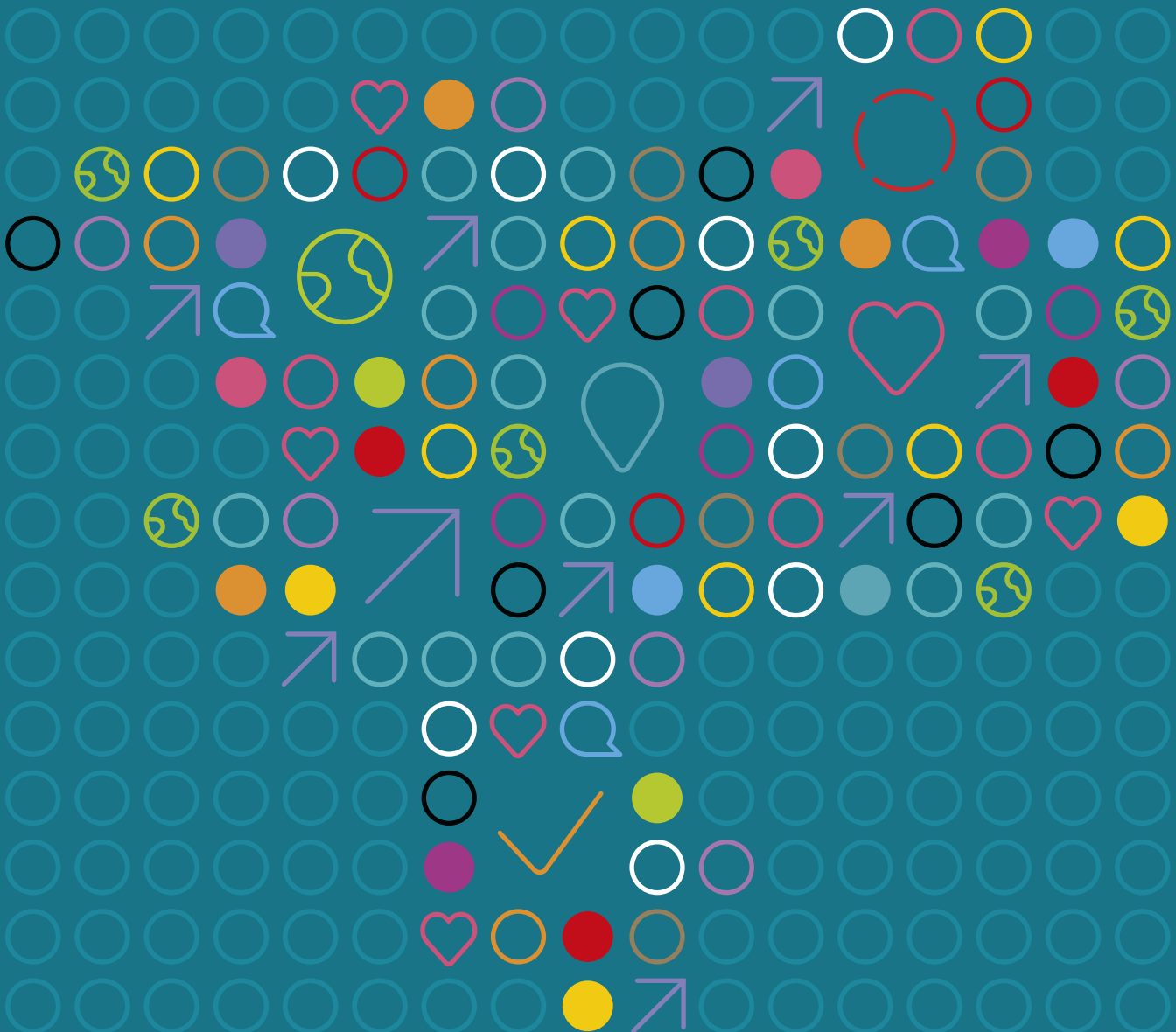


Cheshire West & Chester Council



# Play your part towards a Stronger Future

A Plan for the Borough: 2024-2028



A stronger future where we all play our part in thriving, caring, and sustainable communities



Cheshire West  
and Chester

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# Foreword

This is our ambitious plan for the borough, shaped with and for local people and everyone who plays their part in making our communities such special places.

West Cheshire is amazing, and our residents are remarkable. But a stronger future is possible. A future where all of us live in thriving, caring and more sustainable communities. It won't be easy but, if we all play our part, change is possible.

Our hope comes from the extraordinary strengths we have to build on, not least our passionate communities. In 2020 we agreed a Council Plan where we invited everyone to play their part. And local people did. The way our residents, businesses, community sector and public services stepped up during the pandemic and the Ukraine crisis, alongside the contribution people make every day to our borough, showed that this was more than fine words.

We want to go even further, working together to make the borough the best it can be. This isn't about public services 'passing the buck', it's about working cooperatively towards common goals. Cheshire West and Chester Council is a cooperative council and we are working to reclaim the traditions of community action, community engagement, and civic empowerment that can transform communities. We will need to be an even more open, collaborative and ambitious borough, which recognises that the answer to many of our challenges starts and ends with the relationships within our communities.

We can't deny the challenges that local people face. We know times aren't easy and we care deeply about that. People are worried about paying bills. They are concerned about the environment. They worry about the future and their family's future.

Local public services are also under significant and immediate financial pressure – the most challenging situation in a decade. There are no easy solutions. We will have to prioritise stability in uncertain times and will need to make hard decisions about local services, being good stewards of public money. But we won't stop there.

We will also look forward to a hopeful future. That future will mean coming together to ensure our children have the best start in life. It will mean we tackle hardship and poverty, we support all residents to be resilient and healthy, we make all our communities places of opportunity for all, we are proud of our neighbourhoods and our environment is greener.

**“ We are working to reclaim the traditions of community action, community engagement, and civic empowerment that can transform communities.”**

We know that great things happen when we work together with shared goals and mutual respect – that has always been the case. No top down, quick fixes, but real change that tackles the root causes of the challenges we face. We need to be bold and innovative to improve this situation. If we aren't, not only will our communities lose out, but future generations will find it harder to succeed.

It will take each and every one of us to make it happen. We will all have to step up. It will take time. And we will need to do things differently.

Our communities deserve to see a relentless focus on delivery. We will be held to account on our goals and will put in place arrangements to make it happen.

Through our common endeavour, we can enjoy a stronger future and secure thriving, caring and sustainable communities. We will play our part – join us and play yours.



**Councillor Louise Gittins**  
Leader of Cheshire West and Chester Council

# Purpose

This plan sets out our shared vision and goals for the borough for 2024-28. It builds on a previous plan 'Play Your Part to Thrive 2020-24', but is more than a traditional council plan. It is a shared vision across the partners and communities of the borough.

It sets out:

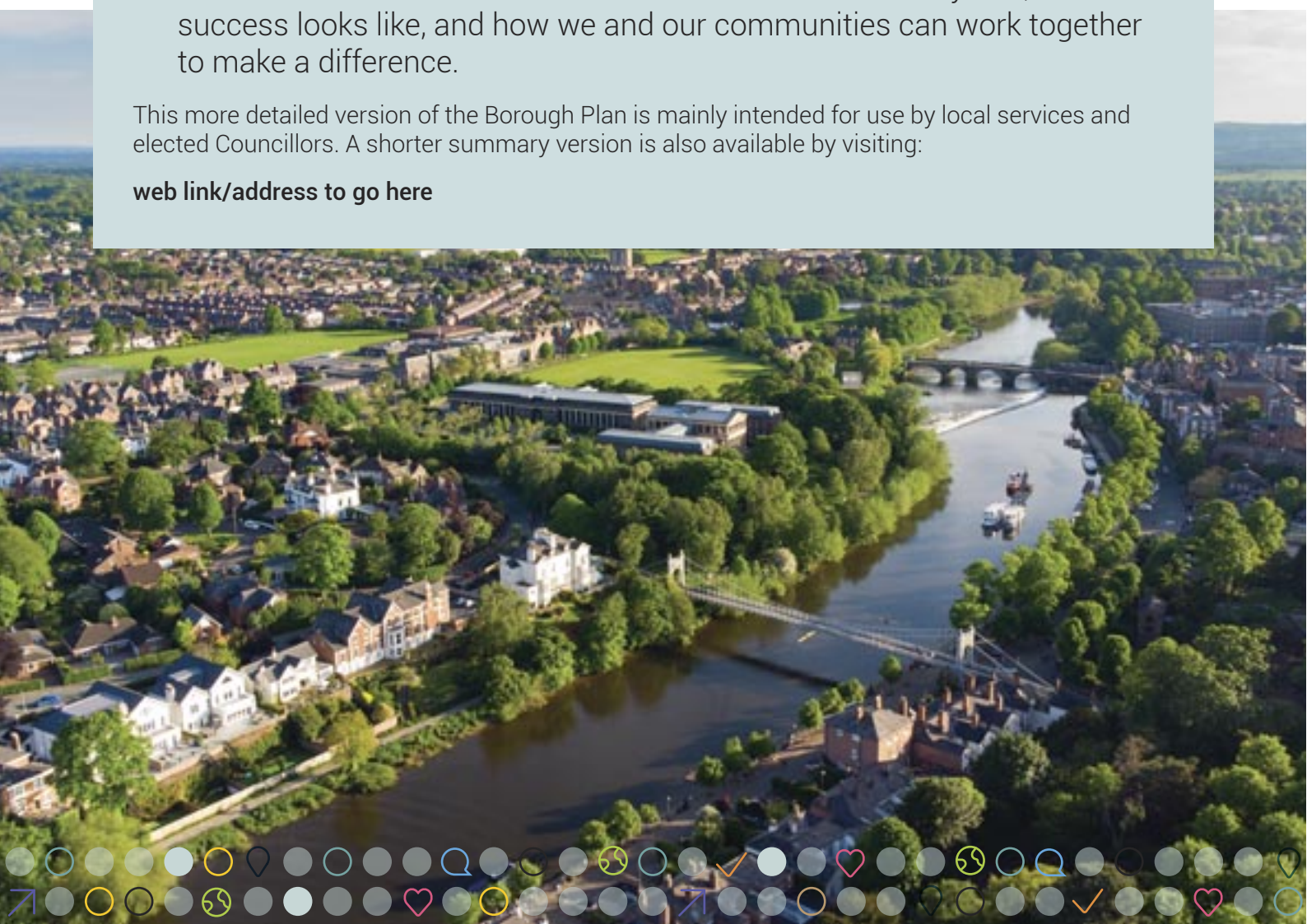
- the difference we are seeking to make
- the changes that local public services will implement
- how residents and businesses can play their part
- how we will work differently to make a difference in challenging times.

It is divided into two sections.

- 1 **Context:** Background on the plan, the vision and priorities, how it was developed and how it fits into other key plans.
- 2 **Missions:** An outline of our six missions for the next four years, what success looks like, and how we and our communities can work together to make a difference.

This more detailed version of the Borough Plan is mainly intended for use by local services and elected Councillors. A shorter summary version is also available by visiting:

**web link/address to go here**





Context

## Our vision

A stronger future where we all play our part in **thriving, caring and sustainable communities.**

## Our six missions



### Starting well:

The best possible start for our children and young people, with improved opportunity, a healthier start, greater resilience in families and the best possible support and care when it is needed.



### Tackling hardship and poverty:

More people feel more financially secure as the causes and impact of hardship and poverty are addressed by working alongside residents.



### Resilient people living their best lives:

Local people are enabled to flourish, be healthy, happy and independent for longer in supportive communities.



### Opportunity in a fair local economy:

Local people and businesses contribute to and benefit from a strong and fair local economy.



### Neighbourhood pride:

Residents live in well maintained, connected and safe places with good and affordable homes.



### Greener communities:

Individuals, public services and businesses take action to move to tackle the climate emergency, achieve net zero, protect the natural environment and adapt to the impact of climate change.

To make this happen, particularly when the demand our services face exceeds the funding we have available, we will **do things differently**. This will include working ever more closely with communities, scaling up prevention, raising our game with digital and insight, developing our workforce and strengthening our partnerships.

## What difference this will make



- **More children and families being helped at an earlier stage**, reducing the number of children in care through prevention



- **Higher levels of educational attainment and progression**, with a reducing attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.



