that proposed Borough ward and the new Crewe West ward.		
Rationale for the proposed name	The name broadly reflects the geographical area of Crewe covered by the ward and it is a well-established and accepted ward name locally.		

4.16 Dane Valley

Proposed ward name	Dane Valley		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,905	4,453	+8%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Transfer, from the current Brereton Rural Borough ward, of the part of the parish of Brereton (polling district BRE1) containing the Bluebell Green estate.		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The current Borough ward area (the parishes of Cranage, Goostrey, Holmes Chapel and Twemlow) and the Bluebell Green estate area.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts BRE1 (part only), DAN1, DAN2, DAN3, DAN5, HCE1, HCE2, HCE3, HCE4.</p> <p>The part of BRE1 to be included would be: the Bluebell Green housing estate (Bluebell Road and the roads accessed from it); Field View Close; Paddock Close; numbers 130 & 132 on the west (even) side of London Road; the properties on the Dunkirk Farm site.</p> <p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of BRE1 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled 'Dane Valley: close-up of boundary in Bluebell Green area'.</p>		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>There are significant links between Holmes Chapel and the parishes of Cranage, Goostrey and Twemlow, which mean that warding them together will reflect local communities' identities and interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They are geographically close and well connected by road. The Final Recommendations report (2010) from the Commission's previous Review cited the proximity of Twemlow to Holmes Chapel and the strong transport links between the two provided by the A535 – and this remains the case today. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are other transport links connecting these parishes. All four parishes are on the same bus route and Holmes Chapel and Goostrey are adjacent stops on the Crewe-Manchester railway line. • For Cranage and Twemlow (which have no convenience store) and for Goostrey, Holmes Chapel is the closest location within Cheshire East with services and amenities such as a supermarket and GP practice. • Cranage is in the catchment for one of Holmes Chapel's primary schools and Twemlow is in the catchment for Goostrey Community Primary School. <p>Although the Borough Council's consultation (2021) on its Community Governance Review draft recommendations revealed substantial evidence of Bluebell Green having ties to the rest of Brereton, it lies immediately outside the village of Holmes Chapel and is dependent on Holmes Chapel for the many key services unavailable in Brereton.</p> <p>The proposed warding would achieve electoral equality by having an electors per seat ratio that (as of 2030) would be within 10% of the Borough average.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects one of the key geographical features that form part of this area's identity, namely the River Dane.

4.17 Disley

Proposed ward name	Disley		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,253	4,253	+3%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Addition of the parish of Kettleshulme & Lyme Handley (polling districts 4FB6, 4FD1, 4FD7), from the current Poynton East & Pott Shrigley Borough ward		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The parishes of Disley and Kettleshulme & Lyme Handley		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 4FA1, 4FB1, 4FB2, 4FB6, 4FD1, 4FD7		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>If the boundary were limited (as now) to the parish of Disley, its electors per seat ratio by 2030 would be 6% below the Borough average, which would be on the low side for a relatively compact settlement that covers a small geographical area and has no deprivation issues. Adding Kettleshulme & Lyme Handley to the ward achieves better electoral equality for Disley and the other proposed Borough wards in this area.</p> <p>The current Poynton East & Pott Shrigley Borough ward spans an area running from the eastern half of the town of Poynton to the rural parishes of Kettleshulme & Lyme Handley and Pott Shrigley. The latter two parishes collectively cover an extensive geographical area that includes a significant part of the Peak Park. This warding arrangement combines some very different communities with varying interests. It also adds to the local Members' workload due to the additional time involved in travelling around the ward and issues arising from the Peak Park's specific needs and its separate planning policy regime.</p> <p>The proposed new arrangements for Disley and for Poynton would better reflect local communities' identities and interests and enable more convenient and effective local government by warding Kettleshulme & Lyme Handley (and also Pott Shrigley) with smaller settlements, and</p>		

	by creating a single ward for Poynton that would cover only the Town Council area. (See the separate section on Poynton for further details.)
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and Disley is the main settlement within this area.

4.18 Gawsworth

Proposed ward name	Gawsworth		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,324	4,324	+5%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition of the following (all from the current Brereton Rural Borough ward):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parish of Swettenham (polling district DAN4). • AST5 (Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths Parish Council's Somerford Booths parish ward). • All of AST4 (Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths Parish Council's Hulme Walfield parish ward), except the part that lies south of Congleton Link Road and east of Giantswood Lane. <p>Transfer (removal) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parishes of North Rode (4GH6) and Bosley (4GA1), to the proposed Sutton Borough ward. • 4GDT (Local Plan site LPS 15) to the proposed Macclesfield South Borough ward. • 4GET (the part of Local Plan site LPS 18 that moved into Macclesfield Town Council as part of the Community Governance Review [CGR] changes), to the proposed Macclesfield West Borough ward. • 4GCT (the parts of Local Plan sites LPS 29 and LPS 30 that moved into Congleton Town Council as part of the CGR changes), to the proposed Congleton West Borough ward. • 4GCT2 (the part of Buglawton that moved into Congleton Town Council as part of the CGR changes), to the proposed Congleton East Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	<p>The following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gawsworth Parish Council's Gawsworth Village parish ward. • The parishes of Eaton, Henbury, Lower Withington, Marton, Siddington and Swettenham. • All of the parish of Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths, except the part that lies south of Congleton Link Road and east of Giantswood Lane. 		

<p>Details of area covered by proposed ward</p>	<p>Polling districts 4GC1, 4GD1, 4GE1, 4GF6, 4GJ6, 4GN1, AST4 (part only), AST5, DAN4.</p> <p>The part of AST4 to be included would be all of this polling district, except for the area that lies to the east of Giantswood Lane and south of the Congleton Link Road (namely Local Plan site LPS 28, the part of site LPS 29 that falls within this polling district, and the properties on the east side of Giantswood Lane that lie immediately southwest of the LPS 28 development).</p> <p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of AST4 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled 'Congleton West: close-up of Link Road area'.</p>
<p>Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding</p>	<p>As noted in the section covering the warding proposals for Sutton, the current Sutton ward is expected to have an electors per seat ratio that will be too high by 2030 to fall within the range that the Commission usually requires. As the same section notes, the only parish that could practically be removed from Sutton in order to bring this ratio close enough to the Borough average is Rainow. However, a knock-on consequence is that one or more parishes have to be transferred from Gawsworth Borough ward to Sutton, to avoid Sutton's electors per seat ratio then being too <u>low</u> to satisfy the Commission's electoral equality criterion. Therefore the Borough Council also proposes that the parishes of Bosley and North Rode be included in the redrawn Sutton ward. These two parishes have a rural character that fits with the rest of the proposed Sutton Borough ward and the road network provides a convenient connection between them and Sutton's other settlements. Moving only Bosley from Gawsworth to Sutton would, in tandem with the other proposed warding arrangements for Gawsworth, leave Gawsworth with a ratio 10% above average, while Sutton's would be 8% below. Moving both Bosley and North Rode produces a more even balance between these two very large, rural wards' ratios (plus 5% and minus 3% respectively).</p> <p>4GET is a Local Plan site that is intended to cater for Macclesfield's housing needs and the area covered by this polling district was therefore transferred from Henbury parish to Macclesfield Town Council under the recent CGR changes. Residents on this site will look to Macclesfield for key services and it is appropriate for it to be included in a Macclesfield ward.</p>

	<p>4GDT is another Local Plan site (LPS 15) intended to meet Macclesfield's housing needs. Along with the established properties in 4BFR, it forms part of Gawsworth Parish Council's Gawsworth Moss parish ward. The CGR generated extensive evidence that the residents of the established properties in 4BFR identify closely with Gawsworth and participate in many communal activities in the other (Gawsworth village) part of the parish. However, 4BFR is part of the same urban conurbation and is dependent on Macclesfield for a number of key services; it is in fact already warded with Macclesfield South. Given this, together with the intended purpose of LPS 15, the Borough Council proposes that Gawsworth Moss parish ward should be warded with Macclesfield South. This warding arrangement for Gawsworth Moss, together with the other boundary changes proposed above and the proposals (detailed below) for the Congleton-Gawsworth boundary, also achieves good electoral equality, with the would-be Gawsworth ward having an electors per seat ratio fairly close to (5% above) the Borough average.</p> <p>The housing on 4GCT (parts of Local Plan sites LPS 29 and LPS 30) was developed to meet Congleton's housing needs and residents there are adjacent to other residential areas of Congleton and dependent on the town for key services. (This area was transferred from Eaton Parish Council to Congleton Town Council as part of the CGR changes in 2023.) Therefore It is proposed that 4GCT be included in the Congleton West Borough ward.</p> <p>The current boundary between Gawsworth and Congleton East Borough wards divides two streets in Buglawton: Crompton Close and Malhamdale Road, with 4CGT2 containing the properties on those streets that are currently in Gawsworth Borough ward. The parish boundary divided these streets in the same way up until the recent CGR changes in 2023, which brought the northern (4GCT2) part within the Congleton Town Council boundary. It would better reflect local communities' identities and interests for 4CGT2 to be warded with Congleton East, to reflect the fact that all the properties on Crompton Close and Malhamdale Road are part of the same Buglawton community and all now fall within Congleton Town Council.</p> <p>The reasons for including the part of AST4 described above (and excluding other new housing development areas outside the Town Council boundary) in the Gawsworth Borough ward are as follows (and are also set out in the subsection on Congleton West):</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LPS 28 (where construction is now complete) and LPS 29 are adjacent to residential areas that are already part of the Town Council. There are no physical barriers in this area that prevent residents of the LPS 28 and LPS 29 developments from engaging in the same community activities and using the same local services in the adjacent part of the Town Council. Residents on these new housing sites will be relatively dependent on Congleton for key services, as the village of Hulme Walfield to the north has no such provision. • The situation is different in some respects for the LPS 27 site (the part of AST4 that is south of the Link Road but west of Giantswood Lane). At the time of writing, construction in this location has not yet started, but the areas of LPS 27 set aside for housing development are separated from the nearest Town Council residential areas because Congleton Business Park and other non-residential development and the River Dane (and Westlow Mere, which will remain as a protected green space) are in between. • The number of electors in the LPS 28 and LPS 29 and established (east side) Giantswood Lane properties is forecast to be 790 by 2030, whilst the number on the west (LPS 27) side is forecast to reach 1,113 by then. Including the properties on the west (LPS 27) side in the Gawsworth Borough ward ensures that Gawsworth's electors per seat ratio is high enough to be within the range usually sought by the Commission. However, if the properties on the west side were included in a Congleton ward, Gawsworth would have to cover a much wider rural area in order for its ratio to be within the required range – but this would mean including parishes in the Gawsworth ward that are relatively distant and have no community links to the rest of that ward. <p>Looking at the area of the proposed Gawsworth ward more broadly, it reflects local community identity and interests by warding together a group of rural areas that are generally of similar character, well connected by road and that have links with each other. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Withington, Siddington, Swettenham, Eaton and the part of Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths proposed for inclusion in Gawsworth are all in the catchment for Marton's primary school.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eaton and Gawsworth are both on the A536 and on the same bus route, while Marton, Siddington and Lower Withington are connected via the A34 and B5392 and Hulme Walfield is relatively accessible, being close to the Congleton Link Road. • Swettenham is linked to the other parishes in the proposed ward by more minor roads. However, the natural barrier of the River Dane (with no road crossings in that location) limits community links between Swettenham and Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths on the east side of the river and Somerford on the west. The responses to the CGR draft recommendations consultation provided persuasive evidence that Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths has no significant links to Somerford, so warding it (minus the LPS 28 and LPS 29 area) with Gawsworth is considered to be a better reflection of community identity and interests than its current inclusion in Brereton Rural.
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established. Gawsworth is one of the main settlements within this area.

4.19 Handforth

Proposed ward name	Handforth		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	7,241	3,621	-12%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Fairways estate (polling district 8FKT), which is Local Plan site LPS 34, from the current Wilmslow Lacey Green Borough ward. the parish of Styal (8FK1). <p>Transfer (removal) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8EA1 (part of the Finney Green area of Wilmslow) to the proposed Wilmslow Lacey Green Borough ward. 8EE1 (which consists of the Colshaw Farm estate and the Summerfields estate) to the proposed Wilmslow East & Dean Row Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	Handforth Town Council and the parish of Styal		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 8EF1, 8EG1, 8EH1, 8EJ1, 8FK1, 8FKT		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The proposed changes would reflect community identity and interests much better than the current warding, as the changes would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend Handforth Borough westwards, to include the new Fairways development. This new estate was developed to meet Handforth's housing needs and Fairways is very close to and well connected by road to the many shops and other services in the centre of Handforth. Bring the Colshaw Farm estate into a Wilmslow Borough ward. There is no road access from this estate into Handforth and Colshaw Farm residents identify as being part of Wilmslow. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place 8EA1 in the same Wilmslow ward as the rest of Finney Green. The adjacent part of Handforth Town Council consists of Deanway Business Park and this, together with the railway line to the east of 8EA1 and the natural boundary of the River Dean, mean that residents of 8EA1 have limited connections to the nearest residential areas of Handforth. <p>Although there is no direct road link from Styal into Handforth through the Fairways estate, there is pedestrian access, and road travel between the two parishes (which have previously been warded together) is relatively quick via the B5166 and A555. The services and amenities in Wilmslow town centre are not particularly close to Styal and the road network and large retail outlets in Handforth (most obviously Handforth Dean Retail Park) make Handforth a convenient location for many of the service needs of Styal residents.</p> <p>The proposed warding would result in an electors per seat ratio that (as of 2030) would be 12% below the Borough average. However, the Borough Council considers that this is justifiable, given that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There would be a very positive impact on community identity and interests, as set out above. The proposed ward contains the Handforth Garden Village site (Local Plan site LPS 33), which is one of the largest housing developments provided for in the Council's Local Plan. According to the Council's housing forecasts that were used to inform the electorate forecasts for this Review, the number of net housing completions on LPS 33 is predicted to reach around 600 by the start of 2030, but a total of 1,500 homes are provided for (and expected) on the site eventually. Therefore it is anticipated that the number of electors in the proposed ward will grow significantly not just up to 2030, but well beyond that date, meaning that the electors per seat ratio is likely to converge with the Borough average over the longer term.
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established. Handforth is the main settlement within this area, as well as a key centre for services and amenities.

4.20 Haslington

Proposed ward name	Haslington		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,387	4,387	+7%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Transfer (removal) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polling district 2GDT (areas of new housing development on the western edge of Alsager Town Council), to the proposed Alsager Borough ward. • The parish of Barthomley (2GA6) and Weston & Crewe Green Parish Council's Weston and Crewe Green parish wards (polling districts 1GF1, 1GF1T, 1GG1) to the proposed Weston Borough ward. • The Winterley village and the Wheelock Heath part of the current Borough ward (2GE1) to the proposed Wheelock & Winterley Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	Haslington village (polling districts 2GC1, 2GC2 & 2GC3) and the settlement of Oakhanger (2GD1)		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 2GC1, 2GC2, 2GC3, 2GD1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>By removing 2GDT, this proposal would align the Alsager Borough ward boundary with the post-Community Governance Review (CGR) boundaries between Alsager Town Council and Haslington Parish Council, and bring the new housing development on the western edge of Alsager within the Borough ward that contains the town.</p> <p>The population of the current Haslington Borough ward has grown substantially in recent years as a result of significant new housing development and this trend is expected to continue up to 2030. As a result, the existing ward will (by 2030) be too large for a two-Member ward but too small to justify three Members. In addition, it covers an extensive geographical area and this adds considerably to Members' workloads. The proposed new warding would address these constraints on effective and convenient local government and would better reflect community</p>		

	<p>identity and interests, by allocating parts of the current ward to new wards and leaving the remaining settlements of Haslington and Oakhanger as a single-Member ward.</p> <p>Haslington village is a distinct community, with a number of key services and amenities contributing to its self-containment and sense of identity. Oakhanger residents have a natural tie to Haslington, given that it is the most convenient centre for key services (Alsager is closer as the crow flies, but road access and the scope for community ties to the town are constrained by the physical barrier of the M6).</p> <p>Winterley and Wheelock Heath residents, in contrast, tend to rely primarily on Sandbach for key services, as do people living in the Wheelock part of Sandbach, so warding these communities together, in the proposed Wheelock & Winterley ward, would better reflect local interests and identities.</p> <p>The proposed warding would also result in an electors per seat ratio that (as of 2030) would be within 10% the Borough average, meeting the Commission's requirement for electoral equality.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established. Haslington is the main settlement within this area, as well as being the proposed ward's key (and only) centre for services and amenities.</p>

4.21 High Legh

Proposed ward name	High Legh		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	3,704	3,704	-10%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Transfer (removal) of polling district 3CVT (which contains the western part of Local Plan site LPS 36A), to the proposed Knutsford Borough ward.		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The parishes of Aston by Budworth, High Legh, Little Bollington with Agden, Mere, Pickmere and Tabley Millington & Rostherne Parish Council's Millington parish ward 		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 3CA1, 3CA2, 3CC6, 3CG1, 3CK1, 3CL1, 3CLT, 3CT1, 3CV1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The proposed warding would reflect local communities' interests and identities and enable effective and convenient local government, given that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By removing 3CVT, this proposal would align the Knutsford Borough ward boundary with the post-Community Governance Review boundaries between Knutsford Town Council and Tabley Parish Council, and bring the new housing development on the western edge of Knutsford within the Borough ward that contains the rest of the town. The parishes of Aston by Budworth, High Legh, Mere, Pickmere and Tabley have similarly rural characters and largely lie on the same side of the A556/ M56 road network. Millington & Rostherne Parish Council's Millington parish ward is in the catchment area for High Legh's primary school. Millington is also geographically close to High Legh and is on the same side of the A556, M56 and M6. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although Little Bollington with Agden is on the opposite side the M56 to the rest of the proposed Borough, it is on the western side of the A556 (like most of the proposed ward) and is well connected to High Legh via the A56 and B5159. The village of Mobberley, which forms the main settlement and main location for key services and amenities in the proposed Mobberley Borough ward to east, is much more distant from Little Bollington and there is no direct, quick road link between the two. Therefore warding Little Bollington with Agden with Mobberley would not reflect community identity or promote effective and convenient local government as well. <p>The proposed ward's electors per seat ratio (10% below the Borough average as of 2030) would be at the lower end of the range usually sought by the Commission. However, other things being equal, Member workloads are higher in large rural areas such as the proposed ward and its geographical position, the location of major road networks and the community ties of neighbouring parishes mean that alternative warding arrangements would be less appropriate. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adding Plumley with Toft and Bexton (and potentially Peover Inferior too) to the High Legh ward would not reflect community identity and interests, as they have very strong ties to Peover Superior & Snelson, involving shared services, common school catchments and other longstanding links. Although it forms part of the same parish council as Millington, the Rostherne & Tatton parish ward lies east of the A556 and its residents fall within the catchment areas for schools in Mobberley and Knutsford.
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and High Legh is the main settlement within this area.

4.22 Knutsford

Proposed ward name	Knutsford		
Proposed number of seats	3		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	11,639	3,880	-6%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Addition of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> polling district 3CVT (which contains the western part of Local Plan site LPS 36A), from the current High Legh Borough ward. polling district 3CMT (the small part of the Longridge Trading Estate not currently in Knutsford Borough ward), from the current Mobberley Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	Knutsford Town Council		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 3BA1, 3BAR, 3BART, 3BAT, 3BB1, 3BBR, 3BC1, 3BD1, 3BDT, 3BE1, 3BF1, 3BF2, 3CMT, 3CVT		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The proposed warding would reflect local communities' interests and identities and enable effective and convenient local government, given that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By adding 3CVT, this proposal would align the Knutsford Borough ward boundary with the post-Community Governance Review (CGR) boundaries between Knutsford Town Council and Tabley Parish Council, and bring the new housing development on the western edge of Knutsford within the Borough ward that contains the rest of the town. By adding 3CMT, the proposal would align the Knutsford Borough ward boundary with the post-CGR boundaries between Knutsford Town Council and Mobberley Parish Council. This change would also bring the whole of the Longridge Trading Estate within a single Borough ward, avoiding the potential requirement for Members from two different Borough wards to liaise over issues relating to the Estate. 		

	<p>The proposed ward's electors per seat ratio (6% below the Borough average as of 2030) would be relatively low for a compact urban area. However, warding part or all of one (or more) of the neighbouring rural parishes would not reflect community identity or promote effective and convenient local government and including some of the more sparsely-populated ones would have minimal impact on the ward's ratio. The adjacent rural parishes and parish wards all cover very large geographical areas and so would add considerably to the Knutsford Members' workloads whilst warding together communities with very different characters and interests.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects community identity, as the ward would consist solely of the Knutsford Town Council area.</p>

4.23 Leighton

Proposed ward name	Leighton		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	7,707	3,854	-6%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Addition of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The parish of Minshull Vernon (polling district 3FJ7) from the current Bunbury Borough ward. The parish of Woolstanwood (1FJ1) from the current Wistaston Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	Leighton, Minshull Vernon & Woolstanwood Parish Council		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 1FJ1, 1FJ4, 3FJ2, 3FJ3, 3FJ5, 3FJ6, 3FJ7		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The current Borough ward has seen substantial housing development and population growth in recent years and this is expected to continue up to 2030. As a consequence, the electors per seat ratio was 23% above the Borough average by 2023 and is forecast to rise to 69% above average by 2030. Taking account of the Commission's electoral equality criterion, this means the current ward's electorate size has become much too high for a single-Member seat, but will not (even by 2030) be high enough to warrant two Members.</p> <p>The proposed new warding would bring the ratio within 10% of the Borough average by 2030. It would also reflect local communities' identities and interests, as the parishes of Leighton, Minshull Vernon and Woolstanwood are part of the same parish council and the recent Community Governance Review (CGR) undertaken by the Borough Council generated a lot of evidence of the ties between these parishes. In particular, the CGR draft proposals to bring Leighton and Woolstanwood within Crewe Town Council and merge Minshull Vernon with Church Minshull prompted a large number of responses – the overwhelming majority opposing the proposal and supporting the retention of the existing parish council. The Parish Council held an official poll on the proposals and over 95% of voters in the parishes of Leighton and Woolstanwood opposed a break-up of the council, as did two thirds of those in Minshull Vernon.</p>		

	<p>The proposed ward's electors per seat ratio (6% below the Borough average as of 2030) would be relatively low for a compact urban area. However, the proposed ward covers an extensive swathe of land and Minshull Vernon is a large rural area, so its geographical composition will add to Members' workloads.</p> <p>The option of including other rural parishes to the proposed ward is not favoured, given that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church Minshull has ties to Worleston (it is in the same primary school catchment). • Worleston itself has a notable range of amenities and services for its small size, including a shop and Aston Juxta Mondrum has ties to Worleston (both are part of the same parish council). These parishes are in any case geographically distant from the main residential areas of Leighton and Woolstanwood. • A railway line divides Warmingham from Minshull Vernon and road access between these two parishes is only possible via Crewe or settlements in Cheshire West & Chester.
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and Leighton is the main settlement within this area.

4.24 Macclesfield Central

Proposed ward name	Macclesfield Central		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	7,640	3,820	-7%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	No changes to the current Borough ward.		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The current Borough ward		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 4BA1, 4BA2, 4BB1, 4BB2, 4BBR, 4CD1, 4CE1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>Although the current Borough ward is forecast to have an electors per seat ratio below the Borough average by 2030, this ratio would still be within 10% of the average.</p> <p>Adding parts of one or more of the neighbouring wards to Central could bring this ratio closer to the Borough average. Various possible extensions to the ward have therefore been considered, but the Borough Council feels that each of these would reflect local communities' identities and interests much less well than the current warding arrangement, and that the existing boundary meets the Commission's three main criteria better than any alternatives.</p> <p>The existing Borough ward includes all of the town centre and its retail outlets and public buildings. It is enclosed by the natural boundary of the inner road network (A537, B5088, A536 and A523 Silk Road) on three sides.</p> <p>The boundary to the south – the 4CD1 boundary enclosing Macclesfield College, Macclesfield Academy, the Ryles Park Road/ Ridge View residential area and the park and sports grounds on either side of Ryles Park Road – also provides a natural divide between the Central ward and the South ward, with green space separating the Central ward and South ward properties in much of this area. There is no direct road access between the Ryles Park Road/ Ridge View area and the</p>		

	<p>South ward properties in 4CAR (such as Primrose Avenue and Craig Road). Nor is there any such access between the Ryles Park Road/ Ridge View area and the South ward properties around Ash Grove Primary School.</p> <p>The residential area to the east of 4CD1 (consisting of the streets around Briarwood Avenue and Cedar Grove and broadly equating to 4CB1) is the town's most deprived neighbourhood (ranking in the Government's 2019 English Indices of Deprivation's "top" 10% for overall deprivation). To the south of 4CD1 is the Moss estate (spanning the extent of Moss Lane and consequently much of 4CAR and 4CA1), where deprivation is also a significant issue. It is therefore appropriate for 4CB1, 4CAR and 4CA1 to remain in the South ward, given that these areas face different issues and have different needs to the communities in the Central ward.</p> <p>It is appropriate that the adjacent (eastern) part of 4BF1 (Haldene Road, Clowes Street/ Frances Street, Brooklands Avenue, Cherington Crescent etc) be included in the proposed Macclesfield West Borough ward, not Central: this area west of Oxford Road contains the secondary school that serves the west of the town and so is part of that community.</p> <p>The residential areas of 4AD2 that are closest to the Central ward (such as West Park Drive, Field Bank Road and Fern Lea Drive) are generally of a character that fits better in the proposed West ward. These properties are also physically separated from the closest (northwestern) part of the Central ward by the road network and the hospital/ health sector complex that covers much of 4AD2.</p> <p>The inclusion of the Coare Street area (4AC1) in the Central ward has also been considered, as its terraced housing is of similar character and the River Bollin would provide a natural boundary. However, 4AC1 is not part of the town centre and the road network (Hibel Road) is a clear physical barrier between the two. It is a separate community to the current Central ward and to the areas of Tytherington north of the River Bollin. Moving 4AC1 to the Central ward would, though, result in inadequate electoral equality, leaving the Tytherington ward with too few electors to warrant two seats (but far too many for one Member to serve), whilst also increasing the Central ward's electors per seat ratio to more than 10% above the average. The properties in 4AC1 are connected to the rest of the current Tytherington ward via Beech Lane and fall within</p>
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	<p>the catchment for Tytherington High School. The Borough Council therefore proposes that 4AC1 remain warded with Tytherington.</p> <p>Hurdsfield ward is very different in character to the central areas of the town and faces different issues (such as deprivation). The East ward, which is relatively affluent, is different again. The A523 and railway line are also a natural boundary between these wards and the Central ward. Including some of the residential parts of the current East or Hurdsfield wards in the Central ward would not therefore reflect local communities' identities and interests.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects the geographical area of Macclesfield that the ward would cover.

4.25 Macclesfield East

Proposed ward name	Macclesfield East		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,106	4,106	0%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	No changes to the current Borough ward.		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The current Borough ward		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 4CF1, 4CG1, 4CH1.		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>Macclesfield East and Macclesfield Hurdsfield are currently the only two single-Member Macclesfield wards. Macclesfield Hurdsfield's electors per seat ratio is already more than 10% below the Borough average and forecast to be 17% below average by 2030. However, whilst a merger of the East and Hurdsfield wards would result in better electoral equality overall, it would fail to satisfy the Commission's other criteria.</p> <p>The current Macclesfield East Borough ward is a relatively affluent area, which is largely urban but includes a sparsely-populated rural area that extends to the edge of the Peak Park. As such, it has a very different character to the Macclesfield Hurdsfield Borough ward to its north. Macclesfield Hurdsfield's housing stock is largely former council housing and the ward includes some areas that are relatively deprived, falling within England's "top" 30% for overall deprivation, according to the Government's 2019 English Indices of Deprivation.</p> <p>The East and Hurdsfield have no notable connections: they are in different primary school catchments, on different bus routes and residents shop in different locations. Green space and industrial premises lie between the residential properties at the southern end of Hurdsfield and the East ward's residential areas, so the two communities are largely geographically separate.</p>		

	<p>The Borough Council had considered the option of adding a small part of the South ward to the East, to adjust for the South ward's deprived communities and the associated higher workload levels that entails for the South ward Members. However, the existing ward boundary line in this area is more natural and the properties in the northern part of 4CBR (Black Road and other streets between Windmill Street and Gunco Lane) are more similar to those in the South ward than those in the East.</p> <p>The current East ward's electors per seat ratio is already within 10% of the Borough average and is forecast to converge with that average by 2030.</p> <p>Taking all these factors into account, the Borough Council proposes that the East ward's boundary should stay as it is now.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects the geographical area of Macclesfield that the ward would cover.

4.26 Macclesfield Hurdsfield

Proposed ward name	Macclesfield Hurdsfield		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,024	4,024	-2%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Addition of the parish of Higher Hurdsfield (polling district 4FC1) from the current Bollington Borough ward.		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The current Macclesfield Hurdsfield Borough ward and the parish of Higher Hurdsfield		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 4AB1, 4AB2, 4AB3, 4FC1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The parish of Higher Hurdsfield is currently warded with Bollington and the two communities have some ties and a good working relationship. However, Higher Hurdsfield's population is largely concentrated in the Roewood Lane estate, which is adjacent to the current Macclesfield Borough ward and that ward's residential areas. Higher Hurdsfield is on the opposite side of the canal to Macclesfield Hurdsfield, but there is a road link over the canal in this opposite, so residents on both sides of the parish boundary are within a very short walking distance of each other and people in Higher Hurdsfield can easily access services in the Hurdsfield and more central parts of Macclesfield. Higher Hurdsfield village and the Roewood Lane estate have no amenities or services except a pub and play area and so the parish is relatively dependent on Macclesfield in that respect. Consequently, the existing Borough ward area and Higher Hurdsfield have significant ties and a number of common interests. In addition, the Macclesfield Hurdsfield Member is already frequently approached by Higher Hurdsfield parish residents about local issues, so including the parish in the Hurdsfield ward would reflect that situation and help to enable more effective and convenient local government.</p> <p>The current Macclesfield Hurdsfield Borough ward has too few electors, with its electors per seat ratio forecast to be 17% below the Borough average by 2030. Warding Higher Hurdsfield with Macclesfield Hurdsfield would, however, give the expanded Macclesfield Hurdsfield Borough</p>		

	<p>ward an electors per seat ratio very close to (2% below) the Borough average, as well as ensuring that Higher Hurdsfield's interests and identity are still reflected. This change would also help to promote effective and convenient local government, given the relative proximity of (and the road link between) Higher Hurdsfield and Macclesfield Hurdsfield.</p> <p>The current Macclesfield Hurdsfield Borough ward includes some areas that are relatively deprived, falling within England's "top" 30% for overall deprivation, according to the Government's 2019 English Indices of Deprivation. The area's character and its residents' needs and identity are very different to those of the adjacent Tytherington and East wards, which are in contrast relatively affluent areas and which, in the East's case, includes a sparsely-populated rural area that extends to the edge of the Peak Park. It is therefore important that Macclesfield Hurdsfield remains as a single-Member ward and is not merged with its neighbours, as this would not reflect local communities' identities and interests. (This report's subsection on Macclesfield East provides further information on the differences between the East and Hurdsfield wards.)</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects the name of the area of Macclesfield that would be included, which also features in the name of the parish that would be added to the existing Borough ward.</p>

4.27 Macclesfield South

Proposed ward name	Macclesfield South		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,055	4,028	-2%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Addition of 4GDT (Local Plan site LPS 15) from Gawsworth Borough ward.		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The current Borough ward plus site LPS 15.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 4BF2, 4BFR, 4CA1, 4CAR, 4CB1, 4CBR, 4GDT.		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>As noted in the subsection on Macclesfield Central, there are good reasons for keeping the boundary between the Central and South wards as it is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The boundary around 4CD1 - enclosing Macclesfield College, Macclesfield Academy, the Ryles Park Road/ Ridge View residential area and the park and sports grounds on either side of Ryles Park Road – provides a natural divide between the Central ward and the South ward, with green space separating the Central ward and South ward properties in much of this area. There is no direct road access between the Central ward's Ryles Park Road/ Ridge View area and the South ward properties in 4CAR (such as Primrose Avenue and Craig Road). Nor is there any such access between the Ryles Park Road/ Ridge View area and the South ward properties around Ash Grove Primary School. • Part of the South ward – specifically the area consisting of the streets around Briarwood Avenue and Cedar Grove and broadly equating to 4CB1 - is the town's most deprived neighbourhood. This area is one of only four in Cheshire East that ranks in the Government's 2019 English Indices of Deprivation's "top" 10% for overall deprivation. • To the southwest of 4CB1 is the Moss estate, which spans the extent of Moss Lane and much of 4CAR and 4CA1). Deprivation is a predominant issue here too. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is therefore appropriate for 4CB1, 4CAR and 4CA1 to remain in the South ward. Boundaries that divided 4CB1 or the Moss between two wards would make it very difficult to coordinate efforts to address their deprivation and would not result in effective or convenient local government. <p>4BF2 (the residential area of the South ward around Ivy Bank Primary School) has ties to the adjacent parts of the current West & Ivy Borough ward. Including all these areas in the same Borough ward would better reflect local communities' identities and interests in this part of the town. However, the Borough Council does not propose this change, as it would result in poor electoral equality, leaving the South ward with an electors per seat ratio much more than 10% below the Borough average and giving the proposed West ward (which also has deprived communities and consequently higher workloads) a ratio far more than 10% above the Borough average. Therefore the Borough Council believes the Commission's collective criteria are better achieved by keeping 4BF2 warded with the South, as this report proposes.</p> <p>As noted in the subsection on Macclesfield East, the Borough Council had considered the option of moving a small part of 4CBR from the South ward to the East, to adjust for the South ward's deprived communities and the associated higher workload levels that entails for the South ward Members. However, the existing ward boundary line in this area is more natural and the properties in the northern part of 4CBR (Black Road and other streets between Windmill Street and Gunco Lane) are more similar to those in the South ward than those in the East.</p> <p>4GDT is a Local Plan site (LPS 15) intended to meet Macclesfield's housing needs. Along with the established properties in 4BFR, it forms part of Gawsworth Parish Council's Gawsworth Moss parish ward. The Community Governance Review generated extensive evidence that the residents of the established properties in 4BFR identify closely with Gawsworth and participate in many communal activities in the other (Gawsworth village) part of the parish. However, 4BFR is part of the same urban conurbation and is dependent on Macclesfield for a number of key services; it is in fact already warded with Macclesfield South. Given this, together with the intended purpose of LPS 15, there is a good case for warding the Gawsworth Moss parish ward with Macclesfield. This warding arrangement for Gawsworth Moss, together with the other</p>
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	<p>boundary changes proposed above and the proposals for the Congleton-Gawsworth boundary (see the subsection on Gawsworth), also achieves good electoral equality, with the would-be Gawsworth ward having an electors per seat ratio fairly close to (5% above) the Borough average.</p> <p>The proposed South ward would have an electors per seat ratio slightly below the Borough average, which suitably reflects the high workload associated with its deprived areas. However, as explained above, changing its boundaries with the adjacent Macclesfield wards (in order to lower its ratio a little further) would not reflect local communities' identities and interests.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects the geographical area of Macclesfield that the ward would cover.

4.28 Macclesfield Tytherington

Proposed ward name	Macclesfield Tytherington		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,093	4,047	-2%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Addition of part of 4EE1 (which forms part of Bollington Town Council's West ward), from the current Bollington Borough ward.		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The current Borough, plus the part of 4EE1 south of the Silk Road.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts 4AA1, 4AA2, 4AA3, 4AA4, 4AAR, 4AC1, 4AE1, 4EE1 (part only).</p> <p>The part of 4EE1 to be included would be the part south of the Silk Road (Dumbah Lane, Tytherington Lane, Ball Lane, Springwood Way, Webbs Close, Woodward Close, Goodwin Close, Livesley Road, Patterson Close, Monk Close, Hetherington Square, Edgell Close and Wesley Close).</p> <p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of 4EE1 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled 'Macclesfield Tytherington: close-up of Springwood Way area'.</p>		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The current Tytherington ward's population is largely concentrated in the residential areas spanning 4AA1, 4AA2, 4AA3, 4AA4 and 4AAR, including Tytherington Drive, Marlborough Drive, Rugby Drive, Badger Road and the streets off Dorchester Way. This area has a supermarket and many other amenities and a good community spirit, with many social activities.</p> <p>As noted in the subsection on Macclesfield Central, the inclusion of the Coare Street area (4AC1) in the Central ward has also been considered, as its terraced housing is of similar character and the River Bollin would provide a natural boundary. However, 4AC1 is not part of the town centre</p>		

	<p>and the road network (Hibel Road) is a clear physical barrier between the two. It is a separate community to the current Central ward and to the areas of Tytherington north of the River Bollin. Moving 4AC1 to the Central ward would, though, result in inadequate electoral equality, leaving the Tytherington ward with too few electors to warrant two seats but far too many for one Member to serve. (This is true even allowing for the impact of the Borough Council's proposed extension of Tytherington's northern boundary up to the Silk Road, as detailed below.) The properties in 4AC1 are connected to the rest of the current Tytherington ward via Beech Lane and fall within the catchment for Tytherington High School. The Borough Council therefore proposes that 4AC1 remain warded with Tytherington.</p> <p>The Bollinbrook area (4AE1) has been warded with Tytherington since 2011, but was part of the Broken Cross & Upton Borough ward prior to that. As with 4AC1, it is a distinct community in its own right and has its own primary school and social media groups. The Borough Council has considered including this area once again in the same ward as Broken Cross & Upton: there is direct road access from Bollinbrook into the residential area between Prestbury Road and Victoria Road, whereas the railway line and River Bollin mean that access by car or bus into most of Tytherington (4AA1, 4AA2, 4AA3, 4AA4 and 4AAR) involves a longer journey, via the inner road network along Cumberland Street or Hibel Road and the Silk Road. However, moving 4AE1 out of Tytherington would (as with 4AC1) result in poor electoral equality, leaving Tytherington with far too few electors for a two-Member ward but far too many for a single seat. It would also result in the proposed Macclesfield West ward having an electors per seat ratio much more than 10% above the Borough average. As the would-be Macclesfield West ward contains some of the town's more deprived communities (in the Weston and Ivy areas and in part of Upton), this would result in an unduly heavy workload for the West ward Members. Hence keeping 4AE1 warded with Tytherington is necessary in order to meet the Commission's criteria relating to electoral equality and effective and convenient local government (as well as reflecting local communities' identities and interests).</p> <p>The current Borough ward boundary between Bollington and Macclesfield Tytherington is the same as the current boundary between Bollington and Macclesfield town councils. However, this boundary divides the Springwood Way estate, with residents on some of the estate's streets being in a different Borough ward to those on adjacent streets and properties on some roads</p>
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	<p>(such as Hetherington Square) being divided between the two wards. The responses to the Community Governance Review's (CGR) draft recommendations consultation stage revealed evidence of ties between Springwood Way estate residents and the part of Bollington north of the Silk Road. Therefore the CGR final recommendations left the town council boundary unchanged, rather than aligning it with the Silk Road.</p> <p>Nevertheless, a Borough ward boundary that divides the estate and individual streets (and in some cases runs through individual properties) does not reflect the local community's identity and interests, nor does it promote effective and convenient local government. Springwood Way residents are part of the same community and it is more practical for them all to be included in the same Borough ward, so that residents are clear about whom to approach about local matters and so issues related to the estate do not require liaison between Members from different wards. The Silk Road represents a natural boundary and there is also a sizeable green gap between that road and the town of Bollington itself. In contrast, the residential streets south of Tytherington Business Park (such as Cotton Crescent and Tytherington Drive) are relatively close to the Springwood Way estate, with footpaths connecting the southern end of the estate to Tewkesbury Drive and Tytherington Drive. Many of the estate's properties (those within the current Macclesfield Tytherington Borough ward boundary) are in the catchment for the Marlborough Primary School on Tytherington Drive. The B5090 and A538 also provide easy access from the estate to the areas of Tytherington further south.</p> <p>Given the advantages of placing the entire Springwood Way estate in a single ward, the estate's ties to the parts of Tytherington further south, and the merits of the Silk Road as a natural boundary, it is therefore proposed that the whole estate be warded with Macclesfield Tytherington.</p> <p>The impact of extending the Tytherington ward's boundary to the Silk Road is to bring its electors per seat ratio closer to (2% below) the Borough average.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects the name of the area of Macclesfield that the ward would cover.

4.29 Macclesfield West

Proposed ward name	Macclesfield West		
Proposed number of seats	3		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	13,488	4,496	+9%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>This ward would be formed from the merger of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current Broken Cross & Upton Borough ward • The current Macclesfield West & Ivy Borough ward • Polling district 4GET (the part of Local Plan site LPS 18 that moved into Macclesfield Town Council as part of the Community Governance Review [CGR] changes). 4GET is currently part of Gawsorth Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	See row above.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 4AD1, 4AD2, 4AD3, 4AF1, 4AF2, 4AF3, 4BC1, 4BD1, 4BE1, 4BF1, 4GET.		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>As noted in the subsections on the Central, South and Tytherington Borough wards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is appropriate that the whole of 4BF1 (including the areas around Haldene Road, Clowes Street/ Frances Street, Brooklands Avenue and Cherington Crescent) be included in the proposed Macclesfield West Borough ward, not Central: this area west of Oxford Road contains the secondary school that serves the west of the town and so is part of that community. • 4BF2 (the residential area around Ivy Bank Primary School) has ties to the adjacent parts of the current West & Ivy Borough ward. Including all these areas in the same Borough ward would better reflect local communities' identities and interests in this part of the town. However, the Borough Council does not propose this change, as it would result in poor electoral equality, leaving the South ward with an electors per seat ratio much more than 10% below the Borough average and giving the proposed West ward (which also has deprived 		

	<p>communities and consequently higher workloads) a ratio far more than 10% above the Borough average.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bollinbrook area (4AE1) has been warded with Tytherington since 2011, but was part of the Broken Cross & Upton Borough ward prior to that. It is a distinct community in its own right and has its own primary school and social media groups. The Borough Council has considered including this area once again in the same ward as Broken Cross & Upton: there is direct road access from Bollinbrook into the residential area between Prestbury Road and Victoria Road, whereas the railway line and River Bollin mean that access by car or bus into most of Tytherington (4AA1, 4AA2, 4AA3, 4AA4 and 4AAR) involves a longer journey, via the inner road network along Cumberland Street or Hibel Road and the Silk Road. However, moving 4AE1 out of Tytherington would (as with 4AC1) result in poor electoral equality, leaving Tytherington with far too few electors for a two-Member ward but far too many for a single seat. It would also result in the proposed Macclesfield West ward having an electors per seat ratio much more than 10% above the Borough average. As the would-be Macclesfield West ward contains some of the town's more deprived communities (in the Weston and Ivy areas and in part of Upton), this would result in an unduly heavy workload for the West ward Members. Hence keeping 4AE1 warded with Tytherington is necessary in order to meet the Commission's criteria relating to electoral equality and effective and convenient local government (as well as reflecting local communities' identities and interests). <p>The properties in the eastern (Upton Hall) part of 4AF2 (those east of Prestbury Road) are very few in number. The Borough Council has considered the option of including this part of 4AF2 in Tytherington Borough ward, but does not propose that change, given that services and amenities in Broken Cross & Upton are geographically closer and more accessible by road for these residents than the facilities in Tytherington are.</p> <p>4GET is a Local Plan site that is intended to cater for Macclesfield's housing needs and the area covered by this polling district was therefore transferred from Henbury parish to Macclesfield Town Council under the recent CGR changes. Residents on this site will look to Macclesfield for key services and it is appropriate for it to be included in a Macclesfield ward.</p>
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	<p>The proposed West ward would contain all of Broken Cross, Upton and Weston, which are distinct communities. However, dividing this area into small wards is not considered to be feasible without splitting one or more of these communities between wards, or without leaving one such ward with a very high electors per seat ratio. The proposed ward includes some of the town's areas of social housing and some of its most deprived neighbourhoods. One of these (broadly equating to 4BE1) ranks among England's most deprived 20% under the Government's 2019 English Indices of Deprivation. Deprivation is also a challenge in parts of 4BC1 and 4BD1 and in the area around Upton Priory School. Although the proposed ward would have an above-average electors per seat ratio and generate a substantial workload for the elected Members, the Council believes (as set out above) that alternative warding arrangements would result in either wards that poorly reflected local communities' identities and interests, or warding that involved an extremely high electors per seat ratio (well above 10%) for an area containing deprived neighbourhoods.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>The proposed ward name reflects the geographical area of Macclesfield that the ward would cover. Whilst this ward would include Broken Cross, Upton, Weston and Ivy, which have distinct identities and make up the ward's main communities, a composite ward name listing all these areas of the town would be too long for practical use, as would a composite name derived from the existing 'Broken Cross & Upton' and 'West & Ivy' ward names.</p> <p>It should also be noted that 'Weston' is the proposed name for one of the wards in another part of the Borough and it is important that the names of that ward and the one covering western Macclesfield do not get confused.</p>

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4.30 Middlewich

Proposed ward name	Middlewich		
Proposed number of seats	3		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	12,626	4,209	+2%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Addition of polling district BRET, from the current Brereton Rural Borough ward.		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	Middlewich Town Council		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts BRET, MIAA, MIAB, MIAC, MIAE, MIAF, MIAG, MIAH, MIAJ		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The proposed ward would align the Middlewich Borough ward boundary with the post-Community Governance Review boundaries between Middlewich Town Council and Moston Parish Council, and bring the whole of the housing development on Local Plan sites LPS 42 and LPS 45 within Middlewich Borough ward.</p> <p>This change would reflect local communities' interests and identities, as these new development sites were provided in order to help meet Middlewich's housing needs and residents there will naturally look to Middlewich for services and amenities.</p> <p>The proposal would also leave Middlewich with an electors per seat ratio close to the Borough average.</p> <p>Including one or both of the adjacent parishes of Moston and Bradwall in the ward would not be appropriate, as they are small rural communities with dispersed populations. In addition, Middlewich's ties to neighbouring settlements are primarily to the Cheshire West & Chester towns of Winsford and Northwich, rather than to the rest of Cheshire East. Winsford and Middlewich Town Councils provided evidence of this during the recent (2021-22) consultations on parliamentary constituency boundaries, which led to the Boundary Commission for England</p>		

	placing all three towns in the same constituency. In other words, Middlewich is very much a separate community to the rest of Cheshire East.
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects community identity, as the ward would consist solely of the Middlewich Town Council area.

