

OFFICER DECISION RECORD (ODR2)

This form records an officer decision and is published in accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014.

Decision to Enter into Grant Agreements with T&P Councils for the Operation of Libraries 2025 (April 2025)

Date of Decision	4 th July 2025
Decision Taker (including Job Title)	Chris Allman – Director of Planning & Environment In consultation with Councillor David Jefferay – Chair of Environment and Communities Committee Councillor Heather Seddon – Vice-Chair of Environment and Communities Committee Councillor Tony Dean – Opposition Spokesperson of Environment and Communities Committee
Specific Delegation	This is an officer decision taken under a delegation by the Environment and Communities Committee who on 27 th November 2024 [link] at minute 7.4 delegated authority to the Interim Director of Planning and Environment, in consultation with the committee Chair, Vice-Chair and Opposition Spokesperson to: b. take all necessary steps to enter into top up funding agreements with Town and Parish Councils
Brief Description of Decision	As a result of an engagement process with Town and Parish Councils, in support of the implementation of the Cheshire East Libraries Strategy 2024-28, the decision is to enter into Grant Agreements with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alderley Edge Parish Council – operation of Alderley Edge Library on Tuesdays and Saturdays This grant agreement covers the opening of Alderley Edge Library for an additional 7.5 hours per week from week commencing Monday 6th January 2025 to 31st March 2028.• Disley Parish Council – operation of Disley Library on Saturdays

	<p>This grant agreement covers the opening of Disley Library for an additional 3.50 hours per week from week commencing Monday 6th January 2025 to 31st March 2028.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handforth Town Council – operation of Handforth Library on Mondays <p>This grant agreement covers the opening of Handforth Library for an additional 3.5 hours per week from week commencing Monday 6th January 2025 to 31st March 2028.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macclesfield Town Council <p>This grant agreement covers the relocation of the Visitor Information Centre facilities from Macclesfield Town Hall to Macclesfield Library from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poynton Town Council – operation of Poynton Library on Wednesdays <p>This grant agreement covers the opening of Poynton Library for an additional 3 hours per week from week commencing Monday 6th January 2025 to 31st March 2028.</p>
<p>Reasons for the Decision and alternatives considered</p>	<p>As part of the implementation of the Cheshire East Libraries Strategy 2024-28, formal consultation was undertaken with 11 local Town and Parish Councils.</p> <p>The Library Strategy 2024-28 arranges the libraries into four distinct tiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 1 – Library Hubs <p>This group covers the following sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crewe Library ▪ Congleton Library ▪ Macclesfield Library ▪ Nantwich Library ▪ Wilmslow Library <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 2 – Local Libraries <p>This group covers the following sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alsager Library ▪ Holmes Chapel Library ▪ Knutsford Library ▪ Middlewich Library ▪ Poynton Library

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sandbach Library • Tier 3 – Community Libraries (Community managed libraries) <p>This group covers the following sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Alderley Edge Library ▪ Bollington Library ▪ Disley Library ▪ Handforth Library ▪ Prestbury Library • Tier 4 – Libraries Direct <p>This group covers the Mobile Library.</p> <p>During the public consultation proactive engagement has been undertaken with Town and Parish Councils including arranging specific meetings to discuss the proposals and seek opportunities to work together to ensure continued library service provision for their area.</p> <p>The ability for Town and Parish Councils to fund ‘top up’ services is well established with both Crewe and Nantwich Town Councils already having three year funding agreements in place for their respective local sites.</p> <p>As a result of the entire engagement process Town and Parish Councils, the following has been agreed – all are subject to the respective formal agreements being finalised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alderley Edge Parish Council – operation of Alderley Edge Library on Tuesdays and Saturdays <p>This grant agreement covers opening Alderley Edge Library for an additional 7.5 hours per week from week commencing Monday 6th January 2025 to 31st March 2028.</p> <p>The total costs for 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028 has been calculated as £12,431.12.</p> • Disley Parish Council – operation of Disley Library on Saturdays <p>This grant agreement covers opening Disley Library for an additional 3.5 hours per week from</p>
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week commencing Monday 6th January 2025 to 31st March 2028.

The total costs for 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028 has been calculated as £6,946.16.

- Handforth Town Council

This grant agreement covers opening Handforth Library for an additional 3.5 hours per week from week commencing Monday 6th January 2025 to 31st March 2028.

The total costs for 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028 has been calculated as £15,870.24.

- Macclesfield Town Council

This grant agreement covers relocation of the Visitor Information Centre facilities from Macclesfield Town Hall to Macclesfield Library from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028.

The Visitor Information Centre will be open during the days and hours of the library operation as set out below:

- Monday = 10:00 to 19:00
- Tuesday = 10:00 to 17:00
- Wednesday = 10:00 to 17:00
- Thursday = 10:00 to 19:00
- Friday = 10:00 to 13:00
- Saturday = 09:00 to 13:00
- Sunday = Closed

The total cost for 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2028 is £90,000 – equating to £30,000 per annum.

- Poynton Town Council – operation of Poynton Library on Wednesdays

This grant agreement covers opening Poynton Library for an additional 3 hours per week from week commencing Monday 6th January 2025 to 31st March 2028.

The total costs for 1st April 2025 to 31st March has been calculated as £13,329.83.

In advance of the Commencement Date the Council has maintained these hours at the respective Libraries.

	<p>Upon the signing of the respective Grant Agreements, the associated cost will be invoiced to the respective Town or Parish Council.</p> <p><u>Confirmation of Grant Amount for Future Years</u></p> <p>The Council shall set out by no later than the end of October each year the fixed sum amount for the Project for the following financial year.</p> <p>This amount shall be based on the base staffing costs plus all associated costs relating to pay awards and any national insurance obligations.</p> <p><u>Payment of the Grant</u></p> <p>The Council shall invoice the Funder in the April of each year for the delivery of the Service for that Financial Year.</p> <p>The invoices shall be payable within 30 days.</p> <p>If the Funder does not make the payment within the 30 days the Recipient reserves the right to charge interest at 1% above the prevailing bank base rate of the Co-operative Bank.</p>
<p>Member consultation and interests declared</p>	<p>In accordance with the delegation, the Chair, Vice-Chair and Opposition Spokesperson of the Environment and Communities Committee have been consulted on the decision.</p> <p>In accordance with the Local Ward member protocol local ward members have been informed.</p>
<p>Significant Decision</p>	<p>YES/NO</p>
<p>Legal Implications</p>	<p>Legal notes the Committee Decision on 27 November 2024 allows the Interim Director of Planning and Environment, in consultation with the committee Chair, Vice-Chair and Opposition Spokesperson to take all necessary steps to enter into a Funding Agreements with Town and Parish Councils.</p> <p>The Decision Taker (Director of Planning and Environment) under the Committee Decision has the necessary delegations to enter into these Agreements subject to consulting the necessary people as described above.</p> <p>Legal have provided the Decision Taker with a Funding Agreement Precedent which is finalised approved by both Councils.</p>

	<p>On this basis, Legal approves this ODR.</p> <p>Daniel Allee Contract Lawyer 28 May 2025</p>
Financial Implications	<p>I am satisfied that the recommended option is supportable. The contributions have been built into the 2025-26 Libraries budget to match the additional staff costs of the increased opening hours.</p> <p>Wendy Broadhurst, Lead Finance Partner 29/05/25</p>
Confidential/Exempt Information	None
Background Papers	None

Signed: 

Dated: 4th July 2025

Chris Allman, Director of Planning & Environment