

## **COUNCIL MEETING – 16 JULY 2025**

### **RECOMMENDATION FROM ADULTS AND HEALTH COMMITTEE: CONNECT TO WORK FUND – APPROVAL OF SUPPLEMENTARY REVENUE ESTIMATE**

#### **Recommendation:**

**Council is recommended to approve a Supplementary Revenue Estimate of the value of £2,090,769, as referenced in paragraph 35 of the report, over the 2025-2030 financial years.**

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**Extract from the minutes of the meeting of the Adults and Health Committee held on 23 June 2025.**

#### **6 CONNECT TO WORK FUNDING**

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

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

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

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

Members were updated that officers would be looking to target those individuals in harder to reach rural areas, and this would form part of the action plan. It was noted that several methods would be used to ensure that as many people as

possible could be reached with this programme and Members stated the importance of helping those with disabilities to get back into work.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **RESOLVED (Unanimously):**

That the Adults and Health Committee:

1. Agree that the funding be accepted and approve the proposed spend to use this additional funding as set out in para 20-23.
2. Approve the proposed “Connect to Work Action Plan” as set out in Appendix 1.
3. **Recommend to Council the approval of a Supplementary Revenue Estimate of the value of £2,090,769 referenced in para 35 over the 2025-2030 financial years.**

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