4.31 Mobberley

Proposed ward name	Mobberley		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	3,980	3,980	-3%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition of the parish of Ollerton with Marthall (polling districts 3CJ1 and 3CO1), from the current Chelford Borough ward.</p> <p>Transfer (removal) of polling district 3CMT (the small part of the Longridge Trading Estate currently in Mobberley Borough ward), to the proposed Knutsford Borough ward.</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	<p>The following parishes and parish wards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parishes of Ashley, Great Warford, Little Warford, Mobberley and Ollerton with Marthall. • Millington & Rostherne Parish Council's Rostherne & Tatton parish ward (polling districts 3CU1 and 3CU7). 		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 3CB6, 3CH1, 3CJ1, 3CM1, 3CMR, 3CO1, 3CU1, 3CU7, 3DE1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The current Borough has a relatively low electors per seat ratio: the ratio was 9% below the Borough average as of 2023 and this variance is forecast to widen, to 15% below the average, by 2030. It is therefore necessary to expand the geographical area of the ward, in order for its ratio to fall within the range usually sought by the Commission.</p> <p>The proposed addition of Ollerton with Marthall to the ward would achieve this and result in a ratio (as of 2030) close to the Borough average. This change would also reflect local communities' identities and interests. Whilst Ollerton with Marthall is currently part of Chelford Borough ward, it has no significant ties to Chelford or any shared services. The issues Ollerton with Marthall faces are more similar to those for Great Warford, so there are benefits in warding them together in Mobberley. Ollerton and Mobberley are also on the same bus route.</p>		

	<p>Ashley, Great Warford and Rostherne also have links to Mobberley, meaning that there is logic in keeping these areas warded together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parishes of Great Warford and Ashley are reasonably close to Mobberley and well connected to it by road. Mobberley and Ashley are also adjacent stops on the same (Chester-Manchester) railway line. • Ashley and Rostherne are in the catchment for Mobberley's primary school. • For Ashley and Great Warford, Mobberley is the nearest location in Cheshire East with a supermarket or a pharmacy. <p>Although the proposed warding would mean that the parish of Millington & Rostherne would still be split between Mobberley and High Legh Borough wards, the Millington parish ward has ties to High Legh rather than High Legh. As noted in the section of this report covering the proposed warding for High Legh, Millington is on the same side of the A556 as High Legh and is in the same school catchment.</p> <p>By transferring 3CMT to the proposed Knutsford Borough ward, the proposal would align the Knutsford Borough ward boundary with the post-Community Governance Review boundaries between Knutsford Town Council and Mobberley Parish Council. This change would also bring the whole of the Longridge Trading Estate within a single Borough ward, avoiding the potential requirement for Members from two different Borough wards to liaise over issues relating to the Estate. As this polling district has no electors either currently or expected by (or after) 2030, its removal from Mobberley ward would have no impact on electoral equality.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects community identity, as Mobberley is the main settlement within the proposed Borough ward and an important local centre for key services and amenities.</p>

4.32 Nantwich North & West

Proposed ward name	Nantwich North & West		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,400	4,200	+2%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> polling district 3FBT (the Kingsley Fields housing development, Local Plan site LPS 46), from the current Bunbury Borough ward. 3FAT (the Malbank Waters housing development), from the current Wrenbury Borough ward. <p>Transfer (removal) of 1NA3 to the proposed Nantwich South & Stapeley Borough ward.</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	Most of the current Borough ward (all except for the Mount Drive estate area covered by 1NA3), plus the Kingsley Fields and Malbank Waters developments.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 1NA0, 1NA1, 1NA2, 1NA6, 1NAC, 3FAT, 3FBT		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The proposed changes would reflect local communities' interests and identities by aligning the Borough ward boundary between the Bunbury and Nantwich Borough wards with the post-Community Governance Review boundaries between Nantwich Town Council, Burland & Acton Parish Council and Worleston & District Parish Council, and bring the Kingsley Fields and Malbank Waters development within the Borough ward that contains the adjacent part of the town of Nantwich. These new developments were intended to meet Nantwich's housing needs and residents of the new properties are dependent on the town for key services and amenities.</p> <p>However, if the addition of Kingsley Fields and Malbank Waters were the only changes made to the ward, Nantwich North & West would have an expected 9,530 electors by 2030, giving it an electors per seat ratio 16% above the Borough average, whilst the Nantwich South & Stapeley Borough ward, if left unchanged, would have a ratio 6% below the average. Hence the Borough</p>		

	<p>Council proposes that polling district 1NA3 be transferred from the North & West ward to the South & Stapeley ward, so that both have a (2030) ratio within 10% of the Borough average.</p> <p>The reasons for proposing to transfer this specific part of the current North & West Borough ward to South & Stapeley are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transferring an area of Nantwich North & West that is further west (namely part or all of 1NA0) would, given the physical barrier of the River Weaver, limit direct access between the northern and western parts of the redrawn North & West ward. • It would keep all the properties in the Mount Drive area (which broadly equates to 1NA3) in the same Borough ward. <p>The resulting ratios for the two proposed Borough wards would, as of 2030, both be within 10% of the Borough average (2% above and 7% above respectively).</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects the geographical parts of the town that the proposed ward would cover.

4.33 Nantwich South & Stapeley

Proposed ward name	Nantwich South & Stapeley		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,833	4,417	+7%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Addition of polling district 1NA3, from the current Nantwich North & West Borough ward.		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The current Borough ward (which includes the parish of Stapeley & District) plus 1NA3		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 1FC1, 1FC2, 1FC6, 1FCR, 1NA3, 1NA4, 1NA5, 1NAR		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The previous (Nantwich North & West) subsection of this report explains the reasons for the proposed addition of 1NA3.</p> <p>Although Stapeley & District is a separate parish to Nantwich and has its own identity, the vast majority of its residential properties (many of them on recent housing development sites) are part of the same conurbation as Nantwich and there are good, direct road links from the more sparsely-populated parts of Stapeley into Nantwich. Stapeley residents are dependent on Nantwich for many key services.</p>		
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects the geographical parts of Nantwich that the proposed ward would cover. It also reflects the fact that Stapeley makes up a large proportion of the ward's population and (as the recent Community Governance Review confirmed) has its own separate identity.		

4.34 Odd Rode

Proposed ward name	Odd Rode		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,237	4,119	0%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Transfer (removal) of polling district LAWT (to the proposed new Alsager Borough ward).</p> <p>Addition of the parishes of Smallwood (AST6), Betchton (LAW3) and Hassall (LAW4).</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The parishes of Betchton, Church Lawton, Hassall, Newbold Astbury cum Moreton, Odd Rode and Smallwood.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts AST1, AST2, AST6, LAW1, LAW2, LAW3, LAW4, ORD1, ORD2, ORD3, ORD5		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The removal of LAWT will align the Odd Rode Borough ward with the post-Community Governance Review (CGR) boundaries between Alsager Town Council and Church Lawton Parish Council, and bring the whole of the housing development on Local Plan site LPS 21 with Alsager Borough ward. This site was provided to help meet Alsager's housing needs and residents are dependent on the town for key services and amenities. The boundary change will therefore better reflect community identity and interests.</p> <p>The existing Borough ward would be too small to meet the Commission's electoral equality criterion, with its electors per seat ratio forecast to be 15% below the Borough average by 2030. The removal of LAWT, if not undertaken in tandem with other boundary changes, would exacerbate this slightly, resulting in a ratio 16% below average.</p> <p>Adding the parishes of Smallwood, Betchton and Hassall to the existing ward would address this imbalance and give the expanded ward a ratio that matched the Borough average. Including these parishes in the ward would also reflect local communities' identities and interests, as there are significant community ties between the parishes in the proposed Borough ward. In particular:</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some of the settlements in Church Lawton and Odd Rode parishes have convenience stores or a supermarket and two of them (Rode Heath and Scholar Green) have key services such as a GP surgery and post office, whereas Hassall, Smallwood and Betchton have no such services and no retail provision. There are direct road links from Hassall Green (Betchton's main settlement) to Rode Heath (in Odd Rode parish) and the main settlements in Church Lawton, making their services relatively accessible to the smaller parishes to their north. Similarly, there are good road links between the main settlements in Smallwood/ Newbold Astbury and Rode Heath/ Scholar Green (which are in Odd Rode parish). Hassall and Betchton are in the catchment area for Smallwood Church of England Primary School and Moreton parish ward is in the catchment for Scholar Green Primary School. In the final recommendations report (2010) from the Commission's last review of Cheshire East, evidence (from Betchton Parish Council) was cited of Betchton's community ties to Odd Rode. <p>The proposals mean the new ward would cover a large and much expanded geographical area. Even the existing ward's area sometimes presents challenges arising from the hilly terrain of its Mount Pleasant parish ward (as Odd Rode Parish Council noted in its response to the CGR draft recommendations consultation). Therefore, it is not felt that the ward should be extended to include more than the proposed six parishes. As noted in the proposal for Brereton, Arclid has closer ties to Brereton than to Odd Rode and all the other rural parishes adjoining the proposed ward are relatively large in terms of land area and population and face different issues to those in the proposed Odd Rode ward (for example, major new housing development sites).</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and closely associated with the area (the parish of Odd Rode) where the majority of the proposed ward's electors live.

4.35 Poynton

Proposed ward name	Poynton		
Proposed number of seats	3		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	12,097	4,032	-2%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Transfer (removal), from the current Poynton East & Pott Shrigley Borough ward, of the parishes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kettleshulme & Lyme Handley (to be added to the proposed Disley Borough ward). • Pott Shrigley (to be added to the proposed Bollington & Rainow Borough ward). <p>Transfer (removal), from the current Poynton West & Adlington Borough ward, of the parish of Adlington.</p> <p>Merger of the residual areas of these two Poynton wards into a single new ward.</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	Poynton Town Council		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 4JC1, 4JC2, 4JD1, 4JDR, 4JE1, 4JF1, 4JG1, 4JG2, 4JH1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>These changes would address the fact that both existing Poynton wards have electors per seat ratios that are well below the Borough average: without boundary changes, both of them would be more than 10% (and one of them more than 20%) below that average by 2030.</p> <p>The changes would mean a Borough ward boundary that is coterminous with the Town Council boundary. The elected Members would consequently be able to focus on the needs and interests of the town, rather than having to address, in addition, the rather different needs and issues of the rural neighbouring parishes currently included in the Poynton wards.</p>		

	<p>It is recognised that Pott Shrigley and Adlington have some ties to Poynton. For example, there are good road connections to the town, Adlington train station is on the line to Poynton – and Poynton Industrial Estate (located in Adlington parish) is adjacent to the town.</p> <p>However, these two parishes, along with Kettleshulme & Lyme Handley, each cover a wide geographical area. Travel times will account for a significant proportion of Members' working hours and accessibility to parts of the Peak Park area (which spans much of Pott Shrigley and Kettleshulme & Lyme Handley) is more difficult in winter weather. The Park's different planning policy regime can potentially also add to the complexity of the workload for Members serving this area.</p> <p>All three of the rural parishes currently included in the Poynton wards also have their own primary schools, which again limits their dependency and links to nearby towns.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and reflects community identity, as the ward would consist solely of the Poynton Town Council area.

4.36 Prestbury

Proposed ward name	Prestbury		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,239	4,239	+3%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Transfer (removal) of the parish of Over Alderley (polling district 3DC1) to the proposed Chelford Borough ward.</p> <p>Addition of the parish of Adlington (polling districts 4JA1 & 4JB1), from the current Poynton West & Adlington Borough ward.</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The parishes of Adlington, Mottram St Andrew and Prestbury		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 4HE1, 4HE2, 4HF1, 4HF2, 4HF3, 4JA1, 4JB1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The three parishes in the proposed ward are of similar character, being home to fairly affluent communities and covering large rural areas. The main villages in the three parishes are well connected by road and have well established links to each other. Adlington is also connected to Prestbury by rail. Prestbury is well endowed with services and amenities, including a library, supermarket, GP surgery and pharmacy and is the nearest location for these for many Adlington and Mottram St Andrew parish residents. Adlington has previously been warded with Prestbury and the Commission's final recommendations report from its last (2010) review of Cheshire reported that Adlington Parish Council's preferred option was to be warded with Prestbury.</p> <p>Over Alderley too has some ties to Prestbury, but, as noted in the subsection on Chelford, Nether Alderley and Over Alderley have a number of shared interests, such as the Alderley Park development site, which is split between the two parishes.</p> <p>The Council's consultation on its Community Governance Review draft recommendations had proposed that the parishes of Mottram St Andrew and Over Alderley be merged, but the</p>		

	<p>responses to that proposal included a substantial amount of evidence of a relative lack of links and common interests between the two parishes. In particular, Mottram St Andrew has a diverse array of amenities, including a hotel, golf club and garden centres, whereas Over Alderley has very few. The consultation responses also noted that Mottram St Andrew's numerous social clubs and other communal activities have no links to Over Alderley.</p> <p>Therefore it is felt that Over Alderley now fits better in the proposed Chelford ward. This change would also result in better electoral equality. The current Prestbury ward's electors per seat ratio is forecast to be 8% below the Borough average by 2030. However, removing Over Alderley from the ward and 'replacing' it with Adlington increases the Prestbury ward's electorate significantly, making it much closer to the Borough average.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and Prestbury would be the ward's main village and centre for key services and amenities, making it a major focal point.

4.37 Sandbach East & Central

Proposed ward name	Sandbach East & Central		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,660	4,330	+5%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Transfer, to the proposed Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath Borough ward, of part of polling district SAE2</p> <p>Merger of the rest of Sandbach Town Borough ward and the whole of the current Sandbach Heath & East Borough ward, to form the proposed Sandbach East & Central Borough ward</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	All of the current Sandbach Town and Sandbach Heath & East Borough wards, except for the Middlewich Road/ Park Lane part of SAE2.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts SAE1, SAE2 (part only), SAE3, SAEC, SAN1, SAN2.</p> <p>The part of SAE2 to be included would be all of this polling district, except for: the Park Lane part (both sides of the road); Blackacres Close; Bowles Close; numbers 112-160 on south (even) side and numbers 101-129 on north (odd) side of Middlewich Road.</p> <p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of SAE2 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled 'Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath: close-up of Park Lane area'.</p>		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The proposals for the East & Central ward have been informed in large part by the electoral forecast numbers and identities of the communities in other parts of the town. This is a consequence of recent housing and population growth leading to a situation where Sandbach's current allocation of four council seats is too few to reflect the size of its electorate, but five seats is too many to divide the town into whilst meeting the Commission's main three criteria. An added complication is that of this demographic growth being much more concentrated in some of the</p>		

	<p>town's current Borough wards than others. In particular, the current Elworth Borough ward has an electors per seat that is at (and forecast to remain) over 20% above the Borough average, whilst the ratios forecast for the other three wards range from 4% to 10% above average.</p> <p>Whilst they largely form part of the same urban area and have the sort of community ties that would justify warding them together, a merger of the current Elworth and Ettiley Heath & Wheelock wards would create a ward with an electors per seat ratio too high to meet the Commission's electoral equality criterion. Including the new Albion Lock development (polling district BRET2), which identifies as part of Elworth and which became part of the Town Council's Elworth ward as part of the Community Governance Review changes, would therefore make this ratio higher still.</p> <p>A merger of the Town Council's Elworth ward (BRET2, SAN3, SAW1 and SAW2) and the Ettiley Heath area (SAW3), to create a two-Member ward, means a somewhat lower ratio, because of the exclusion of polling districts that contain Wheelock. Such a ward would have a ratio within 10% of the Borough average, but would be somewhat on the low side (8% below average). A merger of the current Town and Heath & East wards would likewise have a ratio within 10% of the Borough average, but on the high side (7% above).</p> <p>The proposal addresses this disparity between the two would-be wards' ratios – and also provides a better reflection of community identity and interests – by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taking the Middlewich Road and Park Lane part of SAE2 (currently in the Sandbach Town Borough ward) as far east as the town's secondary schools - and including these properties in the proposed Elworth & Ettiley Heath Borough ward; • also including the properties on the Park Lane part of SAWR in the proposed Elworth & Ettiley Heath Borough ward. <p>The housing stock in these parts of SAE2 and SAWR are generally of similar character to those along the adjacent (SAW2/ SAN3) stretch of Middlewich Road and form part of the same community, whereas the Middlewich Road properties east of the secondary schools are of a different character and form part of the town's central areas.</p>
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	<p>The impact of including these parts of SAE2 and SAWR in the Elworth and Ettiley Heath ward is to increase its ratio to 3,983 (3% below average) and lower the Central & East ward's ratio to 4,330 (5% above average).</p> <p>The part of the Town Council not included in these proposed wards is the Wheelock area, which consists of SAW4 and all of SAWR except the Park Lane part. Wheelock has a few retail outlets and amenities, but relies primarily on the central areas of Sandbach for key services. Wheelock on its own has far too few electors to justify its own ward, but it and the Winterley and Wheelock Heath areas of Haslington Parish Council are forecast to have a total of 3,852 electors as of 2030, which equates to a ratio 6% below the Borough average. Although they fall within a different parish council and are a separate community to Wheelock, Winterley and Wheelock Heath residents also tend to rely on Sandbach for key services, rather than Haslington village, and so there is a natural link between these communities. Therefore the council's proposes that Wheelock, Winterley and Wheelock Heath be warded together.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The name clearly indicates the geographical areas of Sandbach that the ward would cover.

4.38 Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath

Proposed ward name	Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	7,966	3,983	-3%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Merger of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the current Elworth Borough ward. the Albion Lock housing development (polling district BRET2), which is currently part of Brereton Rural Borough ward. the Ettiley Heath (SAW3) part of the current Sandbach Ettiley Heath & Wheelock Borough ward. the Middlewich Road/ Park Lane part of SAE2, which is currently part of Sandbach Town Borough ward. the Park Lane part of SAWR, which is currently part of Sandbach Ettiley Heath & Wheelock Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	See above list of merged areas.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts BRET2, SAE2 (part only), SAN3, SAW1, SAW2, SAW3, SAWR (part only).</p> <p>The part of SAE2 to be included would be: the part of Park Lane (on both sides) that is within this polling district; Blackacres Close; Bowles Close; numbers 112-160 on south (even) side and numbers 101-129 on north (odd) side of Middlewich Road.</p> <p>The part of SAWR to be included would be: the part of Park Lane (on both sides) that is within this polling district; Fields Drive; Drovers Way.</p> <p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of SAE2 and SAWR and the resulting boundary lines can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate</p>		

	document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled ‘Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath: close-up of Park Lane area’.
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	See section on the warding for Sandbach Central & East, as this sets out the rationale for warding for all those areas containing the existing Sandbach Borough wards and the other area (BRET2) that falls within the Town Council.
Rationale for the proposed name	Elworth and Ettiley Heath are distinct areas of Sandbach with their own sense of identity and their inclusion in ward names is a well-established and accepted practice.

4.39 Shavington

Proposed ward name	Shavington		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,784	4,392	+7%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition (to the current Shavington Borough ward) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council's Gresty Brook parish ward (polling district 1GM2), from the current Crewe South Borough ward. 1FE1 (the polling district containing the parish of Rope's urban population), from the current Willaston & Rope Borough ward. 1FET (part of the Chatsworth Park estate) and 1FET2, from the current Willaston & Rope Borough ward. Both of these areas were moved from Rope Parish Council to Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council under the Community Governance Review (CGR). Part of 1FE2 (see below for further details), from the current Wistaston Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The parishes of Rope and Shavington Part of 1FE2, which is in the parish of Wistaston 		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts 1FE1, 1FE2 (part only), 1FET, 1FET2, 1GM1, 1GM2, 1GMR, 1GMT.</p> <p>The part of 1FE2 to be included would be all of this polling district, except for: numbers 156 to 160 Wistaston Road; numbers 314-348 on the even (east) side of Crewe Road; the properties in Holly Place and Gerard Gardens that fall within 1FE2; and numbers 351/ 351a to 421 on the odd (west) side of Crewe Road.</p>		

	<p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of 1FE2 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled 'Wistaston: close-up of Wistaston Road area'.</p>
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>As a result of major housing development, the population of Shavington has grown significantly in recent years and consequently the current, single-Member Shavington Borough ward has too many electors for one seat (yet too few to warrant two seats). The ward's electors per seat ratio was 24% above the Borough average as of 2023 and this variance from the average is forecast to decrease only a little (to 22% above average) by 2030.</p> <p>Therefore the ward needs to be either reduced or expanded significantly in size, in order to meet the Commission's electoral equality criterion.</p> <p>A key element of the proposed solution is to include Gresty Brook in the Shavington Borough ward, so that both of Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council's parish wards are in the same Borough ward. The recent CGR draft recommendations consultation stage generated over 900 responses on the draft proposals for Shavington and these clearly demonstrated that Gresty Brook identifies strongly with the rest of Shavington. The responses also highlighted the connections that Gresty Brook has to the adjacent urban area of Rope parish, which forms part of the same housing estate (Laidon Avenue/ Berkeley Crescent) and which has shared services (see below for further details). In addition, it was clear from the consultation responses that Gresty Brook has no significant ties to Crewe, despite it currently being warded with Crewe South. It should also be noted that the Brook itself, and the green space either of it, provides a natural boundary between the Gresty Brook properties and the adjacent area of Crewe.</p> <p>The rationale for dividing 1FE2 and including all but a small southwestern segment of it in the proposed Shavington ward is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1FE2 consists largely of a housing estate (Laidon Avenue/ Berkeley Crescent and roads off these) that spans the parishes of Wistaston, Rope and Shavington (specifically Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council's Gresty Brook parish ward). The entire estate falls within the same primary school catchment (for Berkeley Primary School), as do the Rope Lane and

	<p>Springfield Drive (Wells Green) areas of 1FE2. People on the estate also share the same medical practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the estate is part of the same community, it is proposed that all of 1FE2 be warded with Shavington, except for the small southern 'loop' of that polling district (south of the Crewe Road/ Church Lane junction) that forms part of Willaston village. <p>The proposed warding would reflect local communities' identities and interests by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> placing the whole of the parish of Shavington cum Gresty in a single Borough ward. bringing the whole Chatsworth Park estate within a single Borough ward. placing Shavington High School within Shavington Borough ward. placing the whole of Willaston village in the same Borough ward (currently, Holly Place and Gerard Gardens are split between two Borough wards). <p>The resulting ward would have an electors per seat ratio within 10% of Borough average, though on the high side of this range (7% above average as of 2030). However, the population is concentrated within Laidon Avenue estate, the new housing development off Jack Mills Way (the B5071) and Shavington village - and the A500 and the rest of the road network provide easy access around the area. Deprivation is not an issue for this part of the Borough either, so the relatively high ratio should not imply unreasonably high workloads for the elected Members.</p> <p>The Borough Council has considered the option of having two single-Member wards (collectively covering the same geographical area as the proposed Shavington Borough ward), with the A500 forming the boundary between them. However, it is felt that that arrangement would meet the Commission's criteria less well, given that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gresty Brook, which is north of the A500, has ties to Shavington village (which is south of the A500). Shavington High School would be in a different Borough ward to Shavington village. This is the situation currently – and it results in some parents contacting the Shavington Borough ward Member about issues relating to the school (as they assume the school is within that Member's ward) and those parents having to be referred on to the Willaston & Rope Member. Having the school in the same Borough ward as the whole of Shavington cum Gresty village
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	could avoid this confusion and enable more efficient communication between parents and the local Members.
Rationale for the proposed name	The current (and proposed) ward name is well-established and Shavington would be the ward's main settlement and a key centre for services and amenities, making it a major focal point.

4.40 Sutton

Proposed ward name	Sutton		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	3,982	3,982	-3%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Removal (transfer) of the parish of Rainow, to the proposed Bollington & Rainow Borough ward.</p> <p>Addition of the parishes of Bosley (polling district 4GA1) and North Rode (4GH6), from the current Gawsworth Borough ward.</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The parishes of Bosley, Macclesfield Forest & Wildboardclough, North Rode, Sutton and Wincle.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 4CC1, 4GA1, 4GG6, 4GH6, 4GK1, 4GK6, 4GL6, 4GM6, 4GO1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>Largely as a result of new housing development forecast in the area of Sutton parish that adjoins Macclesfield (Lyme Green), the Sutton Borough ward's number of electors is predicted to grow to 4,549 by 2030, which equates to an electors per seat ratio 11% above the Borough average. The ward covers a very widespread geographical area that includes a large part of the Peak Park and many of the communities in the ward live in remote, dispersed locations, often at high elevations. This mean travel times and conditions can be particularly challenging, as can some of the issues faced by the elected Member. Hence the workload would be relatively high, even if the ratio were close to the Borough average.</p> <p>Consequently, changes to the ward boundary are required, to reduce it to a more manageable size that meets the Commission's requirements for electoral equality and effective and convenient local government, whilst ensuring that the new warding arrangement continues to reflect local communities' identity and interests.</p>		

	<p>As the responses from the Council's Community Governance Review draft recommendations consultation stage indicated, the three main villages in Sutton parish have very strong ties to each other, relying on each other's facilities and amenities and engaging together in many and varied community activities. Parts of the parish's other parish ward (Sutton Rural) are adjacent to the villages and so can easily access their services and amenities, such as the local shop. Therefore an attempt to reduce the size of the ward's electorate by moving part of Sutton parish to another ward would not reflect community identity. Because of its small number of electors, transferring Wincle to the adjacent Gawsworth Borough ward would make only a modest difference to electoral equality and would again fail to reflect community identity, as the interests and needs of the Peak Park's communities are completely different to those of many Gawsworth parishes.</p> <p>Hence the removal of Rainow from the ward is the only practical solution. The Council proposes that Rainow be included instead in the proposed Bollington & Rainow Borough ward. Although they have a number of differences, there are common issues affecting Bollington and Rainow, such as balancing housing development pressures against the need to protect the natural environment. (One residential street, Ingersley Vale, has a number of properties on both sides of the parish boundary.) Therefore having both parishes represented by the same Member would reflect local communities' interests. This warding arrangement, including Pott Shrigley too (it is close and well connected to Bollington by road), would also address the fact that the current Bollington Borough ward's electorate is too small to justify two Members, with an electors per seat ratio that is forecast to be 15% below the Borough average by 2030.</p> <p>However, if Rainow is removed from Sutton, one or more parishes have to be transferred from Gawsworth Borough ward to Sutton, to avoid Sutton's electors per seat ratio being too low to satisfy the Commission's electoral equality criterion. Therefore the Borough Council also proposes that Bosley and North Rode be included in the redrawn Sutton ward. These two wards have a rural character that fits with the rest of the ward and the road network provides a convenient connection between them and Sutton's other settlements. As noted in the subsection on Gawsworth, moving only Bosley from Gawsworth to Sutton would, in tandem with the other proposed warding arrangements for Gawsworth, leave Gawsworth with a ratio 10% above the Borough average, while Sutton's ratio would be 8% below average. However, moving both</p>
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	Bosley and North Rode ensures a more even balance between the electors per seat ratios for the two very large, rural wards of Gawsworth and Sutton (with variances of plus 5% and minus 3% respectively).
Rationale for the proposed name	Sutton is the parish where the large majority of the proposed ward's population lives and the name of one of the area's main villages. The use of this ward name is well established and accepted.

4.41 Weston

Proposed ward name	Weston		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,286	4,286	+4%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>This new ward would consist of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the parish of Barthomley, which is currently in Haslington Borough ward. the parish of Weston & Crewe Green. This consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weston parish ward and Crewe Green parish wards, which are currently in Haslington Borough ward. Wychwood parish ward, which is currently in Wybunbury Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The parishes of Barthomley and Weston & Crewe Green.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 1GF1, 1GF1T, 1GFR, 1GG1, 2GA6, 2GB1		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>This proposed warding would reflect community identity and interests by bringing the whole of the parish of Weston & Crewe Green into a single Borough ward. The area is largely rural, but with two relatively large villages, Weston and Wychwood, where the population has grown in size in recent years as the result of major housing developments. The proposed ward would have at its heart the South Cheshire Growth Village (Local Plan site LPS 8), where additional housing development is expected in the years to come.</p> <p>Wychwood village is currently in Wybunbury Borough ward, but is a separate community to the Wychwood Park development to its immediate south. Wychwood village has more in common with Weston than with Wychwood Park. This is reflected in the final recommendations from the recent Community Governance Review, which resulted in Wychwood Park (previously split between the then Weston & Basford and Hough & Chorlton Parish Councils) being located entirely within Hough & Chorlton Parish Council.</p>		

	<p>Including Wychwood village in the proposed Weston Borough ward would therefore reflect local communities' identities and interests better than the existing Haslington-Wybunbury Borough ward boundary. Therefore Weston & Crewe Green Parish Council's Wychwood parish ward (polling district 1GFR, which contains Wychwood village) is included in the proposed Weston Borough ward.</p> <p>This change to the current Borough ward boundary with Wybunbury would also meet the Commission's electoral equality criterion. The proposed Weston Borough ward would have an electors per seat ratio 4% above the Borough average by 2030. By removing 1GFR from Wybunbury, but otherwise leaving that Borough ward unchanged, Wybunbury's ratio would also be 4% above the average, as opposed to 20% above otherwise.</p> <p>Barthomley is roughly equidistant from Weston village and the town of Alsager. It is in the catchment area for an Alsager primary school and the Radway Green Business Park is split between the two parishes. However, Barthomley is a very small rural community of a completely different character to Alsager and Barthomley village is on the opposite side of the M6 and A500 to the town. Barthomley has its own community centre, church and pub, which reduce its dependency on larger settlements for social activities and community ties. Therefore it fits better within the proposed Weston ward, which likewise includes some very small, dispersed communities.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>Weston is the name of one of the area's two main villages and it features in the name of the parish that would comprise most of the proposed Borough ward. The use of this name at parish council level is already well established and accepted.</p> <p>As noted above, Wychwood village is the other main settlement in the proposed ward. However, calling the ward 'Wychwood' or 'Weston & Wychwood' could potentially cause confusion, given that it would not include the Wychwood Park development. Hence the Borough Council's proposal that the ward be named simply 'Weston'.</p>

4.42 Wheelock & Winterley

Proposed ward name	Wheelock & Winterley		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	3,852	3,852	-6%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>This new ward would consist of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of polling district SAWR (all except the part containing Park Lane and the roads accessed from it) and all of polling district SAW4. Collectively these areas cover the Wheelock area of Sandbach Town Council. Polling districts SAWT and 2GE1, which make up the Winterley parish ward on Haslington Parish Council. This area includes the settlement of Wheelock Heath, as well as Winterley village itself. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The communities of Wheelock, Wheelock Heath and Winterley.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts 2GE1, SAW4, SAWR (part only), SAWT.</p> <p>The part of SAWR to be included would be all of this polling district, except for: the Park Lane part (both sides of the road); Fields Drive; Drovers Way.</p> <p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of SAWR and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled 'Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath: close-up of Park Lane area'.</p>		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	Wheelock is part of Sandbach Town Council and falls within the current Sandbach Ettiley Heath & Wheelock Borough ward, whereas Winterley and Wheelock Heath are part of Haslington Parish Council and currently within Haslington Borough ward.		

	<p>Although they fall within a different parish council and are a separate community to Wheelock, Winterley and Wheelock Heath residents tend to rely on Sandbach for key services (as do people in Wheelock), rather than going into Haslington village. Wheelock is of similar size (in population terms) to Winterley/ Wheelock Heath and the characters of these areas are similar, with a limited number of local amenities and some distinctive natural features, such as the canal network and river around Wheelock and Winterley Pool in Winterley. As such, they share common interests and similar identities and there is logic in warding them together. In addition, the road network provides easy access between Wheelock to the north and Winterley/ Wheelock Heath further south.</p> <p>Looking solely at the Commission's 'interests and identities of local communities' criterion, boundaries based on Sandbach Town Council's area would be the most appropriate solution. However, this would not achieve good electoral equality due to the town's 'fair' share of Borough ward councillors falling roughly midway between four and five councillors. Therefore electors per seat ratios within the usually-required range (10% of the Borough average) can be obtained only through having a ward that spans both part of the Sandbach Town Council area and part of an adjacent parish. The proposed Wheelock & Winterley ward is considered to be the best means of achieving that, given the similarities and connections to Sandbach that Wheelock, Wheelock Heath and Winterley have. All the other communities surrounding Sandbach are far more rural, with smaller, more dispersed populations and warding any of those areas with part of Sandbach would reflect community identity and interests far less well.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	<p>Wheelock and Winterley are the two main settlements in the proposed ward and, as noted above, are broadly similar in terms of population size. The names 'Wheelock' and 'Winterley' also appear in the names of some of the area's key natural features, namely the River Wheelock and Winterley Pool. Including both settlement names in the ward's name therefore reflects their dual importance and provides clarity as to the extent of the geographical area covered. This is particularly important, given that the ward would span two parishes (Sandbach and Haslington) and two parliamentary constituencies.</p>

4.43 Wilmslow East & Dean Row

Proposed ward name	Wilmslow East & Dean Row		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,484	4,242	+3%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> polling district 8EE1 from the current Handforth Borough ward. the current Wilmslow Dean Row Borough ward. part of 8FC1 from the current Wilmslow West & Chorley Borough ward. <p>Transfer (removal) of 8FA1 to the proposed Wilmslow West Borough ward.</p>		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The eastern and town centre areas of Wilmslow		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts 8EB1, 8EC1, 8ED1, 8EE1, 8FC1 (part only), 8FE1, 8FF1.</p> <p>The part of 8FC1 to be included would be: Grove Avenue/ Grove Way; and the part of the polling district bounded by Water Lane to the north and Hawthorn Street/ Bedells Lane to the west.</p> <p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of 8FC1 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled 'Wilmslow East & Dean Row: close-up of town centre area'.</p>		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The current, single-Member Wilmslow East Borough ward is forecast to have a relatively low electors per seat ratio by 2030 (14% below average).</p> <p>The proposed changes would result in a ratio much closer to the Borough average.</p> <p>They would also better reflect community identity and interests and enable more effective and convenient local government than the current warding:</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As noted in the section on Handforth, the proposed warding in this part of the Borough would bring the Colshaw Farm estate into a Wilmslow Borough ward, the proposed Wilmslow East & Dean Row. The Colshaw Farm area, which comprises most of 8EE1, is the most deprived community in Wilmslow or Handforth, ranking (according to the Government's 2019 English Indices of Deprivation) among the 'top' 20% in England for overall deprivation. There is no road access from this estate into Handforth and Colshaw Farm residents identify as being part of Wilmslow. The proposed boundary change involving part of 8FC1 would largely concentrate the town centre area and its commercial and retail premises within a single ward (Wilmslow East & Dean Row). <p>As such, issues relating to Colshaw Farm or the town centre could be readily addressed by councillors from a single ward, rather than having to involve those representing other wards.</p> <p>The transfer of 8FA1 (the Fulshaw Park area west of Alderley Road) to the proposed Wilmslow West Borough ward helps ensure electoral equality (similar ratios) for that ward and Wilmslow East & Dean Row, but without an adverse impact on community identity and interests. Alderley Road provides a clear boundary between the proposed Wilmslow East & Dean Row ward and the proposed Wilmslow West ward in this location.</p> <p>In the northern part of the proposed Wilmslow East & Dean Row ward, the railway line would provide a clear western boundary. To the south of the River Bollin, the railway line is still a physical barrier, but there are multiple road and pedestrian crossing points that allow access between the southeastern (8FF1) and southwestern (8FE1) parts of the proposed ward.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The name provides clarity as to the geographical area of Wilmslow covered by the proposed ward, as well as respecting Dean Row's distinct and well-established identity.

4.44 Wilmslow Lacey Green

Proposed ward name	Wilmslow Lacey Green		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	3,758	3,758	-9%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition of polling district 8EA1 (part of the Finney Green area of Wilmslow) from the current Handforth Borough ward.</p> <p>Transfer (removal) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Fairways estate (polling district 8FKT), which is Local Plan site LPS 34, from the current Wilmslow Lacey Green Borough ward. the parish of Styal (8FK1). 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The Lacey Green and Finney Green areas of Wilmslow		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 8EA1, 8EK1, 8EKC		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The proposed changes would reflect community identity and interests much better than the current warding. The changes would, as noted in the section on Handforth's proposed warding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend Handforth Borough westwards, to include the new Fairways development. This new estate was developed to meet Handforth's housing needs and Fairways is very close to and well connected by road to the many shops and other services in the centre of Handforth. There is no direct road link from Fairways into Wilmslow, other than via Handforth. Place 8EA1 in the same Wilmslow ward as the rest of Finney Green. The adjacent part of Handforth Town Council consists of Deanway Business Park and this, together with the railway line to the east of 8EA1 and the natural boundary of the River Dean, mean that residents of 8EA1 have limited connections to the nearest residential areas of Handforth. 		

	The section on the proposed Handforth ward also sets out the rationale for warding the parish of Styal with Handforth, rather than with Wilmslow Lacey Green.
Rationale for the proposed name	The name reflects the geographical area of Wilmslow covered by the ward and it is a well-established and accepted ward name locally.

4.45 Wilmslow West

Proposed ward name	Wilmslow West		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,450	4,225	+3%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition of polling district 8FA1, from the current Wilmslow East Borough ward.</p> <p>Transfer (removal) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the parish of Chorley (3DD1) to the proposed Alderley Edge Borough ward. part of 8FC1 to the proposed Wilmslow East & Dean Row Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The western part of Wilmslow		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts 8FA1, 8FB1, 8FBR, 8FC1 (part only), 8FG1, 8FH1, 8FHR, 8FJ1.</p> <p>The part of 8FC1 to be included would be all of this polling district, except for: Grove Avenue/ Grove Way; and the part of the polling district bounded by Water Lane to the north and Hawthorn Street/ Bedells Lane to the west.</p> <p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of 8FC1 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled 'Wilmslow East & Dean Row: close-up of town centre area'.</p>		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The proposed changes would better reflect local communities' identities and interests, while ensuring that the redrawn ward would still have an electors per seat ratio close to the Borough average.</p> <p>As noted in the sections on the warding proposals for Alderley Edge and Wilmslow East & Dean Row:</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chorley does not identify with or have significant ties to Wilmslow (with part of which it is currently warded). • Chorley is geographically very close to Alderley Edge (the two were previously warded together) and is well connected to it by road, making its larger neighbour an important centre for many key services and amenities. • The proposed boundary change involving part of 8FC1 would largely concentrate the town centre area and its commercial and retail premises within a single ward (Wilmslow East & Dean Row). • The transfer of 8FA1 (the Fulshaw Park area west of Alderley Road) to the proposed Wilmslow West Borough ward helps ensure electoral equality (similar ratios) for that ward and Wilmslow East & Dean Row, but without an adverse impact on community identity and interests. Alderley Road provides a clear boundary between the proposed Wilmslow East & Dean Row ward and the proposed Wilmslow West ward in this location.
Rationale for the proposed name	The name reflects the geographical area of Wilmslow covered by the ward and it is a well-established and accepted ward name locally.

4.46 Wistaston

Proposed ward name	Wistaston		
Proposed number of seats	2		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	8,553	4,277	+4%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition of polling districts 1FD1, 1FDC and 1FDR (which collectively cover almost all of Willaston village), from the current Willaston & Rope Borough ward.</p> <p>Transfer (removal) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The parish of Woolstanwood (1FJ1) to the proposed Leighton Borough ward. Part of 1FE2 to one of the proposed wards covering the Rope and Shavington area. (The warding arrangements for Rope and Shavington have yet to be agreed.) 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The settlements of Wistaston and Willaston		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	<p>Polling districts 1FD1, 1FD2, 1FDC, 1FDR, 1FE2 (part only), 1FF1, 1FFR, 1FG1, 1FG2.</p> <p>The part of 1FE2 to be included would be: numbers 156 to 160 Wistaston Road; numbers 314-348 on the even (east) side of Crewe Road; the properties in Holly Place and Gerard Gardens that fall within 1FE2; and numbers 351/ 351a to 421 on the odd (west) side of Crewe Road.</p> <p>A map showing a close-up of the proposed division of 1FE2 and the resulting boundary line can be found in Appendix A ('Maps of the proposed wards'), the separate document accompanying this main report. This map is the one titled 'Wistaston: close-up of Wistaston Road area'.</p>		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>Although currently warded with Wistaston, there are few ties between the parish of Wistaston and the parish of Woolstanwood. In addition, Woolstanwood is part of Leighton, Minhsull Vernon & Woolstanwood Parish Council and (as noted in the section on warding for Leighton) the recent Community Governance Review revealed extensive evidence that Woolstanwood residents</p>		

	<p>identify with the other parishes in their parish council. Therefore the proposed warding includes Woolstanwood with Leighton, not with Wistaston.</p> <p>The rationale for dividing 1FE2 and including only a small southwestern segment of it in the proposed Wistaston ward is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1FE2 consists largely of a housing estate (Laidon Avenue/ Berkeley Crescent and roads off these) that spans the parishes of Wistaston, Rope and Shavington (specifically Shavington cum Gresty Parish Council's Gresty Brook parish ward). The entire estate falls within the same primary school catchment (for Berkeley Primary School), as do the Rope Lane and Springfield Drive (Wells Green) areas of 1FE2. People on the estate also share the same medical practice. • As the estate is part of the same community, it is proposed that all of 1FE2 be warded with Rope and Shavington, except for the small southern 'loop' of that polling district (south of the Crewe Road/ Church Lane junction) that forms part of Willaston village. <p>The proposed warding would also reflect local communities' identities and interests by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • placing the whole of the parish of Shavington cum Gresty in a single Borough ward. • placing Shavington High School within Shavington Borough ward. • placing the whole of Willaston village in the same Borough ward (currently, Holly Place and Gerard Gardens are split between two Borough wards).
Rationale for the proposed name	The name reflects the main settlement covered by the ward and it is a well-established and accepted ward name locally.

4.47 Wrenbury

Proposed ward name	Wrenbury		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,026	4,026	-2%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	<p>Addition of Burland & Acton Parish Council's Acton & Henhull parish ward (polling districts 3FA5 & 3FA7), from the current Bunbury Borough ward.</p> <p>Transfer (removal) of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3FAT (the Malbank Waters housing development), to the proposed Nantwich North & West Borough ward • the parishes of Houghton and Spurstow, to the proposed Bunbury Borough ward. 		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The following parishes: Baddiley; Bickerton; Brindley; Bulkeley & Ridley; Burland & Acton; Cholmondeley; Chorley (near Wrenbury); Egerton; Faddiley; Marbury & District; Peckforton; Wrenbury.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 3EC1, 3EC2, 3EC8, 3EE1, 3EET, 3EG1, 3EK6, 3EK7, 3EM6, 3EO6, 3EQ1, 3ER6, 3ER8, 3ER9, 3ET1, 3FA5, 3FA6, 3FA7, 3FH8, 3FHT		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>The proposed change involving 3FAT would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect local communities' interests and identities by aligning the Borough ward boundary between Wrenbury and the Nantwich Borough wards with the post-Community Governance Review (CGR) boundaries between Nantwich Town Council and Burland & Acton Parish Council, and bring the Malbank Waters development within the Borough ward that contains the adjacent part of the town of Nantwich. This development was intended to meet Nantwich's housing needs and residents of the new properties are relatively dependent on the town for key services and amenities. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> greatly reduce the ward's electors per seat ratio. This change alone would reduce the 2030 ratio from 19% above average to 2% above. <p>The other proposed changes would also reflect local communities' identities and interests by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflecting Haughton's and Spurstow's ties to Bunbury. The two settlements are geographically close to Bunbury, with a direct road link. A small part of Bunbury village is actually on the Spurstow side of the parish boundary. Both Haughton and Spurstow are in the catchment for Bunbury Aldersey Church of England Primary School. Bunbury is also the nearest settlement to Haughton and Spurstow for key services and amenities such as a GP surgery, convenience store and community centre. placing the whole of Burland & Acton parish within Wrenbury Borough ward. The parish is currently divided between Bunbury and Wrenbury Borough wards, despite the evidence from the CGR of ties between its two main settlements: Burland (currently in Wrenbury) and Acton (currently in Bunbury). <p>The net impact of all the boundary change proposals is to bring Wrenbury's electors per seat ratio down to slightly (2%) below the Borough average.</p> <p>There are good reasons for keeping Bickerton & Egerton, Bulkeley & Ridley and Cholmondeley & Chorley parish councils and their respective parishes warded together in Wrenbury Borough (as they are currently):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bulkeley & Ridley and Cholmondeley & Chorley are in the catchment for Bickerton Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School. The responses to the consultation on the Council's CGR draft recommendations provided evidence that Bulkeley & Ridley relies on Bickerton's village hall and church for many social and recreational activities and religious worship (and mentioned the dependence on Bickerton's school). <p>In addition, there are sounds reasons for keeping Wrenbury Borough ward's other existing parishes within the ward:</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For parishes such as Chorley, Baddiley and Marbury & District, Wrenbury is the nearest settlement in the Borough with a Post Office, GP surgery and convenience store – and Marbury & District is in the catchment for Wrenbury Primary School. • Burland, Brindley and Faddiley are relatively close to each other and well connected via the A534. <p>Peckforton's ties to the rest of the proposed ward (or to Spurstow in the adjacent part of the proposed Bunbury ward) are less strong: residents are largely concentrated in the village itself and the CGR consultation responses highlighted the fact that it has a different character and faces different issues to some of the adjacent parishes. Peckforton's village hall is shared with Beeston in Cheshire West & Cheshire and so to some extent its links are outside Cheshire East. Warding Peckforton with Bunbury would give Bunbury a ratio above the Borough average. Keeping Peckforton as part of the Wrenbury Borough, however, as the Borough Council proposes, would give both Bunbury and Wrenbury ratios below the Borough average, achieving a better balance of the workload arising from those two wards' very large rural areas.</p>
Rationale for the proposed name	The name reflects the main settlement covered by the ward and it is a well-established and accepted ward name locally.

4.48 Wybunbury

Proposed ward name	Wybunbury		
Proposed number of seats	1		
Electoral statistics (for 2030)	Electors	Electors per seat ratio	Ratio's variance from Borough average
	4,282	4,282	+4%
Summary of any changes proposed to the current (pre-Review) ward boundary	Transfer (removal) of Weston & Crewe Green Parish Council's Wychwood parish ward (polling district 1GFR) to the proposed Weston Borough ward.		
Summary of area covered by proposed ward	The following parishes: The following parishes: Doddington & District; Hatherton; Hough & Chorlton; Walgherton; Wybunbury.		
Details of area covered by proposed ward	Polling districts 1GFT, 1GG2, 1GG3, 1GH6, 1GH7, 1GH8, 1GJ6, 1GJ7, 1GJ8, 1GL6, 1GN1, 1GN6		
Rationale for the proposed boundary and for any changes to current warding	<p>As noted in the section on the proposed Weston Borough ward, Wychwood village (the settlement that makes up Wychwood parish ward) is currently in Wybunbury Borough ward, but is a separate community to the Wychwood Park development to its immediate south. Wychwood village has more in common with Weston than with Wychwood Park. Including Wychwood village in the proposed Weston Borough ward would therefore reflect local communities' identities and interests better.</p> <p>This change would also address the problem of Wybunbury Borough having a very high electors per seat ratio. The current Borough ward is forecast to have a ratio 20% above the average by 2030, but removing the Wychwood parish ward, as proposed, would make this ratio only 4% above average.</p> <p>This proposed change would leave Wybunbury Borough ward consisting of four parish councils: Wybunbury, Hough & Chorlton, Hatherton & Walgherton and Doddington & District. These parish councils have a number of community ties to each other, meaning that the proposed ward would reflect local communities' identities and interests:</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The four parishes have a recent history of working together, notably on the Wybunbury Combined Parishes Neighbourhood Plan. • The main settlements in Hatherton and Walgherton fall within the Wybunbury Delves Church of England Primary School catchment, as does the northern half of Doddington & District. • For some of these settlements, such as Hatherton & Walgherton, Wybunbury is the nearest location with a convenience store, a place of worship or a play area.
Rationale for the proposed name	The name reflects the main settlement covered by the ward and it is a well-established and accepted ward name locally.