- Further action to tackle **poverty and hardship**



- Reduced rates of **homelessness**



- A minimum of **4,400** new homes built in the lifetime of this plan and we want to see **30%** of those being affordable



- **800** empty homes brought back into use by 2028



- The Council will build another **769** new homes over the next three years, **68%** of which will be affordable



- More people living a **healthier, happier life** at home for longer



- Action to tackle the gap in **health and life expectancy** between more and less deprived areas



- **Higher levels of employment** with increased earnings



- An **increase in businesses** being created and remaining sustainable



- **Road and pavement** condition compares well against other areas



- Timely responses to **neighbourhood issues** raised by residents



- Extending access to **gigabit broadband** to at least three quarters of the borough's households by 2028



- West Cheshire will become a **carbon neutral borough** by 2045 or earlier



- Meeting or exceeding regional levels of **public electric vehicle charging** infrastructure per 100,000 population by 2025 and meet or exceed the same metric nationally by 2030.



- **150 hectares** of new tree planting a year



- To ensure we are able to deliver against our missions we will save around **£100m** from the Council budget

## A remarkable place

This is a plan that starts with what is strong, not what is wrong. We have a remarkable borough with amazing communities and everything we do will build on those strengths

 **This is West Cheshire**



## Building on our achievements

While we need to adjust to the latest circumstances, our ethos of working together to achieve more with and for our communities is not new. We have been on this journey for many years and have achieved a lot together.

- **36.65%** reduction in carbon emissions across the borough in the last ten years
- Local recycling levels are **57.6%** against an England average of 41.9%
- **134,971** trees planted across the borough since 2020
- Over **1,650** new businesses created each year
- Over **1300** families supported into sustained and positive outcomes since 2020
- Reported crime almost a **fifth** less than the England average
- **85%** of local secondary schools are good or outstanding
- **96%** of local premises have access to ultrafast broadband
- Over **1,500** new homes built and under construction on Council land, more than **64%** of which are affordable
- **80%** of local people are satisfied with their local area as a place to live
- Cheshire West Crowd crowdfunding has supported **133** projects to access **£17.4m** funding
- Almost **nine out of 10** local people are now being paid the Real living wage
- We have vibrant, active communities where **¾ of people** are involved in a local group, club or organisation

## Confronting our challenges

But we can't pretend there aren't major challenges that we will need to confront.

- Local per capita CO2 emissions are **10.2kt** compared to an England average of 4.3kt
- Increased stresses and pressure on families have meant the number of children in need has increased from **1,975** in 2021, to **2,198** in 2022
- The average cost of a child in care residential placement has increased by **78%** from 2020 to 2023
- **10.9%** of local households have a household income of less than £15,000 a year
- **212** homeless households are currently in temporary accommodation. In 2020 this was **140**
- The number of jobs available locally fell by **2.3%** between 2015 and 2020
- At GCSE level, the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils is growing - the gap was **17.3 points** in 2020, **17.8** in 2021 and **19.3** in 2022

The data and statistics used to inform the achievements and challenges are available within the Council's performance dashboard and state of the borough report



**Performance Dashboard**



**State of the Borough Report**





# Cheshire West and Chester Council values

Our vision will only be achieved if we have a clear set of values that drive our culture, behaviours, and activities. The following values help remind us of our public service ethos and guide everything we do.

## Teamwork

We achieve so much more together and there is more that unites us than divides us. Our relationships with communities and taking a collaborative approach across services and organisations will be vital to make a difference.

## Honesty

We will always act with openness and candour, being clear about what works well, what is possible and what needs to change. It's also about being accountable for our responsibilities.

## Respect

Respect is integral to good public services and good relationships. We will build on the strengths of our communities. We will always listen to and respect our communities, our partners and our colleagues even when we have different opinions and views.

## Innovation

We will work together to think creatively focusing on solutions and possibilities rather than problems. Often this is about tackling the root causes of any challenge, embracing technology, and seeing things from a different perspective.

## Value for money

This is more than just saving money. It's about being passionate about making a difference through every pound we spend or influence.

## Empowerment

We want to help our residents, communities and colleagues to be genuinely empowered to achieve their ambitions. We will act to foster this empowerment, providing people with the opportunity and resources to make a difference.

## How the plan was developed

The Plan was developed through meaningful conversations. For six months, we worked together to talk with local people about what matters to them. This started as open questions before a formal consultation on a summary of the emerging plan. There were a range of ways to get involved online or in person and a concerted effort was made to engage people who don't always have the opportunity to have their say. Over 1500 residents

joined the conversation digitally, whilst hundreds more attended pop up events at community venues or other events. We have also built on the feedback that local people have already provided through ongoing feedback, surveys and consultation. We will continue to work alongside communities and those with lived experience to shape our plans. This is an ongoing conversation to ensure we are meeting local needs and aspirations.

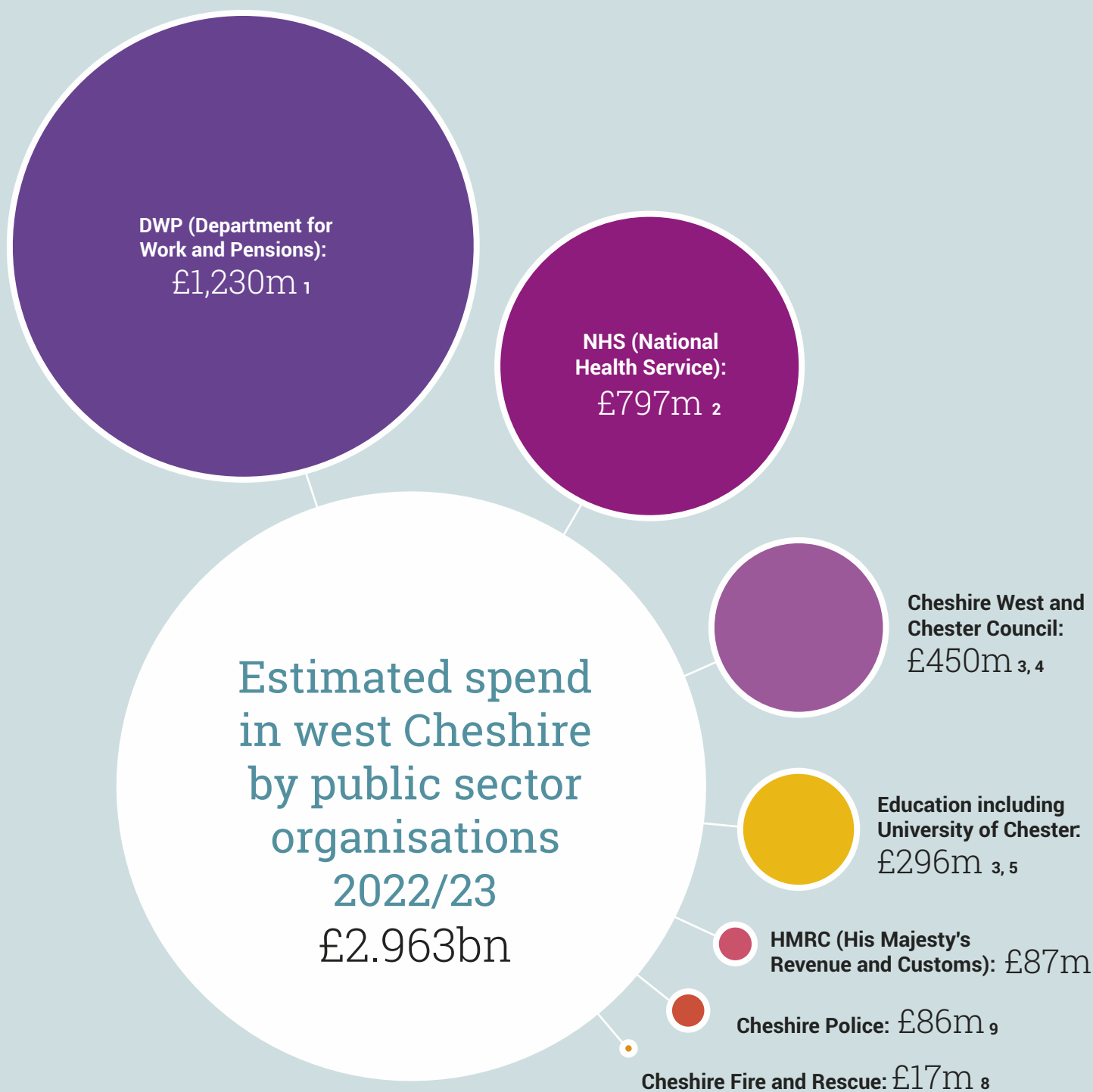
### In addition to this feedback, we also considered the following.

- **The needs of our communities:** We have analysed data to identify the specific needs of our communities. This is vitally important as the needs of our communities vary across the borough and we need to focus on issues in a locally sensitive way.
- **The views of our partners:** Few services could be effectively delivered without the input and involvement of our local partners. These include key organisations in the public sector such as the NHS, Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Housing Associations, Jobcentre Plus, the University of Chester and neighbouring councils etc. It also includes voluntary sector organisations that play a vital role in delivering services and supporting local communities. Businesses are also a key partner that deliver local employment and underpin successful communities. Our shared priorities are reflected in this document.
- **Political priorities:** Elected Councillors, as the representatives of our communities, have influenced this plan. They will continue to play a key role in developing action plans and policies that support this plan. They will have an important part to play to hold the organisation to account against its commitments.
- **The views of colleagues:** We have opened the conversation up to colleagues who deliver vital services and have the insight and passion to know what matters. This engagement will continue through the life of the plan and beyond.
- **Leading practice:** Finally, we have considered leading practice from other organisations across the public and private sector to shape the plan.

## The resources we have available

This Plan was developed alongside the budget plan for the Council and wider partners also considered the money they have available over the next four years. Without reform and closer collaboration, there will not be sufficient funding nationally or locally to deliver our priorities. For example, the Council alone has a budget plan to save £100 million over the next four years across the local NHS there is a planned budget deficit for

2023/24 of £58.7million. Budget plans have carefully considered the impact of any decisions on our priorities to ensure resources are in place to deliver and that every pound we collectively spend makes a difference. It's important, now more than ever, that we work together to spend the West Cheshire Pound well. The following diagram illustrates the total amount of public money spent in the borough.



1 Benefit expenditure and caseload tables 2023 - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

2 K, Ogden and D, Phillips and M, Warner. (2023). How much public spending does each area receive? Local authority level estimates of health, police, school and local government spending. London: Institute for Fiscal Studies. Available at: <https://ifs.org.uk/publications/how-much-public-spending-does-each-area-receive-local-authority-level-estimates-health>.