Cheshire East Council Electoral Review 2023-24: Warding Proposal Report

Appendix A: Maps of the proposed wards

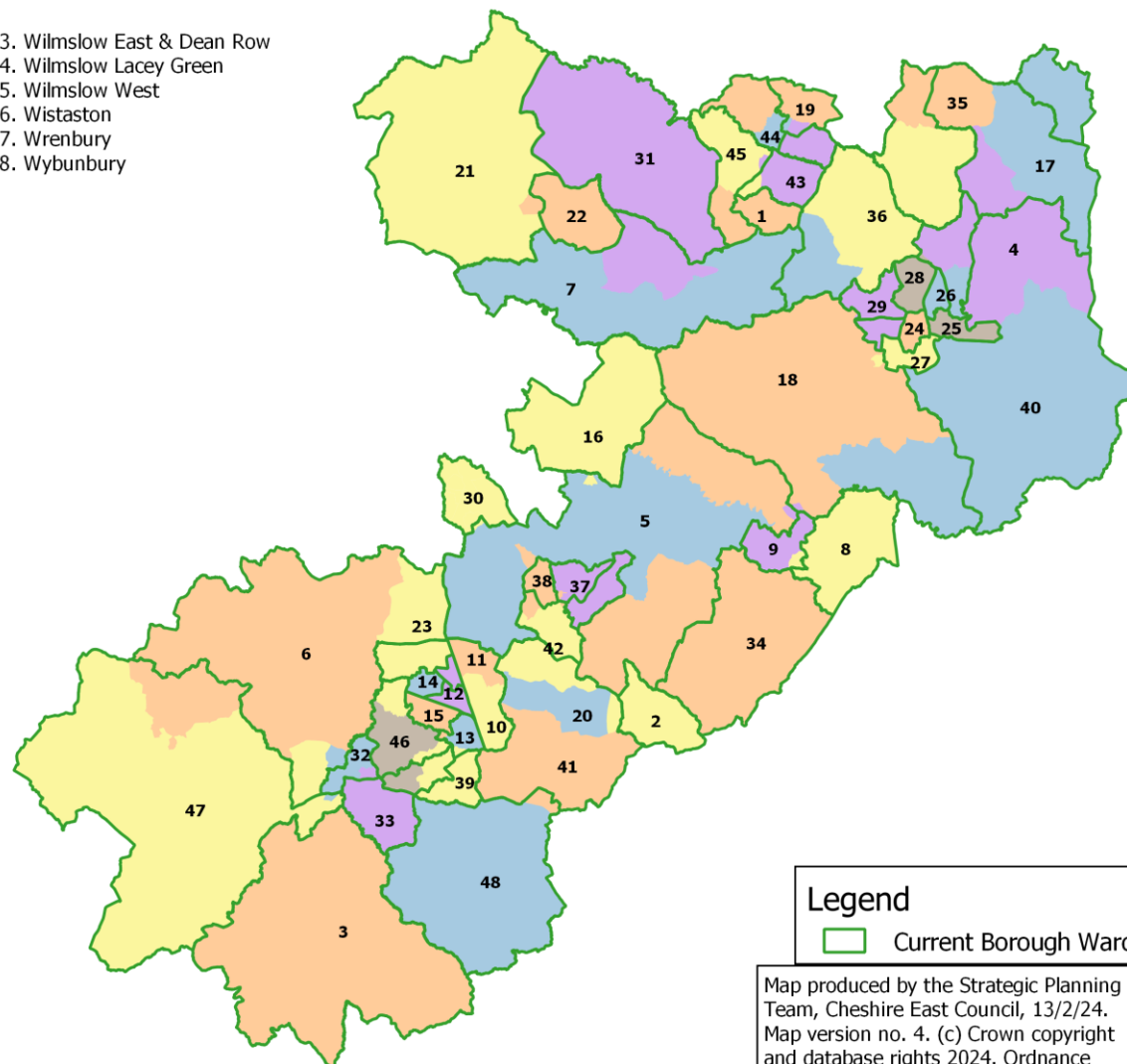
Document version no. 4 (18 February 2024)

Overview Map

Cheshire East: Proposed Borough Wards

MAP GUIDE

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| 2. Alsager | 44. Wilmslow Lacey Green |
| 3. Audlem | 45. Wilmslow West |
| 4. Bollington & Rainow | 46. Wistaston |
| 5. Brereton | 47. Wrenbury |
| 6. Bunbury | 48. Wyburnbury |
| 7. Chelford | |
| 8. Congleton East | |
| 9. Congleton West | |
| 10. Crewe East | |
| 11. Crewe Maw Green | |
| 12. Crewe North | |
| 13. Crewe South | |
| 14. Crewe St Barnabas | |
| 15. Crewe West | |
| 16. Dane Valley | |
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| 28. Macclesfield Tytherington | |
| 29. Macclesfield West | |
| 30. Middlewich | |
| 31. Mobberley | |
| 32. Nantwich North & West | |
| 33. Nantwich South & Stapeley | |
| 34. Odd Rode | |
| 35. Poynton | |
| 36. Prestbury | |
| 37. Sandbach East & Central | |
| 38. Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath | |
| 39. Shavington | |
| 40. Sutton | |
| 41. Weston | |
| 42. Wheelock & Winterley | |



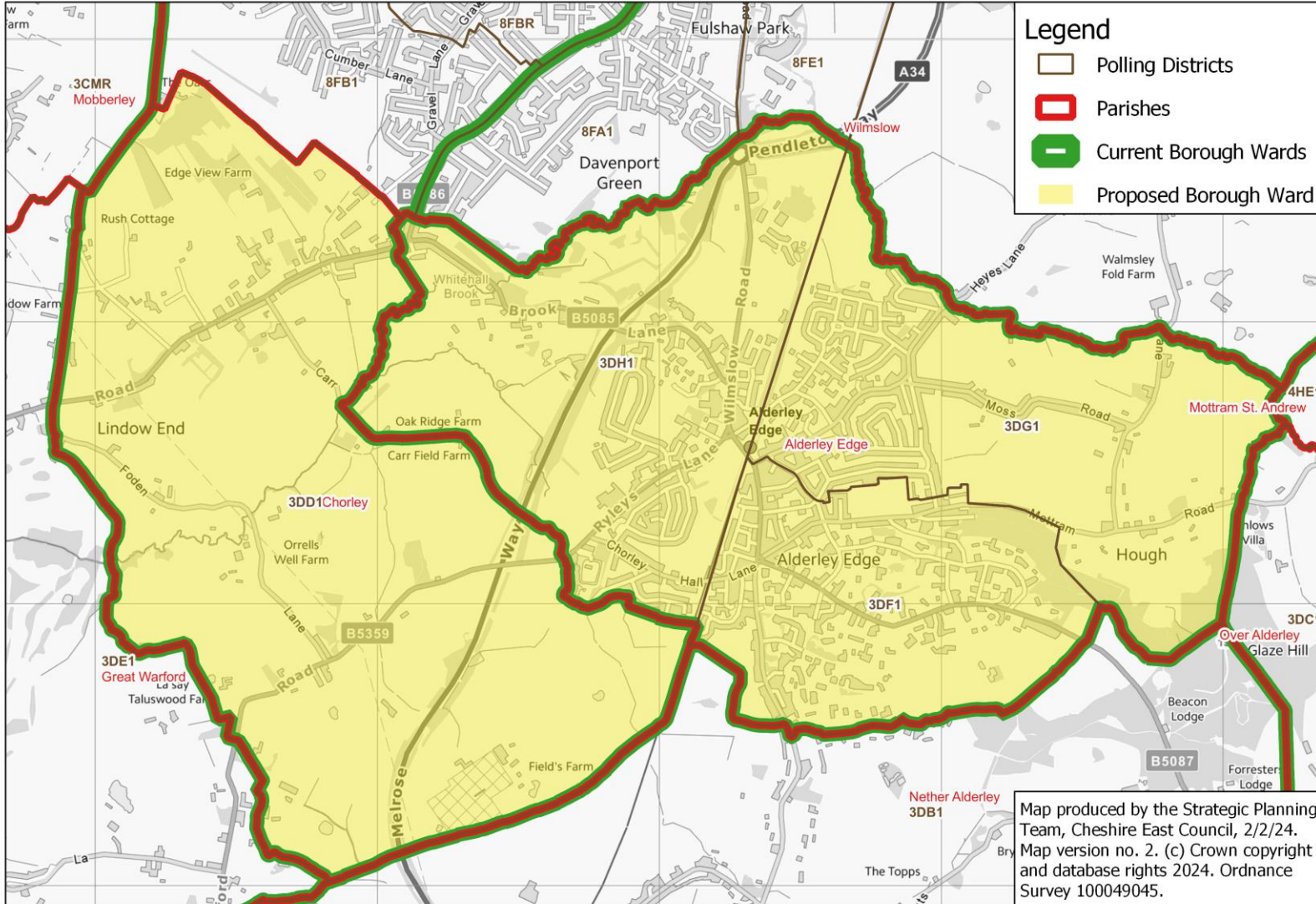
Legend

Current Borough Wards

Map produced by the Strategic Planning Team, Cheshire East Council, 13/2/24.
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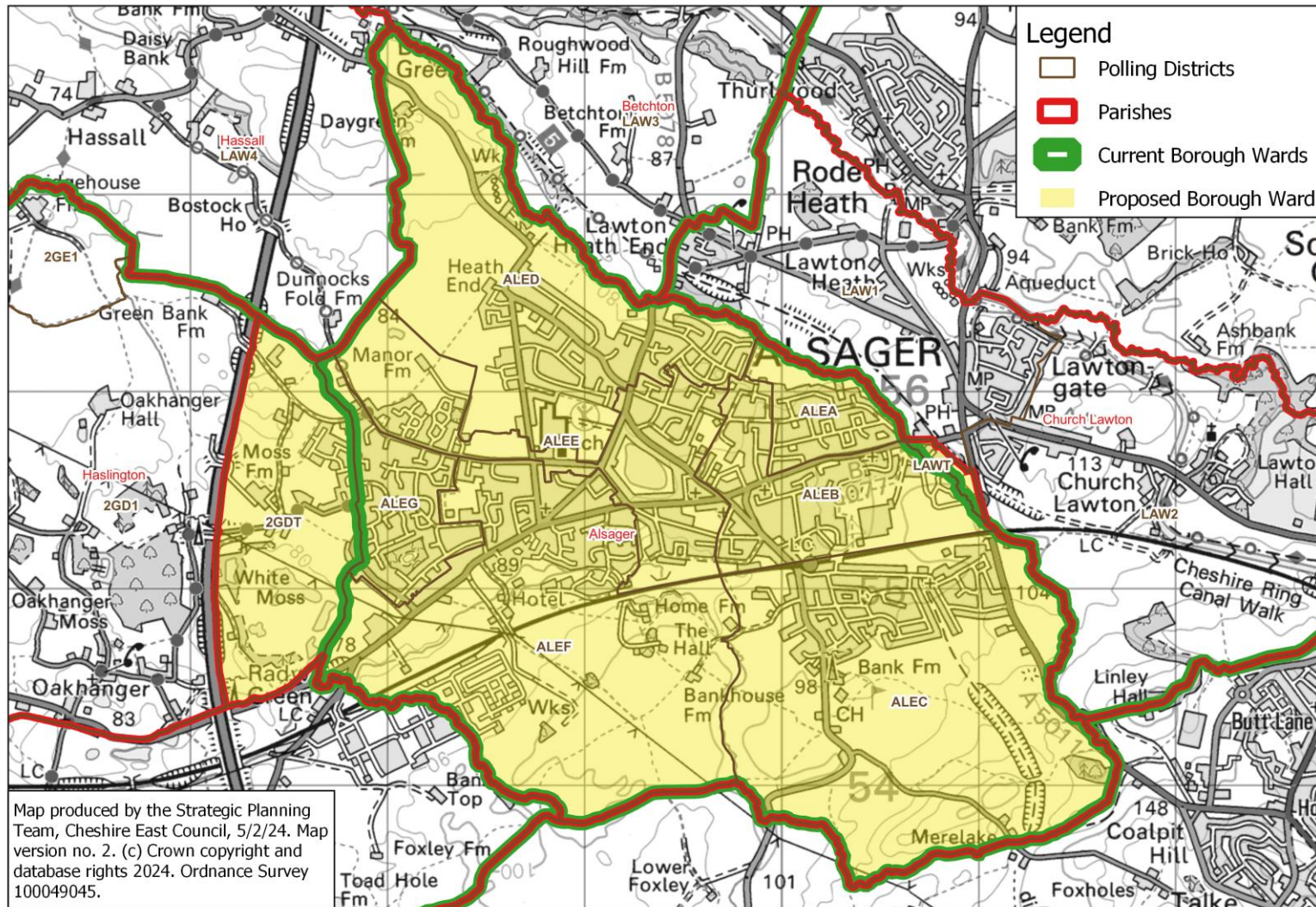
Alderley Edge

Proposed Borough Ward: Alderley Edge



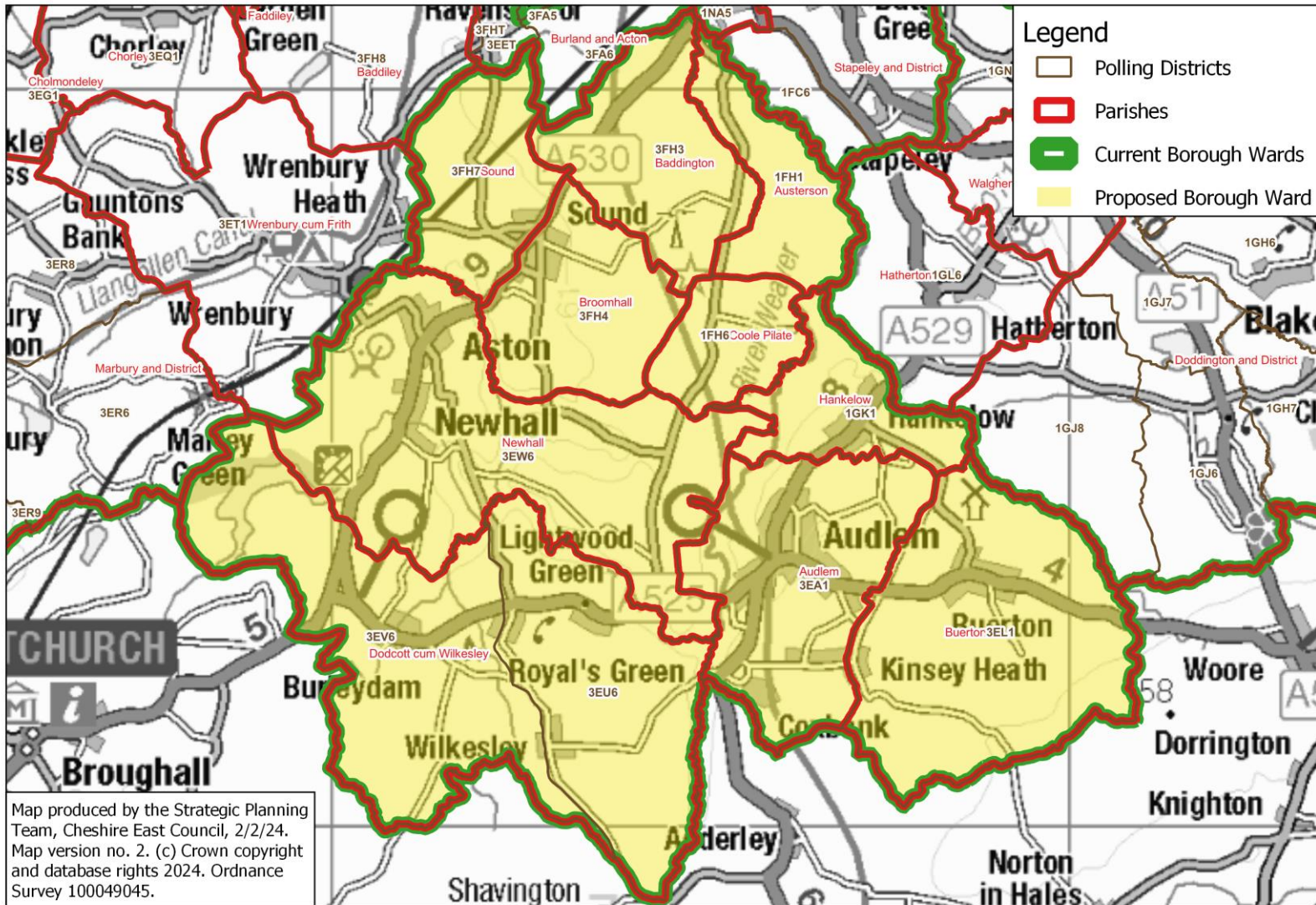
Alsager

Proposed Borough Ward: Alsager



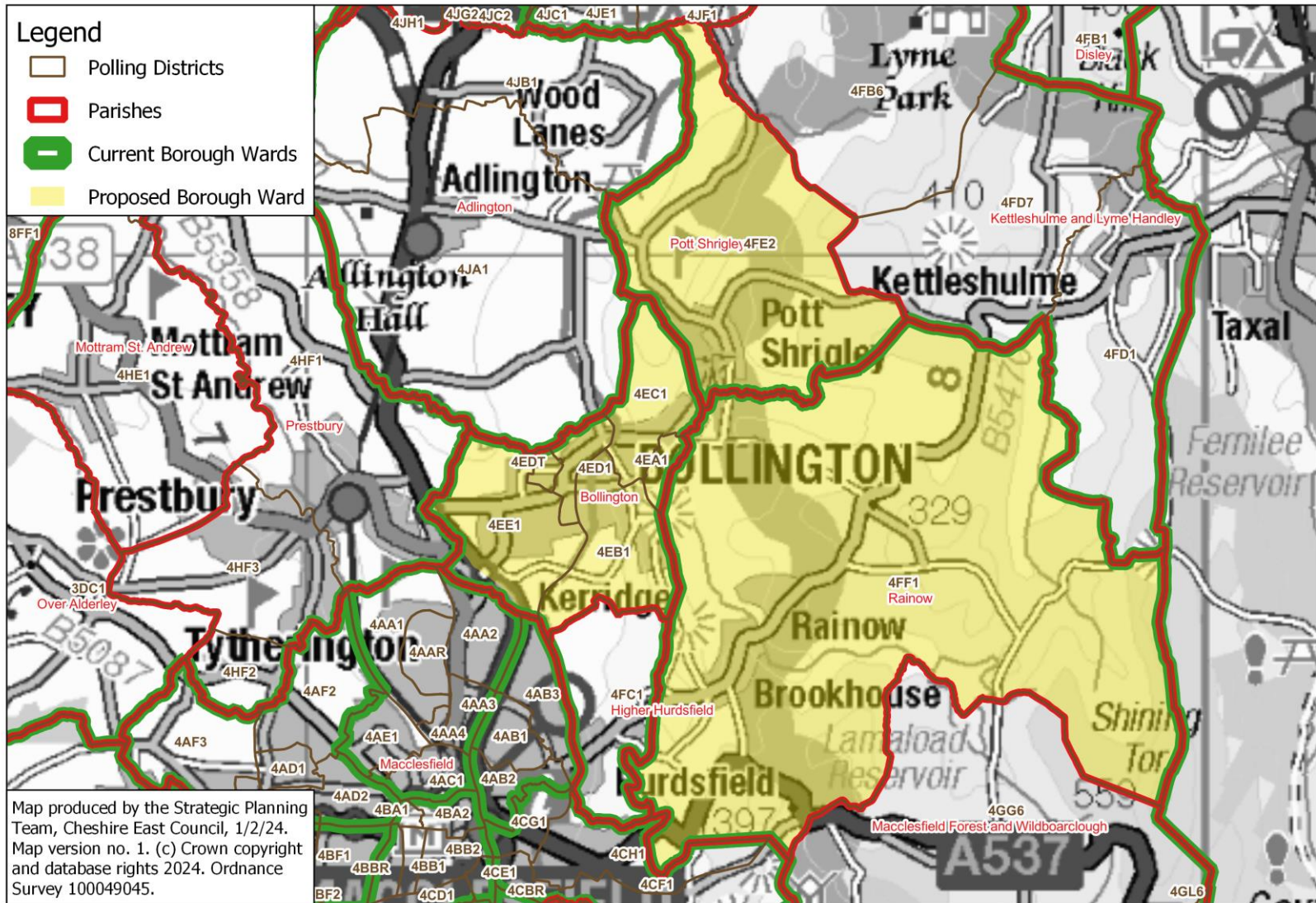
Audlem

Proposed Borough Ward: Audlem



Bollington & Rainow

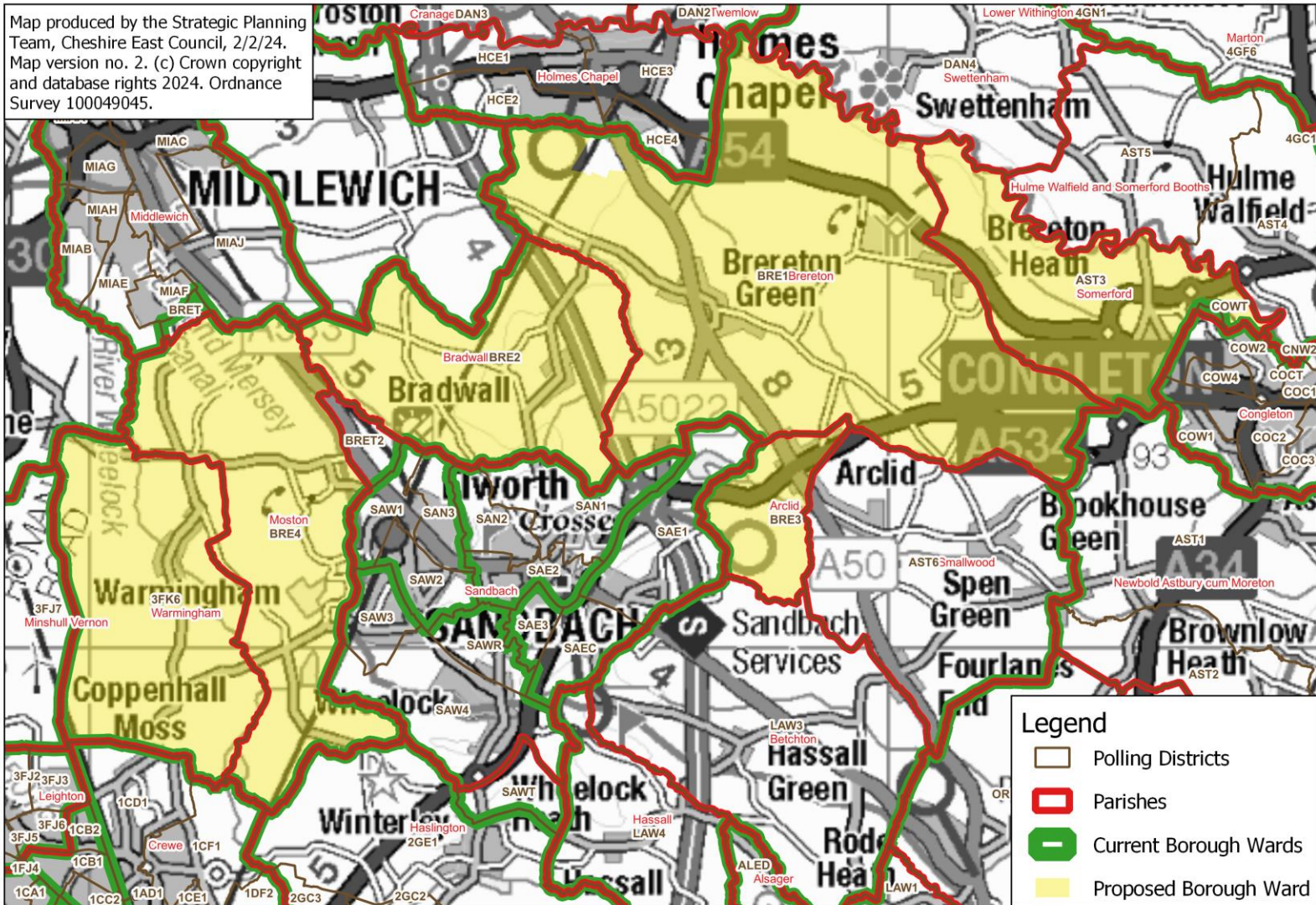
Proposed Borough Ward: Bollington & Rainow



Brereton

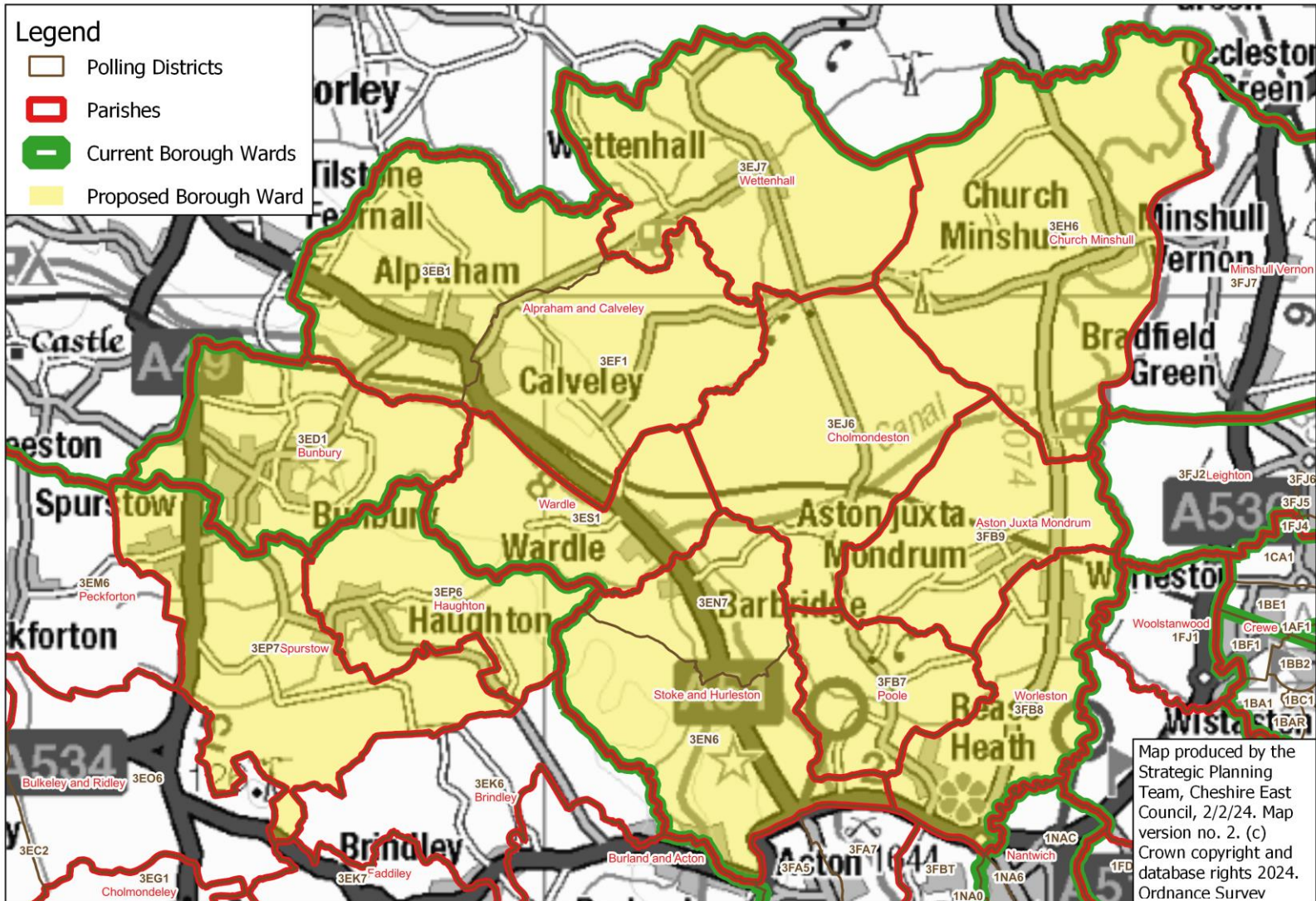
Proposed Borough Ward: Brereton

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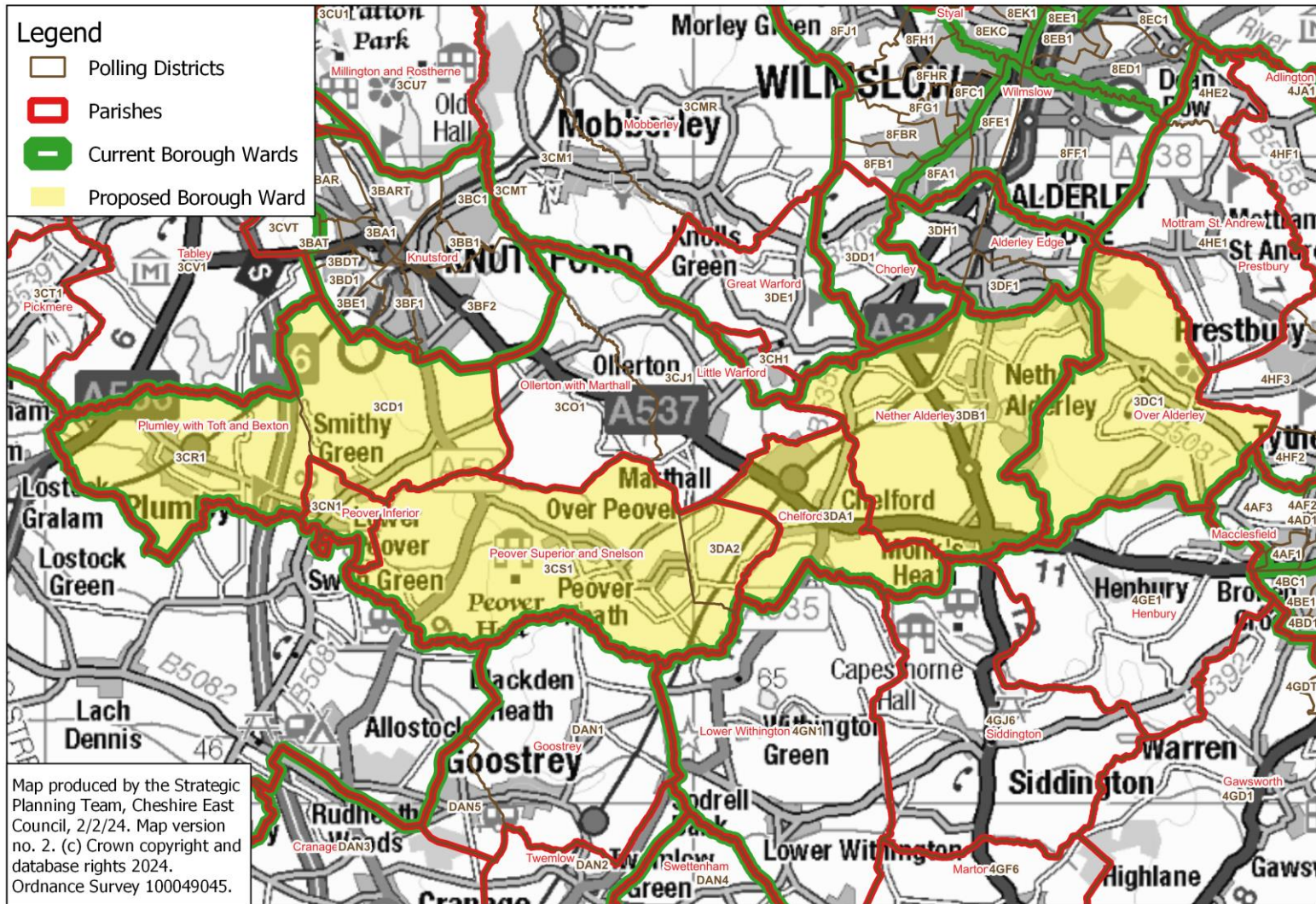
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Proposed Borough Ward: Bunbury



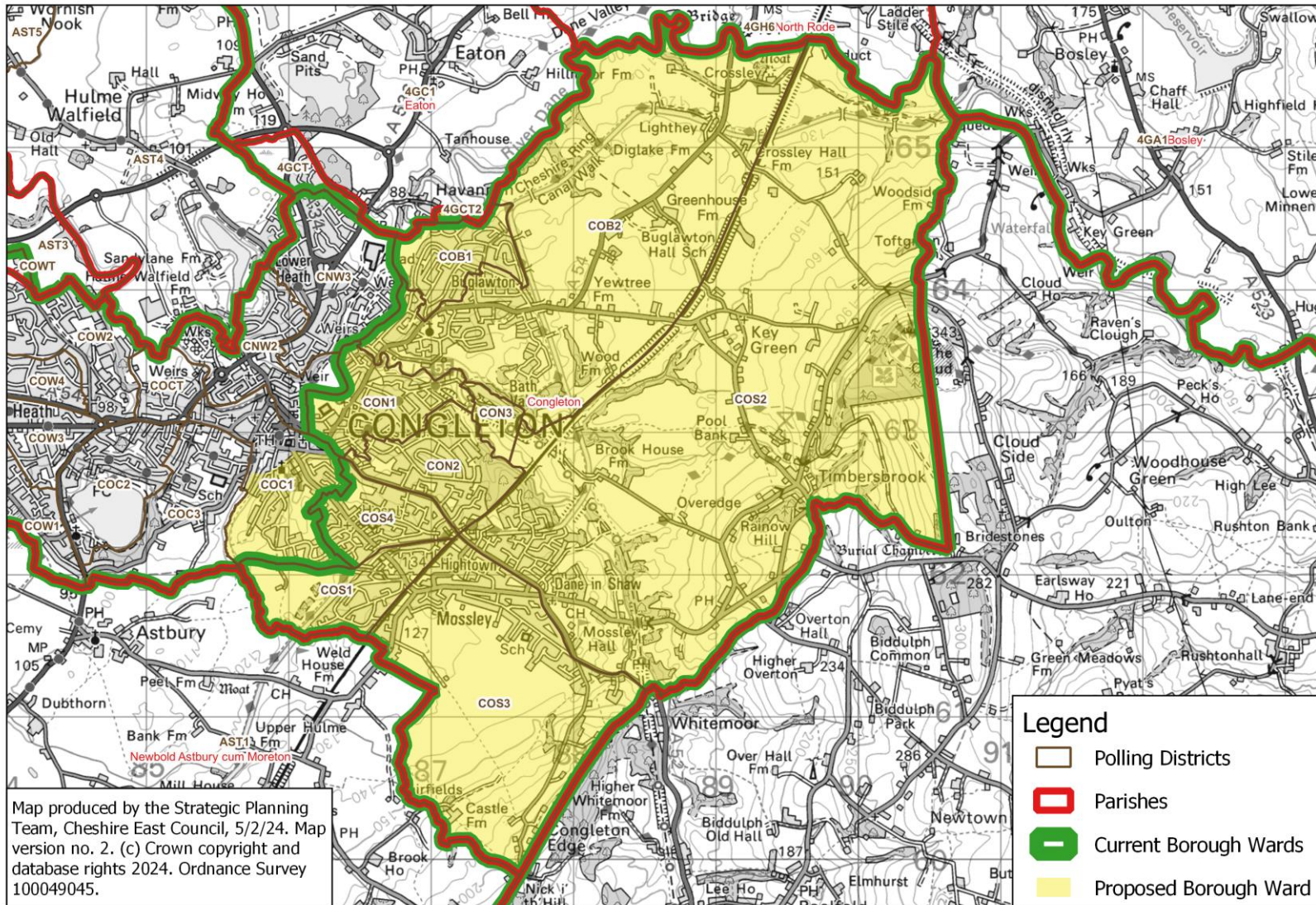
Chelford

Proposed Borough Ward: Chelford



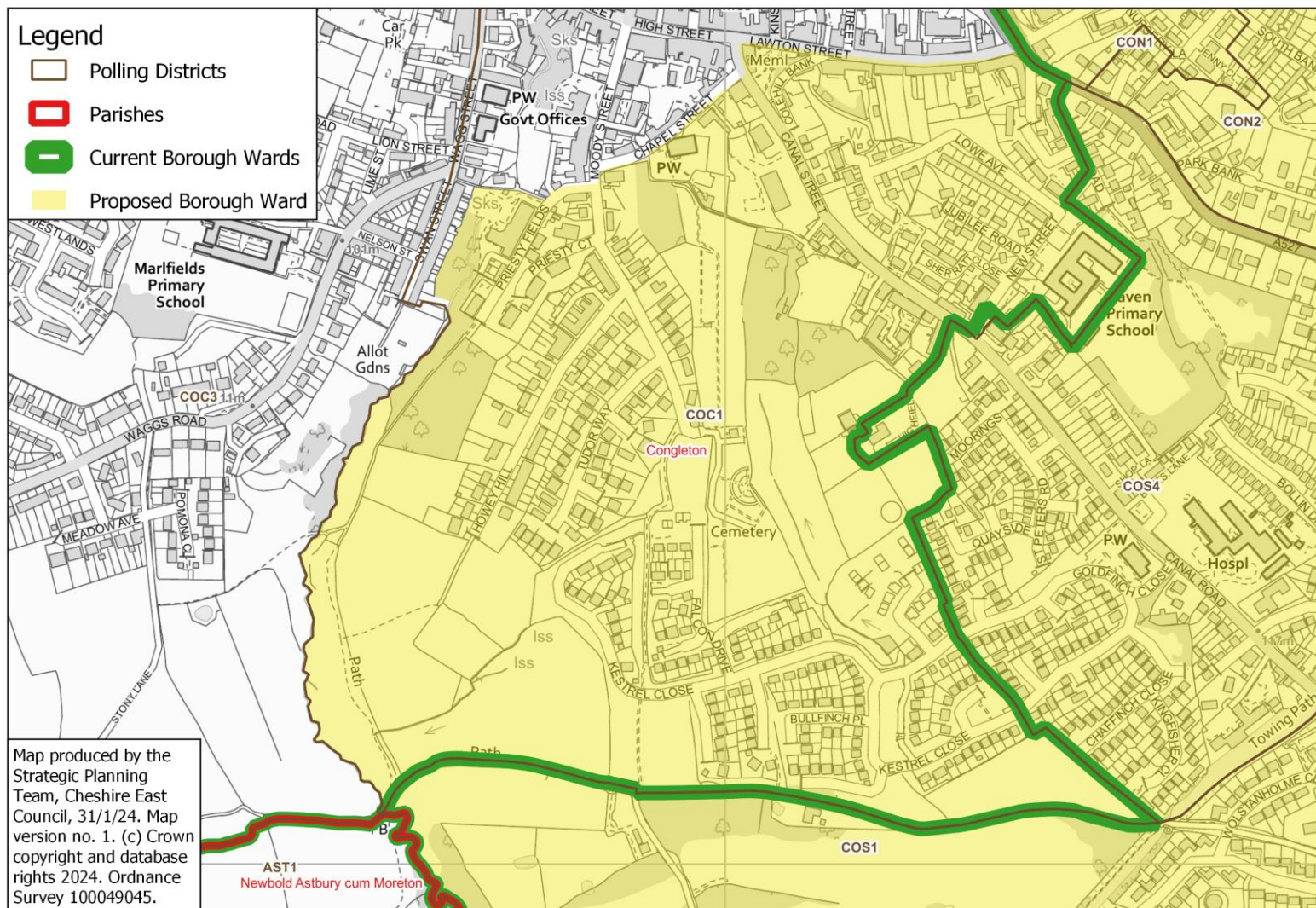
Congleton East

Proposed Borough Ward: Congleton East



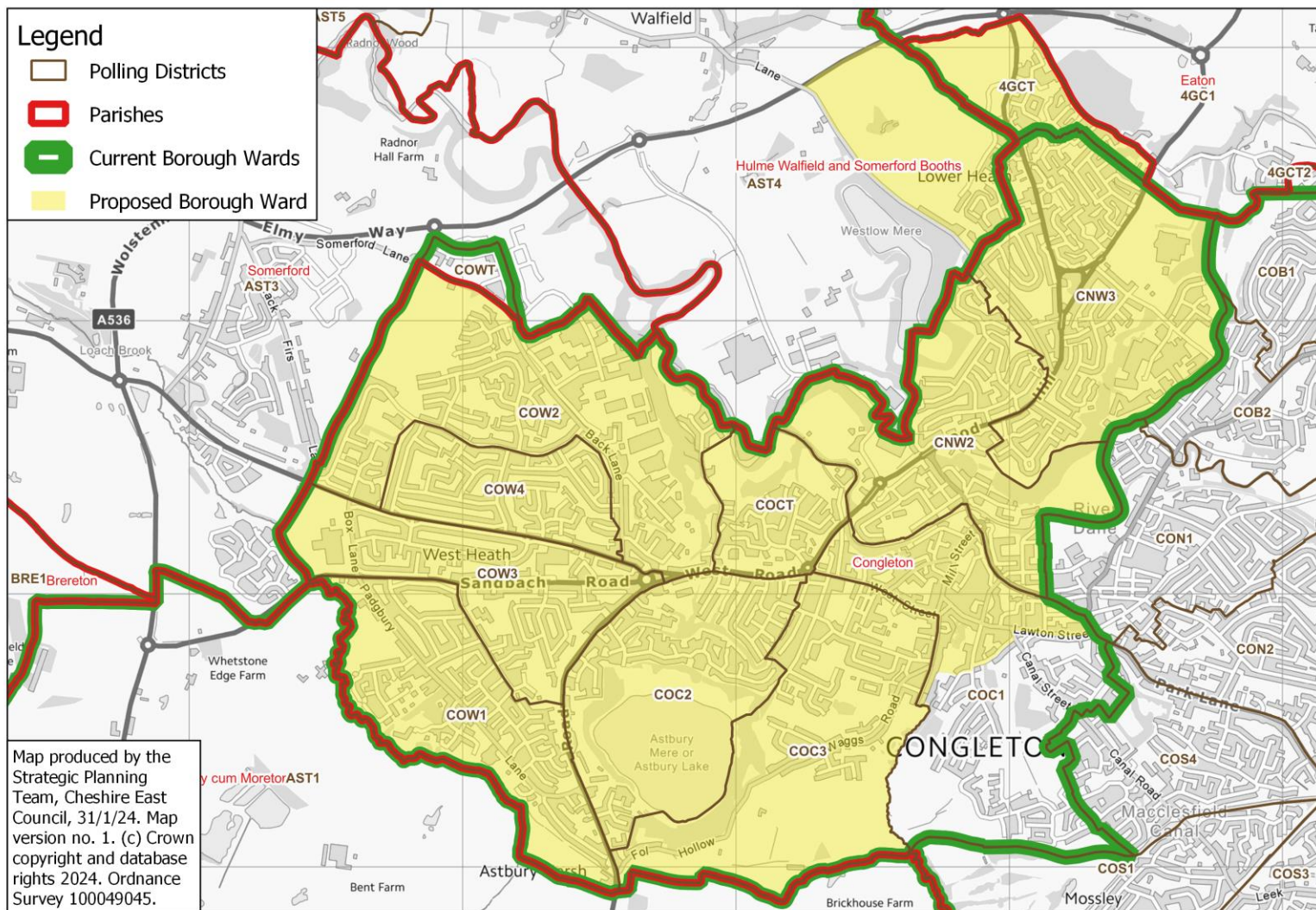
Congleton East: close-up of Canal Street/ Kestrel Close area

Proposed Borough Ward: Congleton East - close-up of area of COC1 to be included



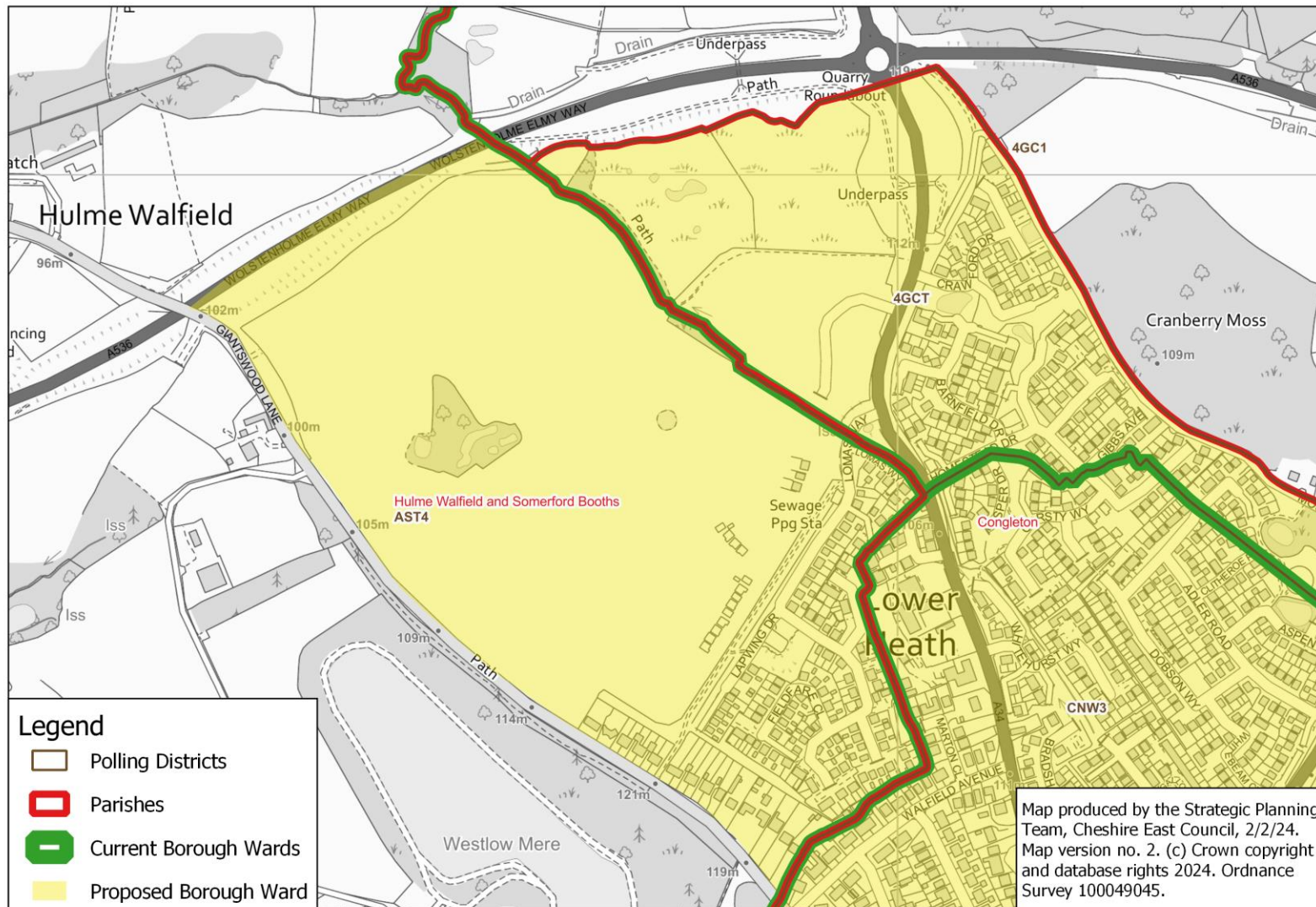
Congleton West

Proposed Borough Ward: Congleton West



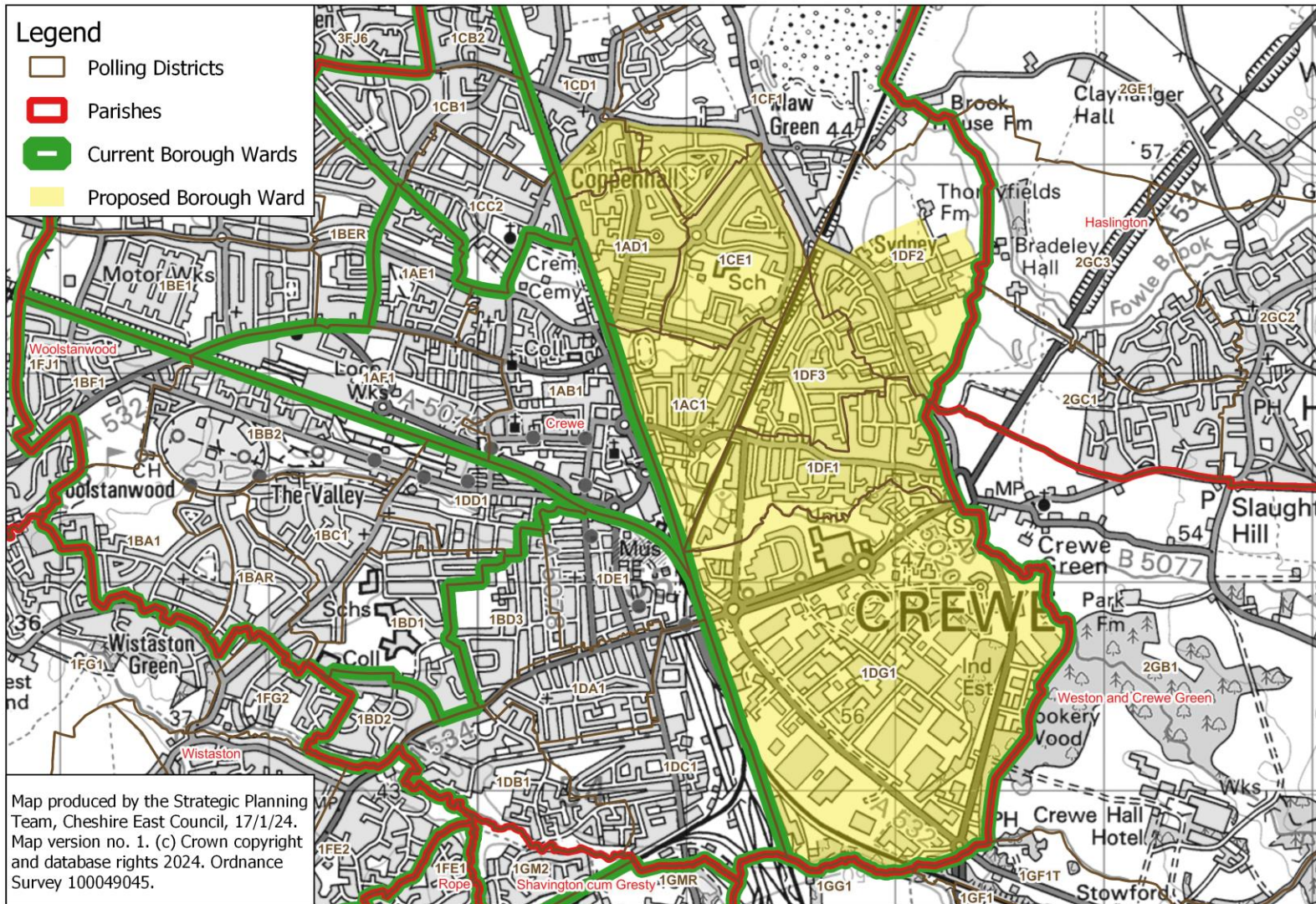
Congleton West: close-up of Link Road area

Proposed Borough Ward: Congleton West - close-up of area of AST4 to be included



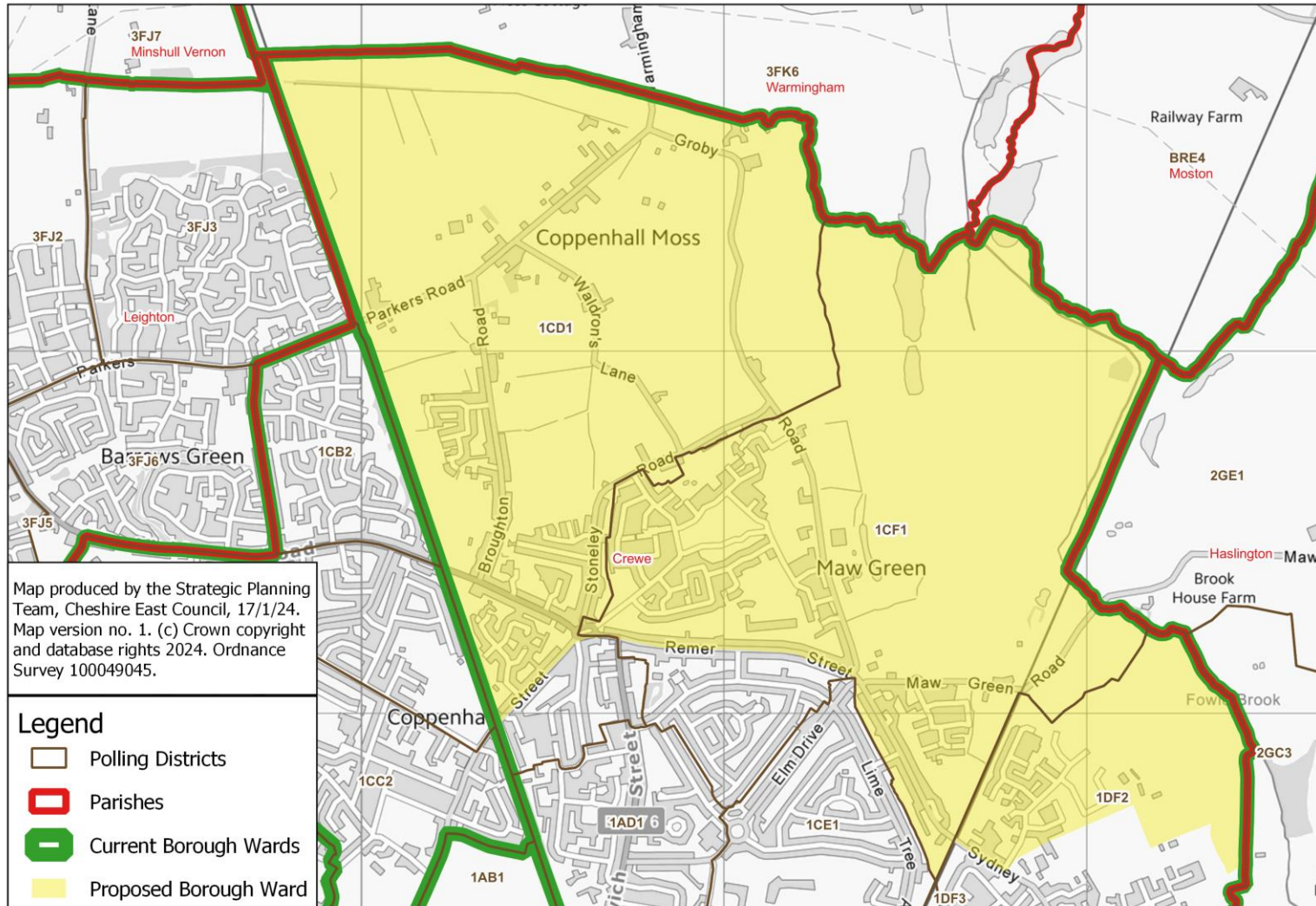
Crewe East

Proposed Borough Ward: Crewe East



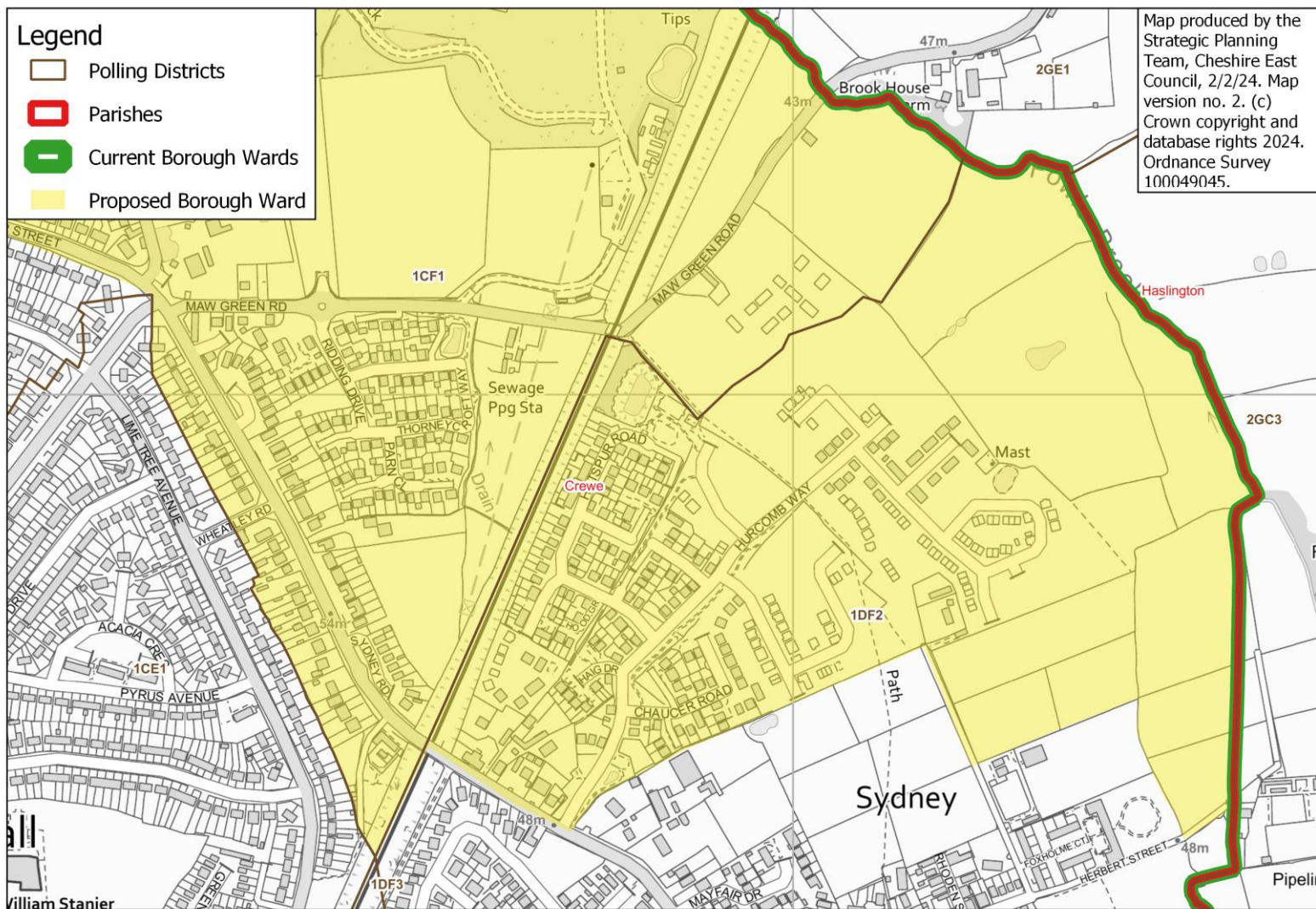
Crewe Maw Green

Proposed Borough Ward: Crewe Maw Green



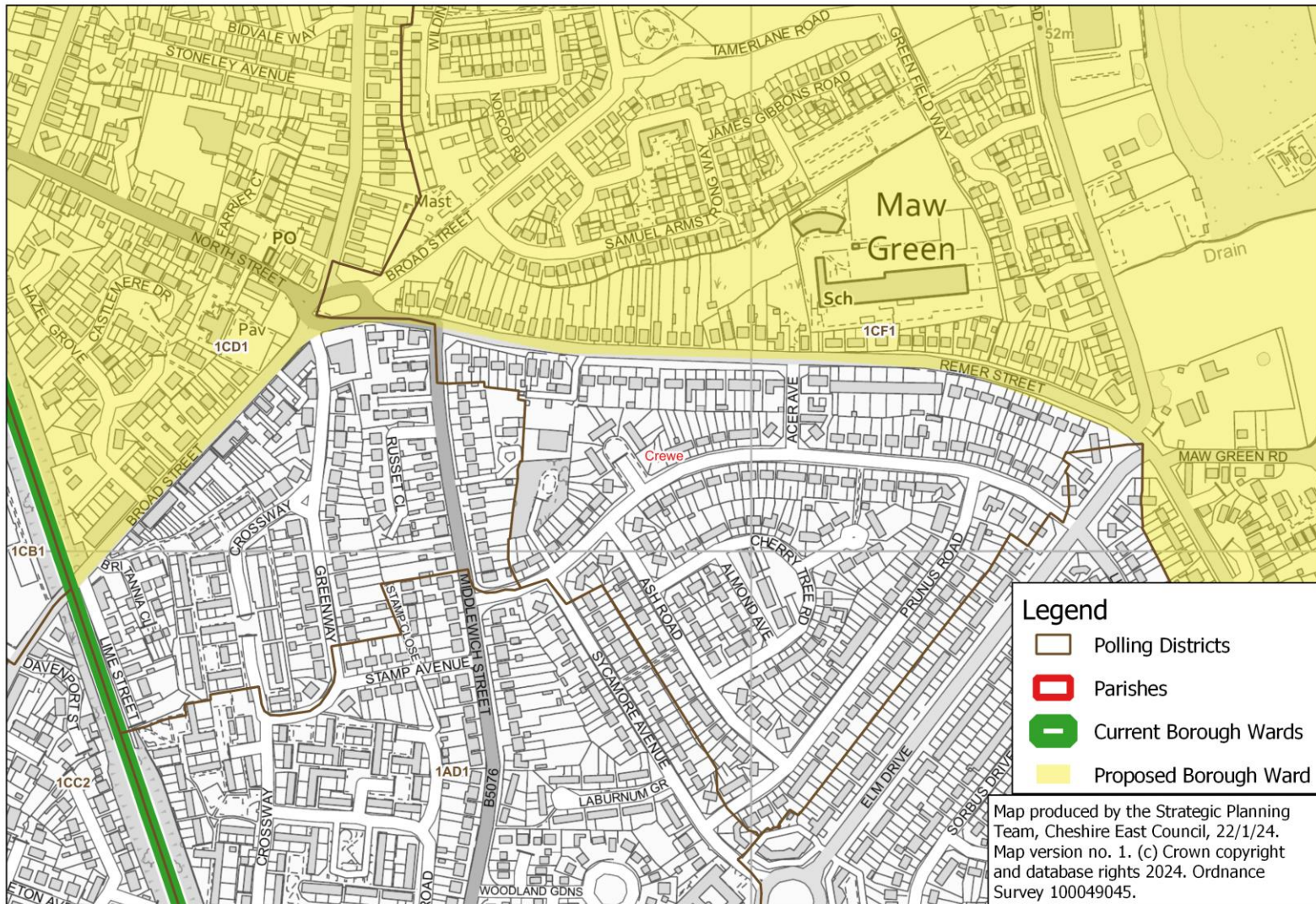
Crewe Maw Green: close-up of southeastern boundary

Proposed Borough Ward: Crewe Maw Green - close-up of southeastern section of proposed boundary

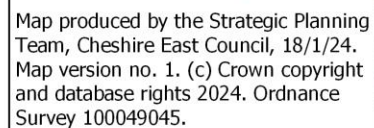


Crewe Maw Green: close-up of southwestern boundary





Proposed Borough Ward: Crewe Maw Green - close-up of southwestern section of proposed boundary



Proposed Borough Ward: Crewe North

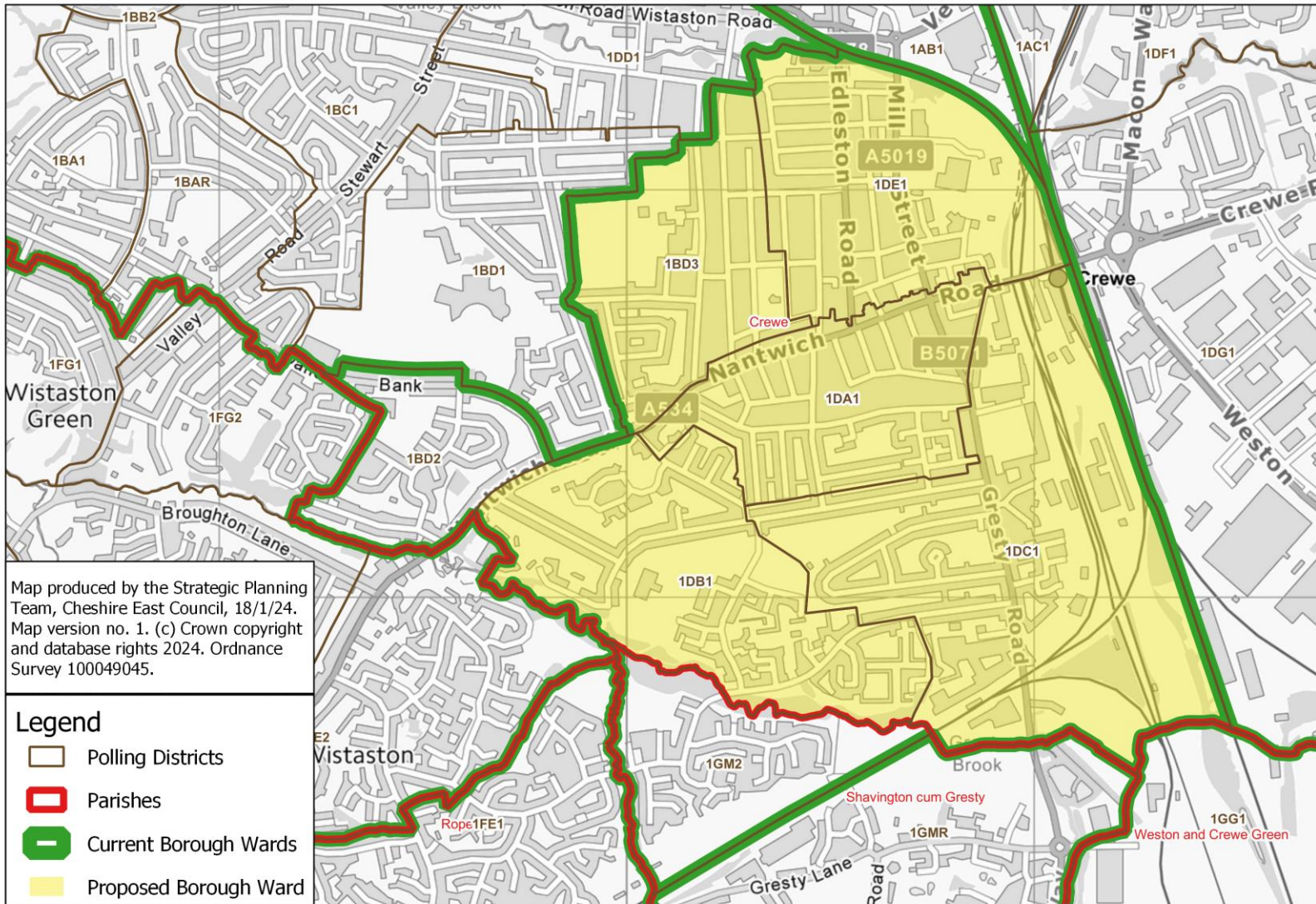


Legend

-  Polling Districts
-  Parishes
-  Current Borough Wards
-  Proposed Borough Ward

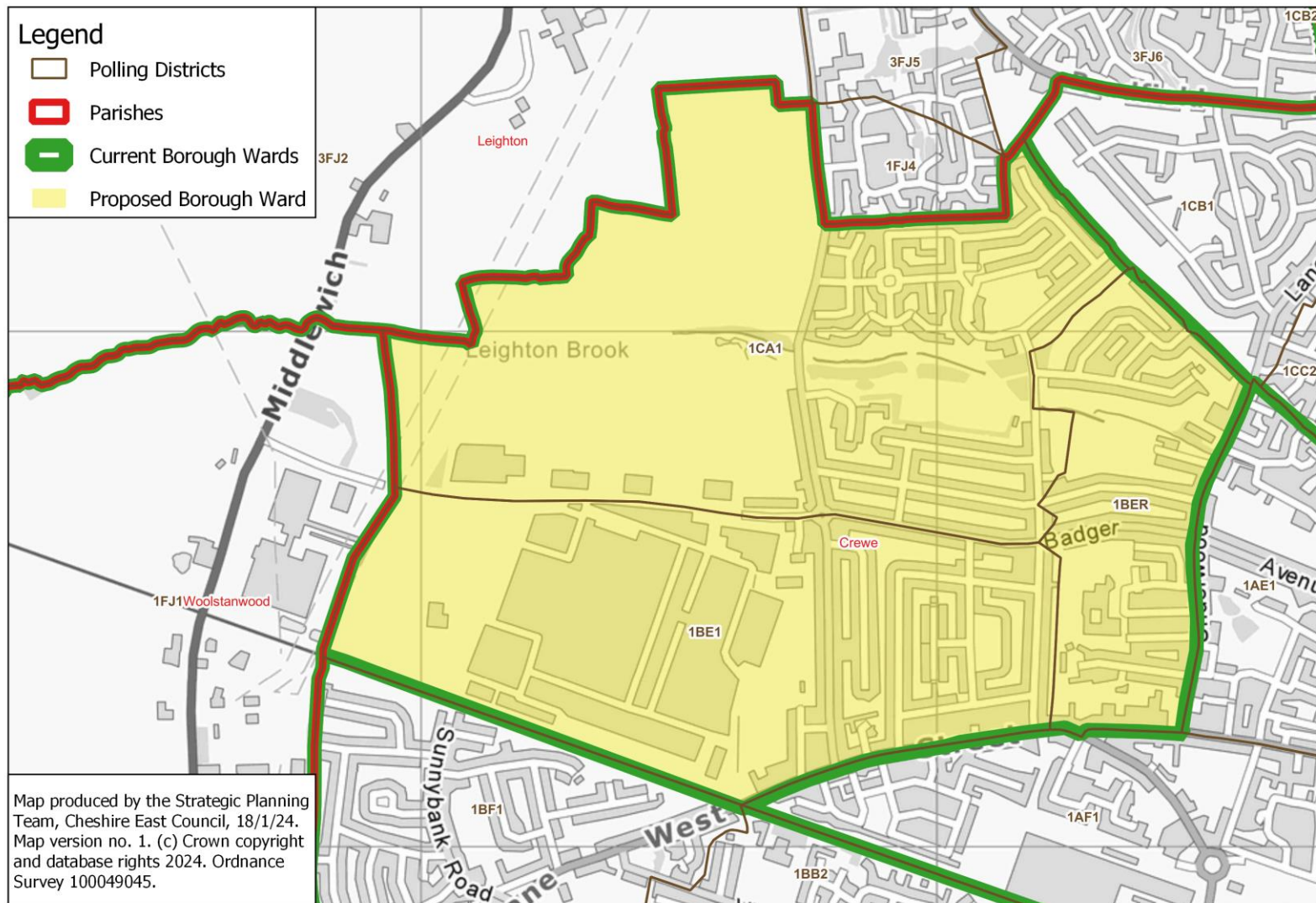
Crewe South

Proposed Borough Ward: Crewe South



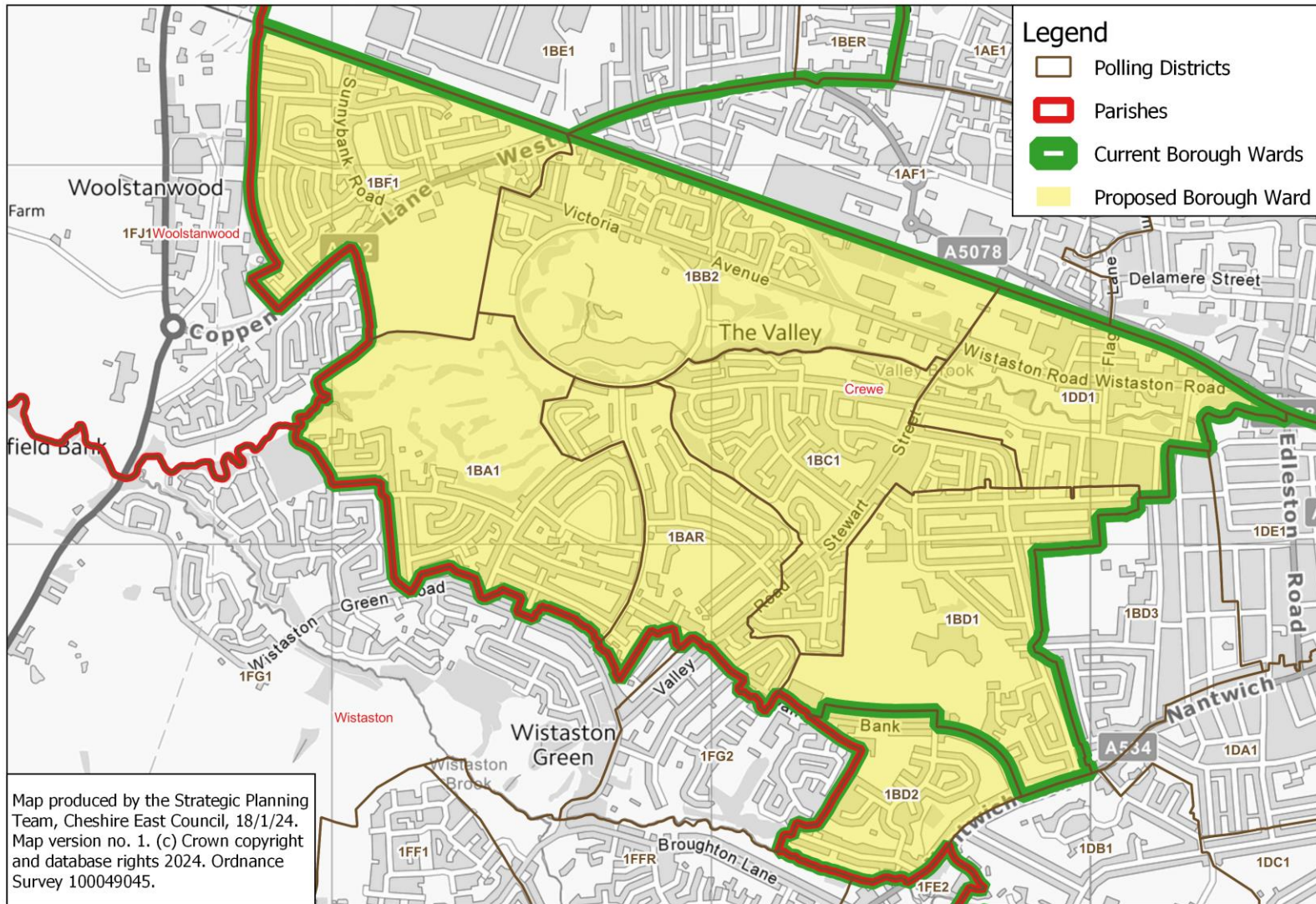
Crewe St Barnabas

Proposed Borough Ward: Crewe St Barnabas



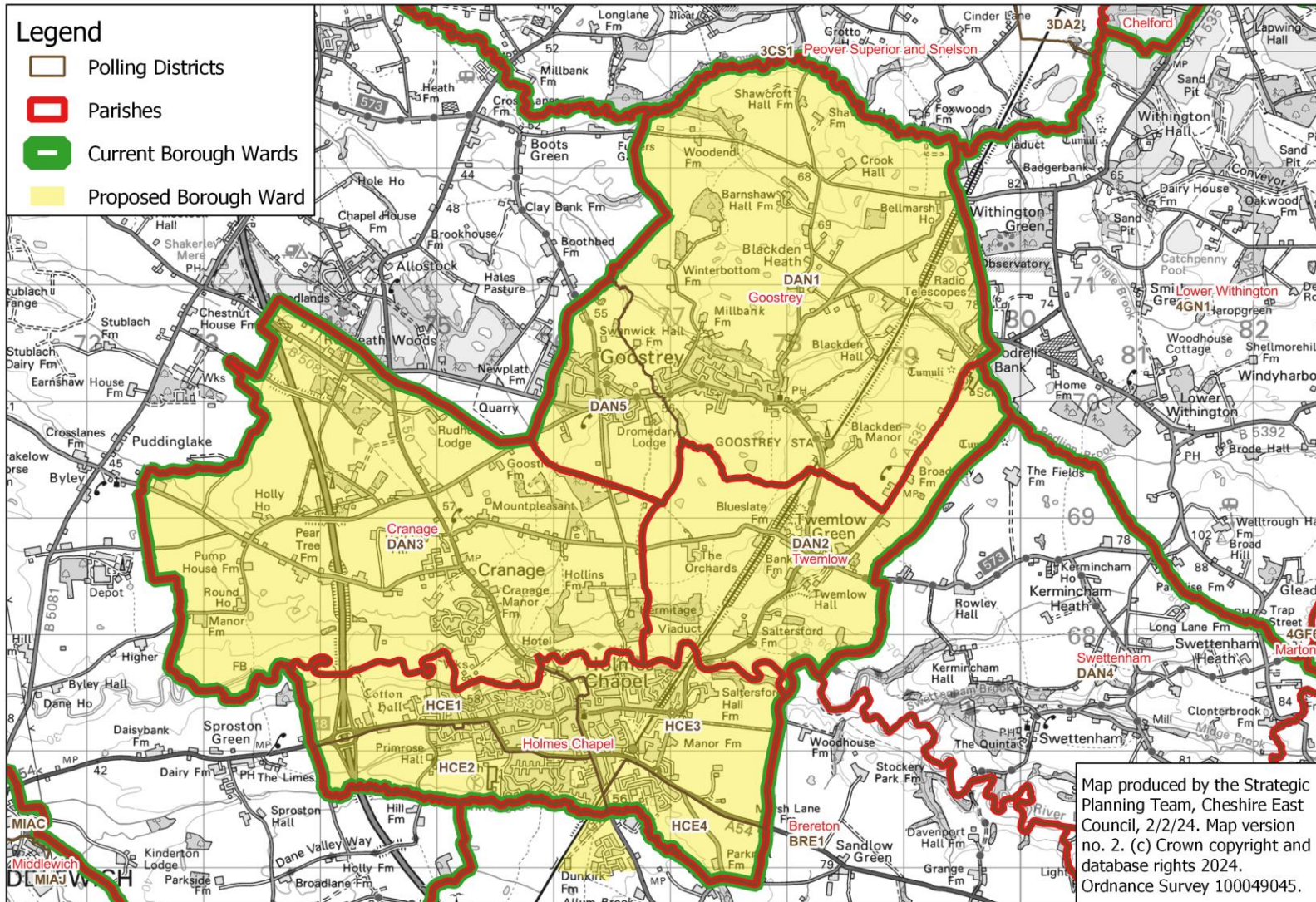
Crewe West

Proposed Borough Ward: Crewe West



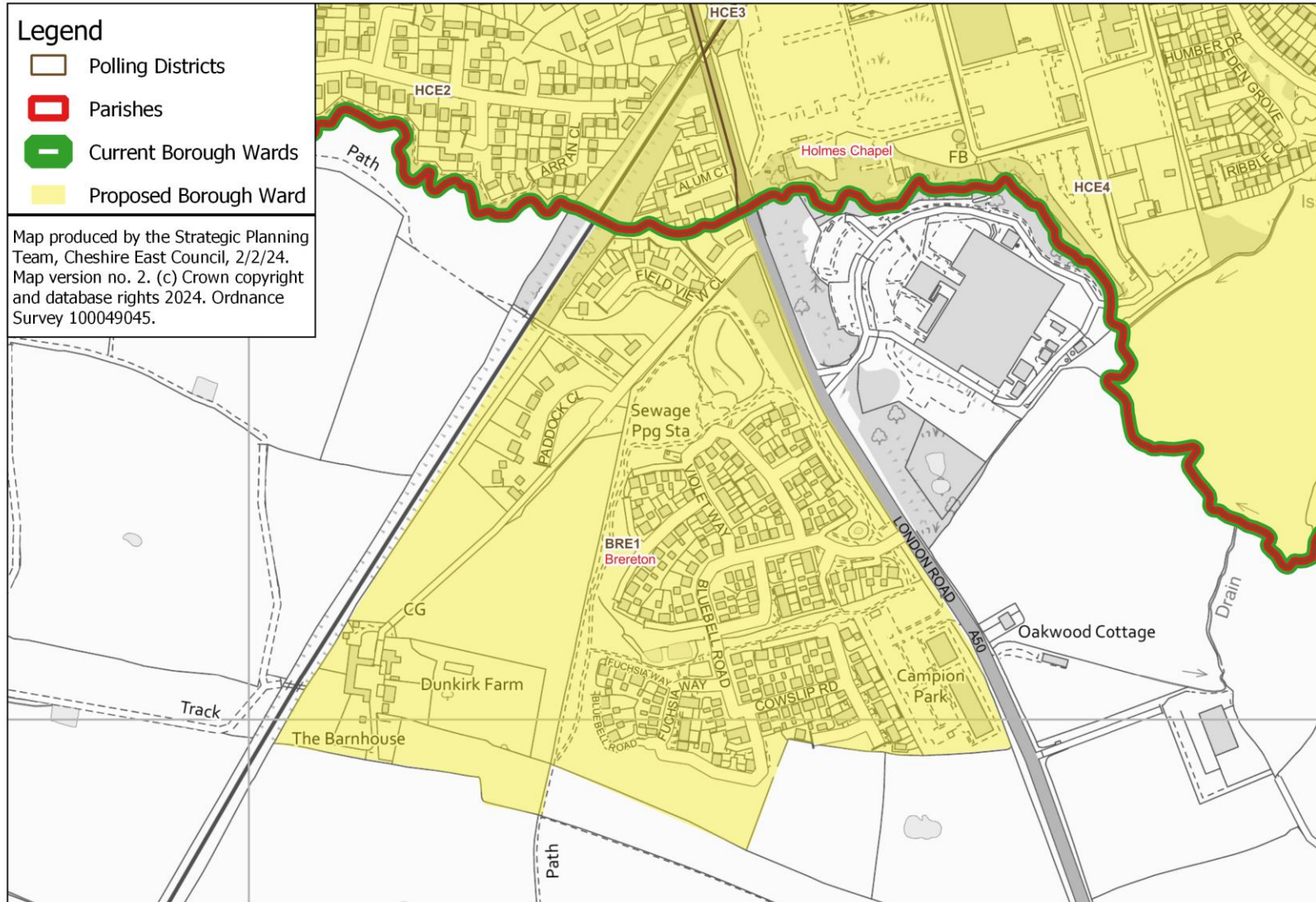
Dane Valley

Proposed Borough Ward: Dane Valley



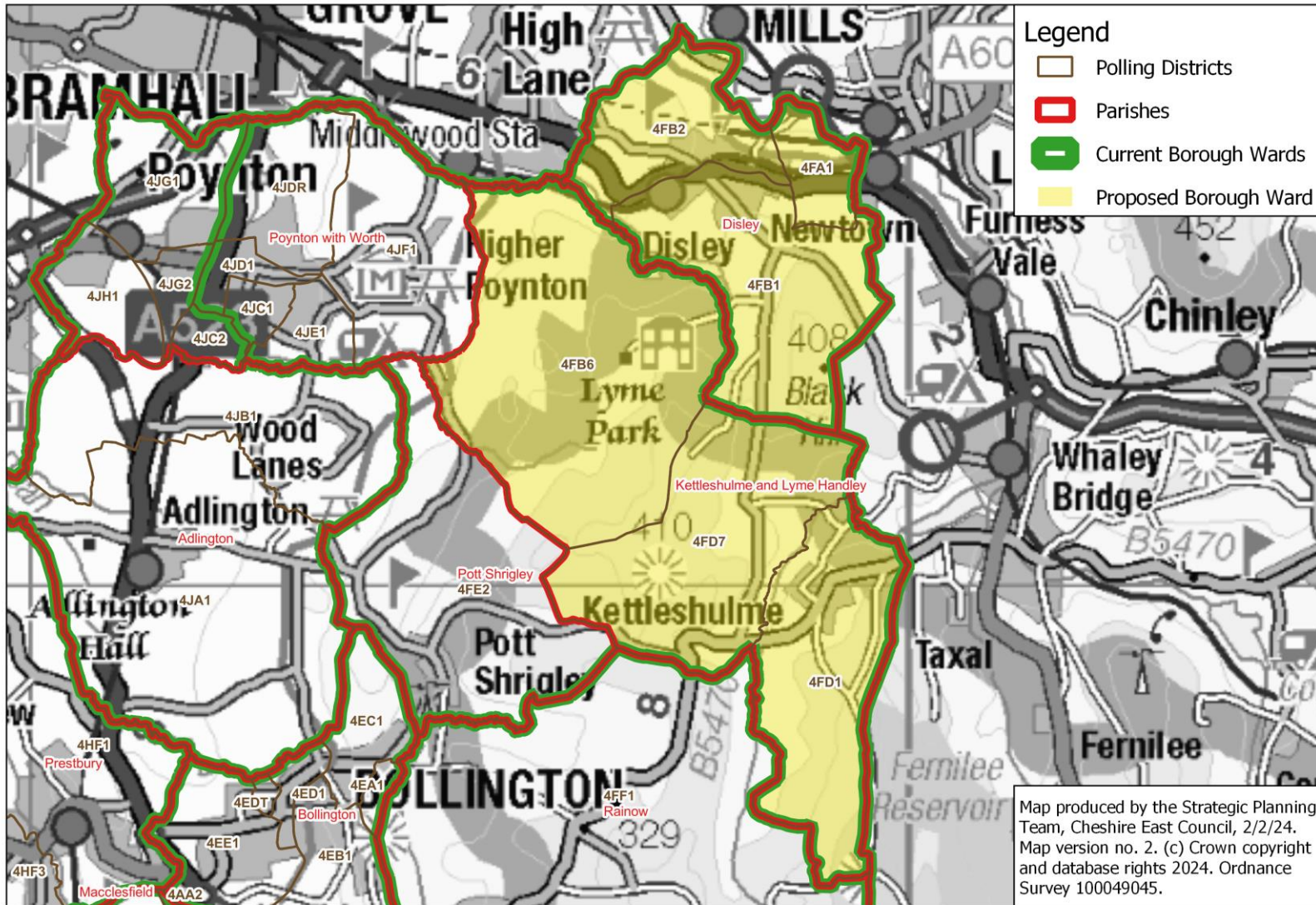
Dane Valley: close-up of boundary in Bluebell Green area