3 Local authority revenue expenditure and financing - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

4 draft-statement-of-accounts-2022-23 ([cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](http://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk))

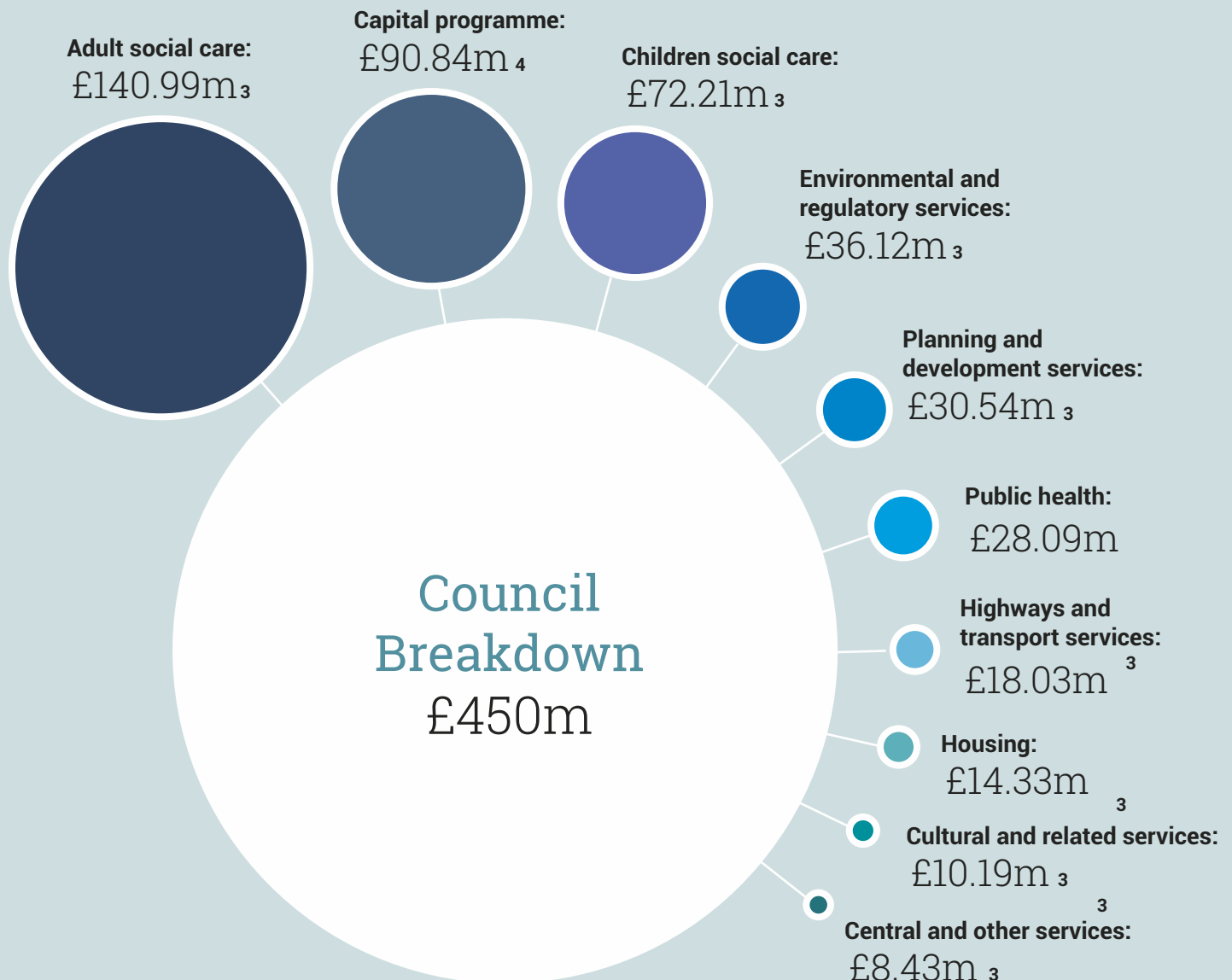
5 Net Expenditure from latest accounts (2022) at <https://www1.chester.ac.uk/about-university/reports-and-policies/financial-statements>, adjusted for inflation (estimated 8.5%)

6 Estimate based on HMRC statistics at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-benefit-statistics-annual-release-august-2022>

7 Estimate based on HMRC statistics at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-and-working-tax-credits-statistics-provisional-awards-april-2023>

8 Estimates using accounts at [statement-of-accounts-2022-23-pre-audit-version-19062023.pdf](http://statement-of-accounts-2022-23-pre-audit-version-19062023.pdf) ([cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://cheshirefire.gov.uk)) and population data from [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)

9 Estimates using accounts at [draft-chief-constable-statement-of-accounts-2022-23.pdf](http://draft-chief-constable-statement-of-accounts-2022-23.pdf) ([cheshire.police.uk](http://cheshire.police.uk)) and population data from [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk)



We should spend this in a way that make the most difference, with greater emphasis on pooling our efforts and shifting our collective resources to tackling the root causes of challenges, rather than dealing with the consequences.

## Relationship with other plans

The plan shapes, and is shaped by, the strategic plans for a range of organisations that make a vital contribution to the borough. For example, it will shape our Place Plan with the NHS and continue to influence our Safer Communities Plans with the Police and other partners. It will be considered in the review of the Compact for West Cheshire - the local agreement

for how the public and community sectors will work together. It will also shape our regeneration plans for our communities and our economic growth ambitions for Cheshire and Warrington.

At Council level, the plan drives our medium-term financial plan, our key strategies, our service plans and our individual objectives for every colleague.



# Our missions

# Starting well:



“Giving children the best possible start and reducing the incidence of adverse childhood events that can lead to life-long trauma would bring multiple long term benefits for individuals and the community.”

[Join the conversation respondent](#)

## The opportunity

West Cheshire is a great place to grow up and thrive. With good schools, starting well services that offer advice and support through our children's centres, a continued commitment to preventative services, a range of leisure and recreational opportunities and good prospects for many young people, we compare favourably to other areas. However, whilst most of our early years settings and schools are good or outstanding, educational attainment has been impacted by the pandemic and a stubborn gap persists in educational outcomes between disadvantaged children and their peers. With a challenging economic environment and the unwinding of the pandemic, the number of children and families requiring social care support,

mental health support, or being in the care of the local authority has also increased. Notwithstanding good practice across the borough, we also need to ensure that we are working collaboratively to ensure education is more inclusive for the increasing number of children with special educational needs and disabilities. These challenges are limiting the life chances of future generations as well as putting unsustainable pressure on public services, exacerbated further by inflationary pressures. The opportunity is to build on our strengths and work alongside children, young people and families to provide targeted support at an early stage to secure better outcomes and prevent the need for more intensive support.

### What success will look like

- More children and families being helped at an earlier stage, reducing the number of children in care and the need for more intensive statutory services
- Fewer children affected by complex issues such as domestic abuse, exploitation and family emotional health and wellbeing
- More timely assessments and decision making
- Higher levels of educational attainment and progression
- Higher levels of social mobility
- A trauma informed approach to working with children, young people and their families
- A closing educational attainment gap between disadvantaged and more vulnerable children with their peers
- Improved mental health and higher levels of positive emotional health and wellbeing
- More inclusive, sustainable and joined up services that meet the needs of children with SEND (special educational needs and disability)
- More children and young people in education, employment and training, particularly those who are care experienced

## How we will make a difference

### Helping all our children and young people secure a good education:

Working with early education providers, schools, settings and post-16 providers through the Education Improvement Partnership, we will support and challenge our schools and settings to improve the educational outcomes for all children and to be recognised as good or outstanding schools. The pandemic has had an impact on learning for all young people and been an additional challenge for specific groups. Recovering from this in the current economic climate is adding to the historic challenges. Closing the gap in attainment between all pupils and disadvantaged groups is recognised as a national issue and a range of national initiatives are in place to support schools and settings. We will also improve the educational outcomes for pupils who have been excluded from school or who are persistently absent. We will provide support and challenge to our schools by looking at the commissioning of alternative, person-centred models of education where appropriate.

**“We need to improve mental health for younger children and give them more support.”**

[Join the conversation respondent](#)

### Ensuring our education and support is inclusive:

We will support and challenge our schools to include children with special educational needs and disabilities. This includes continuing to improve our advice and assessment processes and communication strategies with parents, schools and partners. We will further upskill our workforce and co-ordinate the right specialist support in mainstream settings within the borough. We will also support the transition of all children from mainstream primary to secondary education, with a particular focus on those with a Statement of Educational Need or Disability.



### Promoting the health and wellbeing of our children and young people:

We will work with children, young people and their families to promote healthy lifestyles and ensure access to preventative services from a young age. We will support and promote breastfeeding and want every child or young person in the borough to be vaccinated and receive the protection they need from diseases such as measles, whooping cough and meningitis. Good habits start young, and we will promote access to playing fields, play areas, nature and green spaces. Through our local transport plan, we will support a transport system that makes it safe and easy for children and young people to move around the borough and connect with these opportunities.





### Helping more young people make a positive contribution:

We will provide a range of activities and support for younger people to make a positive contribution, develop their resilience, and prepare them for adulthood. This includes working with young people to develop a new '10 by 10' programme for our borough, so that young people have an opportunity to try ten exciting things before they are ten years old. We will also continue to develop a strong youth offer, working seamlessly with community sector providers, investing in digital youth support, and continuing to seek funding for improved youth hub facilities. We recognise the value of play, and, through our play strategy and play improvement frameworks, we will provide access to play opportunities across the borough, whilst fully using our library network to support children, young people and families. Ensuring the voice of young people is heard will be a key focus through every interaction we have and through mechanisms such as our Youth Senate and Children in Care Council. The community sector come together in the Children and Young People Alliance and the Mental Health Alliance to promote aligned and effective working that improves local lives. We will also work with schools and colleges on programmes to inspire young people into employment opportunities when they reach adulthood, working closely with employers across all sectors and building on initiatives such as the Pledge and Young Chamber.



### Enhancing our approach to early help and prevention for families:

We will scale up our approaches to early intervention and targeted prevention, reducing the numbers of children and families requiring crisis support. This will include further developing a 'think family' and 'trauma informed' approach as our way of working across all local children's and adults' services, with a strong focus on preventative practice and increasing family resilience. This approach will happen at all levels of need, from universal services right through to children in need, children in families experiencing homelessness and 'edge of care'. We also want to develop family hubs, bringing together local services across multiple organisations to make it easier for families to get the help and guidance they need around parenting, lifestyles and employment in their community. We will continue to deliver our services to tackle domestic abuse and violence against women and girls, supporting survivors and families at an earlier stage and working with perpetrators to avoid abuse recurring and escalating.



## Delivering the best possible care for children and young people:

When children do need to be in the care of the local authority, we want to ensure they have the right support at the right time in the right place from outstanding children's services. This includes enhancing our approaches to recruitment and retaining our valued workforce that supports children and families to provide the best possible care. It also involves promoting the opportunity to be a foster carer, specialist foster carer, or adopter and ensuring the right support is in place through our collaborative arrangements with other local authorities. We will also explore regional approaches to tackling increasing costs. To ensure we have more safe, stable accommodation and care in the local area for the growing numbers of children entering the care system, we will invest in more small scale and specialist homes for children in care. This will provide additional places for children and young people in our care with access to specialist support.




## Supporting children in care and care leavers:

Implementing our plans alongside local services and businesses to support children in care and care leavers is a key focus. This involves local organisations doing all they can to support the children in our care to access the same support, opportunities, and experiences that every good parent would want for their own children. We will also improve how children who need support transition into adult services and ensure children that leave care are better equipped for adulthood.

**“There should be more investment in young people and their future”**

[Join the conversation respondent](#)

## Fostering and Adoption

 [watch the video](#)



## How we can all play our part

Our part	Your part
<p>Helping more children and young people secure a good or better education</p> <p>Ensuring our education and support is inclusive</p> <p>Promoting the health and wellbeing of our children and young people</p> <p>Helping more young people make a positive contribution</p> <p>Enhancing our approach to early help and prevention for families</p> <p>Delivering the best possible care for children and young people</p> <p>Supporting children in care and care leavers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the children in your life <b>engage with the five ways to wellbeing</b>.</li> <li>• Build <b>positive relationships</b> with the children in your life and make time to talk about what matters to them.</li> <li>• Take up your <b>free early education entitlement</b>.</li> <li>• Make sure the children in your life <b>get the vaccinations</b> they're entitled to.</li> <li>• <b>Apply for school places</b> within the national schools admissions timeframe.</li> <li>• ensure your child <b>attends school regularly</b>.</li> <li>• Volunteer within your community. Whether you are doing it to help those in need, build your CV, or simply for your own wellbeing, there are a range of opportunities on the <b>volunteering portal</b></li> <li>• Consider whether you could <b>foster or adopt</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Seek early advice</b> and intervention for any concerns you may have about your child.</li> <li>• Check whether you are eligible for the <b>NHS Healthy Start Scheme</b></li> </ul>

## Supporting plans and strategies

- ▶ Children and Young Peoples Plan
- ▶ Corporate Parenting Strategy
- ▶ Children in Care and Care Leavers Accommodation Strategy
- ▶ Childrens Social Care Sufficiency Strategy
- ▶ Domestic Abuse Strategy
- ▶ Inclusion Matters Strategy
- ▶ Play Strategy and Locality Play improvement Frameworks



# Tackling hardship and poverty:



“Get people off the streets. More support for homeless people.”