Proposed Borough Ward: Dane Valley - close-up of boundary in Bluebell Green area



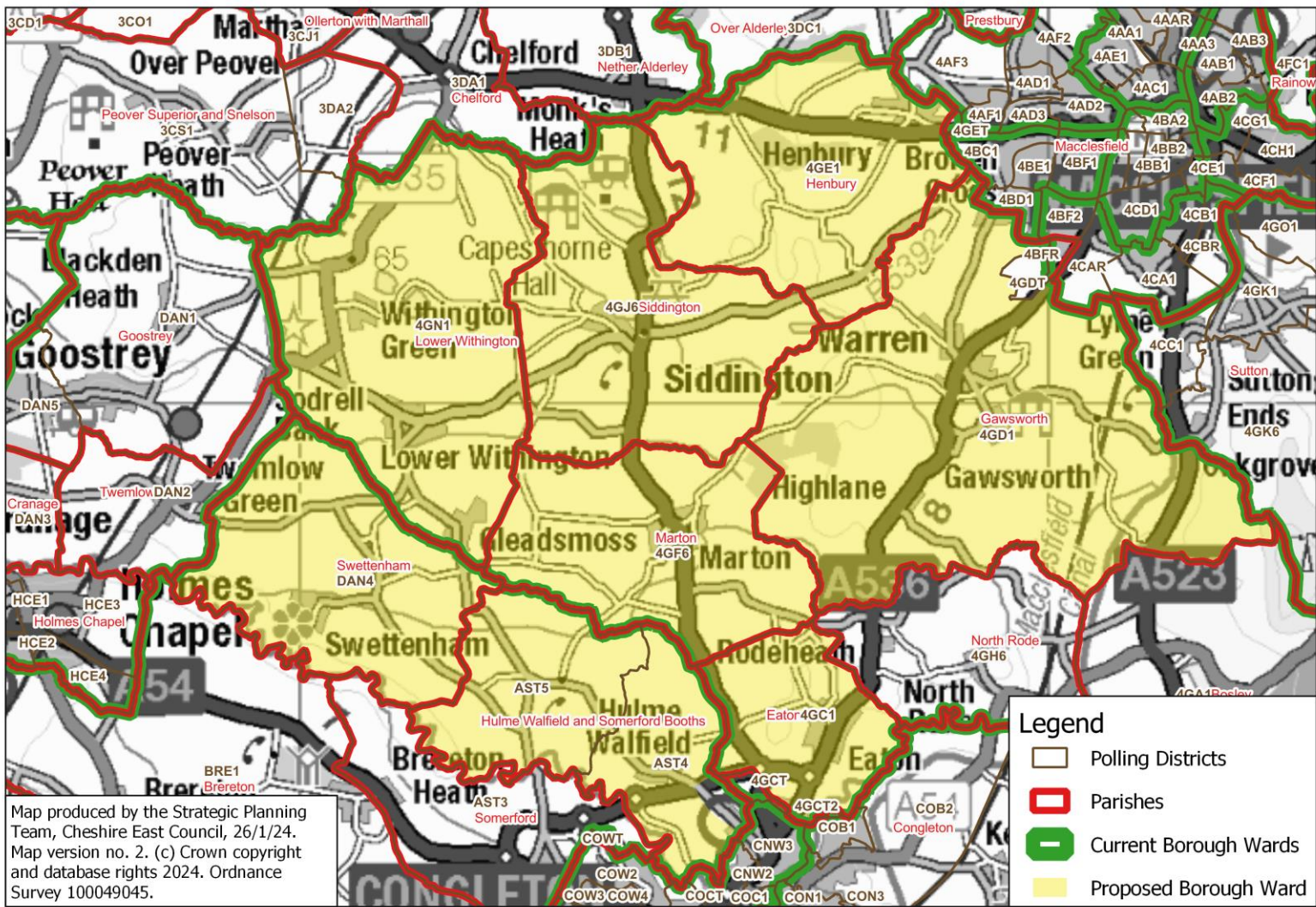
Disley

Proposed Borough Ward: Disley



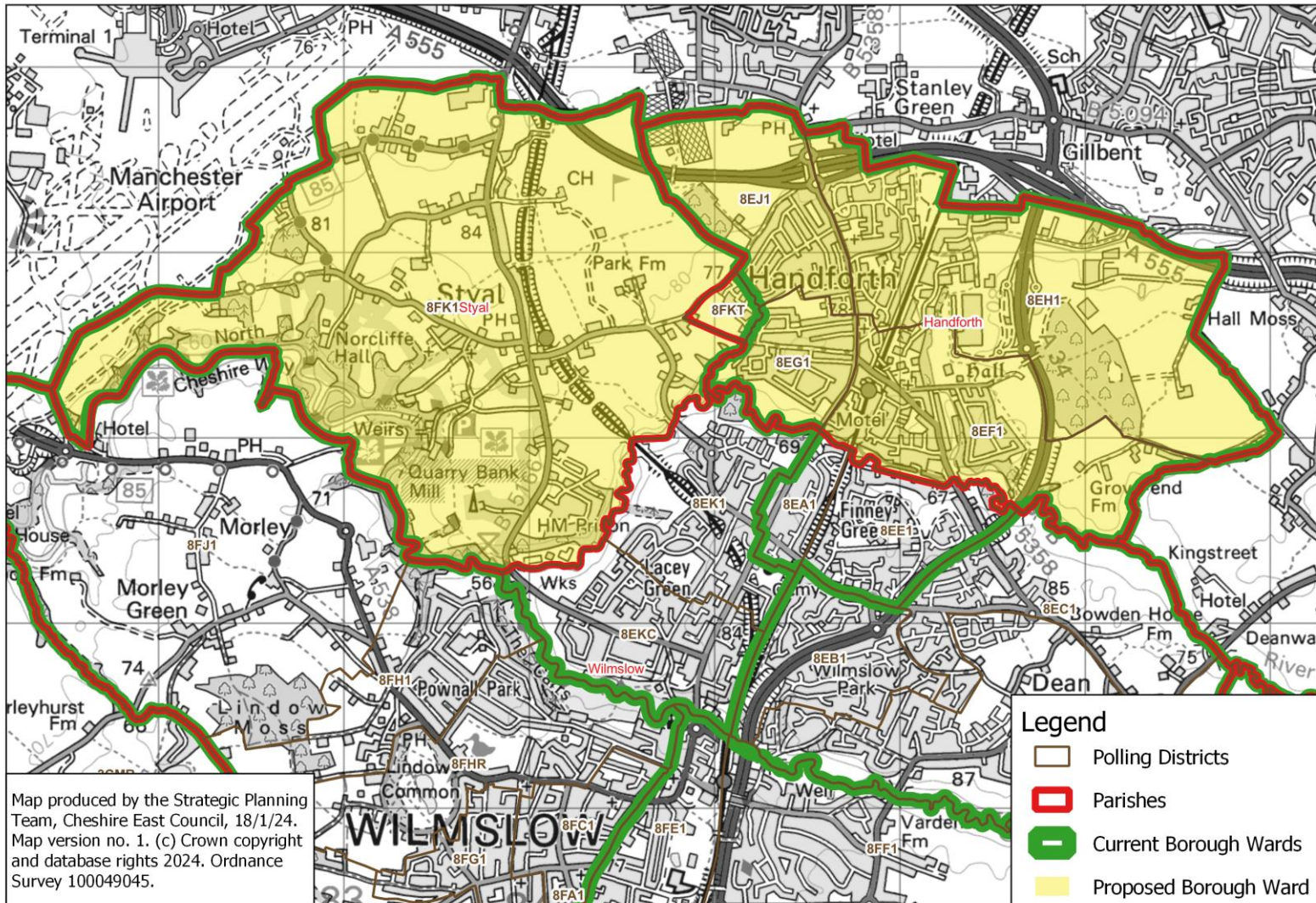
Gawsworth

Proposed Borough Ward: Gawsworth



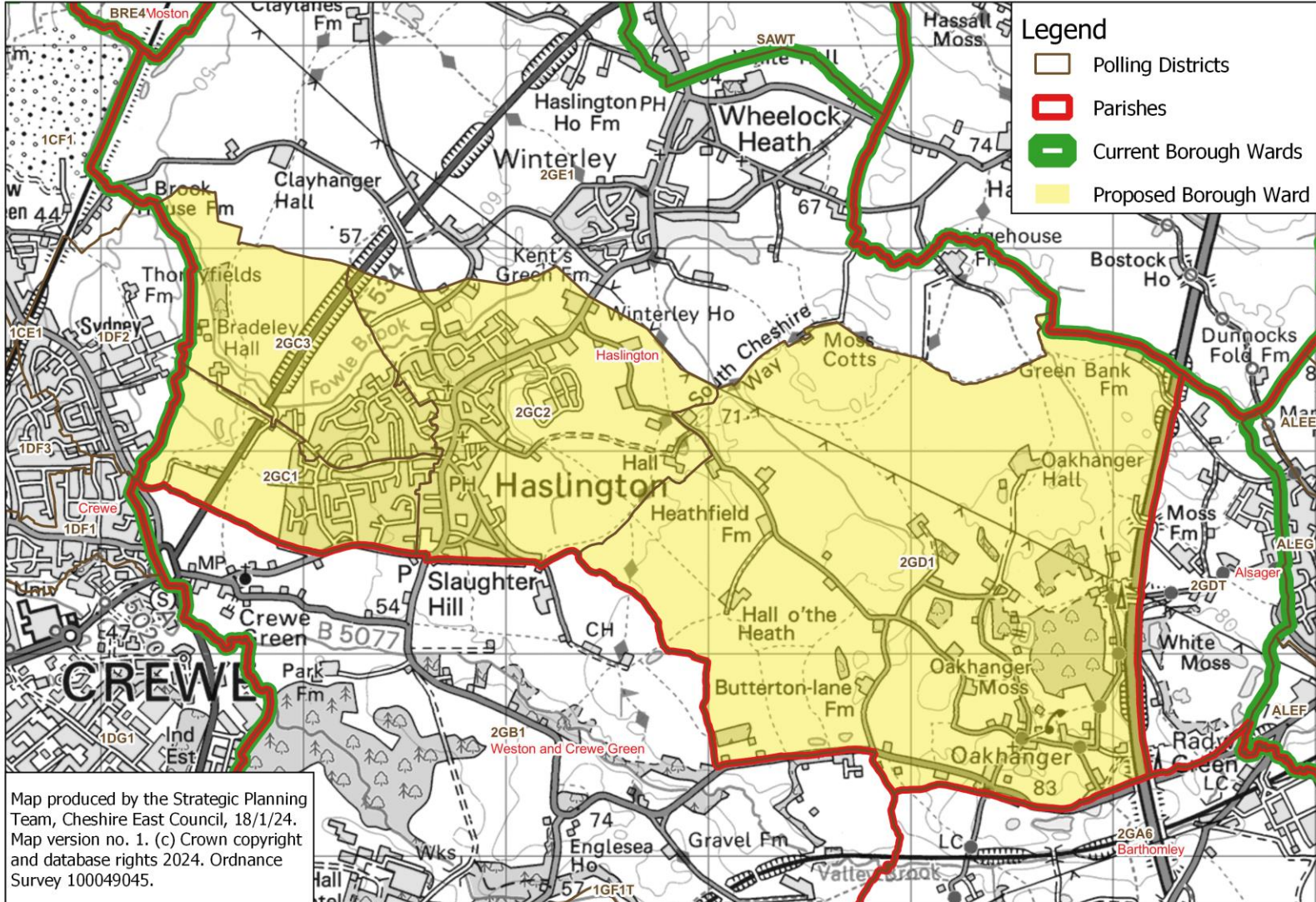
Handforth

Proposed Borough Ward: Handforth



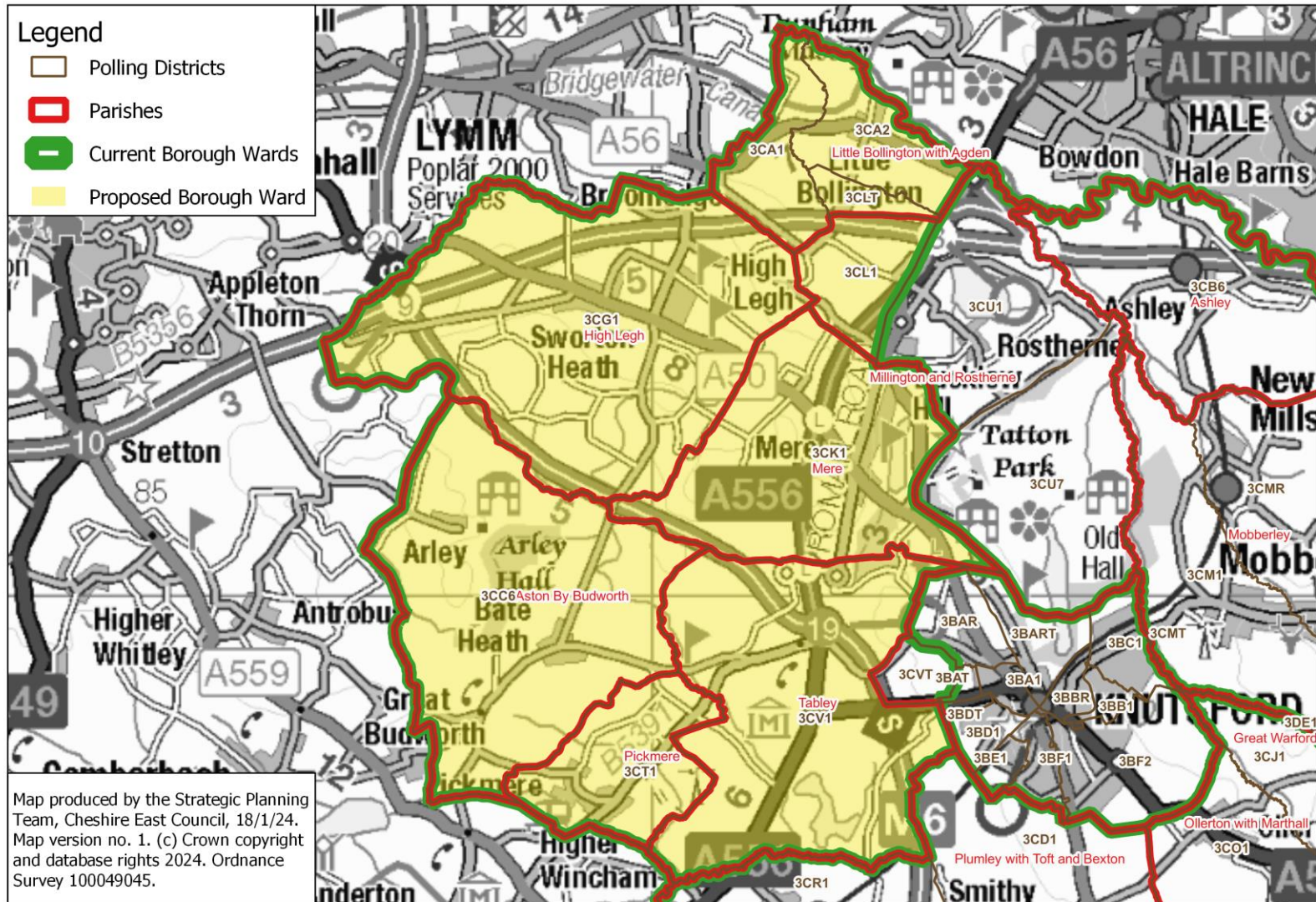
Haslington

Proposed Borough Ward: Haslington



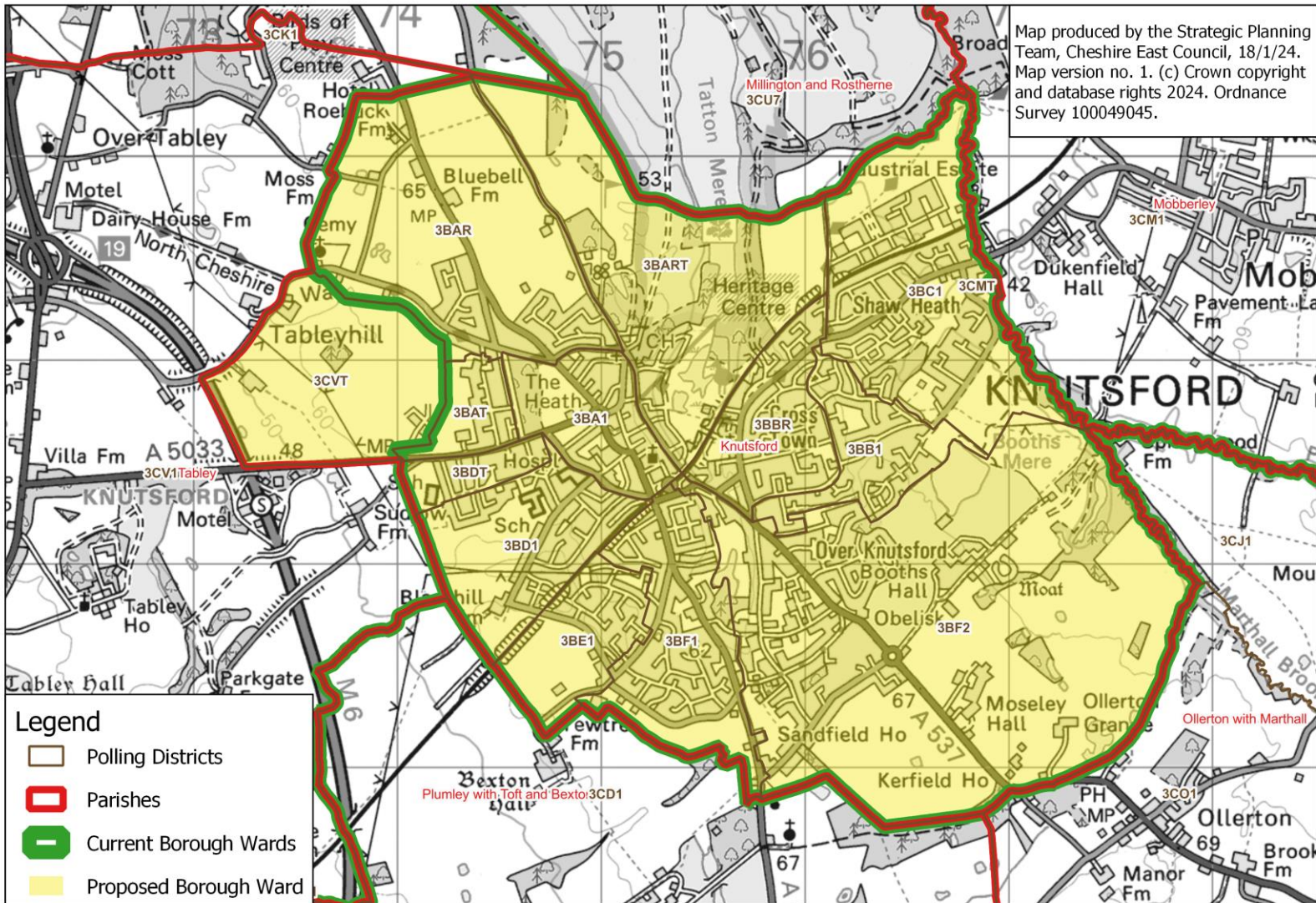
High Legh

Proposed Borough Ward: High Legh

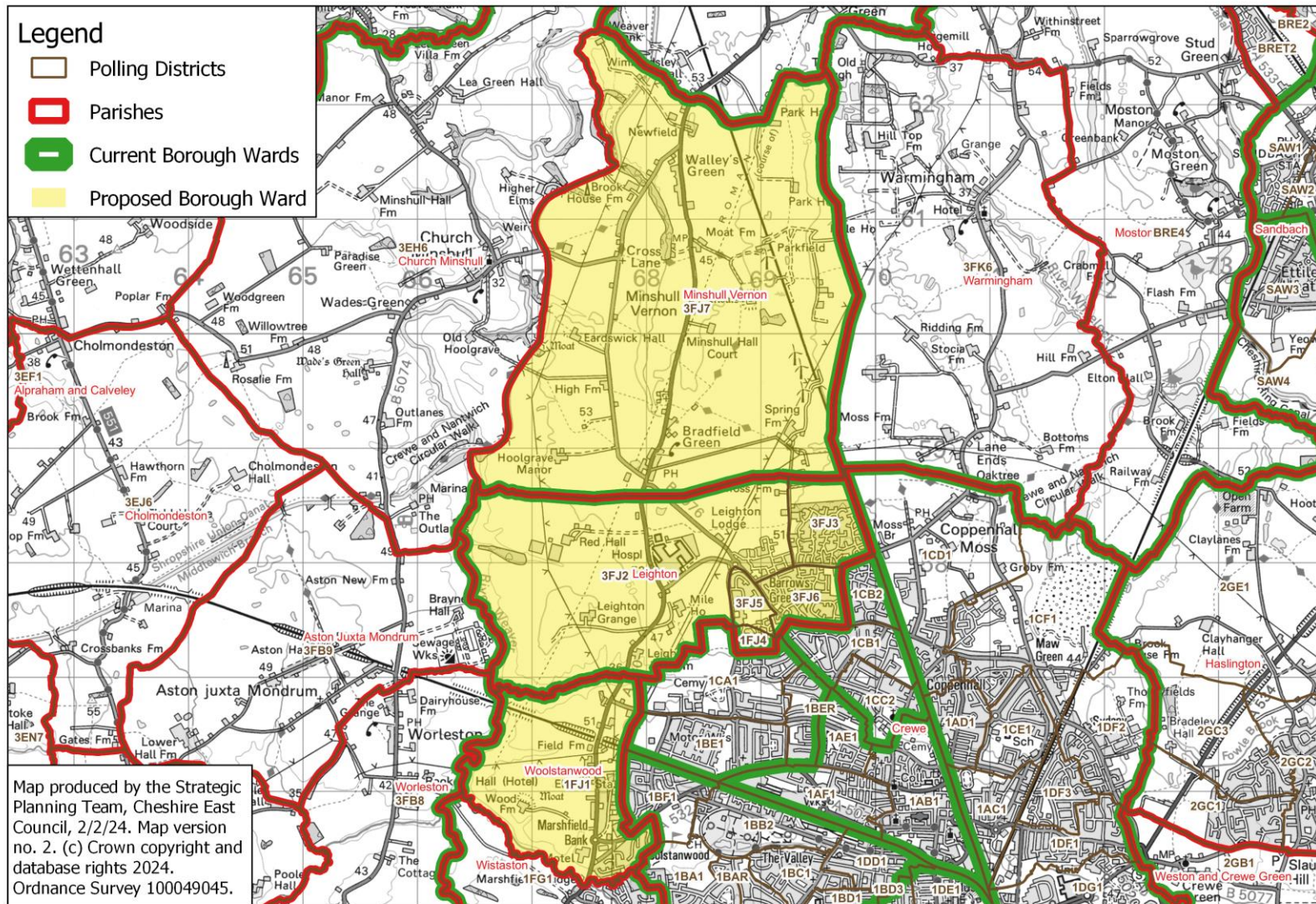


Knutsford

Proposed Borough Ward: Knutsford

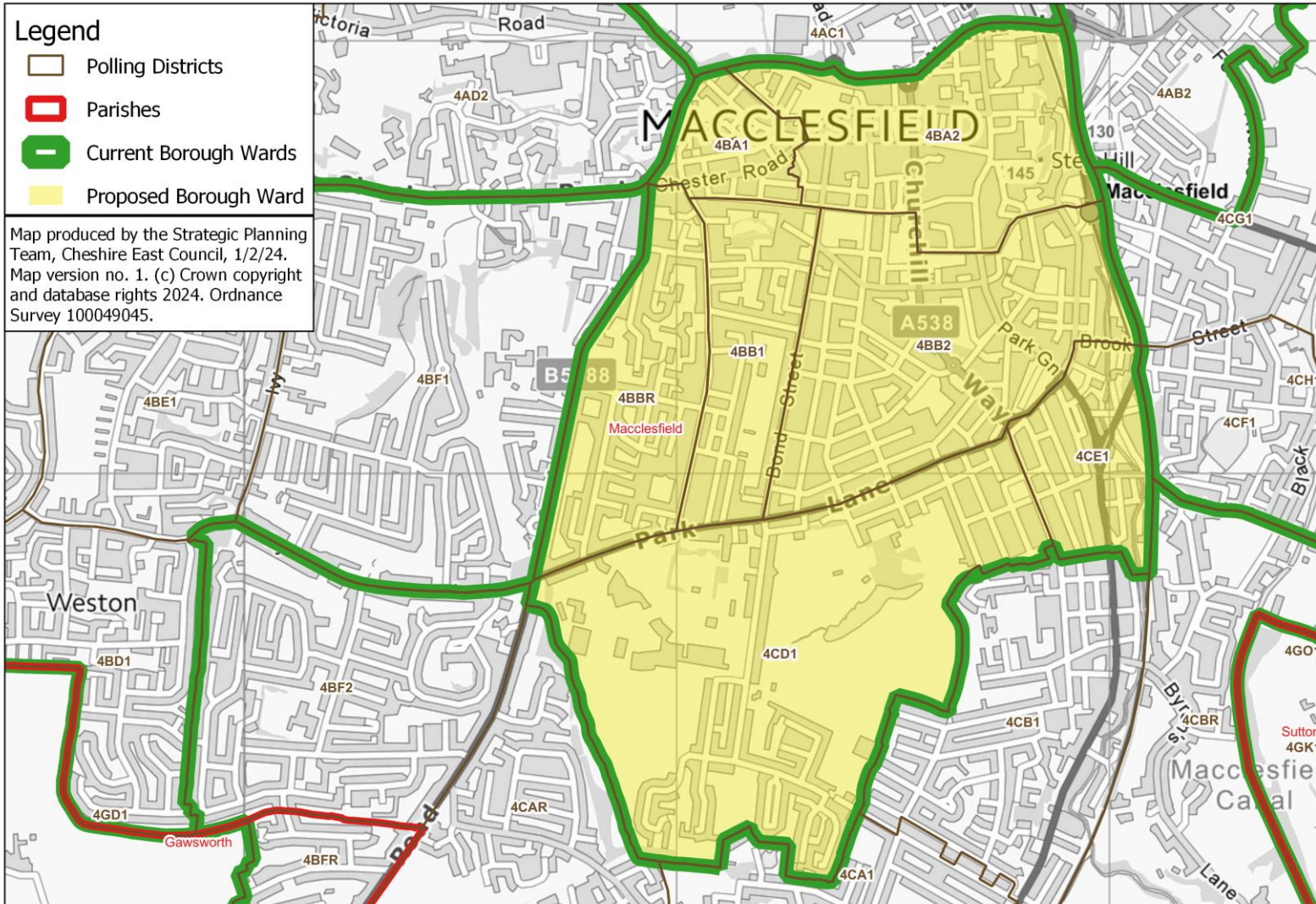


Proposed Borough Ward: Leighton



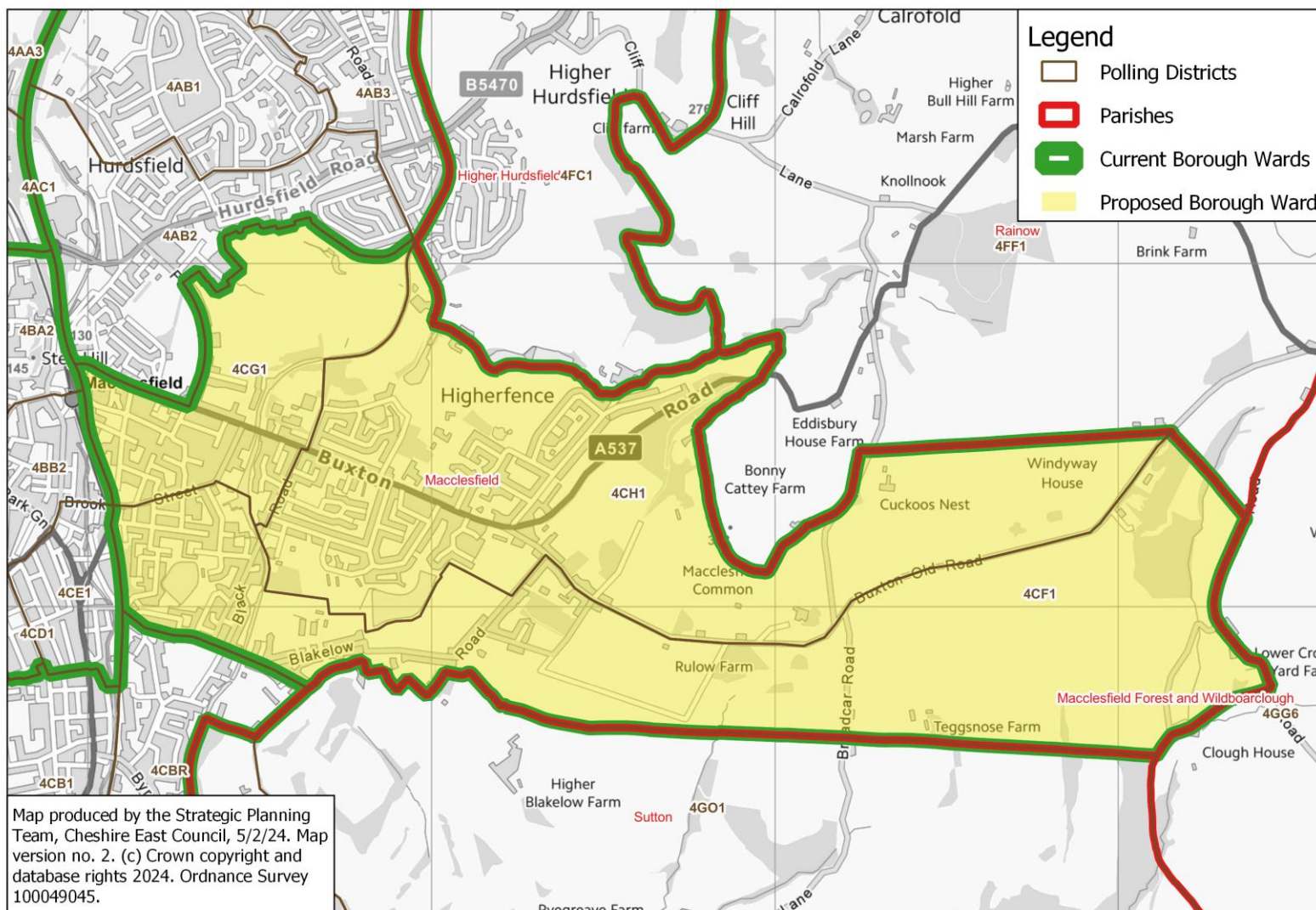
Macclesfield Central

Proposed Borough Ward: Macclesfield Central



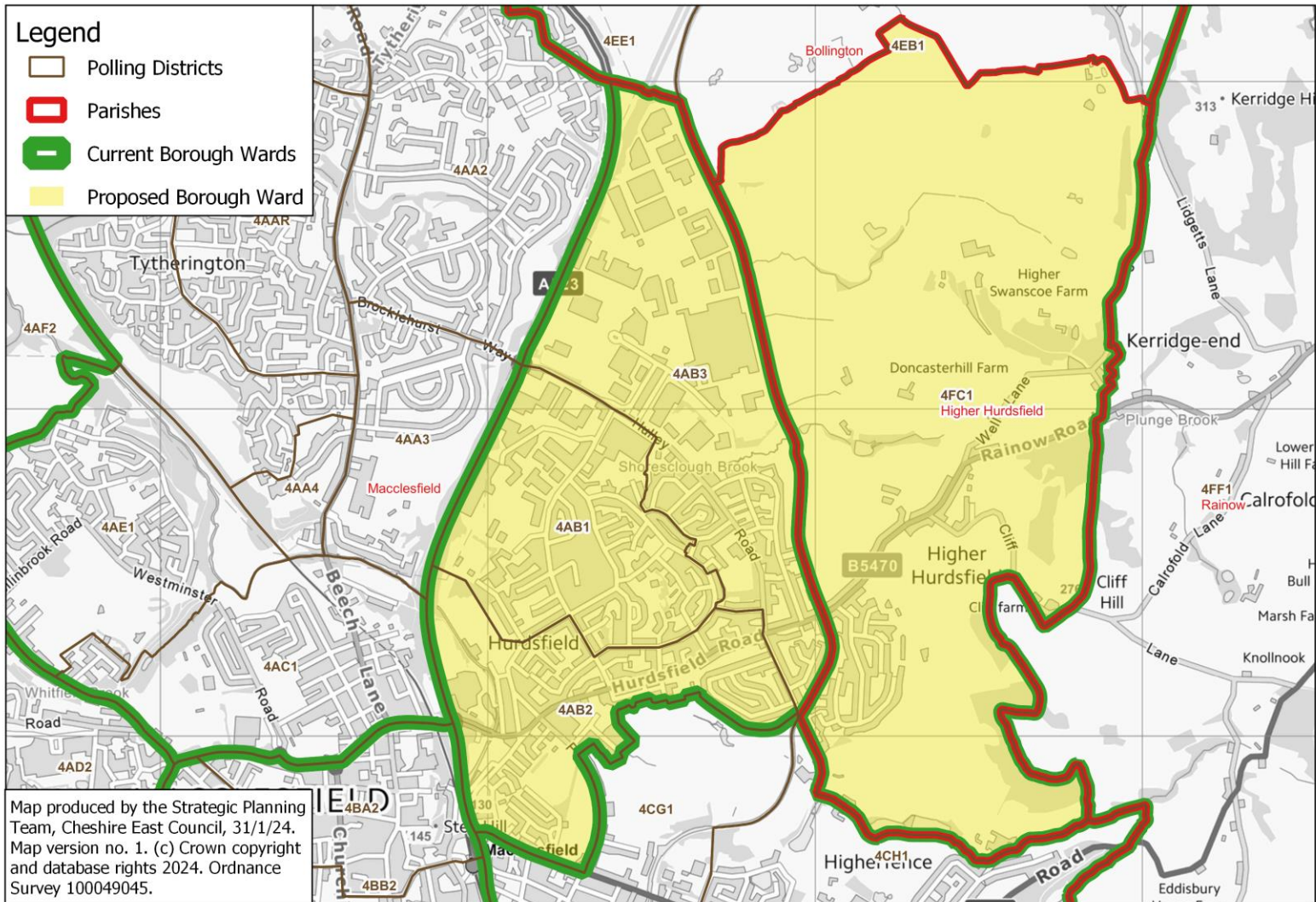
Macclesfield East

Proposed Borough Ward: Macclesfield East



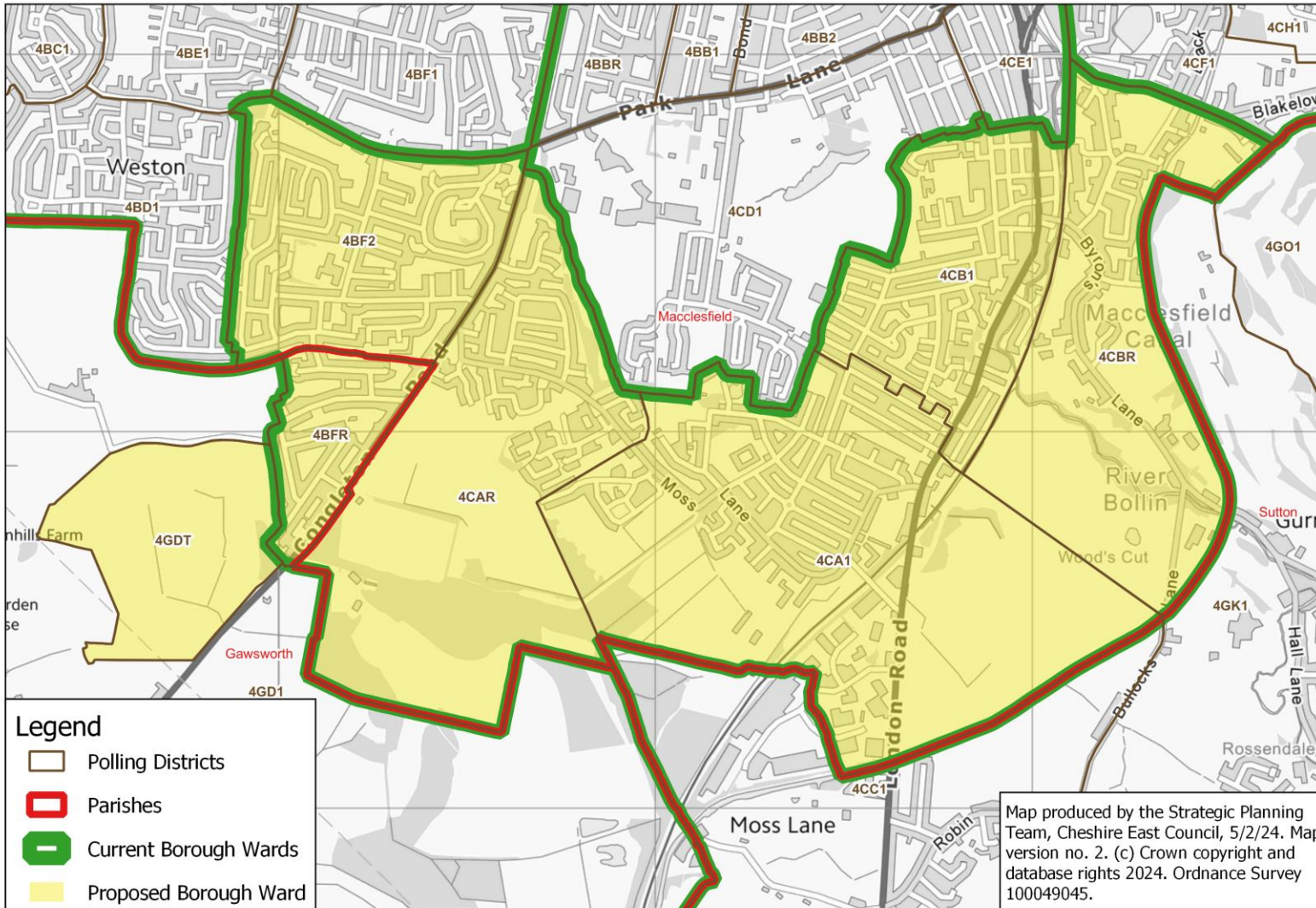
Macclesfield Hurdsfield

Proposed Borough Ward: Macclesfield Hurdsfield



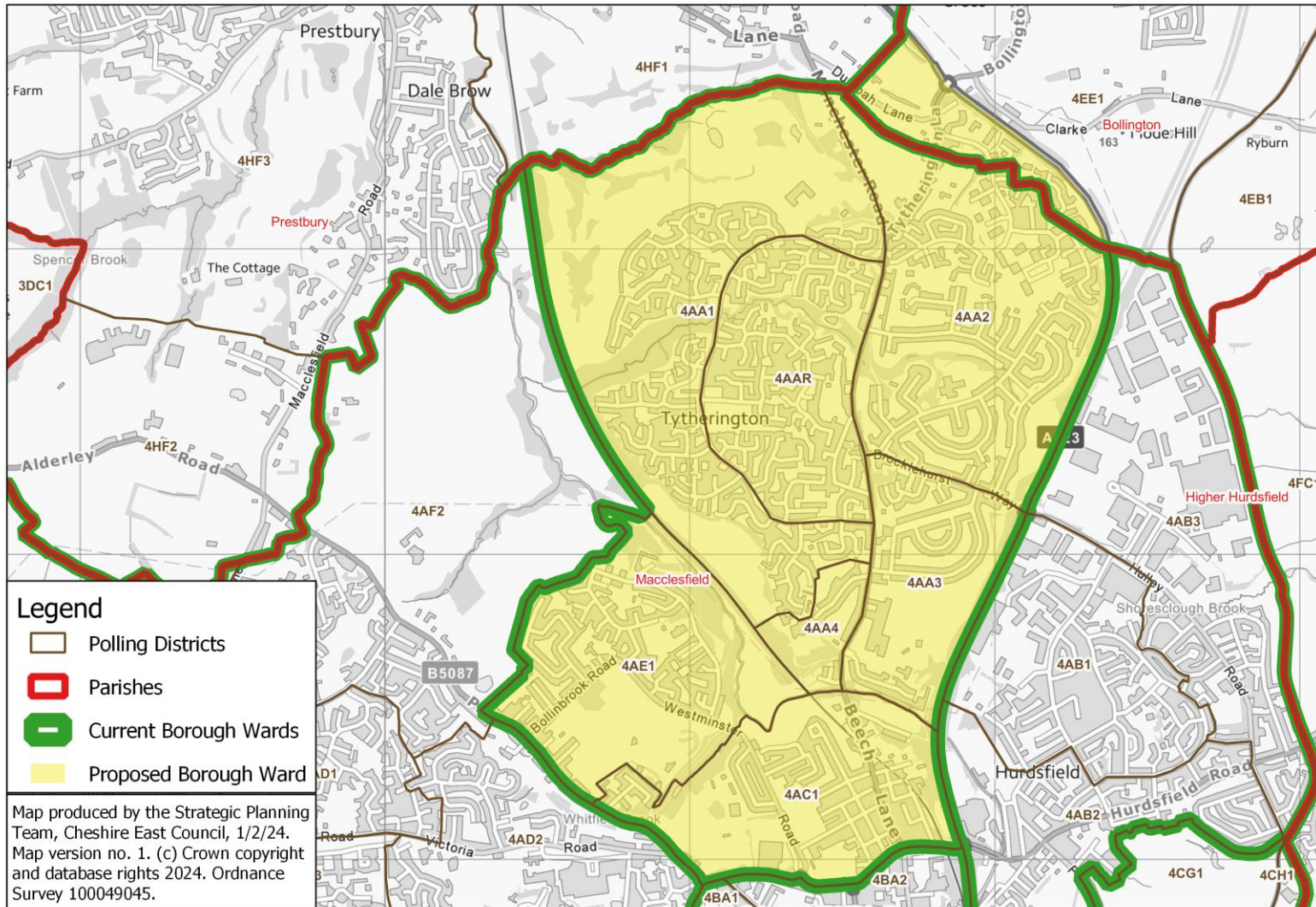
Macclesfield South

Proposed Borough Ward: Macclesfield South



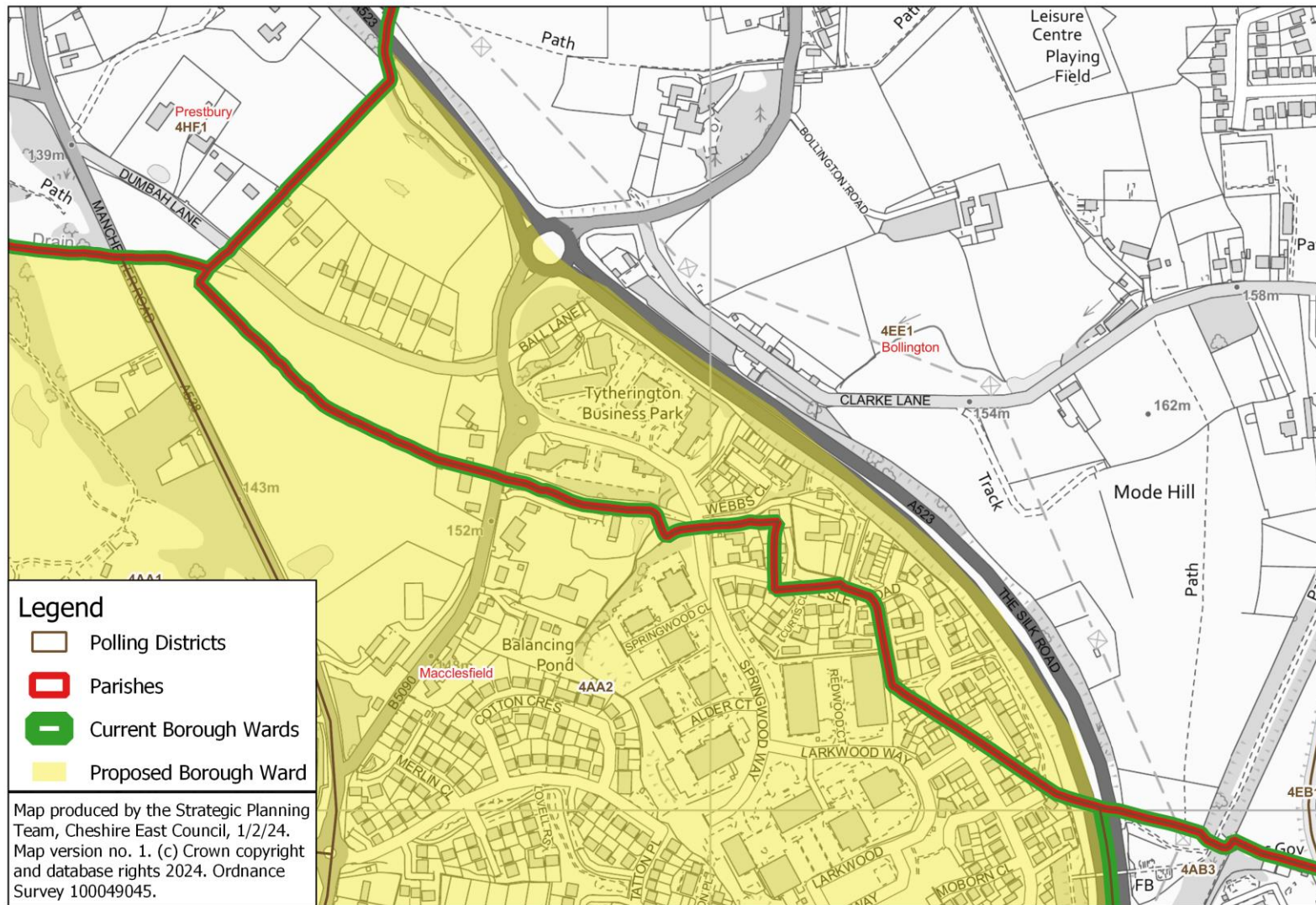
Macclesfield Tytherington

Proposed Borough Ward: Macclesfield Tytherington



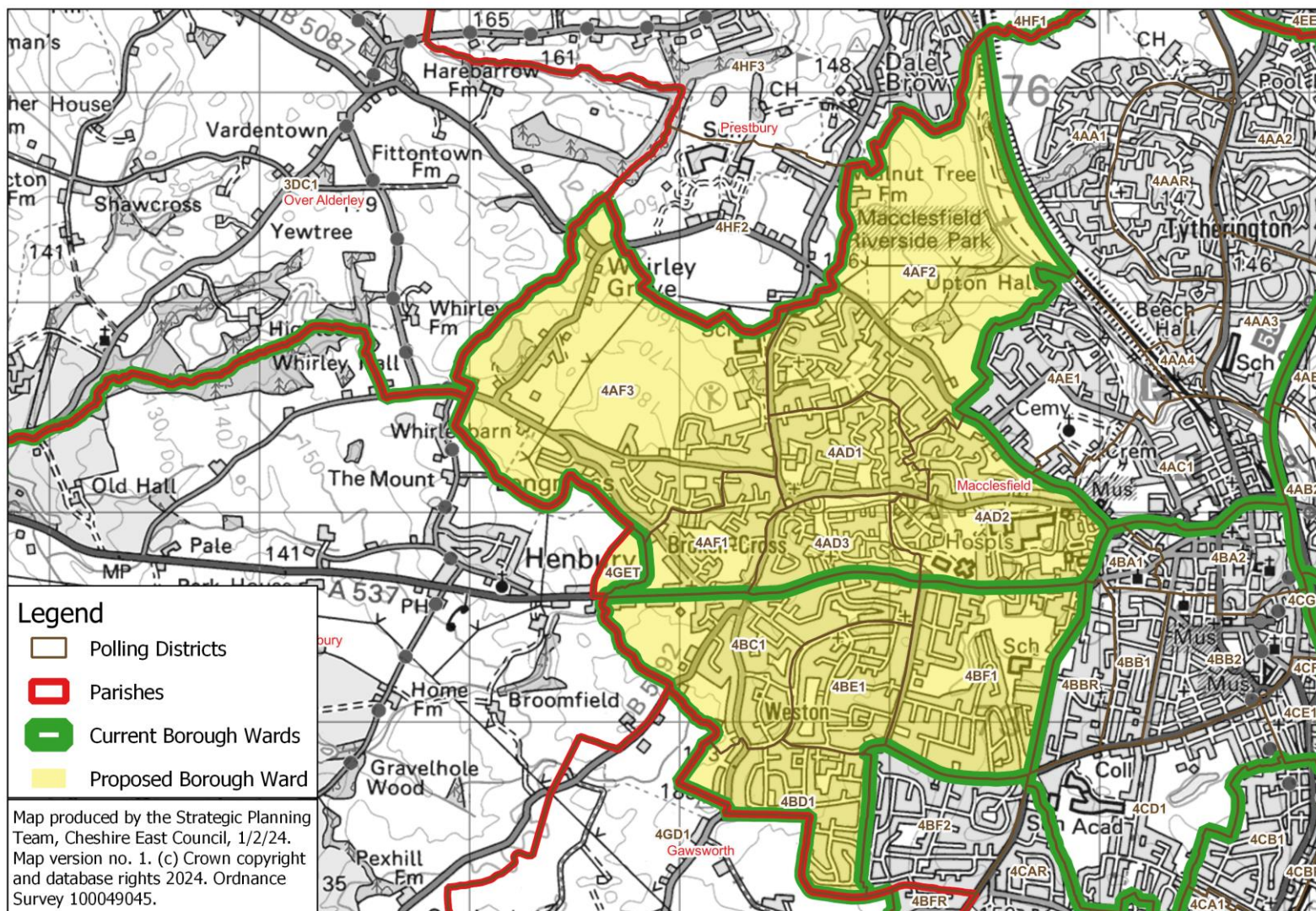
Macclesfield Tytherington: close-up of Springwood Way area

Proposed Borough Ward: Macclesfield Tytherington - close-up of area of 4EE1 to be included