[Join the conversation respondent](#)

## The opportunity

Many residents have higher levels of income and experience lower levels of deprivation than many areas across the country. However, this is not the case for all and more people and families are facing greater levels of hardship and poverty than we have seen for generations. This means not being able to heat your home, pay your rent and facing every day with insecurity, uncertainty, and sometimes impossible decisions about money. Even people who are in work are struggling and being pushed to use food banks and other support. The stress and pressure poverty creates can be immense and often people feel marginalised and excluded. It also impacts on current and future health, with risks and impacts

accumulating throughout people's lives. We also are seeing increased levels of homelessness and use of temporary accommodation. We have a comprehensive tackling poverty plan in place focused on the three pillars of **voice**, **alleviation** and **root cause**, and a commitment across the whole borough to take action and tackle these challenges. With limited resources at our disposal, it is essential that we support those with the most need while preventing others from reaching that point. Listening to people impacted will be critical as will first class information, advice and guidance to support people to access the help when they need it.

### What success will look like

- A slowing in the rate of poverty and hardship
- A slowing in the rate of children and young people in poverty and hardship
- Reduced rates of homelessness
- Increased number of homelessness preventions
- Reduced use of unsuitable hotels as temporary accommodation
- Reduced digital exclusion
- Reduced levels of fuel poverty



## How we will make a difference

### Listening and engaging with people experiencing poverty and inequality:

We will enhance our public engagement processes so the voices and lived experience of people in poverty can be heard and that we challenge the stigma surrounding poverty. The Council will also ensure all policies and decisions consider the onward impact on socio-economic disadvantage, so that our commitment to poverty reduction cuts through everything we do. Poverty awareness training will be offered to our workforce, so they are better equipped to understand the challenges many residents face and the best way to provide support. We will implement a comprehensive and ongoing external communications campaign to raise levels of awareness and engagement with the issues relating to poverty and tackle stigma. This will use existing local media channels and a dedicated webspace and will acknowledge the role that poverty and low income, difficulty accessing high quality work and support play in a complex range of health and wellbeing issues.


### How we live

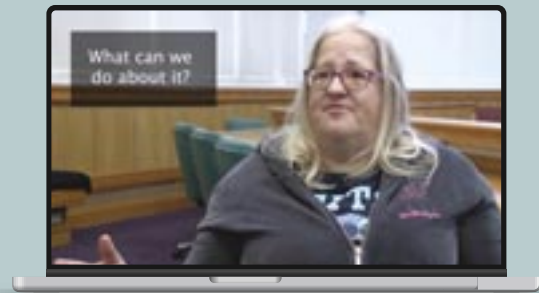
Young people from two schools worked with the television producer Phil Redmond to make a fictional short film 'How we live' to help people understand their experience of poverty. This video was supported by the west Cheshire Poverty Truth Commission and is used to raise awareness of poverty and the impact it has on peoples' lives.

#### How we live film



### Community inspirers

 watch the video



### Providing seamless access to help before people fall into crisis:

We will constantly improve access to our services, taking a 'no wrong front door' approach that means residents feel welcomed and able to access services however they contact us. This involves improving access to services where people live, improving our online guidance, and working closely with a range of agencies to join up advice and support. The use of plain English and avoidance of jargon will be important. We will introduce more innovative approaches to identify people falling into hardship at an earlier stage so we can take preventative action to avoid crisis. We will also consider further ways of supporting people to regain their independence after a financial crisis.

### Alleviating the impact of poverty and hardship:

We will continue to provide a comprehensive package of support to alleviate the impact of poverty. Cheshire West is part of the Cheshire and Merseyside Marmot community, recognising that the main cause of health inequality is social inequality and committing to reduce both. We will provide access to welfare advice and oversee the allocation of funding for when people find themselves in financial crisis. We will continue to support greater financial inclusion, promoting

affordable and ethical access to financial services to avoid the need for payday loans and excessive use of credit agencies, and providing advice on budgeting and debt support. We will take targeted action to maximise income for older people, younger people, ethnic minorities, and disabled people and carers who are experiencing poverty. We will also ensure our frontline staff are equipped to support mental wellbeing, particularly to prevent suicide which, sadly, is sometimes linked to financial hardship.

### Tackling food insecurity:

Our aim is that food poverty becomes a thing of the past and we support the West Cheshire Food Partnership aspiration of a "future where nobody should have to rely on or use foodbanks to provide food for themselves or their family", acknowledging the importance of access to affordable food for people to thrive in their everyday lives. We are working to become a 'Sustainable Food Place' promoting local producers and supply chains to ensure that everyone in west Cheshire has access to affordable, healthy, sustainable and enjoyable food. We will continue supporting access to emergency food support, summer and school holiday food support and activities for children, and advice on wider issues including cooking, activities for children, and debt advice in a dignified and friendly setting.

The **West Cheshire Food Partnership**, hosted by Cheshire West Voluntary Action is delivering the Food for All Plan. The vision of the Food for All Plan is to ensure that everyone in west Cheshire has access to affordable, healthy, sustainable and enjoyable food to make a decent meal. The west Cheshire Food Partnership is also a Sustainable Food Place and the borough is working towards achieving the bronze Sustainable Food Place award.

### Implementing our comprehensive fuel poverty strategy:

Key actions to reduce fuel poverty include improved advice and guidance, training for staff to tackle fuel poverty, working with appropriate providers to ensure all homes receive a smart meter by 2025, promoting benefits of fuel tariff switching, implementing energy efficiency measures in fuel poor households, and supporting a network of warm welcoming spaces for people who are struggling to meet heating costs.

### Enhancing digital inclusion:

We will enhance digital inclusion and reduce the digital divide. Digital inclusion is a social issue, a lack of digital skills and access can have a huge negative impact on a person's life, leading to poorer health outcomes and a lower life expectancy, increased loneliness and social isolation, reduced access to jobs and education. It can mean paying more for essentials, being unable get a bank account or other financial services, and an increased risk of experiencing poverty. We will work through the digital inclusion partnership to take collective action against digital exclusion and provide community support, digital skills, digital lending libraries and affordable access to devices and data.

### Preventing and addressing homelessness:

People become homeless for a number of different reasons. Availability of affordable homes in the borough, unemployment, and poverty are all social causes of local homelessness. In some cases, people are forced into homelessness through life events such as leaving prison or care, people fleeing a violent or abusive relationship, or because they can no longer afford the rent. We will improve homelessness prevention initiatives to keep residents in their homes by providing advice, information, and assistance. This will include

**“I see increased homelessness in Chester. This is disturbing and there should be an emphasis on multi step support.”**

**Join the conversation respondent**

developing our personalised housing plans and our offers of landlord negotiation, mediation with family and friends, debt advice and financial assistance when necessary. When somebody does find themselves homeless, we will support them to secure alternative accommodation in supported housing, social housing or the private rented sector. Supported accommodation works to bridge the gap to support people to become tenancy ready. We will invest in more supported housing units across the borough and ensure that people that require supported housing are equipped with the skills to move on into their own independent homes when the time is right for them. Social housing is an affordable housing option in our borough that can provide a more secure long-term tenancy. We will continue to work with our housing partners to ensure that our most vulnerable homeless households are prioritised for social housing and, where appropriate, use the Housing First approach, which provides tailored wraparound support to the tenant. The private rented sector is very competitive however we will continue to work with landlords and local letting agencies to help find alternative accommodation options for our residents, especially where they face homelessness as the result of 'No Fault' evictions.

We will develop incentives to attract more private landlords and work with them to prevent unnecessary evictions. We will endeavour to end rough sleeping in the borough through our partnership working. Residents, businesses and charities can play their part in tackling rough sleeping and homelessness by signing the Homelessness Pledge or by donating through the diverted giving scheme to local homeless charities.

### **Tackling the root causes of hardship and poverty to secure a fairer future:**

Poverty and hardship is not a lifestyle choice. It is a complex issue that could happen to any of us. We want to really tackle the root causes, not just treat the symptoms. This includes targeted action to improve youth social mobility, supporting access to employment and in work progression, and facilitating a more inclusive economy. We will use our Local Transport Plan to promote a transport system that enables everyone to access the services and opportunities available. It also requires local areas across the country working together to share best practice and learning but also to work with central government to develop effective policies to tackle poverty and hardship.

### **Providing sanctuary to those in need:**

We will show care and compassion, whilst continuing to support people fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries, building on our commitment to become a Council of Sanctuary, and working with other Places of Sanctuary so that Cheshire West and Chester is a welcoming place.

**'End Homelessness in Chester'** is a collaborative project between Chester BID, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Chester Aid to the Homeless, Share, Soul Kitchen and The Chester Bluecoat Charity. The project encourages people to 'tap to donate' £3 to local homeless charities.



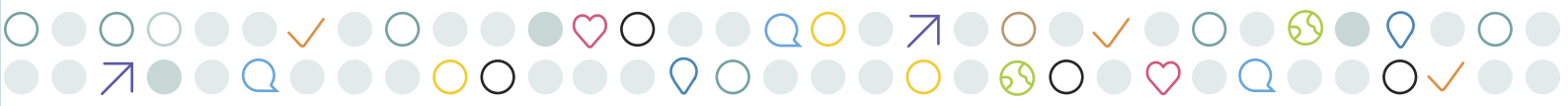


## How we can all play our part

Our part	Your part
<p>Listening and engaging with people experiencing poverty and inequality</p> <p>Providing seamless access to help before people fall into crisis</p> <p>Alleviating the impact of poverty and hardship</p> <p>Tackling food poverty</p> <p>Implementing our comprehensive fuel poverty strategy</p> <p>Enhancing digital inclusion</p> <p>Preventing and addressing homelessness</p> <p>Tackling the root causes of hardship and poverty to secure a fairer future</p> <p>Providing sanctuary to those in need</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look out for the advice that is out there is you need help and ask for support at an early stage.</li> <li>• Be a good landlord, recognising the contribution you make to the wellbeing of your community.</li> <li>• Volunteer within your community. Whether you are doing it to help those in need, build your CV, or simply for your own wellbeing, there are a range of opportunities on the <b>volunteering portal</b></li> <li>• Donate to one of our great local charities.</li> <li>• Sign a pledge to play your part in tackling homeless Rough Sleeping and Homelessness Pledge .</li> <li>• Check whether you are eligible for the <b>NHS Healthy Start Scheme</b></li> </ul>

## Supporting plans and strategies

- ▶ A Fairer Future: tackling poverty strategy
- ▶ All Together Fairer
- ▶ Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
- ▶ Fuel Poverty Strategy
- ▶ Food for All Plan



# Resilient people living their best lives:



“It is important to ensure that people are supported to become resilient and self sufficient. Whilst also supporting genuine need.”

*Join the conversation respondent*

## The opportunity

Local people tell us that they want to be able to live great lives in a flourishing community and that they value the importance of good local care services. With strong communities and many good local services, we have much to celebrate and the majority of local children, young people and adults live healthy, happy and independent lives. Increasingly, however, many residents find themselves in crisis, facing multiple challenges. Mental wellbeing is under pressure with a fifth of local people reporting high anxiety. We have significant inequalities in the health of our population between more and less deprived areas and we are seeing significant increases in people accessing health and adult social care services. These issues are reducing the opportunity for more of our residents to flourish and live their best

lives and are robbing the borough of the experience and contribution these people have to offer. But they are also placing unsustainable pressure on local services. There is an opportunity to do things differently and build on our strengths to meet these challenges head on. We know that our health and wellbeing is not just about health services. It's about living in a supportive, community, having a clear purpose, and living a lifestyle that prevents you from developing ill health. We will also transform our local services to enhance the wellbeing and resilience of our adult residents, working alongside them to ensure these changes meet their needs and aspirations. A key guiding principle will be good conversations about 'what matters to me', enabling local people to have greater control.

## What success will look like

- More people living a healthier, happier lives at home for longer
- Narrowing the gap in health and life expectancy between more and less deprived areas
- More health and wellbeing services delivered in partnership with the community
- More residents having a better experience of health and social care
- More children, young people and adults adopting healthy lifestyles



## How we will make a difference

### Supporting our communities to enable people to live great lives:

We will have good conversations with people who currently, or may in the future, draw on care and support to understand what is important to them, build their confidence and support achievement of goals. Much of that support will come from the strength of our communities. We want to build on these strengths. Our aim is to focus on what people can do for themselves, building on their strengths, and finding creative and meaningful ways that exist in the community to support them and their families, rather than commissioning traditional support. A key part of this approach will be to develop effective and impactful partnerships with health partners and the voluntary and community sector where we are all aligned to common goals which strengthen communities. At the local level we will support this through community partnerships developed across the borough. Working with our partners, we will also continue to deliver our age friendly communities programme, which looks at all aspects of a place and its local services to ensure it supports people to remain independent as they age. A great information, advice and guidance offer that helps local people of all ages to be aware of and access the voluntary support in their community is also important. We will use social prescribing to support people experiencing common health conditions like anxiety and depression. This will include access to Council owned leisure facilities and wellbeing services as well as referrals to our award-winning Natural Health Service, which encourages people to enjoy outdoor activities in our borough's parks and green spaces. We will deliver our local transport plan to ensure people can travel sustainably, can access the facilities and support they need, and enjoy our parks and green spaces. We will deliver our carers strategy, ensuring vital support is in place and the needs of carers are identified at an early stage. We will take further action to support the rights of people with disabilities, improving accessibility, employment, and opportunities to shape services. Finally, we will support more use of personal budgets for health and care to open up support to smaller providers to meet care and wellbeing needs in the community.



### High quality care when you need help:

We will enable the development, continued delivery and promotion of services which support people who wish to be independent for longer and empower people to live in the place they call home. We will ensure there are sufficient amounts of the right care and support available in the borough to meet people's needs and will maintain a constant focus on the quality and sustainability, always ensuring the needs of the individual and their family are at the heart of our approach. This includes reducing backlogs after COVID-19 as well as implementing a fresh approach to recruitment and retention of people working in health and care professions. We will ensure the appropriate investment is in our local care market, explore approaches to tackling increasing costs and work with providers to support them to deliver high quality care. This includes ensuring that care at home and residential care are funded appropriately and carers spend adequate time with residents to meet their needs. The use of assistive technology to support people to remain independent and receive support remotely will be expanded. We will also ensure strengths-based practice is embedded across care services, focusing on what people can do and building on those strengths rather than focusing on what people can't do.

**“It's no good people just living longer, we need to live better. Promote active lifestyles from an early age.”**

**Join the conversation respondent**

We will review our learning disability services to ensure they reflect leading practice and the aspirations of the people that use them. This includes a review of our current accommodation options with a view to investing in new local residential care and housing opportunities. We will also co-produce a new model of day care with local people, so that a wide range of day opportunities are available for people with learning disabilities, autism and for older people.

### **Taking action to tackle health inequalities:**

We want to reduce the inequalities in the health outcomes people of all ages experience, often due to deprivation. This means tackling the wider determinants of health and wellbeing including employment, housing, education, the natural environment, and community resilience. It also means taking very localised and focused action, underpinned by clear evidence and strong evaluation. We will ensure health equity is considered in all our key strategies and decisions such as planning, regulatory, commissioning, and financial decisions. We will also ensure services are available around issues such as substance misuse and sexual health. As a Marmot Borough, we recognise the impact that social inequality has on health and have committed to work across the public, private and third sector across Cheshire and Merseyside to tackle these inequalities and their impact.

### **Being proactive to stop or delay people becoming unwell from preventable diseases:**

We will ensure that every opportunity is taken to promote wellbeing and prevent people from becoming unwell. Every interaction we have with residents is an opportunity to understand how small changes can make a big difference to your health. We will support localised campaigns based on national campaigns such as 'Change 4 Life', 'One You', 'National Smile Month' and 'Stay Well this Winter'. We will tackle childhood obesity through our 'ActiveChild' partnership working and 'Eat Well, Be Active' framework, and we will continue to upscale local initiatives such as the Daily Mile, Active Streets and local sport. Brio, our wellbeing and leisure provider, will play a major role in this endeavour as we work together to do all we can to ensure our local facilities remain open and thrive. Effective services to stop smoking, support breastfeeding, eating healthier, and improve air quality are also vital. Addressing areas of low immunisation and cancer screening uptake is also important. We will ensure that health checks for people are promoted. Our local transport plan will promote a transport system that enables and promotes active travel, reduced air pollution and safer roads, pavements and paths. Overall, we want to shift more resources across the NHS and Council towards preventative services.

### **Enhancing mental health and wellbeing for more of our residents:**

We will implement our comprehensive plans to support mental wellbeing, including improved advice and guidance, rolling out mental health first aid across our public services workforce, supporting our Natural Health Service, promoting Books on Prescription through our library networks and strengthening links between children's mental health services in health and the local authority, embedding our recovery services, tackling self-harm and implementing our suicide prevention strategy. It is a particular priority for young people, and we will work with schools to provide earlier support, improve access to services, and utilise digital services which

can enhance wellbeing. Equally important is our approach to tackling social isolation by developing local communities, having places that people can come together to explore arts and creative activity, building friendship groups to help tackle loneliness and isolation at all ages and supporting a thriving community and voluntary sector.

### **Ensuring we have arrangements in place to protect us from future health emergencies:**

We have a duty to protect the public from potential future public health emergencies, whether due to severe weather, a communicable disease or a major incident. We are retaining our outbreak management capability and a comprehensive 'lessons learned' exercise from our local response to the COVID-19 pandemic is underway and we will continue a robust monitoring regime alongside strong crisis preparation.

### **Making help and support more accessible:**

We will deliver our Let's Talk model to ensure communities can access support at an early stage close to where they live, in a comfortable and informal setting. Our digital services will be improved particularly information, advice and assessments relating to their wellbeing and care. We will also work in partnership to strengthen access to GP, dentistry, community pharmacy and mental wellbeing services.

### **Helping people get their independence back after ill-health:**

When people hit a health crisis, they will be supported with rapid reablement and occupational therapy services as appropriate. A redesigned therapy-led reablement service will support people in the community, with Disabled Facilities Grants and other provision supporting people to live independently. Support will also be in place to support timely and effective hospital discharge, with a Home First approach meaning that, wherever possible, people are supported to return to their home, with community response hubs ensuring that when people leave hospital they are in the right setting and have a reduced need for onward health and care services.

### **Making health and care services seamless:**

We will continue to integrate health and care services so that people access support easily, without worrying about which organisation provides which service. More use will be made of multi-disciplinary teams that focus on the individual and support the right package and sequencing of services. Risk stratification tools will be used to identify people who need health and care and support before they slip into crisis. Preventative pathways will be strengthened across health and care and timely discharge from hospital will remain a key focus. Joint approaches to workforce development, joined up technology, joint commissioning, joint intelligence and pooled budgets will all be important to make this vision work at greater scale.

#### **Age-friendly Cheshire West and International Day of Older Persons**

The Age-friendly Cheshire West partnership held events in libraries across the borough to bring people together for International Day of Older Persons. The partnership aims to make Cheshire West and Chester a borough where people can live active, healthy, fulfilling and independent lives for as long as possible.



**Let's Talk**



## How we can all play our part

Our part	Your part
<p>Supporting our communities to enable people to live great lives</p> <p>High quality care when you need help</p> <p>Taking action to tackle health inequalities</p> <p>Being proactive to stop or delay people becoming unwell from preventable diseases</p> <p>Enhancing mental health and wellbeing for more of our residents</p> <p>Ensuring we have arrangements in place to protect us from future health emergencies</p> <p>Making help and support more accessible:</p> <p>Helping people get their independence back after ill-health</p> <p>Making health and care services seamless</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Connect</b> - connect with the people around you: your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Look out for them, help where you can and spend time developing these relationships.</li> <li>• <b>Eat well and be active</b> - Take responsibility for your own health and wellbeing. You don't have to go to the gym. Take a walk, go cycling or play a game of football. Find an activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your life. Think about your lifestyle and small changes you can make with diet and alcohol to be healthier.</li> <li>• <b>Be safe</b> - Avoid risky behaviours such as smoking or substance use and encourage your friends and peers to do the same. Contact substance misuse or sexual health services if you need the support that they offer.</li> <li>• <b>Keep learning</b> - learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence. It could even help you change careers or improve your earning potential.</li> <li>• <b>Volunteer within your community.</b> Whether you are doing it to help those in need, build your CV, or simply for your own wellbeing, there are a range of opportunities on the <b>volunteering portal</b></li> <li>• <b>Be mindful</b> - be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you. Some people call this awareness 'mindfulness'.</li> <li>• <b>Choose the right health care when you need it</b> - it might be visiting your pharmacist, GP or NHS Direct.</li> <li>• <b>Build on your strengths</b> - If you do need support, tell us about what your strengths and goals are and we will support you to live your best life.</li> <li>• <b>Consider going into a caring or health role</b> - there are many opportunities and career paths to choose from.</li> <li>• <b>Plan for the future</b> – we are all getting older, do things now which will help you be healthy, happy and independent as you age.</li> </ul>

## Supporting plans and strategies

- ▶ Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership Interim Strategy
- ▶ The Cheshire West Place Plan
- ▶ Market position statement
- ▶ Compact for West Cheshire

### Strategies under development:

- Adult Social Care Strategy
- Age-friendly Cheshire West Partnership Strategy and Action Plan

# Opportunity in a fair local economy:



**“Supporting small businesses  
would benefit everybody”**  
 Join the conversation respondent



## The opportunity

Our economy supports many of the factors that lead to a good quality of life. Good work, excellent local employers across a range of strong sectors, decent incomes and strong prospects is the experience for many local people. We have higher rates of employment, skills, earnings and productivity compared to many areas. But this is not the case for all. Recent years have seen slowing productivity coupled with rising levels of inequality – raising questions around the sustainability and

fairness of a growth model that has failed to increase the living standards of all. We know that social inequality is the main cause of health inequalities and, as a part of the Cheshire and Merseyside Marmot community, we have committed to address these issues. We have a comprehensive plan to ensure that the economy for the future creates and rewards good work, creating prosperity and security for all. We will work alongside businesses to make this happen.

## What success will look like

- High levels of employment
- Increased earnings
- Higher levels of productivity compared to other areas
- An increase in businesses being created and surviving
- Greater awareness of the employment opportunities available locally and pathways to access them
- Being a popular destination for learners, visitors, investors and those relocating
- More people volunteering in their neighbourhood



## How we will make a difference

### The right skills to secure good employment:

Ensuring local people have the right skills to access good local jobs is vital. Creating opportunity and skills to succeed starts at a young age and we will establish a commission including young people, Councillors, partners and outside experts to develop a comprehensive action plan to help increase youth social mobility and to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment, and training. We will continue to build on our workzone approach and promote a combined offer around adult education, skills, careers and employment support to help people gain the skills they need throughout their lives. As part of this we will grow our targeted support offer, particularly for groups such as the over 50s. We will implement a skills escalator approach that provides people with clear information about the skills they need to progress in a given career and the opportunities to obtain them. This will involve supporting people in work to enhance their skills, opportunities and earnings. A particular emphasis will be placed on skills to support 'green jobs' and digital skills but we also recognise the vital skills we need to ensure our care sector and wider public services thrive. Partnerships with schools, Cheshire College South and West, Warrington and Vale Royal College, the University of Chester, trade unions, and workplaces will be at the heart of our approach. We will promote volunteering opportunities and encourage all large employers who have surplus Apprenticeship Levy funding to transfer this to local businesses to support local skills and good employment.

### Supporting our businesses of today and the future:

We want to develop an ever-stronger relationship with our brilliant businesses, big and small. This includes supporting some of our key sectors including growing the Cheshire Science Corridor and Origin in the Ellesmere Port Industrial Area, building nationally significant strengths in existing energy, life sciences, logistics, advanced manufacturing businesses, retail and hospitality and agriculture. We will review all our services to support businesses to make sure it is easier to start and grow a local company. This will include attracting inward investment and supporting and promoting different forms of business such as

social enterprises and cooperatives and growing our strong base of small and medium sized enterprises. We support business and community sector start-ups through our funding and business support offer and will work with the local Chamber of Commerce and Business Improvement Districts to ensure that this offer is targeted at those starting businesses in town centres. We will help even more businesses and public sector organisations make progress in being good employers to give back to their community, exploring the potential of a sub-regional award scheme as well as a local fair employment charter. We will work with our partners and businesses to promote inclusive recruitment and use our collective purchasing power to 'keep it local,' supporting local suppliers and local employment to retain wealth and jobs in the local area. We will continue to support local businesses through the way we target the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which has already funded inward investment campaigns, tourism marketing, the promotion of locally led rural care provision and support for flexible shared workspaces and pop-up shops on our high streets. Finally, we will work to ensure that planning applications are considered in a timely way and that consideration and decisions are well-communicated.