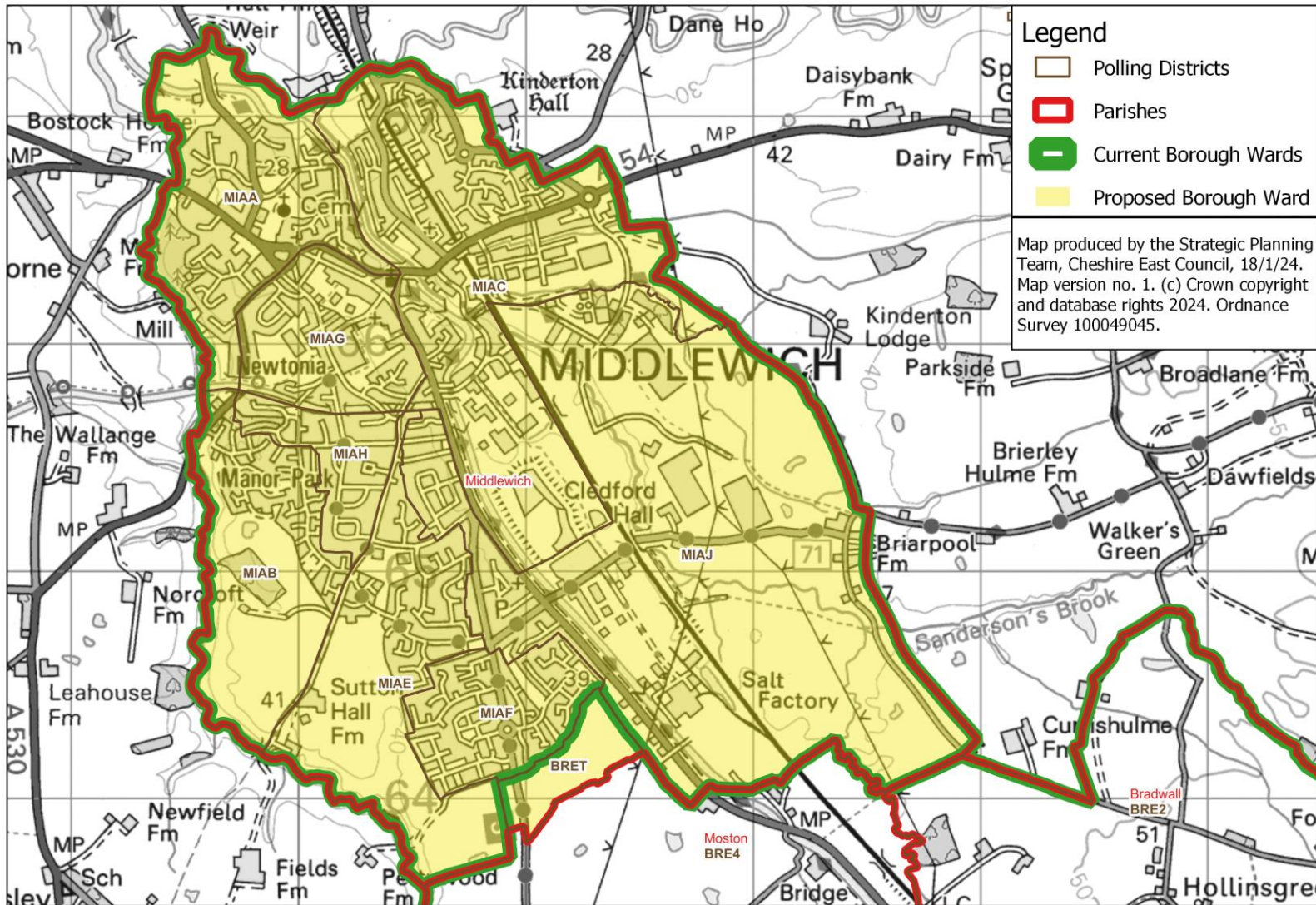
Macclesfield West

Proposed Borough Ward: Macclesfield West



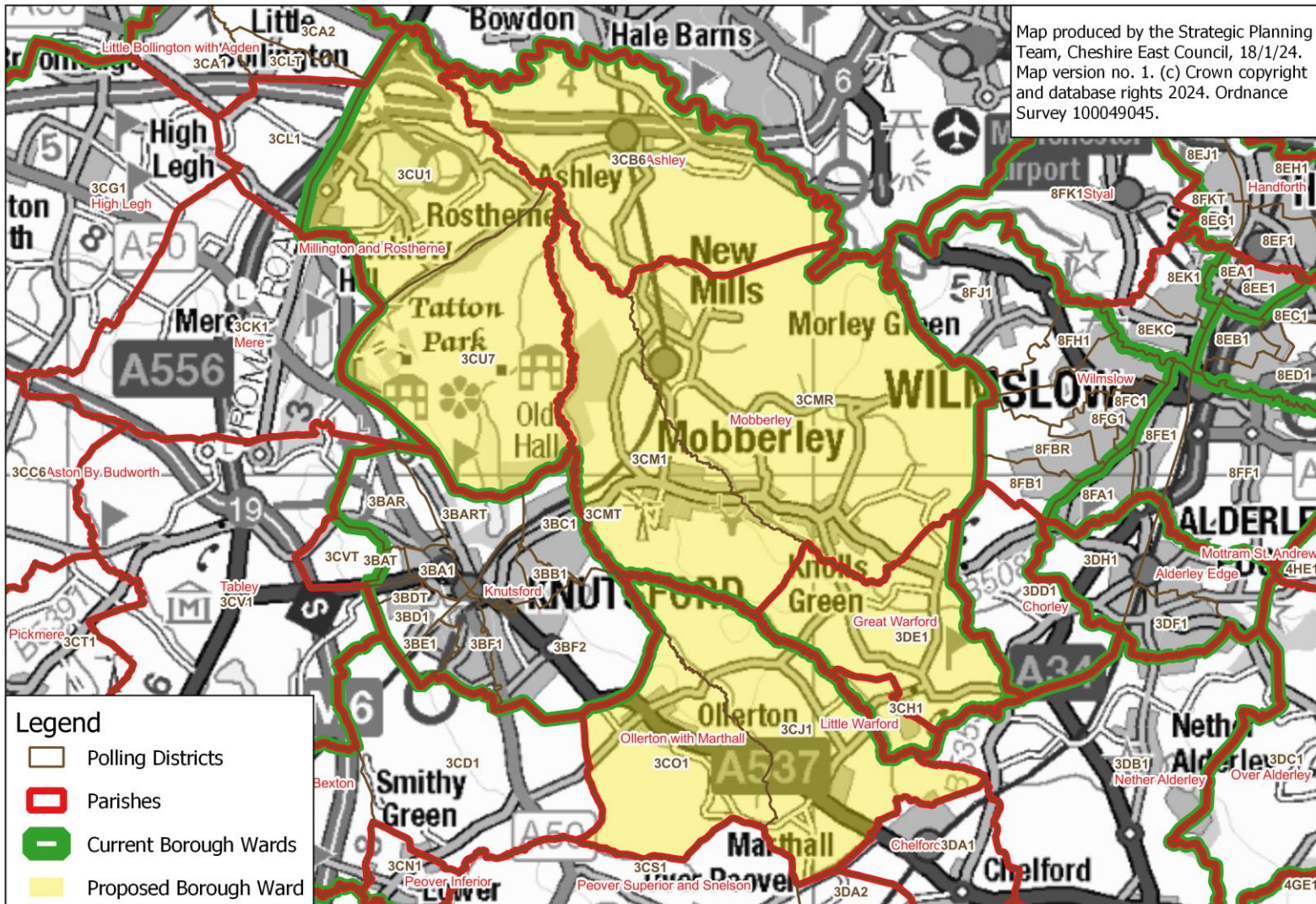
Middlewich

Proposed Borough Ward: Middlewich



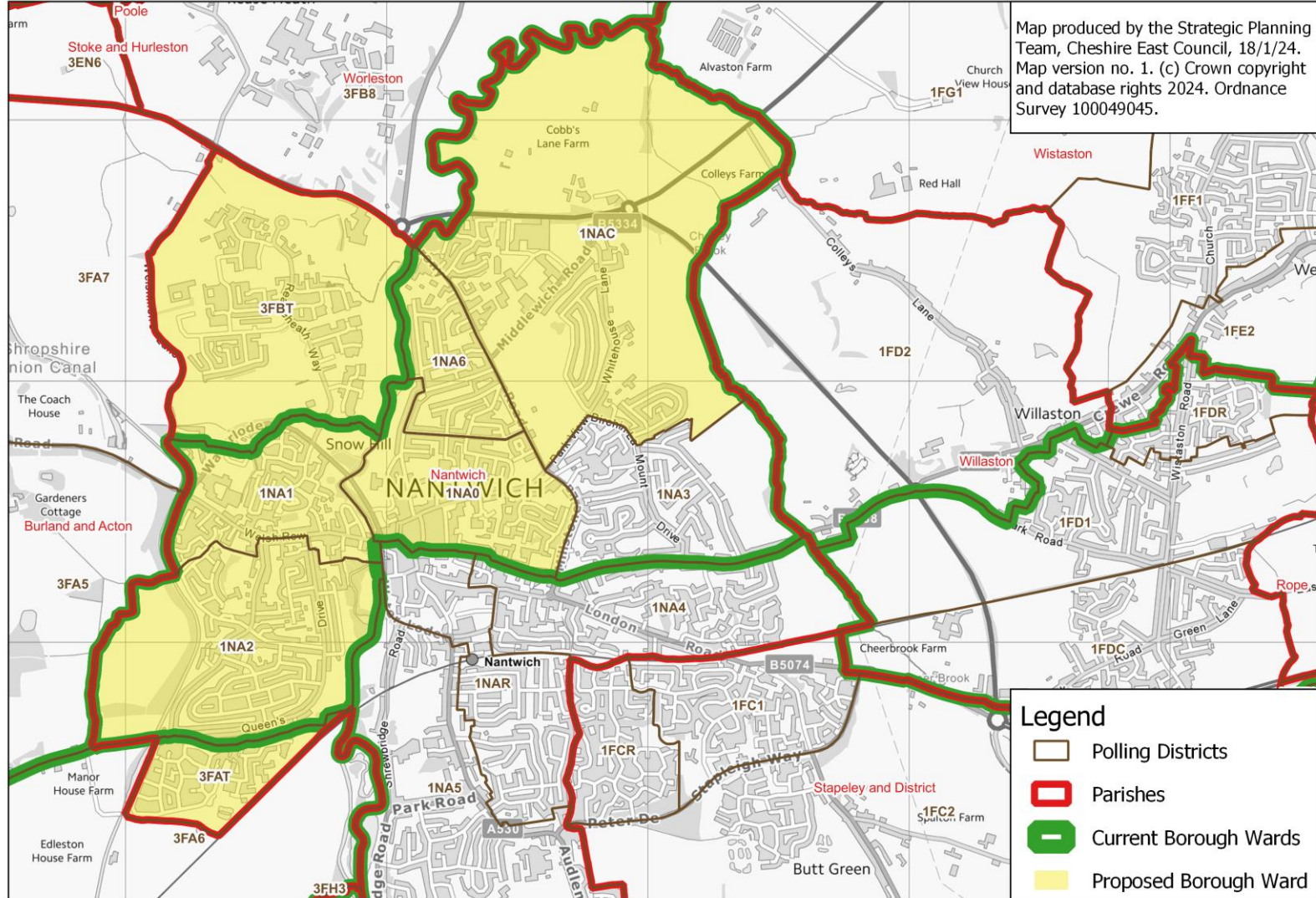
Mobberley

Proposed Borough Ward: Mobberley



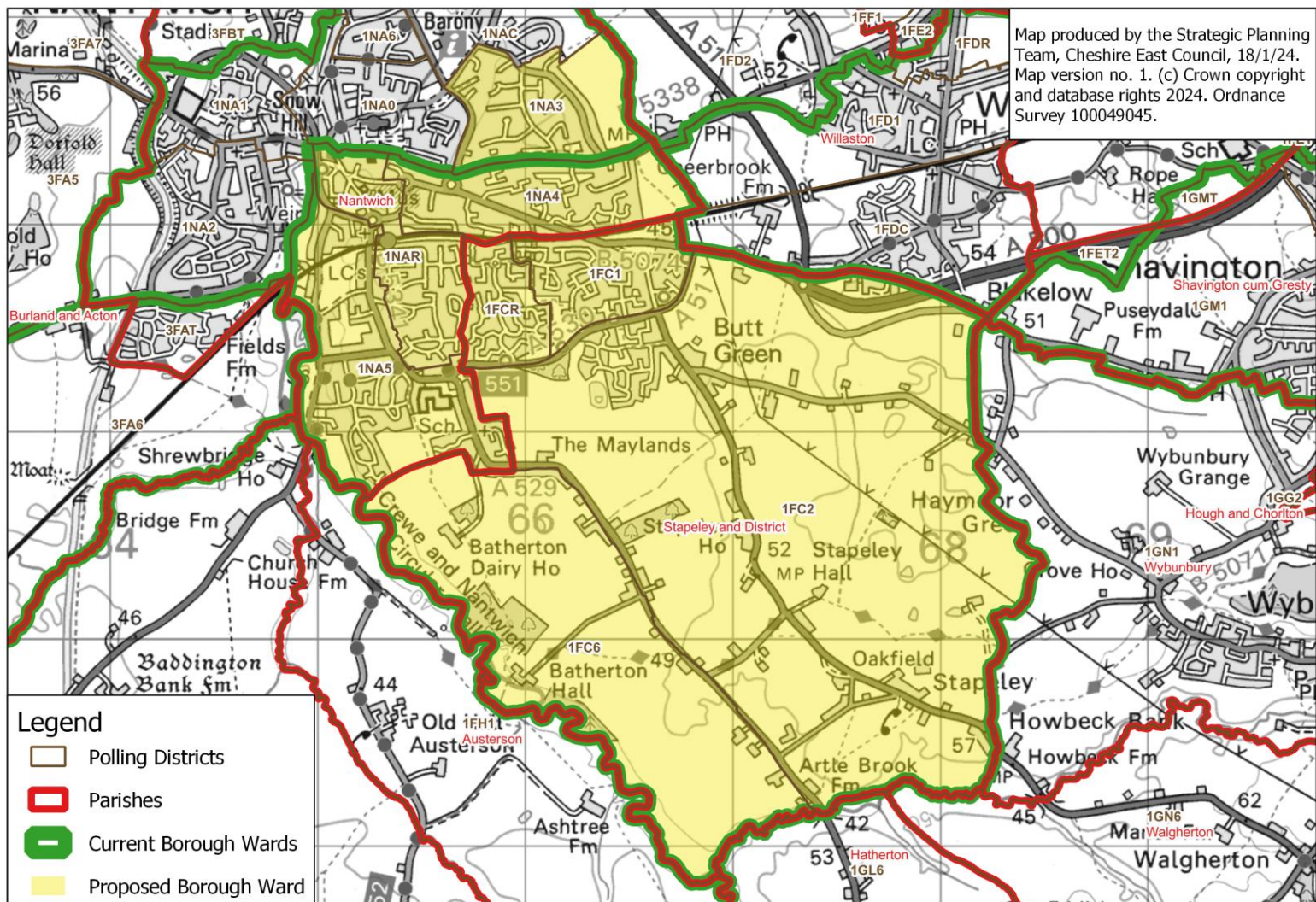
Nantwich North & West

Proposed Borough Ward: Nantwich North & West



Nantwich South & Stapeley

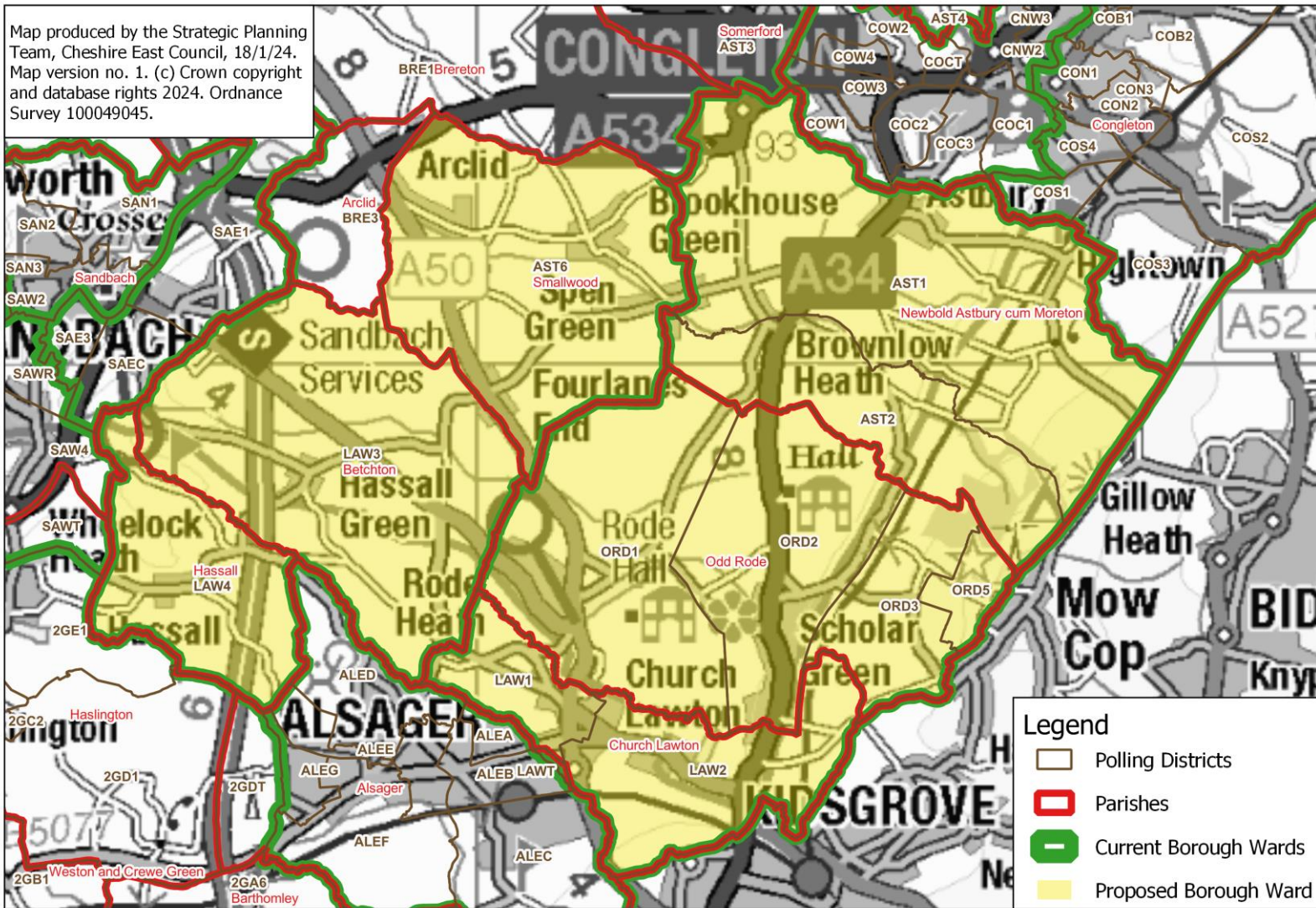
Proposed Borough Ward: Nantwich South & Stapeley



Odd Rod

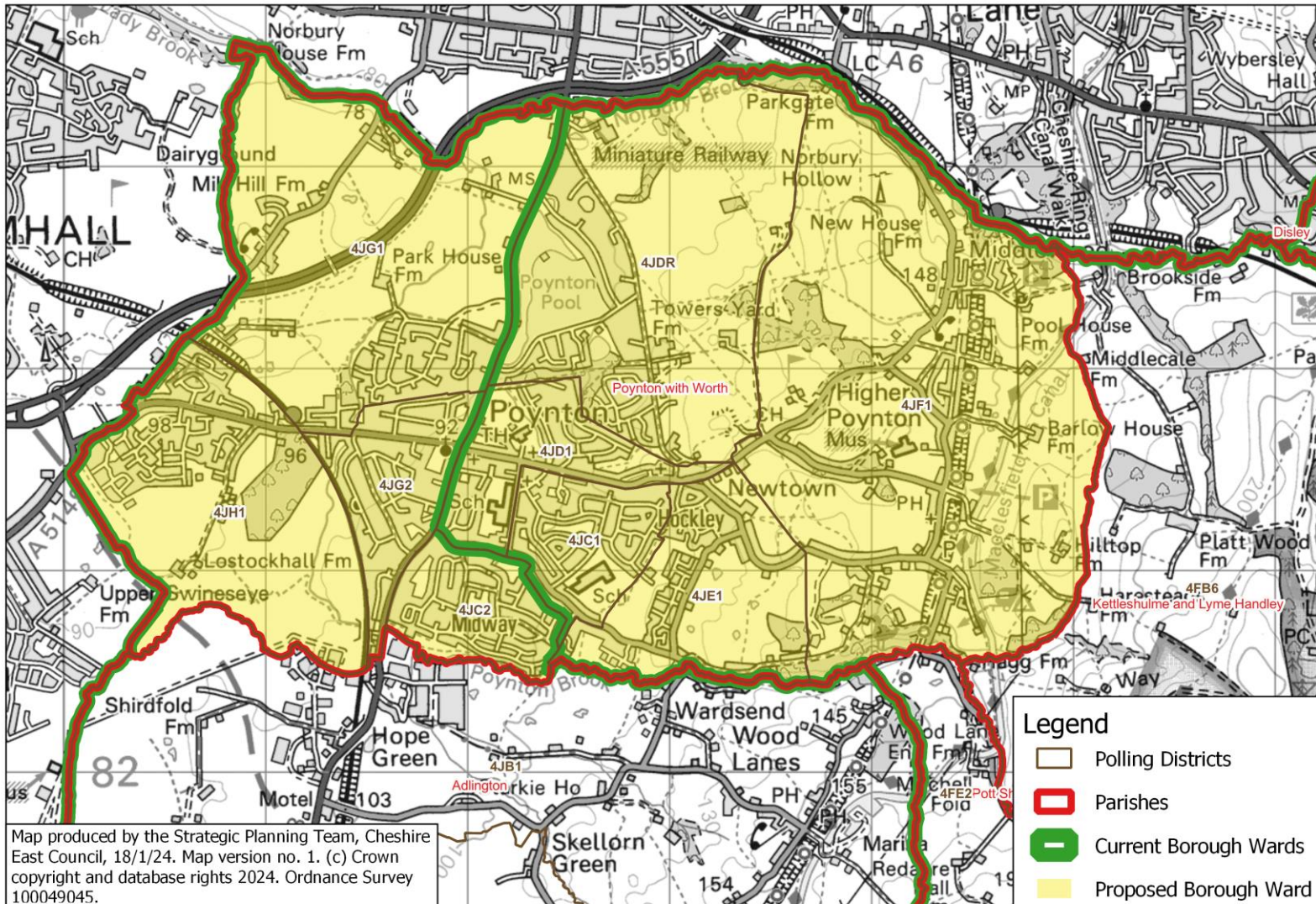
Proposed Borough Ward: Odd Rod

Map produced by the Strategic Planning Team, Cheshire East Council, 18/1/24.
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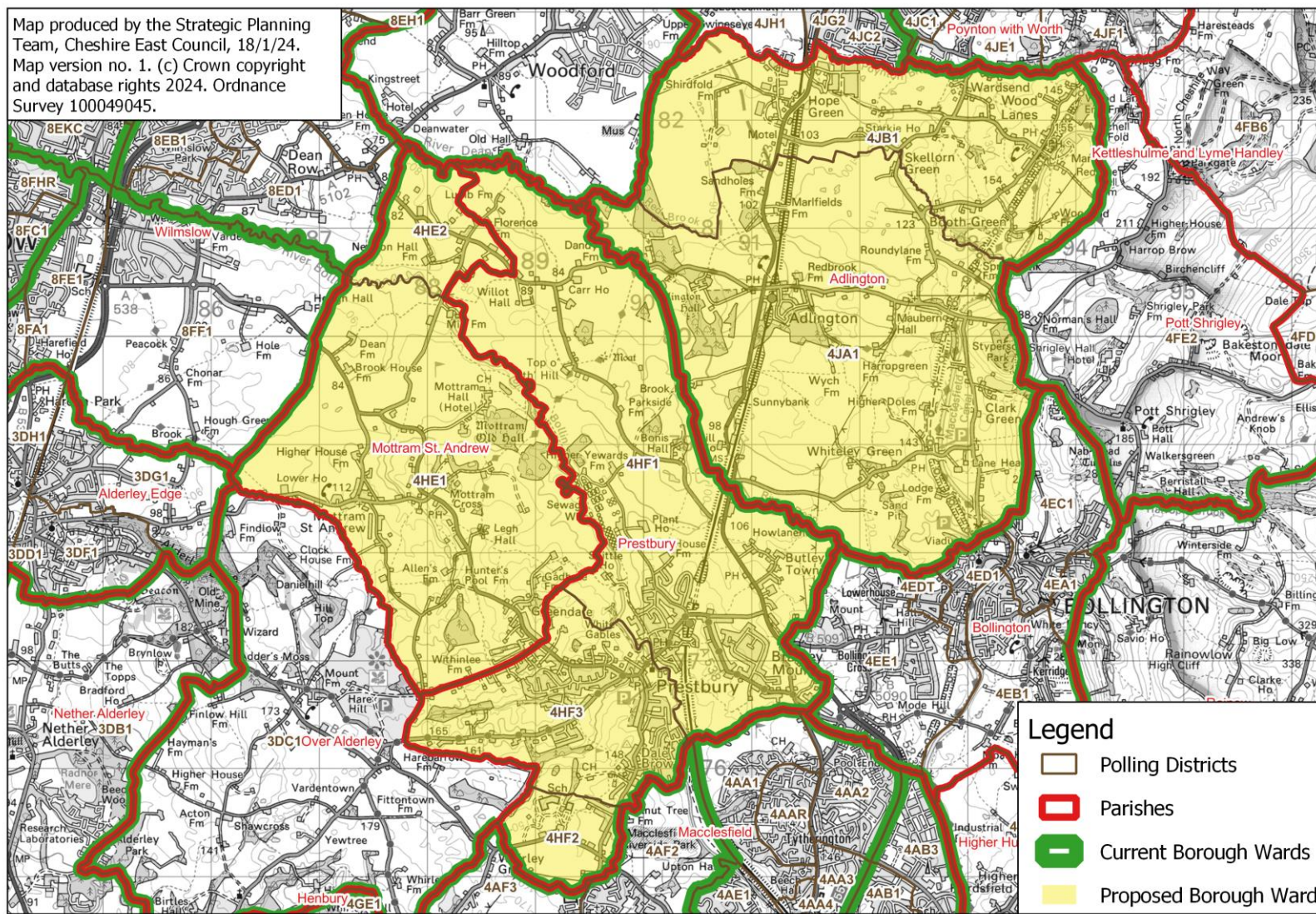
Poynton

Proposed Borough Ward: Poynton



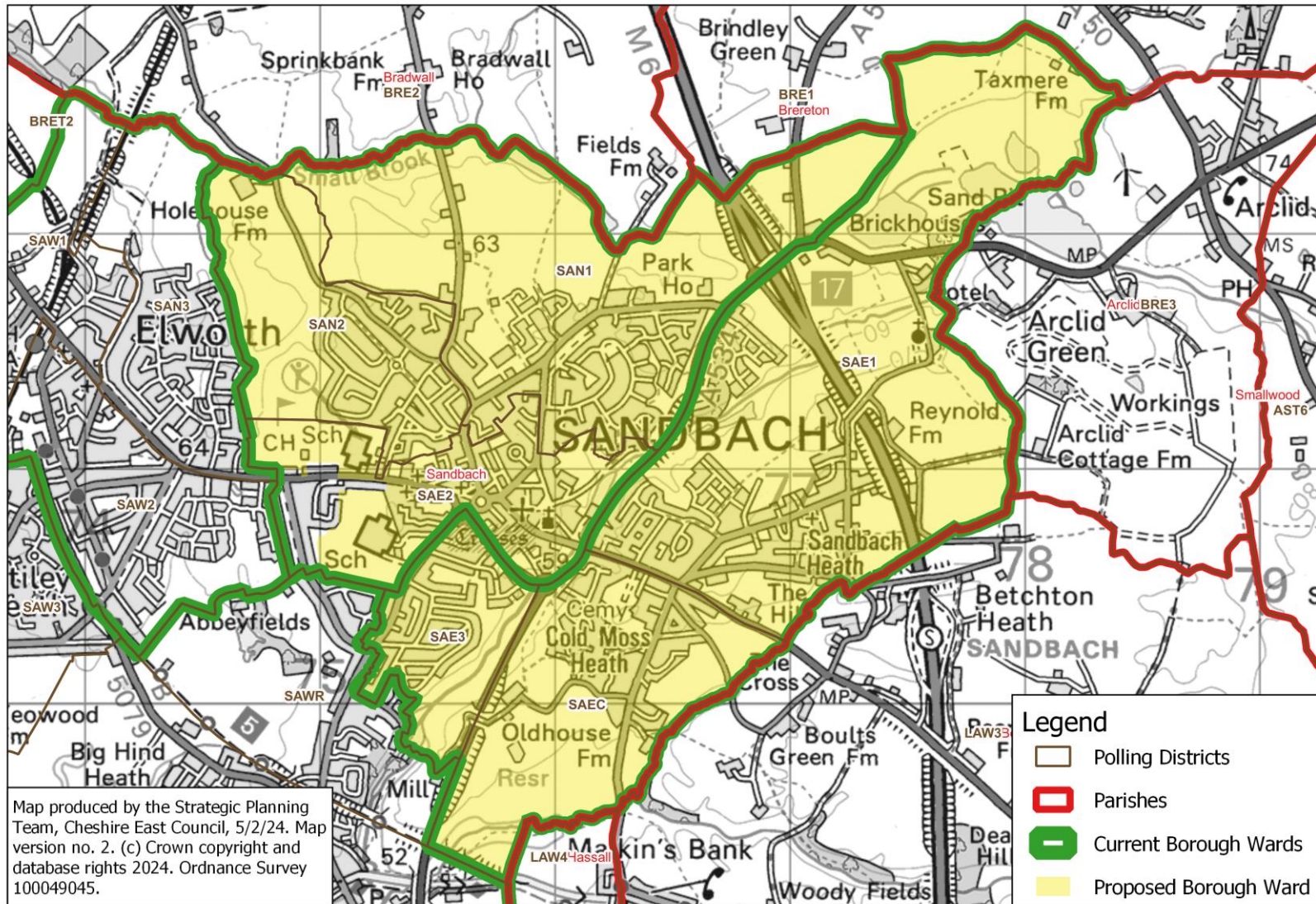
Proposed Borough Ward: Prestbury

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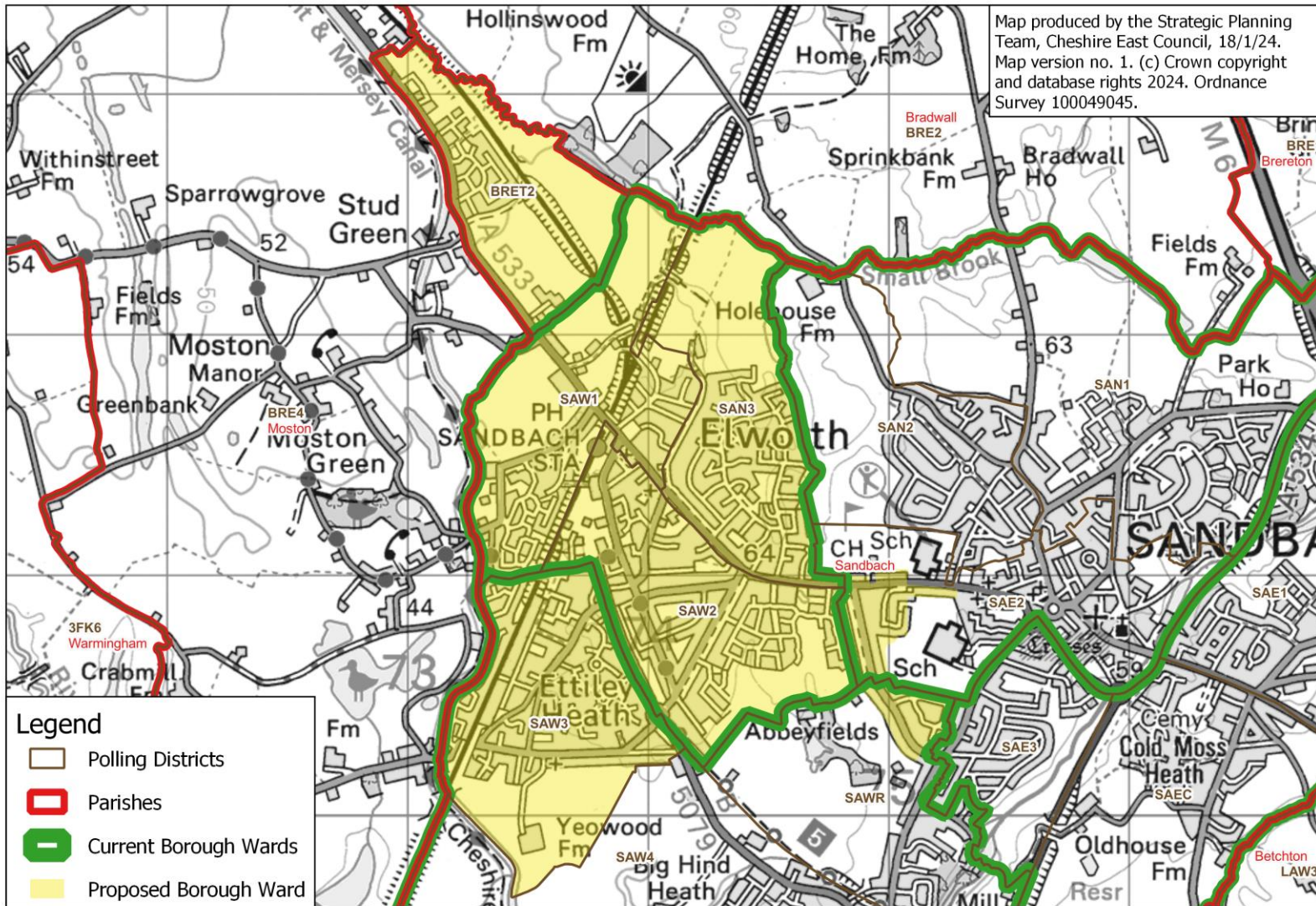
Sandbach East & Central

Proposed Borough Ward: Sandbach East & Central

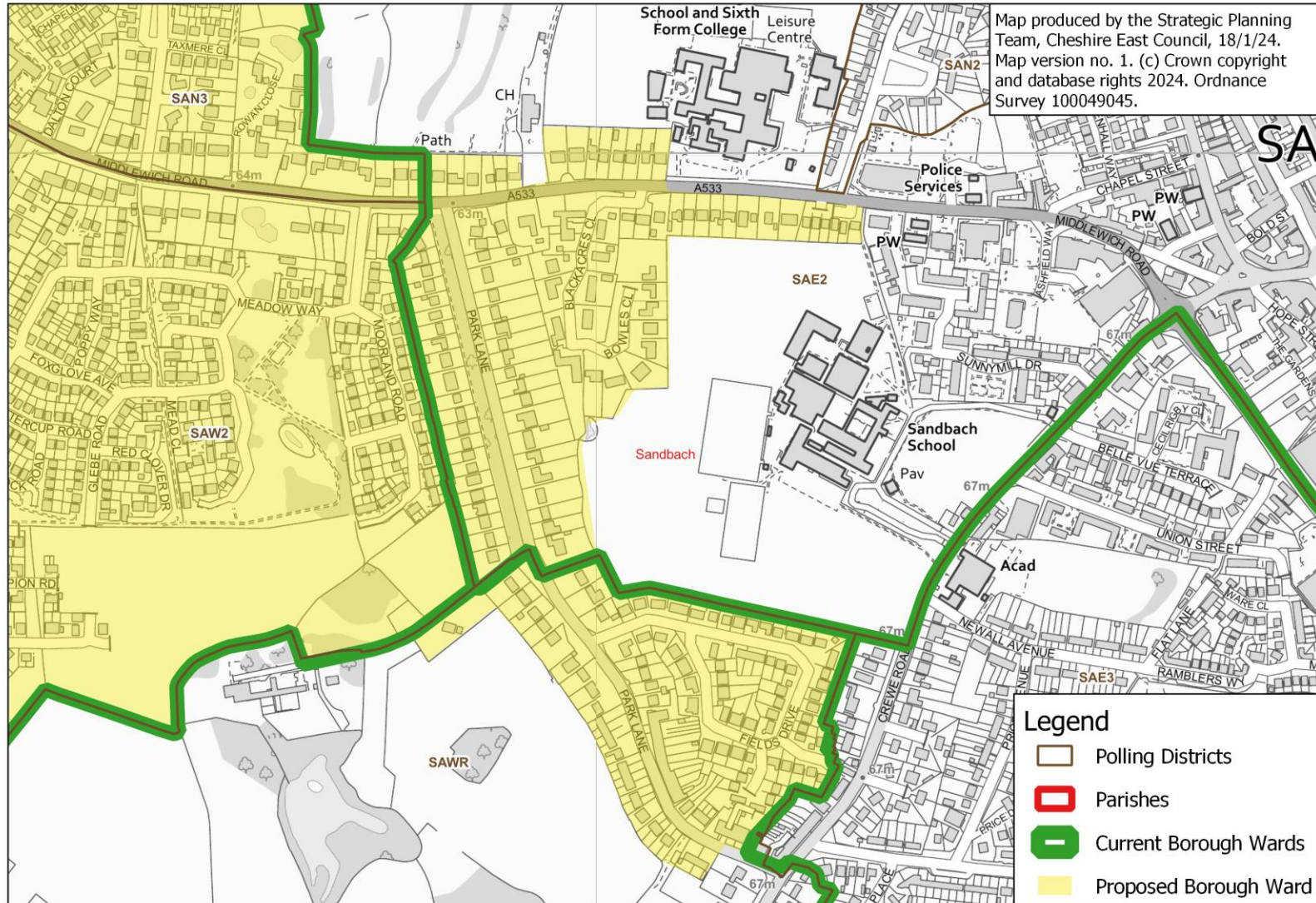


Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath

Proposed Borough Ward: Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath

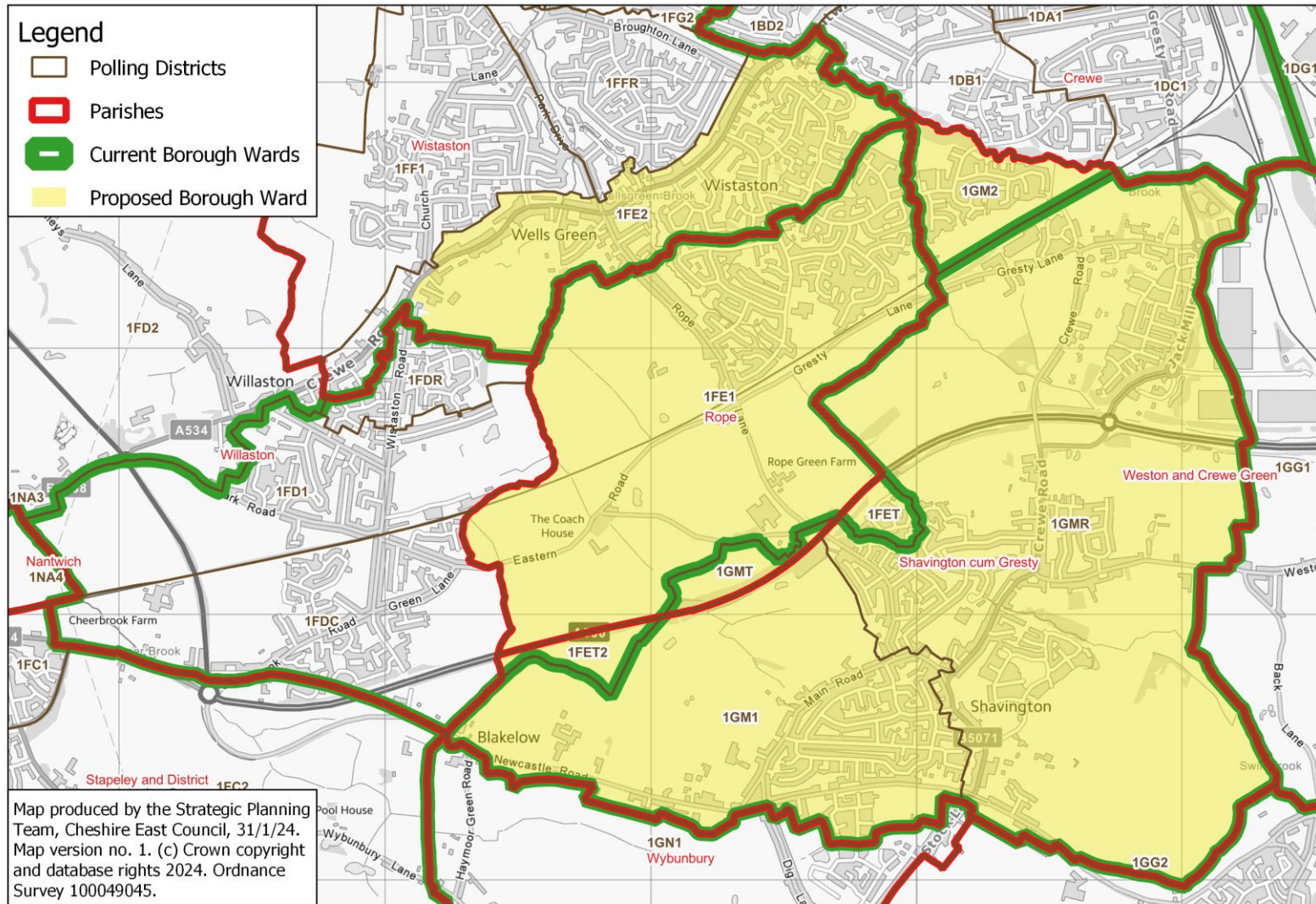


Proposed Borough Ward: Sandbach Elworth & Ettiley Heath - close-up of areas of SAE2 and SAWR to be included



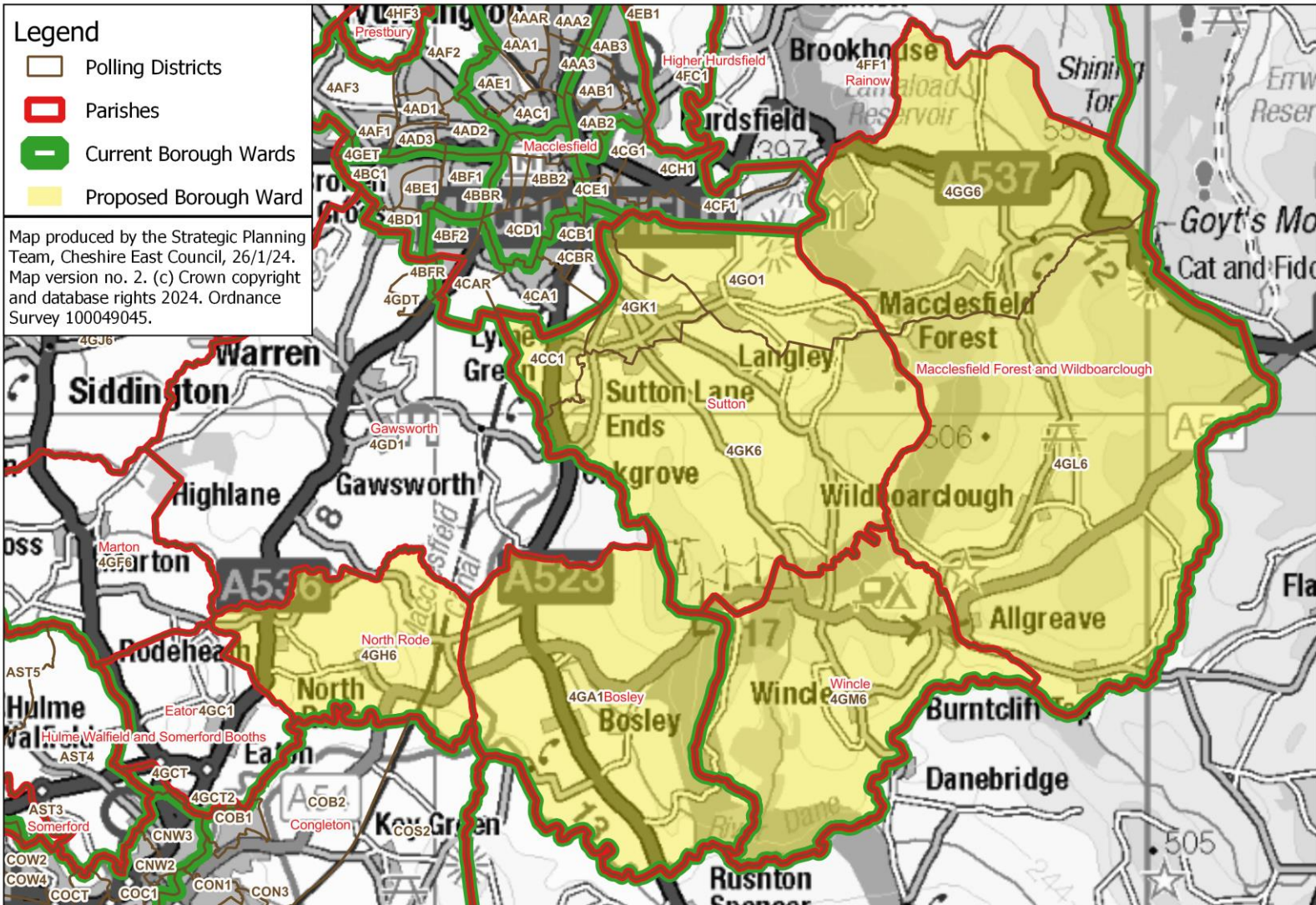
Shavington

Proposed Borough Ward: Shavington



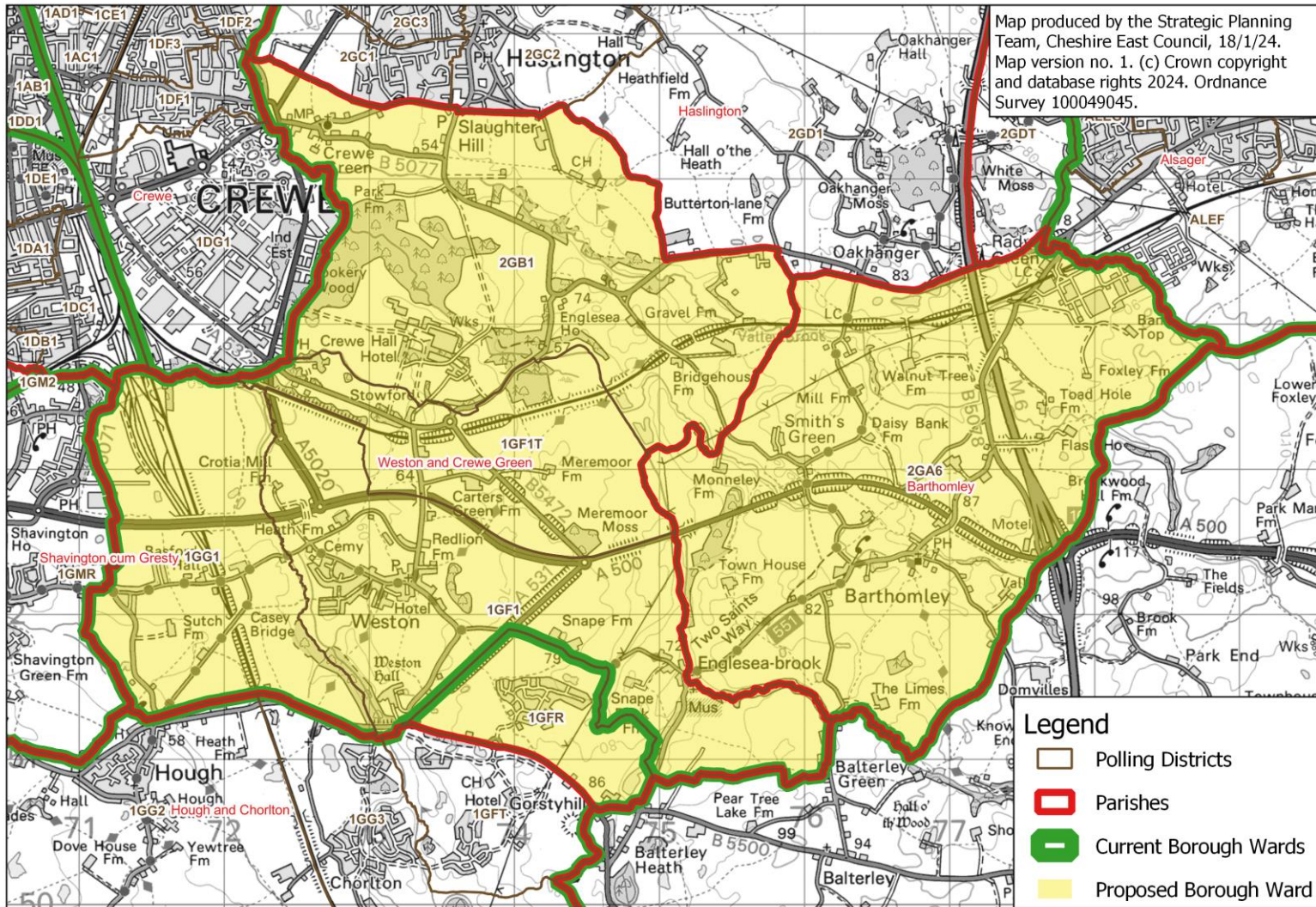
Sutton

Proposed Borough Ward: Sutton



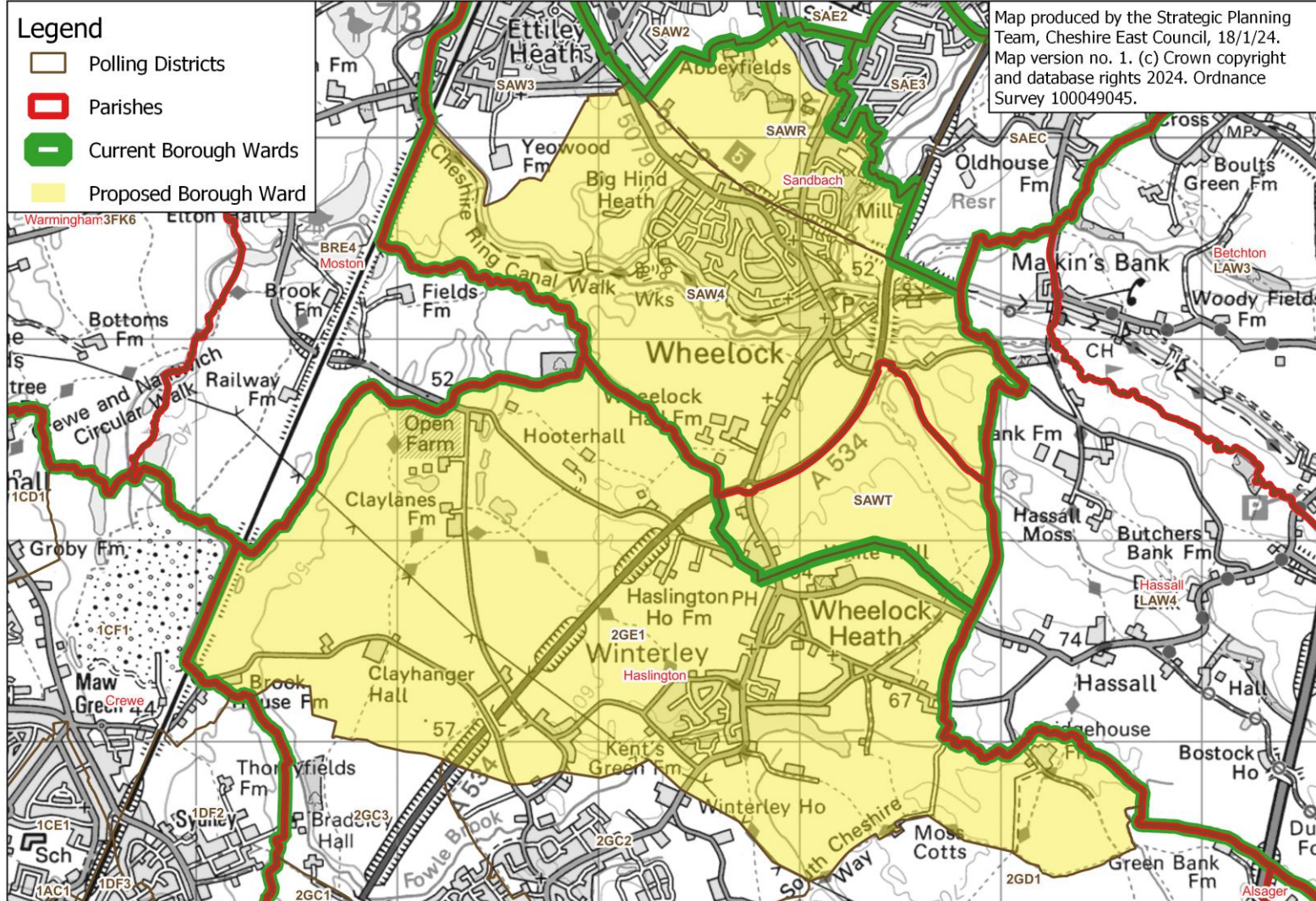
Weston

Proposed Borough Ward: Weston



Wheelock & Winterley

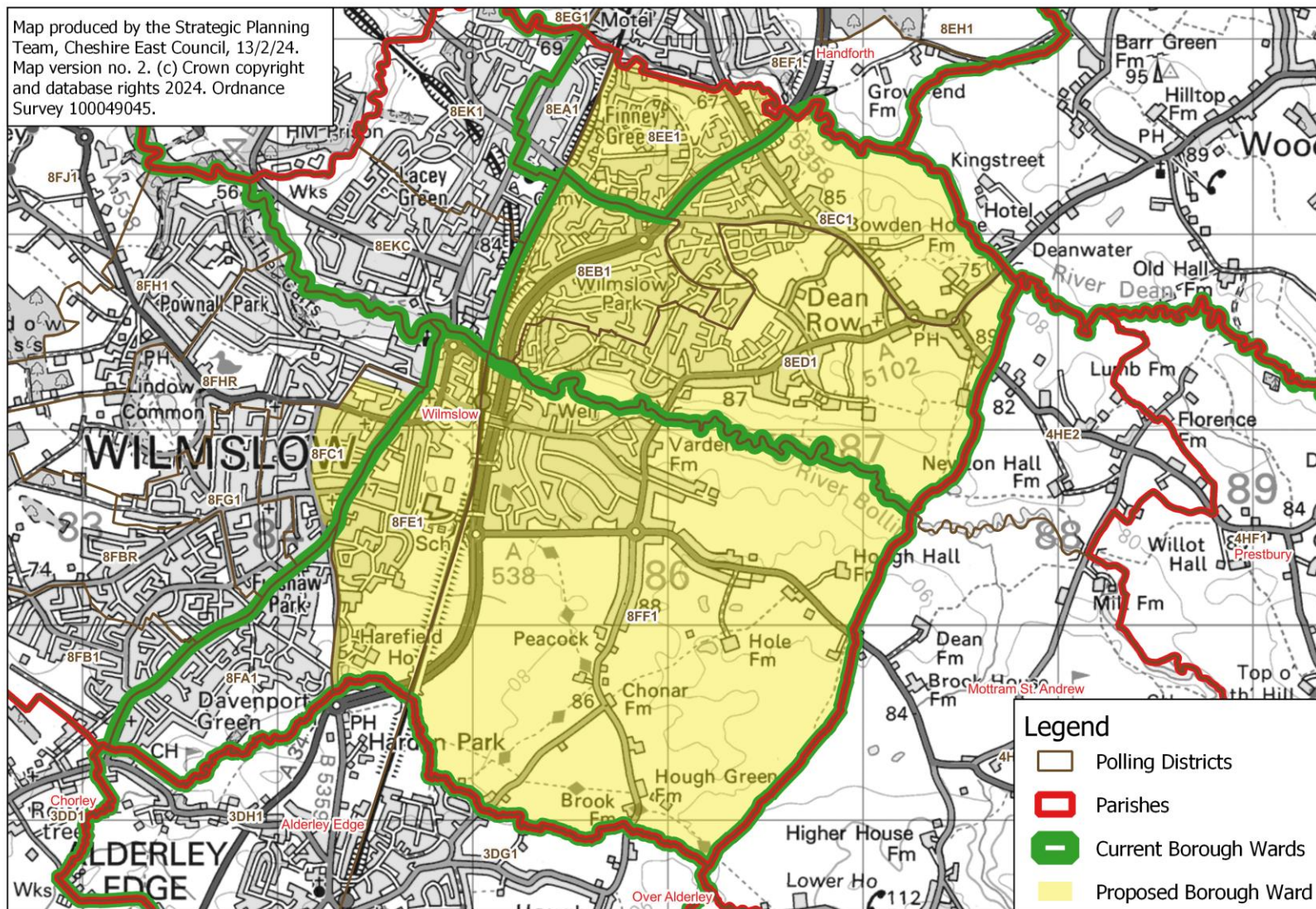
Proposed Borough Ward: Wheelock & Winterley



Wilmslow East & Dean Row

Proposed Borough Ward: Wilmslow East & Dean Row

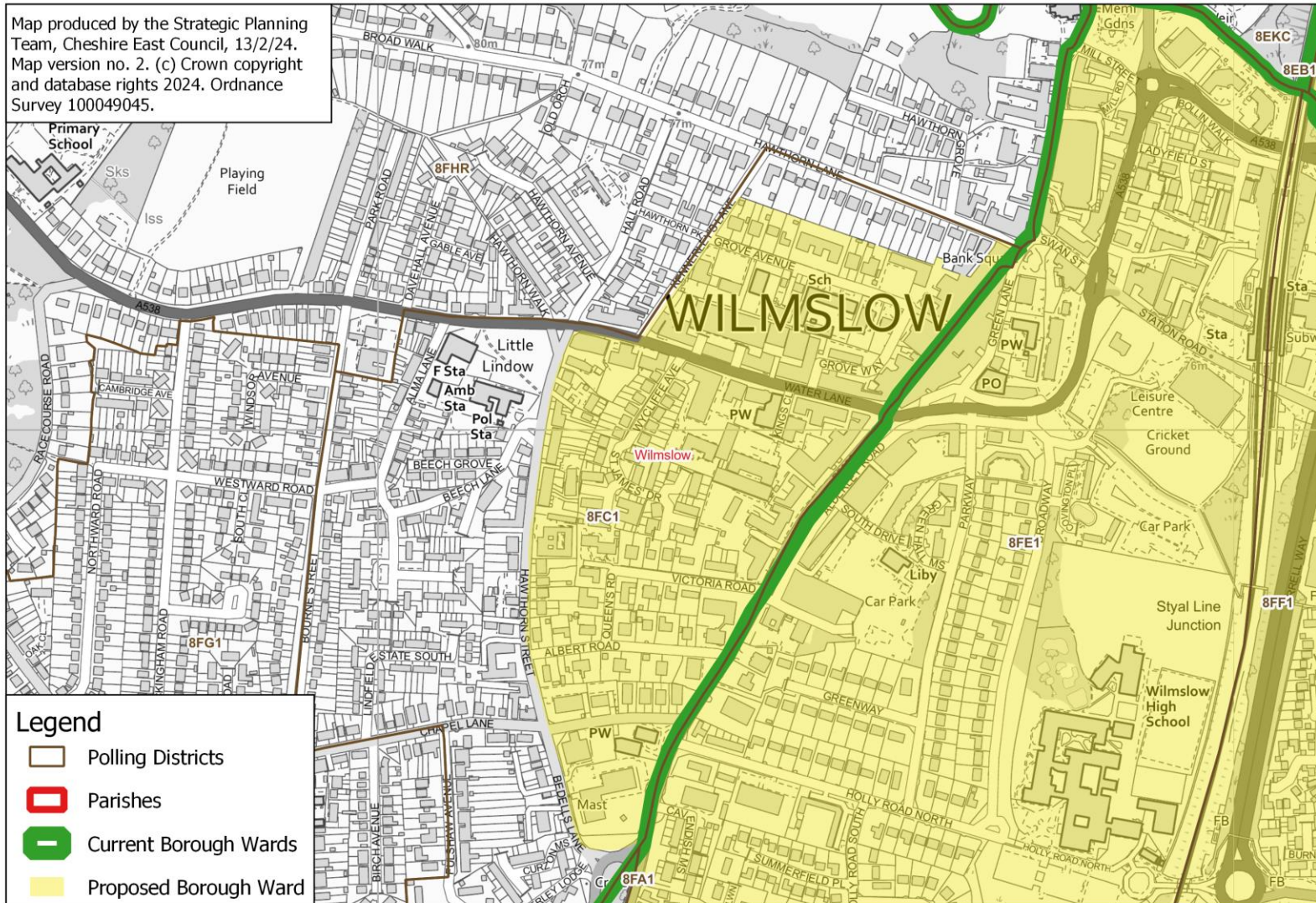
Map produced by the Strategic Planning Team, Cheshire East Council, 13/2/24.
Map version no. 2. (c) Crown copyright and database rights 2024. Ordnance Survey 100049045.