### Improving digital connectivity:

We will work collaboratively to connect those places and communities that would otherwise be left behind. We will explore the potential of smart towns, extend access to gigabit broadband to businesses and at least three-quarters of the borough's households by 2028 and develop alternative technology grants to support those waiting for better connectivity.

### Connecting to opportunity:

We will work with local communities to develop and deliver a local transport plan that will reimagine a local transport system that is sustainable, affordable, adaptable and accessible to everyone, facilitating excellent quality of life, attractive neighbourhoods, thriving business and inclusive prosperity. We will also support major transport programmes, such as Growth Track 360 and

Northern Powerhouse Rail, that better connect the borough to the rest of the North West and the rest of the UK. We will improve highways maintenance and make sustainable travel accessible to everyone, so that people can get to work, and businesses can employ the right people. We will use our Bus Service Improvement Plan funding to improve the bus services across the borough, and to connect to other places in neighbouring boroughs. Our Local Transport Plan will be adopted by spring 2025, setting out a new approach and a long-term plan for transforming transport across our borough. The Local Plan will set planning policy designed to ensure that new developments and employment land is well connected to our existing settlements and services, and appropriate infrastructure improvements are provided.

### Putting people at the heart of regeneration plans for our rural communities, town and city centres:

We have a compelling vision to deliver regeneration across west Cheshire - in our towns, rural communities and the city of Chester. This will include working with residents and businesses to revive our town centres, using empty shops as communal working spaces and creating flourishing places for good employment and leisure opportunities and retaining our Purple Flag status, recognising towns and city centres that meet or surpass the standards of excellence in managing the evening and night time economy. Our rural communities will be supported whilst maintaining those characteristics which make them distinctive.

## Case Studies

### Local regeneration

At the heart of local regeneration plans is an ambition to have a positive impact on our environment, heritage and culture. Through our investments, our aim is to boost business, create jobs and increase skills, whilst delivering new housing, supporting digital connectivity, increasing inclusion, and enhancing pride in our town and city centres.

Working together with the public and private sectors, our projects will grow footfall, increase spend and spread vitality across our borough, bringing underused spaces back to life and making our communities exciting places to live, work, learn and visit.



## Chester

The refreshed One City Plan is a blueprint for enabling joint working and civic participation in Chester.

Through 45 actions, the One City Plan sets out a new vision for how the public, private and community sector can work together to make Chester a fairer, stronger, and greener city by 2045. In late 2022 the new Northgate development opened across the road from Storyhouse. 2023 saw the launch of the Workspace Project, piloted in Chester, to provide small businesses with co-working spaces and to bring more people into the city centre. The future focus will be to encourage and support more people to live within the city centre.

Over the last four years, we have been delivering the Chester Rows Heritage Action Zone which has repaired over 106 properties, including balustrade, railings and stallboards, decoration and new lighting and will be shortly installing a new fire protection system. The project has also supported a wide range of activities to boost footfall and support businesses, add vitality to the high street and help promote understanding of this unique heritage of our city – works have included funding choir, characters in historic dress who meet and interact with visitors, creating family trail, five heritage films and lots of work with young people to engage them in heritage through a range of creative mediums.



In Lache, we have been working with local residents to agree four priorities for the ward, including investing in new and inclusive children's play equipment which will be installed in spring 2024. Future projects focus on creating a new wildlife area in a former landfill site, refurbishing the community centre and making it safer and easier to walk and cycle.

## Ellesmere Port

The Council has successfully secured over £13million from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' Levelling Up Fund to support the transformation of Ellesmere Port town centre. The project has three core elements that will bring increased footfall, living and accessibility to the town centre.

- Transformation of Ellesmere Port market hall
- Improved walking, wheeling and cycling links
- Bring forward sites for new housing

**ORIGIN**, just outside Ellesmere Port, is at the forefront of plans to respond to the Climate Emergency with a green industrial revolution. It presents a transformational economic growth opportunity and is one of the most important industrial and employment clusters in the UK. Already home to 1,300 businesses employing 24,100 people it has the potential to increase to 1,463 businesses, employing 35,500 people by 2040, with a further £2billion investment forecast.



## Market Towns

The rural area and market towns are symbolic of Cheshire and are a distinctive mosaic of wonderful countryside and vibrant market towns.

They accommodate a significant resident population and a substantial part of the Cheshire economy in agriculture, agri-tech, food and drink sectors and visitor economy, but also a thriving small business community.

Projects such as Frodsham Leisure Centre and 'Reimagining Neston' are opportunities to recognise each of these places as a distinctive destination in its own right, where the quality of the environment and built heritage is conserved and managed as part of a balanced approach to maximising its unique potential and fundamental role in the very fabric of west Cheshire.

## Northwich

Northwich is an exciting and vibrant place to live, work, play and visit, with a set of ambitious projects and developments planned as part of the Council's vision for the town. Regenerating areas of the town centre to unlock economic opportunities, renovating much-loved traditional town landmarks and architecture, developing leisure facilities, and improving road links and accessibility are all vital parts of the future for Northwich. The Council's overall vision for the

town is detailed in the recently approved Northwich Development Framework with Weaver Square as the next significant project, delivering town centre housing for rent and purchase.

## Winsford

Winsford is a thriving and vibrant place to live, work, learn and play. The Council has committed funding to ambitious projects and developments as part of its vision for the town.

Redevelopment of Winsford town centre to unlock economic opportunities for existing and new businesses, creating a thriving waterfront area with access to leisure and nature, and residential development are all vital parts of the future for Winsford that the Council is working hard to deliver.

The first phase of the Council's ambitious regeneration of Winsford town centre is underway. The £22.5 million project is funded by the Council and the Government's Future High Street Fund. It is the biggest investment in the town centre shopping area since the 1960s, made possible by the Council's acquisition of the site in 2018.

The scheme will bring new businesses to Winsford and create new and exciting public spaces, giving the people of Winsford a town centre they can be proud of.



## Making culture and heritage a frontline service:

The role of culture is important in our ambitions and key to enriching people's lives and supporting the local economy. We will work with our local Cultural Partnership Board to develop and implement a cultural manifesto that builds on opportunities such as Theatre Porto, Winsford Creates, Storyhouse, NOW Northwich, Cheshire Dance in Winsford, the Chester Contemporary arts festival and the rural touring arts programme to ensure that all our communities remain distinctive, vibrant and great places to be. We will attract more families into our towns through cultural events and activities such as the Summer Watch and Winter Watch parades and implement our Heritage Strategy, working in partnership with people and communities to protect, enhance and celebrate heritage in all its forms for the future. As well as championing a diverse heritage that represents everyone's past, we will also ensure that our heritage informs future regeneration and transport plans. We will deliver a new Cheshire Archives Facility for our borough, enabling improved access, engagement and visitor experience. Finally, the role of tourism remains important and we will continue to improve and broaden the visitor experience.

## Securing new powers and funding from Government

We have the vision, insight and relationships to develop a thriving and inclusive local economy. We already have a strong history of collaboration on economic development across Cheshire and Warrington and this will be strengthened further as the local enterprise partnership is further integrated into these arrangements. We believe that we could move further and faster, supporting and encouraging local innovation and improving local public transport if Government transferred more powers and funding to support local growth. Working with our neighbouring councils in Cheshire East and Warrington we will press for a devolution deal similar to the arrangements in Greater Manchester, Liverpool and elsewhere. Any devolved arrangements would need to be right for our area and fully informed by the views and ambitions of residents, businesses, and other partners.

**“Keeping our libraries, green spaces and cultural centres alive are important as once these facilities are gone, they will be impossible to bring back.”**

[Join the conversation respondent](#)



## How we can all play our part

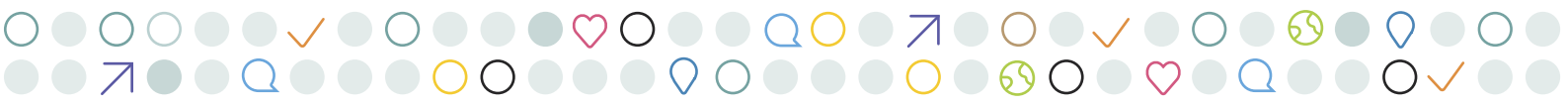
Our part	Your part
<p>The right skills to secure good employment:</p> <p>Supporting our businesses of today and the future:</p> <p>Improving digital connectivity:</p> <p>Connecting to opportunity</p> <p>Putting people at the heart of regeneration plans for our rural communities, town and city centres:</p> <p>Making culture and heritage a front-line service</p> <p>Securing new powers and funding from Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Take advantage of training opportunities:</b> A wide range of training and support is available to help you to develop new skills and potentially change career.</li> <li>• <b>Have your say:</b> When we consult on plans to improve our communities. Your insight and ideas are hugely valuable.</li> <li>• <b>Shop local.</b> Use and support your local shops, farms, services and amenities.</li> <li>• <b>Start a business.</b> Speak to the Let's Talk Business team about starting your own business, co-operative, or social enterprise.</li> <li>• If you are an employer, sign up to the <b>Cheshire and Warrington Fair Employment Charter</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Volunteer within your community.</b> Whether you are doing it to help those in need, build your CV, or simply for your own wellbeing, there are a range of opportunities on the <b>volunteering portal</b></li> </ul>

## Supporting plans and strategies

- ▶ Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Plan
- ▶ Inclusive Economy Prospectus
- ▶ Chester One City Plan
- ▶ Chester Regeneration Plans
- ▶ Citizen Student Strategy
- ▶ Ellesmere Port Regeneration Plan
- ▶ High Street, Town and City Centre Commission
- ▶ Northwich Regeneration Plan
- ▶ Rural Regeneration Plan
- ▶ Winsford Regeneration Plan

### Strategies under development:

- The Local Plan
- The local Transport Plan



# Neighbourhood pride:



“[I like] the sense of community - living in a safe and pleasant place”

Join the conversation respondent



## The opportunity

We have many proud, distinctive and vibrant communities and West Cheshire is a fantastic place to live for many. Around 80% of local residents are satisfied with their area as a place to live and during the development of this plan many local people told us what they love about where they live, highlighting access to nature, low crime, and a real sense of community. Our communities are active with three-quarter of residents involved in a local group, club or organisation. But residents have also reinforced to us the importance of doing all we can to make the places where we live

cleaner, safer and easier to get around. A recent survey revealed that residents wanted to see more progress with road and pavement condition, public transport and clean and tidy streets. Getting these things right requires a close relationship with communities and strong emphasis on providing the best experience for customers but will make our communities even better places to be. Access to housing that meets a wide range of needs is an important aspect of vibrant communities, as is access to green spaces, leisure and cultural opportunities.

## What success will look like

- Maintaining high levels of neighbourhood pride
- Road and pavement condition compares well against other areas
- Timely responses to neighbourhood issues raised by residents
- Increase in affordable homes
- Low crime and anti-social behaviour
- High levels of tenancy satisfaction with council-owned and social housing



## How we will make a difference

The Council is responsible for Chester's City Walls - a Scheduled Monument of national and international significance. The Council has ensured this ancient monument is sympathetically cared for and preserved by co-ordinating both general maintenance and major restoration projects in consultation with Historic England. Every day of the year a lot of work goes on behind the scenes to care for the City Walls to keep them protected as well as safe for the estimated three million visitors and residents who walk the walls annually. A team of engineers, including a specialist conservation accredited engineer, carries out structural inspections and daily safety checks, and prioritises repair works to target limited resources where they are most needed.

Since the Council has been responsible for them, around £6.5m has been spent to ensure the City Walls can be enjoyed by generations to come and we continue to look to identify additional funding sources for this work.

### Maintain the cleanliness and attractiveness of our neighbourhoods:

We will continue to focus and target our resources to improve the cleanliness and attractiveness of where people live, further improving the responsiveness of our services but also working with community groups to keep our neighbourhoods, parks, cemeteries and greenspaces tidy. We will continue to improve information on local friends groups and schedules for things like grass cutting and gully clearing, as well as easy reporting systems and improved communications on the status of reports of issues such as fly tipping and graffiti. As well as maintaining robust behaviour change campaigns to tackle issues like fly tipping we will implement the harshest possible enforcement regime to tackle littering and fly-tipping, including implementing a series of measures that will highlight lawbreaking and punish offenders. We will explore the potential of a commercial service for clearing waste and fly-tipping from private land where the owner is prepared to pay. We remain interested in exploring how technology can play its part for example to help us monitor air pollution or tell us when public bins need emptying. Enhancing and promoting our beautiful countryside is also

important and we will support the Sandstone Ridge Trust in their campaign to move the Sandstone Ridge from being shortlisted, to being designated, as an area of outstanding natural beauty.

### Maintaining our roads, foot ways and cycle ways:

We know that maintaining our highways assets is important to our residents and it's important to us. It is a national, as well as a local issue, and improving the quality of the highway network requires a level of investment which is unlikely to be fully available in the current climate. We will therefore embrace innovation to maintain our network including exploring new technologies that reduce our carbon impacts, such as in-situ recycling, where damaged highway materials are mixed with new cement and bitumen, effectively recycling them to create a new base for resurfacing. We will adopt leading practice to improve the condition of our highways assets - our highways, footways, cycle ways and city walls - and to tackle defects.



The Council's **Your Streets team** bring together a range of service to promote the 'Love Your Streets' message. They work with residents and community groups to investigate and solve environmental issues and encourage involvement and volunteering. They've also supported 'it's your neighbourhood' entries with North West in Bloom, which brings members of the community together to make a positive change to the place they live, work or spend their leisure time.

We will work with utility companies to minimise the impact that infrastructure work has on congestion. Getting repairs right first time will be a key area of focus for our highways provider. We will also ensure easy reporting systems for highways defects and improved communications on the status of the reports people have made. We will use the opportunity of our new Local Transport Plan and refreshed asset management strategy to push for a fair financial settlement from Government that supports us to deliver improvements.

### Keeping our communities safe:

Feeling safe is vital to a thriving community. Residents told us this was the third most important priority for a good quality of life and, for many people, one of the things they value most about their community. We will maintain community confidence through the prevention and reduction of anti-social behaviour such as graffiti and continuing to invest in CCTV. Identifying, preventing, and supporting those at risk of exploitation and doorstep crime including children and vulnerable adults is a real focus for the Council, the Police and other agencies. We are also committed to tackling fraud through effective trading standards. We will implement the findings of our Violence Against Women and Girls Commission, which is being shaped by the experiences of local people. Working in partnership, we will tackle reoffending using Integrated Offender Management approaches. We will improve children and young peoples' access to

## “Improvement to the streets, pavements, and cycle routes”

Join the conversation respondent

educational opportunities about safety and risk, particularly with the role of social media in our lives. Working with stakeholders and residents, we will enhance fire safety and as a borough we will take concerted action to reduce the number of people who are killed or seriously injured on our roads to zero. Finally, we will maintain our preparedness to manage the risks and threats arising from future crises and major emergencies.



In June 2023, **Trading Standards** successfully prosecuted a fraudster who targeted a vulnerable resident, carrying out building work at a cost of £19,000 which was so poor that it was worth nothing.

The defendant started out quoting for minor works, before discussing ideas for an extension at the property. Proclaiming to be an expert in this field after years of experience, the defendant and his company carried out work far from professional standards with the work having to be completed replaced. The defendant was found guilty of fraud and sentenced to immediate imprisonment of 18

months. In addition, he repaid the £19,000 back in full to the complainant.

The judge in this case commented on how the defendant had “defrauded” the resident by carrying out “appalling” work. The complainant said that the fact a complete refund was also secured in addition to the prosecution result was an “unexpected but outstanding result”.

Trading Standards act to protect residents and support legitimate business by taking enforcement action against those who flout the law.



### Making the best use of our community buildings:

The Council owns over 150 buildings that are being used by communities to come together or receive local services. We will implement our plan to get the most out of these assets, transform some facilities by moving to more combined, integrated uses and transfer some of these assets to community groups and town and parish councils, where this is feasible. Moving control of an asset closer to the community that uses and benefits from it can bring an increased feeling of ownership and value.

### Ensuring we have housing that local people need and can afford:

A good home is the bedrock of a good quality of life. Unfortunately, there is a national housing crisis, with real pressure on the cost and availability of housing. Average house prices in the borough are seven times the local average wage and rents are higher than the national average. We will refresh and implement our local planning policies to deliver a good supply of high quality, affordable and low carbon homes to buy or to rent across the borough with the right infrastructure to support communities. We will continue to support neighbourhood plans where requested to ensure that development is appropriate to the needs of the local community. We aim to see a minimum of 4,400 new homes built in the lifetime of this plan and we want to see 30% of those being affordable. We will also bring 800 empty homes back into use by 2028. We will implement the West

Cheshire Homes common allocation policy to ensure that social housing is allocated fairly and objectively to those in the greatest housing need. We will put the spotlight on the issue of damp and other health hazards faced by people living in substandard accommodation and seek to work with landlords to raise standards. We are proud to own our Council housing and we will work with tenants to ensure their homes are safe, decent, well managed and maintained. We will invest in our housing stock to achieve this, and work with tenants to deliver the Together with Tenants' Charter commitments to put tenants at the heart of decision making. It's important throughout our plans that we have more of the right type of housing available whether that be for younger or older people, rural communities and different income groups. We will work with developers and partners to deliver more homes to meet these needs along with the infrastructure to support these communities and take due regard to aligning to modern methods of housing construction. We have an active direct delivery programme to build more affordable, secure, high-quality and energy-efficient housing across the borough. We have already built 782 homes on Council-owned land, with 61% being affordable housing. We plan to build another 769 new homes over the next three years, 68% of which will be affordable. Plans are also being developed for up to 1000 further homes, but Government action will be needed to make this possible. We will also support Gypsies and Travellers to improve their health and well-being and ensure effective and proportionate management of encampments. Finally, we recognise that housebuilding makes a big contribution to local growth through construction and we will strengthen our skills plans to grasp this opportunity.

**“More affordable homes is a key priority”**  
Join the conversation respondent

## Our parks and green spaces

watch the video



## How we can all play our part

Our part	Your part
<p>Maintain the cleanliness and attractiveness of our neighbourhoods</p> <p>Maintaining our roads, footways and cycleways:</p> <p>Keeping our communities safe</p> <p>Making the best use of our community buildings</p> <p>Ensuring we have housing that local people need and can afford</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Volunteer within your community.</b> Whether you are doing it to help those in need, build your CV, or simply for your own wellbeing, there are a range of opportunities on the <b>volunteering portal</b></li> <li>• <b>Report issues in your neighbourhood:</b> It's much easier to report things like crime, anti-social behaviour, pot holes and other neighbourhood issues. It's also easier to see when routine maintenance is already planned.</li> <li>• <b>Take pride in your community and help keep it tidy.</b> We spend significant resources on cleaning up after people, whether that is people littering and fly tipping or irresponsible dog ownership. The more people take pride in their community, the more beautiful our communities will be.</li> <li>• <b>Attend and take part</b> in events and activities in your neighbourhood and encourage others to take part too.</li> <li>• <b>Tell us</b> if there is an empty home in your community so we can bring it into use.</li> </ul>

## Supporting plans and strategies

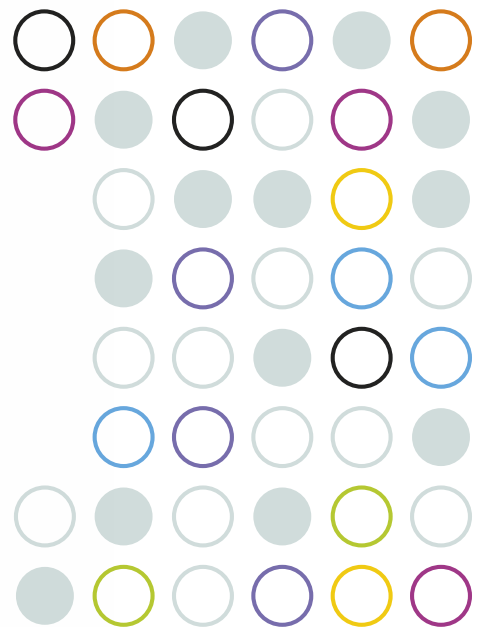
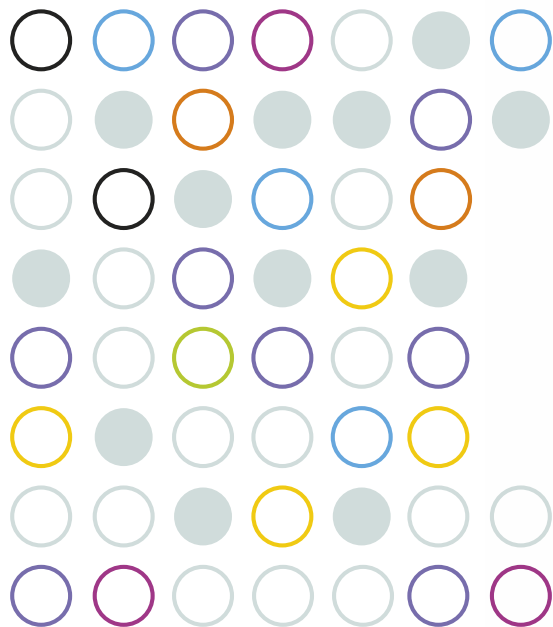
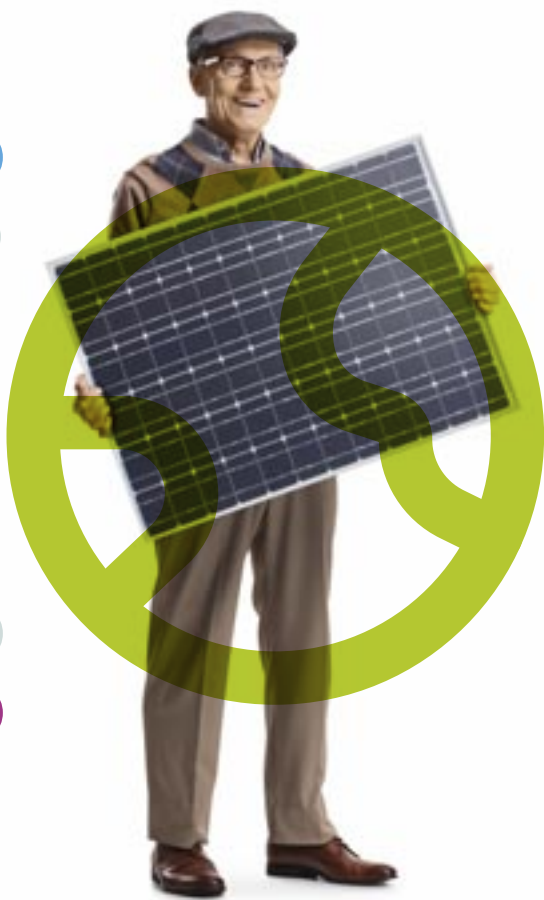
- ▶ Citizen Student Strategy
- ▶ Community Asset Framework
- ▶ Community safety plan
- ▶ Empty Homes Strategy
- ▶ The ForHousing Strategy
- ▶ Police and Crime Plan ([cheshire-pcc.gov.uk](http://cheshire-pcc.gov.uk))

### Strategies under development:

- Council Housing Asset Management Strategy
- Housing Strategy
- The Local Plan
- The local Transport Plan



# Greener communities:



“More projects like the wildflowers and plants. And look after biodiversity”  
Join the conversation respondent



## The opportunity

In May 2019 Cheshire West and Chester Council declared a Climate Emergency. The science and evidence are clear - climate change poses a significant threat to our way of life, and the time for action is now. While Government and other bodies must take a national and international lead, a big difference can be made locally. Cheshire West and Chester has set an ambition to become a carbon neutral borough, reducing emissions of greenhouse gases to net zero by 2045 or earlier. Our Local Transport Plan will set out a pathway to a future net-zero transport network for the borough. As a council, since 2014-15, we have reduced from 54,519 tons of CO2 to 15621 tons and set 7,064 tons of carbon offsets in motion via woodland and biodiversity creation. There is much more we need to do however, and our borough remains one of

the highest emitting in the UK. The impact of rising energy costs on both households and industry have highlighted the need to move to more efficient and sustainable energy uses. There is also a huge economic opportunity to go for green growth across our borough and to be world leading in the growth of green businesses and employment opportunities. We are a leader in planting trees to offset emissions and sustainable agriculture practices. We must also step up our adaptation to climate change as the impact is already with us and we will need to adjust to the impact this has on our way of life. Many of the changes needed will need to be rapid and difficult choices will have to be made. We will endeavour to work alongside local people to make it happen and enable us all to play our part.