Wilmslow East & Dean Row: close-up of town centre area

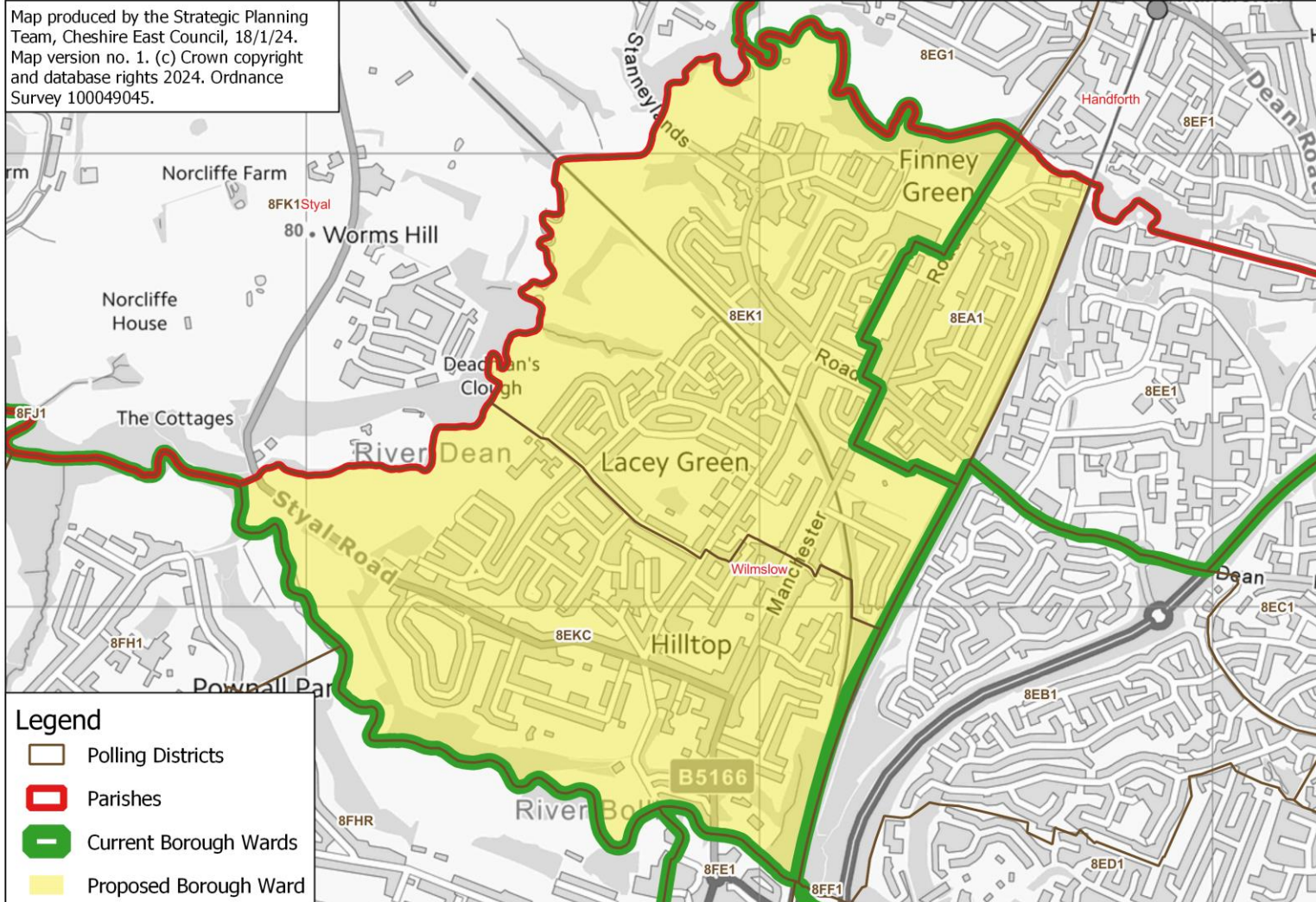
Proposed Borough Ward: Wilmslow East & Dean Row - close-up of area of 8FC1 to be included

Map produced by the Strategic Planning Team, Cheshire East Council, 13/2/24.
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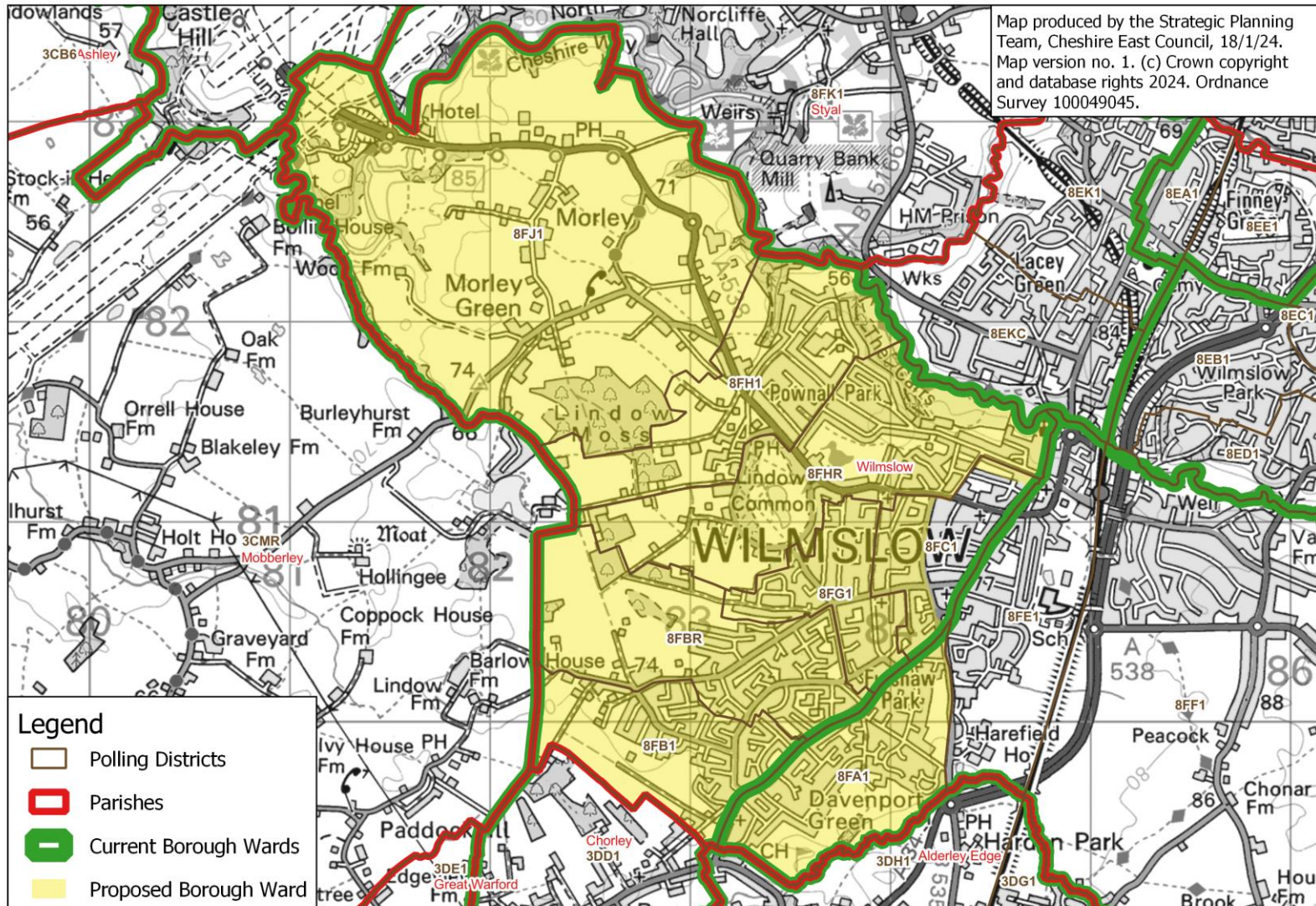
Wilmslow Lacey Green

Proposed Borough Ward: Wilmslow Lacey Green

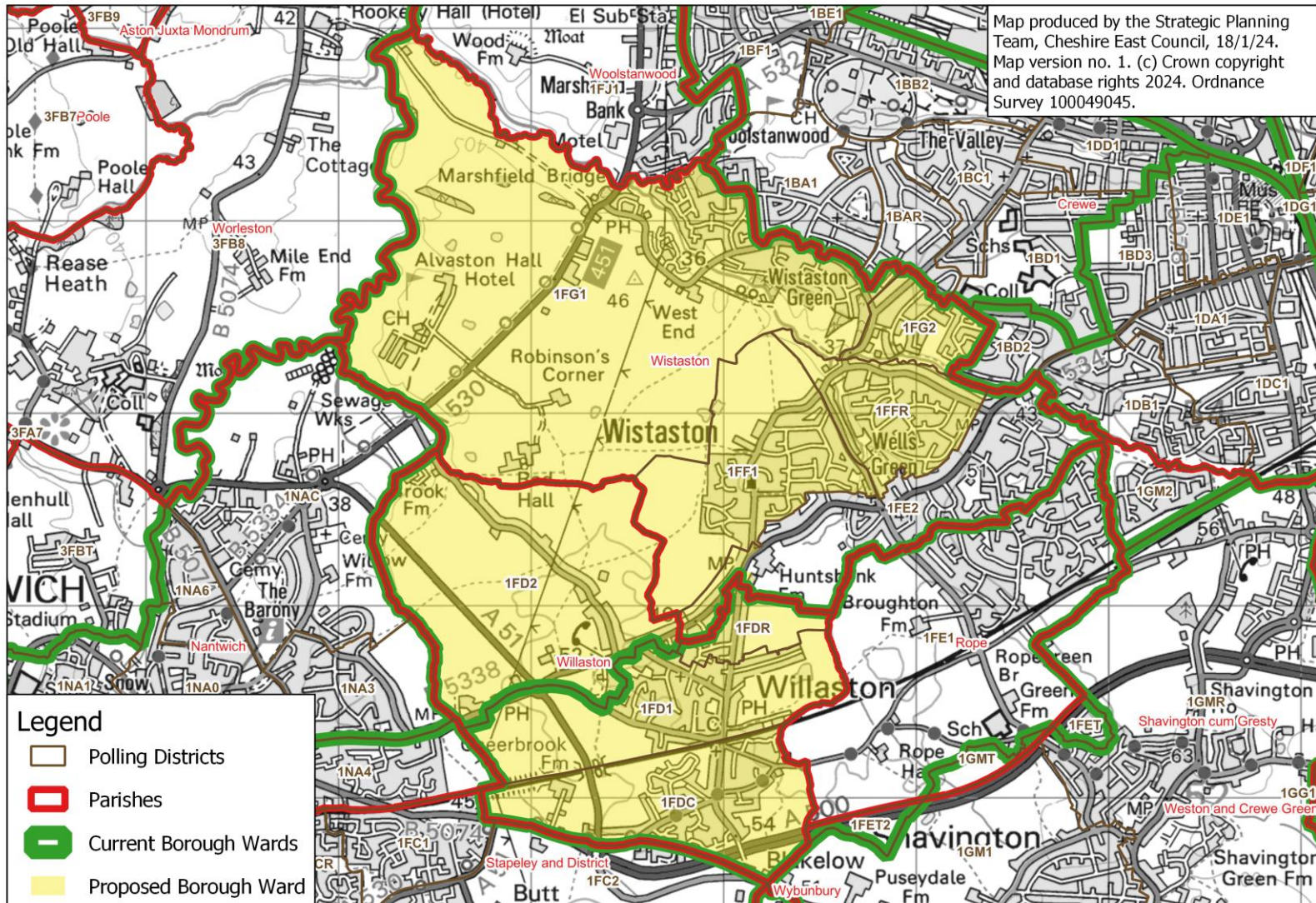


Wilmslow West

Proposed Borough Ward: Wilmslow West

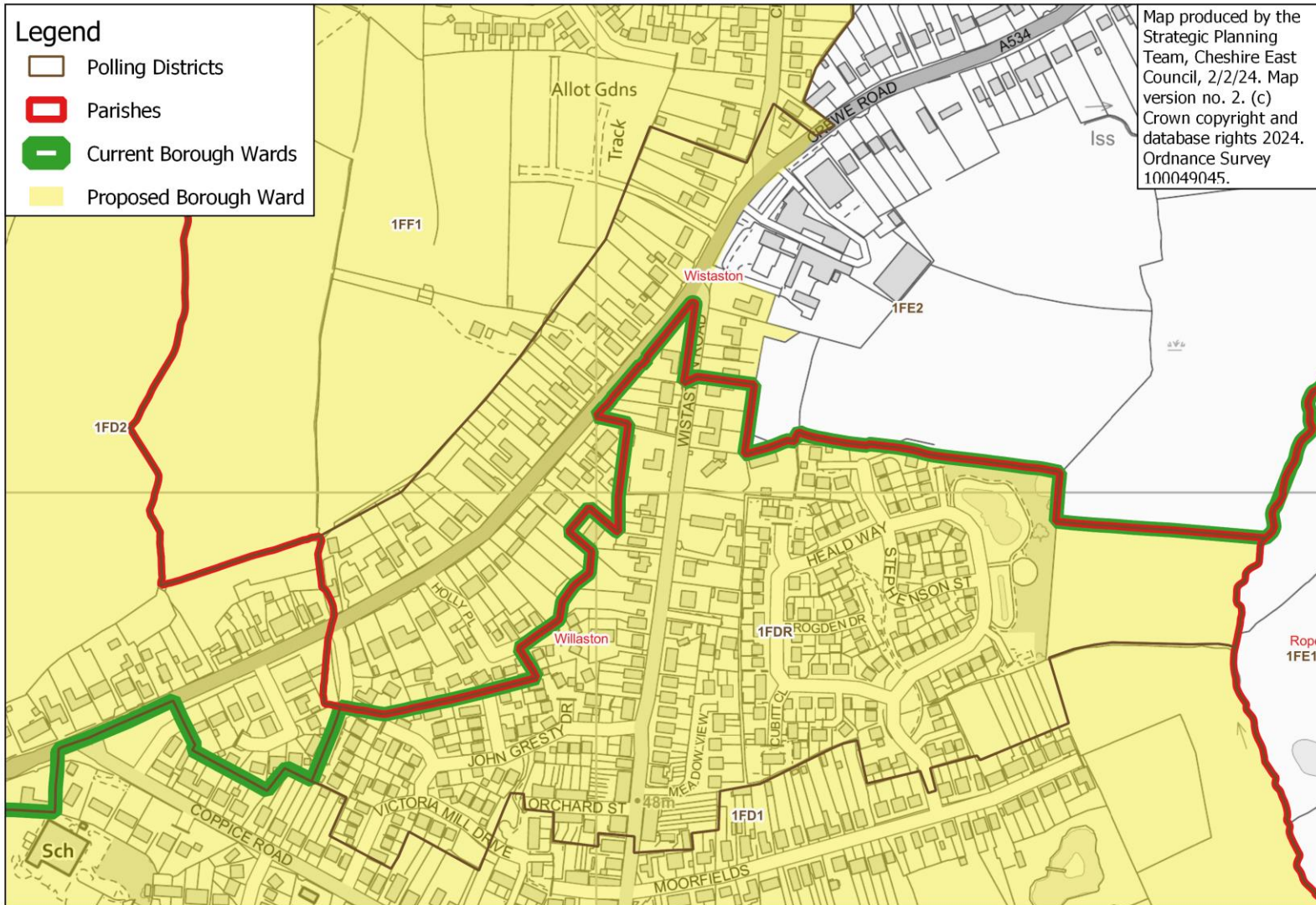


Proposed Borough Ward: Wistaston



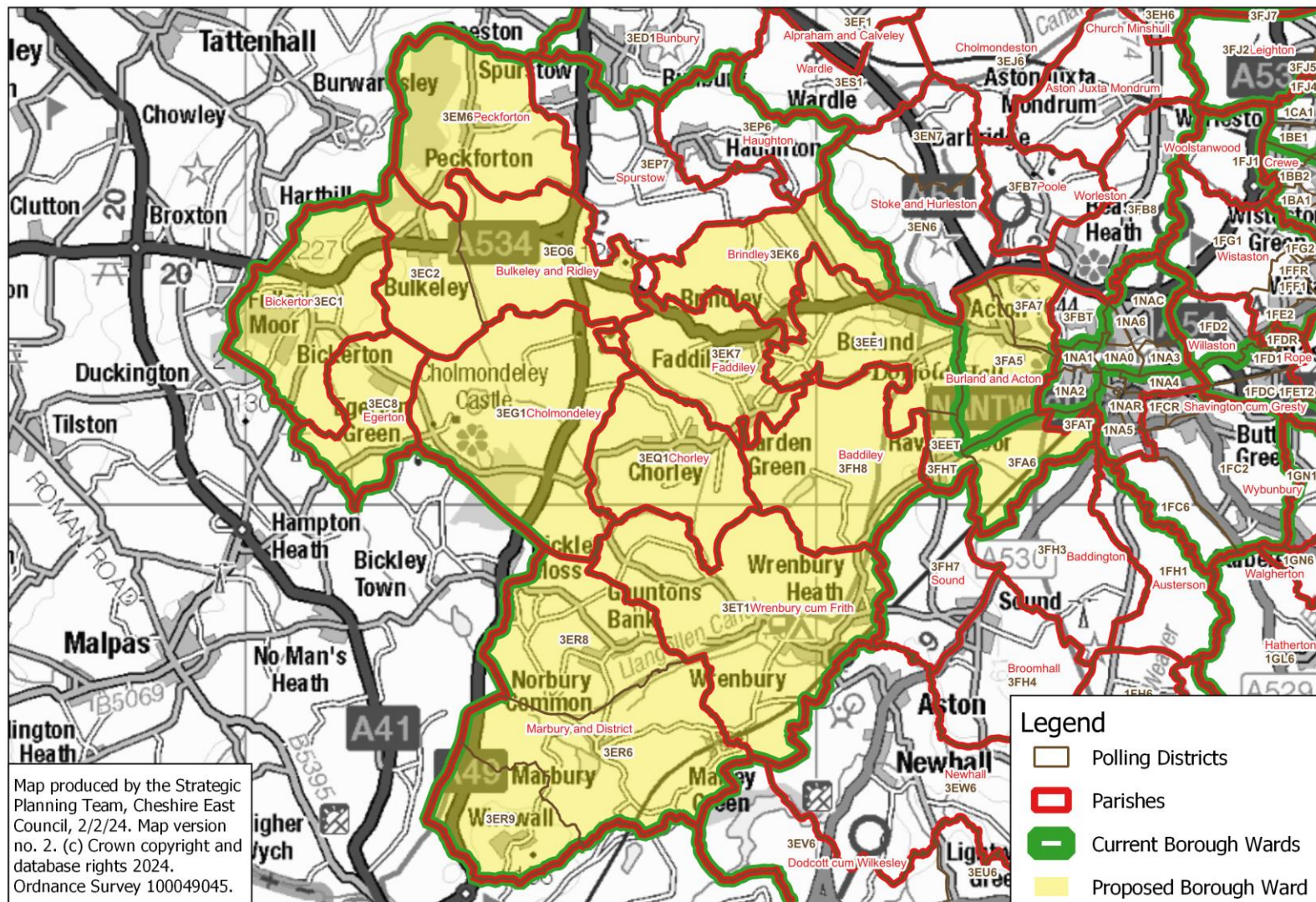
Wistaston: close-up of Wistaston Road area

Proposed Borough Ward: Wistaston - close-up of area of 1FE2 to be included



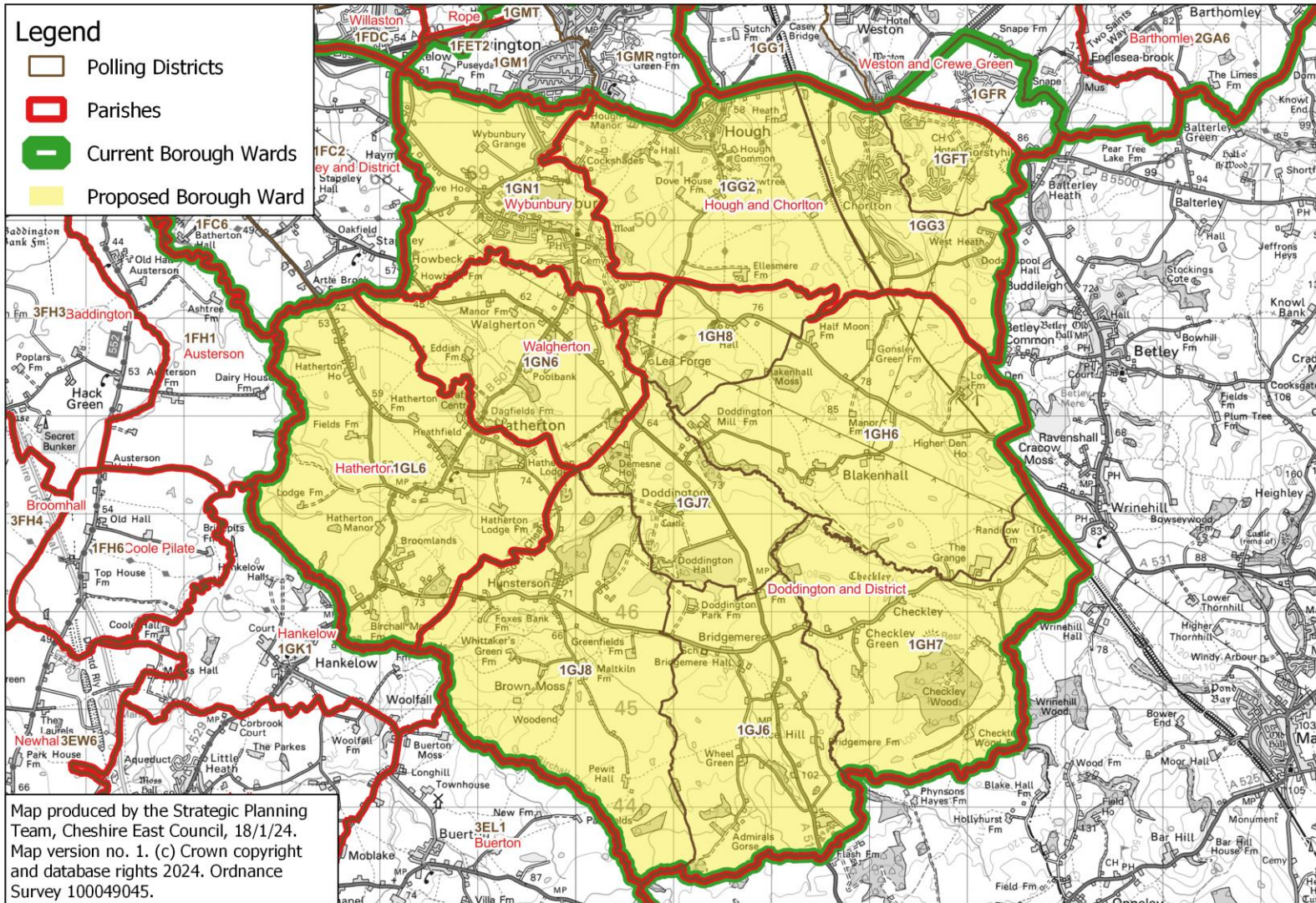
Wrenbury

Proposed Borough Ward: Wrenbury



Wybunbury

Proposed Borough Ward: Wybunbury



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COUNCIL MEETING – 27 FEBRUARY 2024**RECOMMENDATION FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE: CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024-2025****RECOMMENDATIONS: That**

- 1 the draft calendar of meetings for Cheshire East Council 2024/25 be approved, subject to delegated powers being granted to the Director of Governance and Compliance, in consultation with committee chairs and vice chairs, to make any changes to the calendar of meetings which might arise from the review of the committee structure.**
 - 2 That each Service Committee, including the Finance Sub Committee, arrange one twilight meeting over the course of its scheduled cycle of meetings during 2024-25.**
-

Extract from the Minutes of the Corporate Policy Committee meeting on 13 February 2024

12 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2024-2025

The Committee considered a report on the Calendar of Meetings for 2024-2025.

It was proposed, seconded and subsequently carried that, as a trial over the course of the next municipal year, every Service Committee, including the Finance Sub Committee, arranged one twilight meeting scheduled over the cycle of its meetings. It was agreed that individual Service Committees should determine the start time (twilight being between 4-6pm).

RESOLVED (unanimously):

That the Corporate Policy Committee:

1. Agree that the draft calendar of meetings for Cheshire East Council for the municipal year 2024/25 be recommended to Council for approval, subject to delegated powers being granted to the Director of Governance and Compliance, in consultation with committee chairs and vice chairs, to make any changes to the calendar of meetings which might arise from the review of the committee structure.
2. That each Service Committee, including the Finance Sub Committee, arrange one twilight meeting over the course of its scheduled cycle of meetings during 2024-25.

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OPEN

Corporate Policy Committee

13 February 2024

Calendar of Meetings 2024-2025

Report of: David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance

Report Reference No: CP/63/23-24

Ward(s) Affected: All

Purpose of Report

- 1 This report seeks agreement of the Committee in respect of a draft calendar of meetings for the Council for the municipal year 2024/25 and a draft calendar of dates for the period June to October 2025. Full Council will then be asked to formally approve the calendar at the Council meeting on 27 February 2024.

Executive Summary

- 2 In accordance the Local Government Act 1972, the Council is required to give public notice of its meetings. The calendar of meetings assists in fulfilling this legal obligation and provides certainty for Council members.
- 3 Having an approved and published calendar of meetings enables effective business planning and decision-making procedures.
- 4 At its meeting held on [13 December 2023](#), in relation to item 9: Review of the Committee System and Medium-Term Financial Strategy Saving, Full Council resolved that:
 - 4 *the functions of the Scrutiny Committee, Audit and Governance Committee and any other committee, sub-committee, panel or working group are reviewed to consider opportunities for streamlining and efficacy of delivery. The outcome of the review is presented to an all-member briefing in February 2024. Please see full resolution of Council [Minute Council 13 Dec 2023](#)*

- 5 Upon conclusion of the review of the committee structure, the calendar of meetings will be amended if this is required. In the meantime, in order to give as much certainty as possible to Members, officers and the public, it is appropriate to approve the calendar of meetings, based upon the existing committee structure.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the draft calendar of meetings for Cheshire East Council for the municipal year 2024/25 be recommended to Council for approval, subject to delegated powers being granted to the Director of Governance and Compliance, in consultation with committee chairs and vice chairs, to make any changes to the calendar of meetings which might arise from the review of the committee structure.

Background

- 6 As set out in its Constitution (Chapter 3 – Part 1 para 1.1) the Council is required to decide when its meetings will take place. These are set out in a calendar of meetings. The calendar of meetings is intended only to deal with formal decision-making meetings and, therefore, does not provide details of other meetings involving Members.
- 7 Full Council must approve the calendar.
- 8 Following the Corporate Policy Committee held on [23 March 2023](#), the Constitution Working Group has undertaken a Survey to seek Members' opinion on the appetite for twilight / early evening meetings (4pm or 6pm), alongside meetings held during normal working hours. 71% of all Councillors that completed the survey would prefer committee meetings to start in the daytime at 10am or 2pm, with 24% of Councillors expressing a preference for committee meetings to start from 6pm onwards. Bearing in mind that committee chairs can agree changes to the start times of meetings if required, The Working Group concluded that the timing of meetings should remain unchanged.
- 9 Further consultation with the administration has requested consideration is given to each service committee having one twilight meeting. This would require 7 meetings to be moved to a 4-6pm start time.
- 10 Furthermore, there would be financial implications if twilight or evening meetings were to be introduced. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 required a budget saving of £135,000 in relation to the cost of democracy. Following the decision of council to reverse the earlier

decision to reduce the number of planning committees this saving has not been met. The exact cost of twilight or evening meetings will be dependent on how the building is used, length of meeting and the number of necessary staff. The additional costs will comprise an hourly business support staffing charge of £25.21 per hour for all meetings held after 7pm at Westfields, Municipal Buildings, Crewe and Delamere House, Crewe and after 5pm at Macclesfield Town Hall. Any staff grade 8 and under in attendance at meetings would be entitled to claim overtime and there are also facilities costs associated with keeping the buildings open for longer.

- 11 Due to the potential costs for twilight/evening meetings and the clear policy decision to reduce the cost of democracy officers are not able to recommend the introduction of evening meetings. However, Council may consider trialling a twilight meeting during the forthcoming Municipal Year, in order to establish whether this might be a favourable option for Members and members of the public in the future.
- 12 The scheduling of meetings has taken into account the Council's business planning/performance reporting cycle, together with a range of additional issues arising from the implementation of the committee system and learning from its operation since May 2021.
- 13 Where possible August has been retained for recess, except for planning committee meetings.
- 14 A draft calendar for the period June to October 2024 was approved at the Council meeting on 24 May 2023. This approach provided Members, officers and members of the public with some degree of certainty for the period from the end of the Municipal Year through to the winter, and appears to have been well received. It is therefore proposed that the same approach will be adopted for the next Municipal Year. Due to clashes of meetings, the following changes are proposed:
 - Audit and Governance Committee on Thu 25 July 2024 is moved to Mon 29 July 2024 and the meeting on Thu 26 September 2024 is moved to Mon 30 September 2024. This is to avoid having two committee meetings on the same day.
 - Corporate Policy Committee moves from Thu 4 July 2024 to Thu 11 July 2024 to avoid a clash with the LGA Annual Conference.
- 15 The dates for the Strategic Planning Board, Northern Planning Committee and Southern Planning Committee have been scheduled to meet on a Wednesday in accordance with scheduling timeframe agreed by Council on 13 December 2023:

- Strategic Planning Board – meet bi-monthly.
- Northern Planning Committee and Southern Planning Committee: to meet around every 6 weeks.

Site visits to take place on the Friday before the meeting in question.

- 16 Meetings of full Council have been scheduled to be held on a Wednesday on the following dates - 15 May 2024, 17 July 2024, 16 October 2024, 11 December 2024 and 26 February 2025, with the start time of 11 am.
- 17 The meetings of service committees have been scheduled to take place on the same day of the week where possible. If there is a specific need for additional or fewer meetings, this can be dealt with under existing arrangements.
- 18 The Audit and Governance Committee and Licensing Committee have been scheduled to meet five times each year. Provisions exist for additional meetings to be called if needed.
- 19 The scheduling of meetings of the Scrutiny Committee has been approached on a quarterly basis, as is currently the case. It is acknowledged however that there may be the need to arrange ad-hoc meetings, when required to deal with bespoke external scrutiny matters e.g., external proposals by health providers, using the general powers of the Committee Chair. The quarterly scheduling will provide for annual reporting, with flexibility around the dates of meetings, to suit business needs.
- 20 A draft calendar of dates for the period May to October 2025 is also included to help with diary planning.
- 21 The Committee is asked to refer the calendar to Council for approval.

Consultation and Engagement

- 22 The calendar has been shared with the Group Leaders, Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees and senior officers.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 23 The Council is required to give public notice of its meetings in order to fulfil its legal obligations under the Access to Information Rules set out in the Constitution and to meet its obligations under the Local Government Act 1972. The calendar will assist the Council in meeting these requirements and will provide certainty for Members.

24 Other Options Considered

Option	Impact	Risk
Do nothing	The authority would be unable to plan the decision making function of the council in an effective manner	Decisions not being made in a timely manner. The business needs of the council not been met

Implications and Comments*Monitoring Officer/Legal*

- 25 In accordance the Local Government Act 1972 and the Access to Information Rules in the Constitution, the Council is required to give public notice of its meetings, and a calendar of meetings assists in fulfilling this legal obligation.
- 26 Members of the public have a legal right to attend to participate in and observe council meetings, e.g., make representations in respect of planning applications, asking questions at meetings, and presenting appeals.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 27 There are financial implications in relation to introducing twilight and evening meetings, as outlined in paragraphs 10 and 11.
- 28 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 requires a budget saving of £135,000 in relation to the cost of democracy. This saving target has not been reached.
- 29 Evenings or twilight meetings create additional budgetary burdens. There would be an hourly business support staffing charge of £25.21 per hour for all meetings held after 7pm at Westfields, Municipal Buildings, Crewe and Delamere House, Crewe and after 5pm at Macclesfield Town Hall. Any staff grade 8 and under in attendance at meetings would be entitled to claim overtime and there are also facilities costs associated with keeping the buildings open for longer.

Policy

30

An open and enabling organisation

Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision-making

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

31 There are no direct implications for equality.

Human Resources

32 There are no direct implications for human resources.

Risk Management

33 A published calendar of meetings enables effective business planning and decision-making procedures.

Rural Communities

34 There are no direct implications for rural communities.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

35 There are no direct implications for children and young people.

Public Health

36 There are no direct implications for Public Health.

Climate Change

37 There are no implications for climate change.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance brian.reed@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1 - Calendar of Meetings for Municipal Year 2024/25
Background Papers:	None

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Calendar of Meetings 2024-2025

COMMITTEE	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEP	OCT
Council (11 am)	15		17			16		11		26			14		16			15
Corporate Policy (10.00 am)		13				3	28			6	20			12				2
Economy and Growth (2 pm)		4			10		12		14		11			3			9	
Highways and Transport (10.00 am)		20			19		21		23			3		19			18	
Environment and Communities (10.00 am)		6	25		26		14		30		27			5	24		25	
Children and Families (2 pm)		3			16		11		13	10		7		2			15	
Adults and Health (10.00 am)		24			23		18		20		24			23			22	
Finance Sub Committee (10 am or 2 pm)		11 (Tue 2 pm)			12 (Thu 10 am)		7 (Thu 10 am)		9 (Thu 10 am)		10 (Mon 10 am)			10 (Tue 2 pm)			11 (Thu 10 am)	
Scrutiny Committee (10.00 am)		27			5			12			13			26			4	
Audit and Governance Committee (10.00 am)	30 (Thu)		29 (Mon)		30 (Mon)			5 (Thu)			6 (Thu)		29 (Thu)		28 (Mon)		29 (Mon)	
General Appeals Sub Committee (10 am)		18	4	20	9	8	5	10	7	4	4	8		17	3	19	8	7
Licensing Committee (2 pm)		10			2		4		6		3			9			1	
General Licensing Sub Committee (10 am)		17	15		17	10	25		27	24		14		16	14		16	9
Strategic Planning Board (10 am)	29		24		18		20		29		26		28		23		17	
Southern Planning Committee (10 am)		5	31		11	23		4		5		2		4	30		10	22
Northern Planning Committee (10 am)		26		21		2	13		15		5	23		25		20		1
Health and Wellbeing Board (2 pm)			2		24		19		21		18				1		23	
Local Authority School Governor Nomination Sub Committee (2 pm)			16				26				25				15			
Cared for Children and Care Leaver Committee (2 pm)		18			3			3			4			17			2	
Shared Services Joint Committee (10 am)		28					22											

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COUNCIL MEETING – 27 FEBRUARY 2024**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE: TARGETED REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES****RECOMMENDATIONS: That Council**

- 1
 - a) agree that the Constitution Working Group reviews the job descriptions for the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, Service Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs and Opposition Spokespersons.
 - b) the Working Groups recommendations in respect of these job descriptions to be submitted to the Independent Remuneration Panel.
 - c) the Independent Remuneration Panel consider and review these job descriptions and report back to Constitution Working Group; the Working Group to consider if the job descriptions should be referred onwards.
 - d) a full review of all member allowances by the new Independent Remuneration Panel be carried out after the actions set out in a) to c) have been completed.
 - e) the allowances scheme be amended, to allow for two special responsibility allowances to be claimed by any one Councillor.
2. agree that, where the annual NJC officer pay award is for a flat rate and percentage increase to salaries and other allowances respectively, the percentage increase applicable to other allowances will be regarded as that year's uplift in respect of Cheshire East's Scheme of Members' Allowances.
3. that no uplift to the Scheme of Members' Allowances be implemented in 2023/2024.

Extract from the Minutes of the Corporate Policy Committee meeting on 13 February 2024

11 TARGETED REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

The Committee considered the report which set out the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel in respect of a targeted review of Members' Allowances in the context of the budget consultation on the Council's financial position.

Members sought clarity on recommendation 1e which proposed that the allowances scheme be amended to allow for two special responsibility allowances to be claimed by any one Councillor. This recommendation was debated by the committee, both the

positive impact this would have for working members and also the impact this could have on the budget and the MTFS proposal to reduce the costs of democracy, was highlighted.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That the Corporate Policy Committee recommends that full Council:

- 1
 - a) Agree that the Constitution Working Group reviews the job descriptions for the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, Service Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs and Opposition Spokespersons.
 - b) The Working Groups recommendations in respect of these job descriptions to be submitted to the Independent Remuneration Panel.
 - c) The Independent Remuneration Panel consider and review these job descriptions and report back to Constitution Working Group; the Working Group to consider if the job descriptions should be referred onwards.
 - d) A full review of all member allowances by the new Independent Remuneration Panel be carried out after the actions set out in a) to c) have been completed.
 - e) The allowances scheme be amended, to allow for two special responsibility allowances to be claimed by any one Councillor.
2. Agree that, where the annual NJC officer pay award is for a flat rate and percentage increase to salaries and other allowances respectively, the percentage increase applicable to other allowances will be regarded as that year's uplift in respect of Cheshire East's Scheme of Members' Allowances.
3. That no uplift to the Scheme of Members' Allowances be implemented in 2023/2024.

OPEN

Corporate Policy Committee

13 February 2024

Targeted Review of Members' Allowances

Report of: David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance

Report Reference No: CP/69/23-24

Ward(s) Affected: All

Purpose of Report

- 1 To consider the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel in respect of a targeted review of Members' Allowances (Appendix 1), in the context of the budget consultations on the Council's financial position.
- 2 To consider changing the way in which the uplift mechanism is applied to the Scheme of Members' Allowances.
- 3 To consider whether an uplift to allowances should be implemented for 2023/2024.

Executive Summary

- 4 In August 2023, the Independent Remuneration Panel ('the Panel') was asked to undertake a short, focused review of Members' Allowances, covering three specific issues: the allowances paid to the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council respectively; the allowances paid to the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the six Service Committees (and the Finance Sub Committee); and a reconsideration of the case for allocating Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) to Opposition Spokespersons on these committees.
- 5 This report reviews the Panel's recommendations, within the context of the budget consultations on the Council's financial position.

- 6 The current uplift mechanism for Cheshire East's Scheme of Members' Allowances is the NJC officer pay award. This means that the annual pay award agreed for officers (if applicable), is also applied to Members' Allowances. This arrangement is in place until 2026.
- 7 The report proposes that where the annual NJC officer pay award is for a flat rate/percentage increase to salaries/other allowances respectively, the percentage increase applicable to other allowances would be regarded as the uplift in respect of Cheshire East's Scheme of Members' Allowances.
- 8 The report also considers whether the pay award for 2023/2024 should be implemented, in light of budget consultations on the Council's financial position.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the recommendations of the Panel in light of budget consultations, Corporate Policy Committee is invited to recommend to Council that:

- 1 a) Constitution Working Group reviews the job descriptions for the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, Service Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs and Opposition Spokespersons.

b) The Working Group's recommendations in respect of these job descriptions to be submitted to the Independent Remuneration Panel.

c) The Independent Remuneration Panel consider and review these job descriptions and report back to Constitution Working Group; the Working Group to consider if the job descriptions should be referred onwards.

d) A full review of all member allowances by the new Independent Remuneration Panel be carried out after the actions set out in a) to c) have been completed.

e) The allowances scheme be amended, to allow for two special responsibility allowances to be claimed by any one Councillor.
2. That, where the annual NJC officer pay award is for a flat rate and percentage increase to salaries and other allowances respectively, the percentage increase applicable to other allowances will be regarded as that year's uplift in respect of Cheshire East's Scheme of Members' Allowances.

3. That no uplift to the Scheme of Members' Allowances be implemented in 2023/2024.

Background

8.1 Focused Review of Member Allowances: Outcome July 2023

8.1.1 On 19 July 2023, Council considered the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, following a targeted review of allowances. Council resolved that (Minute 26 refers):

1. Civic payments should remain at their current levels (Mayor £14,000 and Deputy Mayor £5,600)
2. From 2023, civic payments should be subjected to the same uprating which may be applied to members' allowances
3. Special responsibility allowance (SRA) for the Chair of scrutiny committee should remain at £7,650
4. In respect of the Parental Leave Policy for Councillors, basic allowance should continue to be paid to an elected Member during any period of parental leave
5. In respect of the draft Parental Leave Policy for Councillors, special responsibility allowance payable to the elected Member during any period of parental leave should be discontinued and transferred to the Councillor who is undertaking the special responsibility in question
6. Basic allowance should be increased by a flat rate of £500 and applied retrospectively for 2022-2023
7. Special responsibility allowances (to include Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Scrutiny Chair) should be increased by 4.04% and applied retrospectively for 2022-2023

8. A full review of the Members' Scheme of Allowances should be undertaken by the new Independent Remuneration Panel, following its appointment by Council on 16 October 2023.

8.1.2 Action points 1 through 7 have been implemented; action point 8 is discussed in paragraph 8.2.3 of this report. The appointment of a new Independent Remuneration Panel will be the subject of a separate report.

8.2 Review of Member Allowances

8.2.1 In August 2023, the outgoing Panel was asked to undertake a second focused review of Members' Allowances, covering three specific issues: 1) the allowances paid to the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council respectively; 2) the allowances paid to the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the six Service Committees (and the Finance Sub Committee); and 3) reconsideration of the case for allocating special responsibility allowances (SRAs) to opposition spokespersons on these committees.

8.2.2 The review looked at both the responsibilities associated with the roles, as well as the allowances paid to them. Whilst being mindful of the Council's budget, the Panel was not aware of the Council's emerging financial position when it was conducting its review and, as a result the Panel's recommendations set out in its report (Appendix 1) are not reflective of the budgetary savings that are now being proposed. Therefore, the report needs to be considered within the context of the budget consultations on the Council's current financial position.

8.2.3 This is particularly relevant in respect of the full review referred to in paragraph 8.1.1(8). The purpose of a full review is to benchmark the Cheshire East scheme against other authorities to ensure that it remains relevant and fit for purpose. This requires extensive research to be carried out and is time/labour intensive. It would be difficult to justify any review at this juncture, given that the Council is seeking to reduce its administrative burden.

8.3 Panel Recommendations relating to Job Descriptions

- 8.3.1 In view of the above, Council may wish to consider whether to refresh job descriptions for the Leader/Deputy Leader, Service Chairs/Vice Chairs and Opposition Spokespersons. It is proposed that the Constitution Working Group be asked to review job descriptions for the above, for submission to the Independent Remuneration Panel; in turn the Panel to consider and review these job descriptions and report back to Constitution Working Group; the Working Group to consider if the job descriptions should be referred onwards. As any changes would need to be considered in the context of the Panel's next review, it is proposed that the review takes place as soon as possible after this piece of work has been concluded.

8.4 Panel recommendation in respect of the payment of more than one special responsibility allowance

- 8.4.1. In its report to Council dated February 2023, the Panel informed Cheshire East that Members had requested a review of the current restrictions on Councillors claiming no more than one special responsibility allowance. The Panel has considered this request as part of the August 2023 targeted review, and has recommended that the allowances scheme be amended, to allow any member to claim up to a maximum of two special responsibility allowances if they so wish. This reflects the same recommendation made by the Panel in 2016. The Panel's rationale is set out in paragraph 5.1 of the attached report.
- 8.4.2 The members' allowances budget provides sufficient funding for each special responsibility allowance. Unallocated special responsibility allowances have been allocated to offset other member support.

Criterion for Uprating Allowances

9.1 Application of current uprating (aka uplift) arrangements

- 9.1.1 With effect from 1 April 2022, the criterion which applies in respect of the annual uprating of the Cheshire East Scheme of Members' Allowances is the national NJC officer pay award. In practice, this means that when an annual pay award is agreed for officers, the same award is automatically applied to Cheshire East's Scheme of Members' Allowances. For example, if the officer pay award was for a 2% increase, the Members' Scheme of Allowances would also be uplifted by 2%.

- 9.1.2 This choice of criterion has been adopted by many authorities; at Cheshire East the arrangement is in place for four years (i.e., until 31 March 2026), when it is due to be reviewed by the Independent Remuneration Panel.
- 9.1.3 In 2022 and again in 2023, the NJC officer pay award has changed from being a percentage increase to salaries/other allowances to a flat-rate increase to salaries (in respect of Members' Allowances this would equate to the increase on basic), and a percentage increase for other allowances (in respect of Members' Allowances this would be special responsibility allowances, subsistence etc.).
- 9.1.4 This has presented local authorities with a challenge; applying the flat-rate pay award for officer salaries to basic allowance would be disproportionate and would cost significantly more than applying a percentage increase (as illustrated in paragraph 9.2.3), but not to do so would be a departure from the agreed criterion.
- 9.1.5 The Panel made reference to this in its 2022 report, stating that "*whilst the flat-rate did not equate with members allowances per se, it was viable to interpret the percentage increase as being 'in line with the officers pay award', thus retaining the link between the award and the scheme*".
- 9.1.6 As the Panel's reasoning was accepted by Council, it is suggested that the uprating arrangements should be amended so that, in the event of the NJC annual pay award taking the form of a flat-rate increase to salaries and a percentage increase to other allowances, it would be the percentage increase applicable to other allowances which would be regarded as the uplift, to be applied to basic and the other allowances set out in the scheme.

9.2 **Pay award for 2023/2024**

- 9.2.1 On 19 July 2023, Council considered the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, which included the Panel's recommendations in regard to the 2022/2023 pay award. In respect of basic and special responsibility allowances, Council resolved that (Minute 26 refers)
- i) Basic allowance should be increased by a flat rate of £500 (from £12,351 to £12,851) and applied retrospectively for 2022-2023.

- ii) Special responsibility allowances (to include Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Scrutiny Chair) should be increased by 4.04% and applied retrospectively for 2022-2023.

9.2.2 The NJC officer pay award for 2023/2024 was not agreed until November 2023, but is again for a flat-rate increase of £1,925 to officer salaries (which would apply to Members' basic allowance) with a 3.88% uplift to other allowances.

9.2.3 Cheshire East Council is facing unprecedented financial challenges to its budget and the budget consultation includes a proposal to freeze Members' Allowances. Members will need to decide what, if any, uplift is applied for 2023/2024.

	Current	New	Increase
If a flat rate increase of £1,925 was applied to basic	£12,851	£14,776	£157,850
If a percentage increase of 3.88% was applied to basic (as set out in para 9.1.5)	£12,851	£13,349	£40,836
Indicative 3.88% increase to special responsibility allowance for a committee chair was applied	£12,485	£12,969	£3,388

Consultation and engagement

10.1 The Panel met at Westfields on 20 September 2023 when interviews were carried out with the Council Leader and Deputy Leader, the Chairs and Vice Chairs of two of the Service Committees and with the Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group. Comments were invited from Chairs and Vice Chairs of the other service committees, an opportunity to which three further Members responded.

- 10.2 Elected members, officers and the public have all been consulted on the budget.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 11 Before Council can consider making any changes to its Scheme of Members' Allowances, it must have regard to the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel.

Other Options Considered

- 12 The actions set out in the report are necessary to fulfil the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 13 The actions set out in the report are necessary to fulfil the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 14 The Council may accept, amend or reject the recommendations of the Panel. However, any increase or additions to allowance(s) will result in a permanent increase to the allowances budget.
- 15 The allowances base budget currently provides for the payment of i) a basic allowance payable to 82 members; and ii) the list of special responsibility allowances set out in the scheme. Funding for other forms of member support or the addition of a new SRA is only possible due to a surplus on the budget, the principal contributor being the current SRA rule, which permits only the highest SRA to be paid where a member is entitled to more than one. Currently, nine posts are unpaid which has created a surplus of £58,877. If the SRA restriction was removed, further changes to the scheme would not be possible, unless an increase was made to the base budget.
- 16 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 2027, line 57- reduce cost of Democracy: consider freeze on Member allowances.

Policy

- 17 Open and enabling organisation: By fulfilling the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2002 ensures that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 18 No equality and diversity implications have been identified.

Human Resources

- 19 No human resource implications have been identified.

Risk Management

- 20 No risk management implications have been identified.

Rural Communities

- 21 No rural communities' implications have been identified.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

- 22 In the context of the recommendations of this report, no direct implications for children and young people/cared for children have been identified.

Public Health

- 23 No public health implications have been identified.

Climate Change

- 24 No climate change implications have been identified.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	<p>Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance</p> <p>brian.reed@cheshireeast.gov.uk</p>
Appendices:	Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel: November 2023
Background Papers:	<p>a) The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances (England) Regulations 2003 (legislation.gov.uk)</p> <p>b) Independent Remuneration Panel: Targeted Review of Allowances Report February 2023. Councillors Expenses and Allowances (cheshireeast.gov.uk)</p> <p>c) Direct feedback from Elected Members and comments submitted to the IRP mailbox.</p>

Appendix 1**OPEN****CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL****Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel****November 2023****Focussed Review of Members' Allowances****1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 In August 2023, The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) was asked by the Council to undertake a focussed review of members' allowances, covering three specific issues: the allowances paid to the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council respectively; the allowances paid to the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the six Service Committees (and the Finance Sub Committee); and a reconsideration of the case for allocating special responsibility allowances (SRAs) to opposition spokespersons on these committees.
- 1.2 The reason for this request was the fact that the Council, between 2019 and 2023 and again since the elections in May 2023, has been operating a 'joint administration' involving the Labour and Independent groups. In 2021, a committee system of decision making was introduced to replace the 'leader and cabinet' model which had previously been in operation. The philosophy behind the 'joint administration' involved a strong emphasis on a joint approach to both the council leadership and the operation of the service committees, in which the leadership roles at both Council and committee level were shared in a way which was untypical of traditional approaches to these divisions of responsibility. For example, the Chairs and Vice Chairs of committees are shared equally (rather than proportionately); if a committee is chaired by a Labour councillor, then the vice chair will be held by an independent member and vice-versa.
- 1.3 The Chair of the Panel was briefed by senior officers of the Council at a virtual meeting on 28th August 2023. The Panel, which comprises Chair, Steve Leach (Emeritus Professor of Local Government, De Montfort University), Mandy Ramsden (former local government officer and local resident) and Jacquie Grinham (former CEO of Cheshire East North Citizens Advice) met at Westfields on September 20th when interviews were carried out with the Council Leader and Deputy Leader, the chairs and vice chairs of two of the service committees and with the Deputy Leader of the Conservative group. Comments were invited from chairs and vice chairs of the other service committees, an opportunity to which three further members responded. The Panel is grateful to the councillors involved for their time and for the excellent support it received from Brian Reed, Diane Moulson and Katie Small.

- 1.4 It was acknowledged that any impact resulting from the Panel's recommendations on the overall level of member allowances should involve at the most a marginal increase. It should also be recognised that the selective nature of this review means that relativities with existing allowances in other spheres (such as the regulatory committees) may change. The Panel endeavoured to take such relativities into account but, because of the limited nature of its brief, was not in a position to make recommendations for changes outside the three topics on which the review was focussed. It should be emphasised that the analysis and recommendations set out in this report apply specifically to a joint administration operating a committee system of decision-making. If either or both of these conditions ceased to apply (i.e., a majority party; a cabinet and leader model) a fundamental review of members' allowances would be required.

2.0 The Leader and Deputy Leader

- 2.1 It is in relation to council leadership that the commitment to the principles of a joint administration were most apparent. The Council Leader and the Deputy, whom we saw together, provided clear evidence of their commitment to genuine joint working at leadership level and provided several examples of how they had put this principle into operation. Weekly briefings from the Chief Executive are attended jointly. Negotiations with Ministers and ministerial visits typically involve both Leader and Deputy, a practice which is rare in majority-controlled councils and indeed with many councils operating as a coalition. On the recent Devolution initiative, in joint meetings with neighbouring authorities the same practice operates, one suspects to the surprise of the other leaders attending. There is a functional division of responsibility involved; the Deputy Leader chairs the Highways and Transportation Committee and would typically attend meetings with other agencies on his own, which seems a sensible use of time resources. The Leader chairs the Corporate Policy Committee in similar fashion. There is little evidence of overlap and duplication, but on any meeting of major significance for the Council, both Leader and Deputy would normally be involved.
- 2.2 The Panel received a good deal of positive response about the way the joint administration was working, from officers and members of the two Parties concerned alike. If it were legally possible, the adoption of a formal co-leadership model would be compatible with the principles adopted. The Panel's understanding is that local authorities are legally required to appoint an individual designated Leader. But that does not preclude a council operating an informal model of shared leadership, which appeared to the Panel to be the case in Cheshire East.
- 2.3 Because of the requirement to designate a formal individual leader and the specific responsibilities attached to that role, the Panel felt that a redistribution of the total SRA allocated to the Leader and Deputy Leader positions in a way which resulted in the equalisation of the two SRAs would not be appropriate.

But given the level of commitment to joint leadership, it would be logical to reflect this commitment (and the sharing of responsibilities which it involves) by moving in this direction. It was difficult for the Panel to make a precise judgement as to the most appropriate balance of SRAs without updated job descriptions or more detailed evidence of how the Leader and Deputy spent their time, which was not feasible within the time constraints of the review. Its 'best estimate' was that if 10% of the Leader's SRA (£2,952) were re-allocated to the Deputy Leader's SRA, that would be a reasonable reflection of the commitment to the philosophy of shared leadership, whilst recognising the specific formal responsibilities which the council leadership role entailed. This adjustment would result in the Leader's SRA reducing to £26,565 and the Deputy Leader's increasing to £20,772. The implementation of this recommendation would send a clear message to the public, partner organisations and central government about the seriousness of the administration's commitment to shared leadership and joint working.

- 2.4 There would be value, in the Panel's view, in the development of a statement of the roles and responsibilities of the Leader and Deputy Leader respectively, based on current practice. A statement of roles and responsibilities is considered to be more appropriate than detailed job descriptions, not least because it could be drawn up more quickly. However, the current mode of operation is felt to be well-established enough for the Panel's recommendation in 2.3 above to be implemented prior to completion of this process.

3.0 Committee Chairs and Vice-chairs.

- 3.1 Although the principles of joint working and shared responsibilities were apparent from the interviews carried out by the Panel and the responses it received, there was some variation in the extent to which these principles had been applied at Committee level. It was rare to find examples of the way in which the Leader and Deputy Leader had thought through the implications of these principles among Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs. In some cases, newly elected councillors, serving as Vice-Chair, acknowledged that they currently lacked the experience to become involved in shared leadership at this level. In other cases, it was clear that the Vice-Chair was content to adopt a more traditional interpretation of this role and recognised the greater experience of the Chair involved. Currently there are responsibilities which cannot be shared, for example the regular joint briefings Committee Chairs receive from the Chief Executive and other officers on matters of corporate significance, which Vice-Chairs do not attend.
- 3.2 These perceptions and practices may change over time as less experienced Vice-Chairs 'learn on the job'. But at this point in time, the Panel's view was that it would be premature to change the balance of SRAs between Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Service Committees. There might be justification in doing so in some cases, for example in relation to Committees chaired by the

Council Leader or Deputy Leader, but not comprehensively and the measure should not be introduced in piecemeal fashion. However, the Panel, aware of the Council's commitment to joint working and shared leadership at all levels, would wish to encourage the Council to take steps to embed these principles at committee level which, if effective, could well justify reassessment of the appropriate balance of SRAs between Chairs and Vice-Chairs within the next few months. As with the positions of Leader and Deputy Leader, the Panel considered that statements of the roles and responsibilities of Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs or the service committees should be drawn up as quickly as feasible. There appeared to the Panel to be a real momentum in the move to a genuinely shared administration, which should be sustained. In this case, it may be helpful, once the role specifications have been agreed, for tailored training and development sessions for the relevant members to be organised.

4.0 Scrutiny Leads on the Service Committees. (Opposition or Lead Spokespersons allowances)

- 4.1 In the Panel's 2021 and (selective) 2022 reports, the payment of SRAs to what it termed 'Opposition spokespersons' on the seven service committees (including Finance Sub) was recommended. The justification for this recommendation was as follows: the Conservative opposition was (and still is) the largest party on the Council. On democratic principles and to ensure that the administration is held to account for its decisions, it is important that it is enabled to play a responsible scrutiny role. This cannot be achieved solely by allocating the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee to the opposition (as has happened); much of the business of this Committee is focused on external partner organisations, notably in the fields of health and crime and disorder.
- 4.2 It has been rightly recognised that, under a committee system, scrutiny of service issues will be expected to take place within the committees themselves. Although in principle scrutiny can be exercised by any committee member, the reality, given the need for and expectation of group support among members of the joint administration partners, is that scrutiny, particular on major issues, is likely to be led by the Opposition. It is for these reasons that other councils which have introduced a committee system of decision making, such as Nottinghamshire and Brighton and Hove, have introduced SRAs for opposition spokesperson roles (see the members allowances reports for these two authorities for further details and justifications).
- 4.3 One argument that was presented to the Panel was that SRAs would normally be attached to positions in which a degree of formal responsibility was involved (such as the chair of a Planning Committee) and that opposition spokespersons on service committees did not meet this criterion. But this argument is premised on a limited interpretation of the concept of responsibility. Scrutiny in any form cannot involve direct responsibility for decision making; it can only seek to influence and persuade by force of

argument those who do have responsibility for decisions. Yet all local authorities allocate SRAs to scrutiny positions. Indeed, when considering formal responsibilities in a committee system, neither the chair nor the vice-chair has formal responsibility for decisions; it is the committee as a collectivity which has the responsibility. However, no-one is suggesting that the demanding jobs of Chair and Vice-Chair of committees should not be acknowledged in the allocation of substantial SRAs, broadly equivalent (in total) to those previously allocated to Portfolio Holders. Indeed, we were told by more than one respondent that the job of Committee Chair was more demanding and certainly more time-consuming than that of Portfolio Holder.

- 4.4 The Panel's preference would be for these positions to be retitled '**Lead Spokespersons**', rather than 'Opposition Spokespersons'. Although the Panel is clear that they should be filled by opposition members, the emphasis should be on scrutiny, rather than opposition per se. The allocation of SRAs to these roles was supported by the Conservative Opposition and although views among the administration parties about the desirability of this measure were more mixed, we were told of committees where the opposition member playing this role was regularly consulted by the Chair, a process which was found to be helpful in the avoidance of misunderstandings about agenda items and the efficient dispatch of committee business.
- 4.5 For reasons set out in the 2021 report the Panel recommended that the SRA allocated to the Lead Spokesperson role should be £4,200. However, as this role is a new and untried and tested initiative in Cheshire East, the Panel considers it appropriate that, prior to recommending a specific figure, a statement of roles and responsibilities should first be drawn up by the Council. This process, which should be completed as quickly as feasible, should include consultation with all the political groups: the committee chairs of today may one day be the lead spokespersons of tomorrow and vice versa. The Panel would be happy to make a specific recommendation once this process has been completed. However, it is clear from the interview evidence that the figure should be less than that agreed for vice-chairs.
- 4.6 The current situation is that opposition members can request a briefing from the relevant chief officer on any agenda item coming before a Committee. There are likely to be occasions when Lead Spokespersons want to request additional information, to enable them to make a judgement as to whether or not it is appropriate to challenge a proposed decision. In these circumstances, we believe such requests should be channelled to Democratic Services, where there is already a dedicated scrutiny support capacity, and where they should be responded to, unless the time implications of doing so are unrealistic. In this event, the matter should be referred to the Monitoring Officer for resolution.
- 4.7 In the event that SRAs for Lead Spokespersons are introduced, the net effect is likely to be a relatively small increase in the members' allowances budget.

5.0 Limit on the number of SRAs allowed to be claimed per member

- 5.1 At present several SRAs are currently unclaimed as a result of the provision that any member can only claim one SRA. It should, however, be noted that the Panel, in its 2016 report, recommended that this provision should be changed to permit two SRAs to be claimed by any one councillor, a view which the current Panel supports and reiterated in its Targeted Review in February this year. We suggest that this restriction be removed and any member be permitted to claim up to two SRAs.

6.0 Summary of recommendations

The Panel recommend that:

6.1 Leader and Deputy Leader's SRA

- (a) 10% of the Leader's SRA (£2,952) be re-allocated to the Deputy Leader's SRA resulting in the Leader's SRA reducing to £26,565 and the Deputy Leader's increasing to £20,772.
- (b) A statement of roles and responsibilities for these two positions, based on existing practice, be drawn up, but not as a pre-requisite for the implementation of recommendation 6.1(a)

6.2 Service Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs SRA

- (a) No change be made to the balance of SRAs between the Chairs and Vice Chairs, until a statement of roles and responsibilities for these positions has been agreed by the Council, a process which should be carried out as soon as feasible.
- (b) Once such a statement has been agreed then the Panel should be asked to make a recommendation as to the SRAs to be allocated to these positions
- (b) It may then be helpful to establish tailored training and development sessions for the members involved.

6.3 Scrutiny Leads on Service Committees

- (a) Lead Spokesperson on Service Committees should be introduced. The positions should be filled by opposition members.
- (b) A statement of the roles and responsibilities attached to such positions should be drawn up as soon as feasible. All parties represented on the Council should be consulted in this process.
- (c) The Panel should then be asked to make a recommendation as to the SRA to be allocated to these positions
- (d) In the event of Lead Spokespersons wanting to request additional information to enable them to make a judgement as to whether or not it is appropriate to challenge a proposed decision, such requests should be channelled to Democratic Services, unless the time implications of

doing so are unrealistic. In this event, the matter should be referred to the Monitoring Officer for resolution.

6.4 Limit on the number of SRAs any member may claim

- (a) The Allowances Scheme be amended to allow any member to claim up to a maximum of two SRAs if they so wish.

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COUNCIL MEETING – 27 FEBRUARY 2024**PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE – AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE****RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopt the Audit and Governance Committee Terms of Reference.

Extract from the Minutes of the Audit and Governance Committee meeting on 7 December 2023

52 PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE - AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the report and revised Terms of Reference for the Audit and Governance Committee, as considered and prepared by the Audit and Governance Terms of Reference Working Group.

The Committee reflected on the proposals arising from the recent Corporate Policy Committee to Full Council on 13 December 2023, relating to the merging of the Scrutiny Committee functions into the functions of the Audit and Governance Committee. The Committee agreed that further assessment and consideration of the proposals was needed. It was therefore proposed, seconded and subsequently carried that the Committee formally recommended that Council defers the decision.

RESOLVED:

That the Audit and Governance Committee

1. Recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Audit and Governance Committee Terms of Reference (Appendix 2).
2. Request that Full Council note the Committee's concerns and defer the decision relating to the proposals recommended by the Corporate Policy Committee to merge the functions of the Audit and Governance and Scrutiny Committees, which is contrary to advice from CIPFA and the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. The Audit and Governance Committee request that the decision of Full Council relating to the merger of the functions of the Scrutiny Committee into the Audit and Governance Committee be deferred to allow further consideration to be given as to the impact, risks, efficacy and value for money of merging the functions of the Committees, with a report back to the Audit and Governance Committee to consider the proposal further.

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OPEN

Audit and Governance Committee

Thursday, 7 December 2023

Proposed Terms of Reference - Audit and Governance Committee

**Report of: David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance
(Monitoring Officer)**

Report Reference No: AG/24/23-24

Ward(s) Affected: (All Wards)

Purpose of Report

- 1 This report presents revised Terms of Reference for the Audit and Governance Committee, as considered and prepared by the working group established.

Executive Summary

- 2 At the July 2023 meeting, this committee received a report recommending the establishment of a working group to review its Terms of Reference, making recommendations for any revisions required following the recommendations of the CIPFA review of the committee.
- 3 The working group has met regularly since the July report and presented in Appendix 1 is a “tracked changes” version of the Terms of Reference, identifying amendments and revisions. Appendix 2 sets out the proposed Terms of Reference with the changes accepted.
- 4 Following consideration and agreement to the proposed Terms of Reference, these will be recommended to full Council for adoption at the 27 February 2024 meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Audit and Governance Committee is recommended to:

- a) Recommend to full council the adoption of the Committee terms of reference at Appendix 2

Background

- 5 The current terms of reference for the Audit and Governance Committee are available to view in the Council's Constitution – Chapter 2, Part 4, starting on page 31.
- 6 The findings of the CIPFA review of the Audit and Governance Committee were presented to the June 2023 meeting of the Committee. 11 recommendations were made in CIPFA's report, including a review of the Terms of Reference for the committee. This is to ensure the committee has a clear purpose, role and position within the governance arrangements at Cheshire East Council
- 7 In July 2023, the Committee endorsed the approach proposed to review the Terms of Reference, appointing a politically balanced working group to review and update the Audit and Governance Committee. The working group's Terms of Reference are set out in Appendix 3.
- 8 The timescale for the working group was to report its initial proposals to the Audit and Governance Committee at the 28 September 2023 meeting, and its final report to the Committee on 7 December 2024; the final recommendation for any amendments would be recommended to Council for adoption within the Constitution at the 27 February 2023 meeting.
- 9 The working group established included
 - i. Cllr Michael Beanland
 - ii. Cllr Ken Edwards
 - iii. Cllr Marilyn Houston
 - iv. Cllr Garnet Marshall
 - v. Cllr Patrick Redstone
 - vi. Mr Ron Jones (co-opted independent member)
 - vii. Mrs Jennifer Clarke (co-opted independent member)

- 10 The working group has been supported by advice and guidance from the Director of Governance and Compliance, the Director of Finance and Customer Services, the Head of Audit and Risk, Audit Manager and the committee's Democratic Services officer.
- 11 Appendix 1 sets out the current terms of reference for the Committee, with tracked changes showing the proposed amendments. Appendix 2 sets out the proposed terms of reference in full. Changes to each section of the terms of reference are summarised and explained below.

Governance/Statement of Purpose

- 12 Additional content has been included here to
- i. Clarify that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee should not be appointed as the Chair and Vice Chair of Service Committees. In order to ensure the Committee is apolitical in nature, the working group also agreed that members of the Audit and Governance Committee should not have held senior positions within political groups including group whip/administrator and that this should be included in the terms of reference.
 - ii. Phrasing on the "Statement of Purpose" has been revised to include text from the CIPFA Model Code, to ensure that the remit and responsibilities of the Committee are set out clearly, and to ensure prominence is given to the Committee's responsibility in relation to the Committee's responsibilities for promoting high standards of Councillor's behaviour.

Governance, risk and control

- 13 Changes in this section cover inclusions from the CIPFA Model Code, again to ensure that the remit and scope of the Committee is set out clearly in respect of these areas, and to provide distinction on this Committee's role in relation to service Committees.

Internal Audit

- 14 Changes in this section re-introduce sections from the CIPFA Model Code, which were previously removed; however, the content this relates to in terms of the reports from Internal Audit has still been provided to the Committee. The opportunity has also been taken to make minor changes to phrasing and consequential amendments such as changes of job titles.

External Audit

- 15 Additional sections have been introduced in this part of the Terms of Reference to ensure that the Committee's role and relationship with the Council's external auditors is very clearly set out.

Annual Statement of Accounts

- 16 Additional phrasing from the CIPFA model Code is included to ensure the Committee's scope and responsibility is clear.
- 17 The section on related functions has been removed in the proposed Terms of Reference; these aspects of the Terms of Reference are specific to Cheshire East Council, however, there are other elements of the Committee's Terms of Reference which provide for these specific reports being brought to the Committee; for example;
- i. *consider reports, both internal and external, on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.*
 - ii. *consider reports on the effectiveness of financial management arrangements, including compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code.*

Standards Arrangements

- 18 The amendment in this section updates the date reference, for the adoption of the current Code of Conduct by Council in October 2022.
- 19 There are no changes proposed to the name or size of the Audit and Governance Committee.
- 20 To complement the revised Terms of Reference, officers will be drafting a further internal document to be maintained by the Committee members and officers, which will give examples of the reports currently provided to the Committee under the elements of the Terms of Reference, indicating the frequency of the report being provided for example, and the assurances it provides.

Consultation and Engagement

- 21 Review of the Committee's Terms of Reference has been carried out by the working group, as agreed by the Committee at the meeting on 27 July 2023. The working group's Terms of Reference are set out in Appendix 3.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 22 Reviewing the existing Terms of Reference ensures the Committee has the opportunity to reflect on the issues raised in the review of the Committee, consider the good practice model and guidance developed

by CIPFA and identify changes which will contribute to improving the overall effectiveness of the Council's Audit and Governance Committee.

Other Options Considered

- 23 No other options considered; the approach to the review of the Committee Terms of Reference was endorsed at the July 2023 meeting. Any further amendments or proposals should be considered in the discussion on this item, and if approved by the Committee would form the final proposed Terms of Reference being recommended to Council for adoption.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 24 The review of the Council's Audit and Governance Committee has been carried out against CIPFA's guidance and view on audit committee practice and principles that local government bodies in the UK should adopt.
- 25 Changes proposed align the Committee's Terms of Reference with good practice, reflect the views of the working group and will be recommended to Council, who have the authority to amend the Constitution to include them. Adoption of the proposed Terms of Reference seek to achieve clarity on the clear purpose, role and position of the Committee within the governance arrangements at Cheshire East Council.
- 26 The adoption of the changes to the Terms of Reference will be communicated to the officers who regularly support the Committee to ensure any changes to report content is implemented promptly.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 27 There are no changes to the Council's medium term financial strategy arising from this report. Changes to working practices and the changes to the Committee's Terms of reference will be part of business as usual for the services which support the Audit and Governance Committee.

Policy

- 28 The review of the Council's Audit and Governance Committee has been carried out against the position statement, and the detailed supporting guidance; any changes arising from the review will seek to ensure the Committee adopts and acts in accordance with best practice guidance.

- 29 Ensuring the effective working of the Audit and Governance Committee supports the Council's "Open" aim in the Corporate Plan 2021-2025; ensuring there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making.

An open and enabling organisation.

- ensuring there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 30 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

Human Resources

- 31 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

- 32 The review of the Committee terms of reference manages the risk that the Council's Audit and Governance Committee is ineffective. The Committee will review the application of the Terms of Reference, and any concerns or further changes can be discussed as needed. The Committee's Annual Report to Council provides an opportunity to reflect on how the changes to the Terms of Reference have worked in practice, and to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Committee.

Rural Communities

- 33 There are no rural communities' implications arising from this report.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

- 34 There are no Children and Young People/Cared for Children implications arising from this report.

Public Health

- 35 There are no public health implications arising from this report.

Climate Change

- 36 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

Access to Information

Contact Officer:	Josie Griffiths, Head of Audit and Risk Management josie.griffiths@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Committee Terms of Reference with tracked changes Appendix 2 – Committee Terms of Reference with changes accepted Appendix 3 – Working Group Terms of Reference
Background Papers:	CIPFA Review of the Audit and Governance Committee (Audit and Governance Committee 8th June 2023) Review of the Audit and Governance Committee Terms of Reference Working Group (Audit and Governance Committee 27 July 2023)

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Audit and Governance Committee
Terms of Reference

Audit and Governance Committee

Membership: 9 Councillors (excluding the Leader and Deputy and Chairs of the service Committees) and 2 co-opted independent members.

Governance

The success of the Audit and Governance Committee depends upon its ability to remain apolitical. It must adopt a non-political approach to its meetings and discussions at all times. Remaining political also places a duty on Councillors not to make inappropriate use of information provided to the Committee for other purposes.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee should not be appointed [as the Chair and Vice Chair](#) to service Committees.

Members may not review decisions as part of the Audit and Governance Committee that they have made as a member of another Committee.

[Members who hold senior positions in political groups should not be appointed to the Audit and Governance Committee. A delay of 12 months should be followed before Members who have previously held senior positions in the Council are appointed to the Audit and Governance Committee.](#)

Co-opted independent members are appointed for a four-year period and may vote on advisory matters ~~(pursuant to a Council resolution on 22 October 2015).~~

To ensure that the Committee remains focussed on its assurance role, all members of the Committee, and any designated substitute, must be appropriately trained.

Statement of Purpose

1) The Audit [and Governance](#) Committee is a key component of the Council's corporate governance.

It provides:

- a) promotes high standards of ethical behaviour by developing, maintaining and monitoring Codes of Conduct for Councillors and co-opted Members (including other persons acting in a similar capacity).
- b) [an independent and high-level focus on audit, \(internal and external\) assurance and reporting arrangements](#) that underpin good governance and financial standards;
- c) [independent review and focus on the adequacy](#) of the Council's governance, risk management, [and](#) control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes;

2) The Committee receives reports and assurances from across the organisation. In doing so the Committee will consider the effectiveness of the arrangements described, identifying further information needed and/or making recommendations for improvements and additional action required, [which can include further reporting on matters to those charged with governance.](#)

3) [Its role in ensuring that there is sufficient assurance over governance, risk and control gives greater confidence to those charged with governance \(Council\) that those arrangements are effective. The Committee's oversight of these areas ensures that there are adequate arrangements in place for both internal challenge and public accountability.](#)

~~4) It also oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.~~

5) The Committee will report to full Council on a regular basis on the Committee's performance and effectiveness [in meeting its purpose.](#)

~~2)6)~~ [Committee members can request items for consideration by the Committee for inclusion on the Work Programme agenda or referral to the relevant service committee.](#)

Governance, risk and control

~~3)7)~~ To consider the Council's corporate governance arrangements against the good governance framework, [including the ethical framework, local code of governance, and](#) annual governance reports and assurances.

~~4)8)~~ To review and approve the Annual Governance Statement and consider whether it properly reflects the risk environment and supporting assurances, taking into account internal audit's opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the council's framework of governance, risk management and control, including an agreed action plan for improvements where necessary.

~~5)9)~~ To consider the effectiveness of the system of risk management arrangements by receiving regular reports on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's risk management and reporting arrangements, ~~and receive assurance that actions have been taken as necessary.~~

~~6)10)~~ To review the Council's Risk Management Policy and Framework and recommend it for approval by Corporate Policy Committee.

11) To consider reports, both internal and external, on the effectiveness of internal controls and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.

12) To consider reports on the effectiveness of financial management arrangements, including compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code.

13) To consider the council's arrangements to secure value for money and review assurances and assessments on the effectiveness of these arrangements

~~7)14)~~ To review the assessment of fraud risks and potential harm to the Council from fraud and corruption.

~~8)15)~~ To monitor the counter-fraud strategy, actions and resources.

~~9)16)~~ To review the governance and assurance arrangements for significant partnerships or collaborations.

Internal Audit

~~10)17)~~ To approve the internal audit charter.

18) To approve the risk-based internal audit plan, including internal audit's resource requirements, the approach to using other sources of assurance and any work required to place reliance upon those other sources.

~~11)19)~~ To approve significant interim changes to the risk-based internal audit plan and resource requirements.

~~12)20)~~ To consider reports from the Head of Audit and Risk Management on internal audit's performance during the year, including:

- a) Updates on the delivery of the audit plan, including key findings, issues of concern and monitoring the actions taken in response to internal audit recommendations.
- b) reports on Internal Audit's effectiveness and compliance with the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme (QAIP), including conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and the Local Government Application Note (LGAN), and the results of the external assessment review of Internal Audit when due. Consider whether non-conformance with PSIAS and LGAN is significant enough that it must be included in the AGS.

~~13)21)~~ To make appropriate enquiries of both management and the Head of Audit and Risk Management to determine if there are any inappropriate scope or resource limitations.

~~14)22)~~ To consider any impairments to independence or objectivity arising from additional roles or responsibilities outside of internal auditing of the Head of Audit and Risk Management. To approve and periodically review safeguards to limit such impairments.

23) Receive the annual report from the Head of Audit and Risk Management setting out

- a) internal activity during the year, and an opinion on the level of assurance as to the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for governance, risk management and internal control together with the summary of the work supporting the opinion – these will assist the committee in reviewing the AGS.
- b) The statement of the level of internal audit's conformance with the PSIAS and LGAN and the results of the QAIP that support the statement – these will indicate the reliability of the conclusions of internal audit.

~~15)24)~~ To consider summaries of specific internal audit reports as requested.

25) To receive reports outlining the action taken where the Head of Audit and Risk Management has concluded that management has accepted a level of risk that may be unacceptable to the authority or there are concerns about progress with the implementation of agreed actions.

26) To contribute to the Quality Assurance Improvement Programme and in particular, to the external quality assessment of internal audit that takes place at least once every five years.

27) To consider a report on the effectiveness of internal audit to support the AGS, where required to do so by the Accounts and Audit Regulations

28) To provide free and unfettered access to the audit committee chair for the head of internal audit, including the opportunity for a private meeting with the committee.

External Audit

29) To oversee the process by which the Council's external auditor is appointed.

30) To support the independence of external audit through consideration of the external auditor's annual assessment of its independence and review of any issues raised by PSAA or the authority's auditor panel as appropriate.

31) To consider the external auditor's annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance.

16)32) To comment on the scope and depth of external audit work and to ensure it gives value for money.

17)33) To consider specific reports as agreed with the external auditor.

18)34) To consider additional commissions of work from external audit.

19)35) To advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external and internal audit and other inspection agencies or relevant bodies.

Annual Statement of Accounts

20)36) To review and approve the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the Council.

21)37) To consider the external auditor's report to those charged with governance on issues arising from the audit of the accounts.

38) Monitor management actions in response to issues raised by the external auditor.

22)39) To monitor the arrangements and preparations for financial reporting to ensure that statutory requirements and professional standards can be met.

Related Functions

23)40) Subject to the requirements set out below, to consider findings of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, including reports resulting in a finding of maladministration against the Council, and to make recommendations as to actions that may be necessary or which arise from or are as a result of the Ombudsman's findings.

- a) There are statutory obligations which will, in some circumstances, require reports to be taken to Council or a Committee.
- b) The Ombudsman operates protocols in relation to the timing of the publication of findings. The Council would have to give consideration to those protocols when determining how to manage the Audit and Governance Committee's agenda.

24)41) To oversee the operation of the Contract Procedure Rules and provide assurance in respect of procurement and significant partnerships or collaborations.

Standards Arrangements

25)42) The Committee is responsible for the Council's standards arrangements to:

- (a) promote high standards of ethical behaviour.
- (b) develop, maintain and update Codes of Conduct and protocols
- (c) Training the Audit and Governance Committee

26)43) The Committee is responsible for monitoring and advising Council about the operation of its Code of Conduct for Councillors in the light of best practice and any changes in the law.

27)44) The Committee will approve the arrangements for dealing with allegations that a Councillor or a town/parish Councillor within the borough has failed to comply with the relevant Councillors' Code of Conduct.

28)45) To assist the Council with the appointment of Independent Persons as required by the Localism Act 2011 and any independent persons under other secondary legislation.

~~29)46)~~ To determine any request for a dispensation under Section 33 of the Localism Act 2011, where not determined by the Monitoring Officer or to appeal against a determination by the Monitoring Officer.

~~30)47)~~ To respond on behalf of the Council to national reviews and consultations on standards related issues.

~~31)48)~~ To consider and make recommendations to Full Council on any other matter that may be referred to the Standards Committee relating to the conduct and training of Councillors.

~~32)49)~~ To review, advise, monitor and report to Full Council on member training.

~~33)50)~~ To recommend proposals to Full Council for changes to the constitution in respect of any governance or standards matters, except where specifically delegated to the Monitoring Officer.

~~34)51)~~ Council on [19 October 2022](#) approved a procedure to be followed when considering a complaint that an elected member of the Council or of a town or parish council within its area has failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct. The full procedure is available on request.

Hearing Sub-Committee

~~35)52)~~ The Hearing Sub-Committee is appointed to consider complaints that a Councillor has breached the Code of Conduct under the Council's arrangements adopted under the Localism Act 2011. It has 3 Councillors drawn from the Audit and Governance Committee.

~~36)53)~~ The standing Chair of the Hearing Sub Committee is the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee; when convened for any individual item, the Chair should be of a different political group to any subject member. Where practicable the Vice Chair will be from a different political group from the Chair.

~~37)54)~~ An Independent Person is invited to attend all meetings of the Hearing Sub-committee and his/her views will be sought and taken into consideration before the Hearing Sub-committee takes any decision on whether the Councillor's conduct constitutes a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct and as to any action to be taken following a finding of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.

~~38)55)~~ The requirement for political balance under section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 is waived in relation to the subcommittee.

~~39)56)~~ Before a Councillor can attend a meeting and participate in the business of the meeting, the determination of any Code of Conduct matter, the Councillor must attend a suitable training course dealing with the quasi-judicial nature of the role of the Sub-Committee.

~~40)57)~~ Where the Committee finds that a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct has occurred, the Hearing Sub-Committee will determine what action, if any, to take and to apply the sanction or recommend to Council to apply an appropriate sanction.

Audit and Governance Committee
Terms of Reference

Audit and Governance Committee

Membership: 9 Councillors (excluding the Leader and Deputy and Chairs of the service Committees) and 2 co-opted independent members.

Governance

The success of the Audit and Governance Committee depends upon its ability to remain apolitical. It must adopt a non-political approach to its meetings and discussions at all times. Remaining political also places a duty on Councillors not to make inappropriate use of information provided to the Committee for other purposes.

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- 2) The Committee receives reports and assurances from across the organisation. In doing so the Committee will consider the effectiveness of the arrangements described, identifying further information needed and/or making recommendations for improvements and additional action required, which can include further reporting on matters to those charged with governance.
 - 3) Its role in ensuring that there is sufficient assurance over governance, risk and control gives greater confidence to those charged with governance (Council) that those arrangements are effective. The Committee's oversight of these areas ensures that there are adequate arrangements in place for both internal challenge and public accountability.
 - 4) The Committee will report to full Council on a regular basis on the Committee's performance and effectiveness in meeting its purpose.
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- 44) To consider and make recommendations to Full Council on any other matter that may be referred to the Standards Committee relating to the conduct and training of Councillors.
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- 47) Council on 19 October 2022 approved a procedure to be followed when considering a complaint that an elected member of the Council or of a town or parish council within its area has failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct. The full procedure is available on request.

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- 48) The Hearing Sub-Committee is appointed to consider complaints that a Councillor has breached the Code of Conduct under the Council's arrangements adopted under the Localism Act 2011. It has 3 Councillors drawn from the Audit and Governance Committee.
- 49) The standing Chair of the Hearing Sub Committee is the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee; when convened for any individual item, the Chair should be of a different political group to any subject member. Where practicable the Vice Chair will be from a different political group from the Chair.
- 50) An Independent Person is invited to attend all meetings of the Hearing Sub-committee and his/her views will be sought and taken into consideration before the Hearing Sub-committee takes any decision on whether the Councillor's conduct constitutes a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct and as to any action to be taken following a finding of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.
- 51) The requirement for political balance under section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 is waived in relation to the subcommittee.
- 52) Before a Councillor can attend a meeting and participate in the business of the meeting, the determination of any Code of Conduct matter, the Councillor must attend a suitable training course dealing with the quasi-judicial nature of the role of the Sub-Committee.
- 53) Where the Committee finds that a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct has occurred, the Hearing Sub-Committee will determine what action, if any, to take and to apply the sanction or recommend to Council to apply an appropriate sanction.

APPENDIX 3

Terms of Reference of Working Group – Review of the Terms of Reference for the
Audit and Governance Committee

Composition: 5 members of the Audit and Governance Committee, politically balanced (x 2 Labour, x 2 Conservative, x 1 Independent) Co-opted Independent Member

Members: To be confirmed Officer Support: Director of Governance and Compliance, Director of Finance & Customer Service, Head of Audit & Risk Management with additional officers or deputies as required.

Democratic Services Support: To be confirmed

Duration: Creation 27 July 2023 - Dissolution 7 December 2023

Type and frequency of meeting: Fortnightly, until end of September 2023, thereafter as and when required until December 2023. Informal meeting which default to remote access unless members indicate a need for in person meeting.

Purpose: The working group is to progress with the CIPFA action plan recommendation to review the Audit and Governance Committee Terms of Reference, to

- Interim report to Audit and Governance Committee 28 September 2023
- Final report to Committee 7 December 2023
- Final report to Council 27 February 2024

Terms of Reference

1. To consider the findings and recommendations of the CIPFA Review of the Audit and Governance Committee in relation to the Committee's existing Terms of Reference.
2. To consider CIPFA 2022 Guidance 'Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities And Police (2022 edition)'
3. To review the current terms of reference for the Audit and Governance Committee (Chapter 2 Part 4 page 31)
4. To make recommendations to the Audit and Governance Committee in relation to any amendments to the committee terms of reference

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Council**27 February 2024****Political Representation on the Council's Committees**

Report of: David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance**Report Reference No: C/18/23-24****Ward(s) Affected: All****Purpose of Report**

- 1 To report to Council changes in political group membership and to secure a resolution from Council in respect of the political proportionalities of the Council, and committee memberships.

Executive Summary

- 2 The law requires that each relevant Council decision-making body must be politically balanced as far as reasonably practicable, and that there is an appropriate total balance of Committee seats across the political structure of the Council of the whole.
- 3 This report addresses the changes in political group memberships following the by-election in the Crewe Central Ward on 8 February 2024.
- 3 At the time of writing this report, discussions had not been concluded with the Council's political groups. The Council's revised political proportionalities and the allocation of committee places had not therefore been finalised. The Appendix to this report, which will reflect the product of those discussions, will be circulated to all Members, and distributed around the Council Chamber at the Council meeting.
- 4 The report recommendations seek a resolution of Council, as required by legislation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the political group and other representation, as set out in the Appendix to this report, and the methods, calculations and conventions used in determining this, as outlined in the report, be adopted and the allocation of places to Committees be approved.

Background

- 5 The Appendix sets out the political representation on committees, this being based on the political structure of the Council as a whole.
- 6 The proportionalities in the Appendix are based upon the following methods and conventions:
 - applying the relevant percentage to each body
 - rounding up from 0.5 and above, and rounding down below 0.5
 - where rounding up would result in more than one political Group (or non-grouped members) receiving an additional seat, and the total allocation of seats exceeding what is required, the Group (or non-grouped members) having the lowest residual entitlement will not receive an additional seat
 - where the required number of members for a decision-making body cannot be achieved using the above methods and calculations, the political group (or non-grouped members) having the largest residual entitlement for that body will be entitled to be awarded the additional place (e.g. if one group etc is entitled to 4.25 places, and another group is entitled to 1.48 places, the first group will be awarded 4 places on the body in question, and the second group will be awarded 2 places)
 - where two or more political Groups (or non-grouped members) have an identical residual percentage, the agreement of one Group etc to sacrifice a seat will be observed. Alternatively, the matter will be resolved by the toss of a coin.

Consultation and Engagement

- 7 In preparation of the Appendix to this report, officers liaised with the Council's political groups.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 8 To comply with primary legislation, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and supporting secondary legislation, Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990.

Other Options Considered

- 9 Legislation requires the Council's political representation on committees, and its political structure, to be reviewed upon a change in political group membership. Whilst one option might be for the Council to take no action in response to the change in group membership, this is not an option which Council is advised to take.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 10 The main rules on political proportionality are set out in S. 15(5) Local Government Housing Act 1989, and they are to be applied sequentially. The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, made pursuant to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, make additional provisions in respect of the political group and non-grouped representation on a local authority's committees, in relation to the overall political composition of the Council. The legislation applies to overview and scrutiny committees and the decision-making committees and sub committees of the Council.
- 11 The legislation requires that, where proportionality applies, and seats are allocated to different political groups, the authority must abide by the following principles, so far as is reasonably practicable:
- Not all of the seats can be allocated to the same political group (ie there are no single-group committees).
 - The majority of the seats on the body are to be allocated to a political group with a majority membership of the authority.
 - The total number of seats on all ordinary committees and sub committees allocated to each political group bears the same proportion to the proportion on the full Council.
 - The proposals contained in this report meet the requirements of the legislation.
 - The 1990 Regulations require political group leaders to notify the Proper Officer of the groups' nominations to the bodies in question.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 12 There are no direct financial implications.

Policy

- 13 There are no direct implications for policy.

An open and enabling organisation

Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

14 There are no direct implications for equality.

Human Resources

15 There are no direct human resource implications.

Risk Management

16 Failure to comply with the Act and Regulations when appointing its committee memberships would leave the Council open to legal challenge.

Rural Communities

17 There are no direct implications for rural communities.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

18 There are no direct implications for children and young people/Cared for Children.

Public Health

19 There are no direct implications for public health.

Climate Change

20 There are no direct climate change implications.

Access to Information

Contact Officer:	Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance brian.reed@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix A - Political Proportionalities
Background Papers:	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer.

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OPEN

Council

27 February 2024

**Nomination of Mayor and Deputy Mayor
for the 2024-25 Civic Year**

Report of: Director of Governance and Compliance (Monitoring Officer)

Report Reference No: C/16/23-24

Ward(s) Affected: All Wards

Purpose of Report

- 1 Council is asked to consider nominations for the office of Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the 2024-25 Civic Year.

Executive Summary

- 2 This report enables Council to determine which Members may be formally considered for election to the Mayoralty and Deputy Mayoralty, at the Mayor Making Ceremony on 15 May 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council is recommended to:

- 1 resolve that a Member be designated as Mayor Elect for 2024-25
- 2 resolve that a second Member be designated as Deputy Mayor Elect,

with a view to their formal nomination for election and appointment as Mayor and Deputy Mayor for Cheshire East for the 2024-25 Civic Year, at the Mayor Making ceremony to be held on 15 May 2024.

Background

- 3 This report asks Council to agree which Members will be nominated for election as Mayor and Deputy Mayor at the Mayor Making Ceremony. Such a decision will assist the proposed civic office holders, and officers, in making arrangements for the new Civic Year.

Consultation and Engagement

- 4 No formal consultation has taken place in relation to this report.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 5 To assist in the making of appropriate arrangements for the Mayor Making ceremony on 15 May 2024.

Other Options Considered

- 6 Whilst Council could choose not to designate a Mayor Elect and Deputy Mayor Elect, doing so aligns with the Council's previous approach and is always subject to formal resolution by Full Council at the Council AGM/Mayor Making Ceremony.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 7 The meeting of Annual Council must formally elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor and it is entirely within the gift of Council to do so.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 8 All allowances and expenses relating to the Office of Mayor and Deputy Mayor have been budgeted for in the 2024/25 Revenue Budget.

Policy

- 9 There are no direct implications for policy.

An open and enabling organisation.

Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 10 There are no direct implications for equality.

Human Resources

11 There are no direct human resource implications.

Risk Management

12 There are no identified risks in respect of the recommendations.

Rural Communities

13 There are no direct implications for rural communities.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

14 There are no direct implications for children and young people/Cared for Children.

Public Health

15 There are no direct implications for public health.

Climate Change

16 There are no direct climate change implications.

Access to Information	
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Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None

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