## What success will look like

- Becoming a net zero borough by 2045
- Public services to move to net zero as soon as possible
- residents and businesses producing less greenhouse gas
- improved uptake of active and sustainable modes of transport such as cycling, walking, buses, rail and electric vehicles
- Cleaner land, air and waterways
- Improved access to green spaces and nature
- Improved biodiversity, including the reintroduction of Beavers and Otters
- More energy efficient homes and buildings
- Less waste and higher rates of recycling
- Improved resilience to the impact of climate change
- Fewer air quality action zones being required in the borough



## How we will make a difference

### Supporting local public services to decarbonise:

We will work from fewer, more efficient buildings, reducing and re-organising our estate to reduce emissions. The energy we do use will be sourced from sustainable sources wherever possible. Reducing the need to travel, using technology, and flexible working practices will be enhanced. We will also work with colleagues to encourage active and sustainable travel options and train our workforce in carbon literacy. Purchasing sustainable goods and services through our procurement processes will be strengthened with a more collaborative approach across local organisations. We will look to reduce the environmental impact of highway repairs through innovative methods that reuse existing materials. Finally, we will move to a fleet of low emission vehicles wherever possible.

**“As climate change and global warming become even more of a reality, you need to move fast”**

**Join the conversation respondent**

### Supporting our economy to decarbonise:

Due to our strong manufacturing sector, the borough is a high emitter of CO2 and a large consumer of energy for industrial purposes. 53% of total emissions in the borough come from industrial processes. But, as we transition towards new energy practices, this presents major opportunities. We will support the decarbonisation of local industry throughout the borough and support the development of the Origin cluster, in Ellesmere Port, to create new green jobs for people across west Cheshire. We will improve advice and guidance on actions businesses can take and funding available to



reduce their emissions and be more efficient. We will work with government to ensure funding is in place for commercial retrofit and energy grants are in place to support investments in low carbon and energy efficiency measures by local businesses. We will work with our vibrant agriculture sector to adopt more sustainable models of farming. We will market the area effectively to create more inward investment into green businesses. Our strategic location, industrial base, supply chain and skills pipeline will be a core part of our offer. We will also ensure our approach to skills development place local people in the best possible position to benefit from these opportunities.

### Promoting the production of renewable energy:

We will support investment in renewable energy across the borough, including community energy projects, solar farms and other renewable opportunities, developing policies and procedures that support a conducive investment environment. We will work across the Cheshire, Warrington and North Wales to drive this agenda, and with the Liverpool City region on the Mersey Tidal project to seek to deliver clean energy to the local area.



### Enhancing our advice and guidance to support sustainable behaviours:

We will support investment in renewable energy across the borough, including community energy projects, solar farms and other renewable opportunities, developing policies and procedures that support a conducive investment environment. We will work across the Cheshire, Warrington and North Wales to drive this agenda, and with the Liverpool City region on the Mersey Tidal project to seek to deliver clean energy to the local area.

### Enhancing our advice and guidance to support sustainable behaviours:

Our communications and advice to help people to make informed choices on things like waste, travel, and energy are vital. We will continue to provide this support and deliver impactful behaviour change campaigns.

### Supporting residents to make their homes more sustainable:

We will seek investment for major housing retrofit programmes, increasing the energy efficiency of homes, and also creating local employment opportunities. We will lead by example with council homes and other social housing but also make the case for more investment in significant energy efficiency measures to support private rented and owner-occupied housing. We will also explore and support group buying schemes such as solar together to help residents access competitive pricing for solar and battery. We will promote community energy schemes, supporting communities when they are proposed. We will continue to raise awareness of our Green Doctor scheme, which will include home visits to residents to advise on small measures they can take to reduce energy consumption and to educate people on the impact on air quality for fuels burned in the home. Our local plan will provide us with the opportunity to enhance the

sustainability and location of future housing development. A review will also take place into the feasibility of ensuring that all new builds meet high standards of energy efficiency (Council and private developments) include renewable energy and EV charging points, and access to a high standard of broadband and transport infrastructure. Finally, we will promote the reuse of brownfield or and reuse of existing buildings rather than demolition and new development.

**“Improve reliability and frequency of public transport, especially in rural communities.”**

[Join the conversation respondent](#)

### Increasing opportunities for sustainable and healthy transport: :

Transport contributes 19% of our Borough's carbon emissions and further action is needed to move to more sustainable options. A lack of sustainable transport options also means many residents cannot access jobs, services, and opportunities they need to thrive, and local businesses are held back by only being able to access a limited talent pool. There is a major opportunity to make progress in this area as we develop a new Local Transport Plan by 2025. We will continue to work with internet companies to improve the connectivity of the borough and reduce the need to physically travel. Support will be provided for increased levels of walking and cycling as the best option for local trips, through better infrastructure and promoting the use of the borough's footpaths, bridle ways and waterways. We will reduce our dependency on private car trips and encourage greater use of public transport by implementing our Bus Service Improvement Plan. We will continue our support for the development of Growth Track 360, which includes the electrification of the line from Crewe

to North Wales and work with Transport for the North and the Department for Transport on their respective key transport decarbonisation plan. Our rural communities will feel more connected through rural mobility schemes and better digital connectivity. We will deliver our Electric Vehicle Infrastructure plan to make accessible charging vehicles less of a barrier for residents, with local availability reaching the regional average by 2025 and the national average by 2030. We closely monitor air quality across the borough and this work will help continue to reduce the number of communities that include air quality action zones where specific issues need to be addressed. Finally, we will use our planning powers to support development in more sustainable and well-connected locations and champion the role transport can play in creating greener, more attractive new neighbourhoods.

### Reducing, reusing and recycling more of our waste:

We will continue to engage to encourage more waste to be reduced, reused and recycled. We will work with others to deliver a more circular economy whereby we better protect our natural resources through the efficient and ongoing reuse of materials. Last year, 56% of west Cheshire's household waste was recycled and we are continually looking to recycle and recover more. Waste that can't be reused is still recognised as a valuable resource and used as a fuel to produce power and heat. Less than 1.5% of all waste we collect has to be landfilled. We will build on the success of our food waste recycling process to create energy and will promote the use of anaerobic digestion to reduce emissions from agriculture. Every week in west Cheshire, over 320,000 refuse, recycling and garden

**“The more wild parks, gardens, walk ways, verges are the better for the wild life.”**

[Join the conversation respondent](#)

waste household kerbside collections are made. Our collection vehicles are moving away from diesel to run on low carbon, renewable and sustainable Hydrogenised Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel. We will also explore the development of a commercial waste collection service for businesses, which has the same commitment to environmental sustainability and recycling as our residential waste service.

### Taking further action to enhance biodiversity and tree planting:

We will further implement the wildflower and grassland strategy across the borough, enhancing local biodiversity and reducing our demand on green space management. We will lead on developing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Cheshire and Warrington, setting out agreed priorities for tackling wildlife crime, supporting rewilding and working with partners such as Cheshire Wildlife Trust as they re-introduce otters and beavers to the borough. We will support the introduction of the requirement for 'net gain' in biodiversity in new development, working with developers on a pipeline of local opportunities that they can fund, to enhance and create new habitats, unlocking much needed development whilst benefiting

Through community and partnership working, The **Mersey Forest Partnership**, which includes Cheshire West and Chester Council has planted more than nine million trees over the last 25 years, creating a growing network of woodlands and green spaces across Cheshire and Merseyside – equivalent to five new trees for every person living within the Forest area. This is creating new woodlands on people's doorsteps and giving more people easy access to nature.



our local ecological network, wider landscapes and contributing towards better places for people live and work. We will make clear recommendations and develop clear plans to improve water quality in our rivers and on the Mersey and Dee Estuaries. As part of our Trees for Climate Programme, we are coordinating 150 hectares of new tree planting a year, strengthening our natural environment, assisting with flood risk, and offsetting carbon emissions.

### Supporting residents and businesses impacted by climate change:

We are facing a future of erratic, unseasonable and extreme weather with flooding, extreme heat and extreme cold posing significant risks for our communities. As extreme weather continues to increase, we we will work through partnerships such as the Cheshire Resilience Forum to support residents with taking protection measures, and help our most vulnerable local people. For example, we will explore whether all Care homes across the borough consider climate change risks within care plans for both their customers and physical assets. Excess heat and cold, flooding and poor air quality will require a flow of good information to residents through alerts and targeted educational programmes. We will also provide advice and guidance to support local communities and businesses to plan for and adapt to the effects of a changing climate.



### Continuing to focus on reducing the risk and impact of flooding:

We will take a community first approach to tackling flooding. This means helping communities understand and actively prepare for the risks, including protection of their own properties, as well as encourage them to have direct involvement in decision-making and risk management actions. As the Lead Local Flood Authority, we will monitor risks carefully, and fully investigate incidences of flooding when properties are impacted, looking to secure the necessary funding to address any issues raised. We will avoid inappropriate development in areas of flood risk and build, maintain gulleys and improve flood management infrastructure and systems to reduce the likelihood of harm to people and property. For example, in Northwich we have worked closely with the other Risk Management Authorities to implement a flood protection scheme through the installation of temporary pumps. We will also continue preparing for and dealing with local flood incidents and ensuring that the multi-agency emergency response plan is properly deployed in response to flood emergencies.

## Community orchards

watch the video



# How we can all play our part

Our part	Your part
<p>Supporting local public services to decarbonise</p> <p>Supporting our economy to decarbonise</p> <p>Promoting the production of renewable energy</p> <p>Enhancing our advice and guidance to support sustainable behaviours</p> <p>Supporting residents to make their homes more sustainable</p> <p>Increasing opportunities for sustainable and healthy transport:</p> <p>Reducing, reusing and recycling more of our waste</p> <p>Taking further action to enhance biodiversity and tree planting</p> <p>Supporting residents and businesses impacted by climate change</p> <p>Continuing to focus on reducing the risk and impact of flooding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Be aware</b> of the impact that you and your lifestyle has on the planet and on the environment and the changes you may be able to make to reduce that impact. The way that you plant your garden or window box can make it a haven for local wildlife and insects.</li> <li>• Consider <b>buying sustainable products</b> that are produced locally or that are environmentally friendly.</li> <li>• Look for ways to <b>reduce, reuse and recycle more waste</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Travel more sustainably</b>. Think about car sharing or using public transport. If your journey is a short one, then maybe walk or cycle. If you're buying a vehicle consider a <b>low emissions or electric vehicle</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Take up</b> energy efficiency schemes and financial support that is available.</li> <li>• <b>Sign up to flooding alerts</b> and <b>take steps</b> that you can to protect your property.</li> <li>• <b>Volunteer within your community</b>. Whether you are doing it to help those in need, build your CV, or simply for your own wellbeing, there are a range of opportunities on the <b>volunteering portal</b></li> <li>• Use our <b>open, green spaces</b> and our parks and play areas.</li> </ul>

## Supporting plans and strategies

- ▶ West Cheshire Climate Emergency Response Plan
- ▶ Waste Management strategy
- ▶ Wildflower and grassland strategy
- ▶ Bus Service Improvement Plan

### Strategies under development:

- The local Transport Plan



## Doing things differently

To make a difference and to achieve our ambitions we need to work differently, particularly as the money we have available for local services is not sufficient to meet our challenges. We want to bring fundamental change to the way we work together across the borough. The seven big shifts we want to make are as follows:

### Working alongside our communities to make west Cheshire more resilient:

If we have more opportunities for people with lived experience of issues and services to have their say and play their part, we are more likely to spend money where we need to. In addition, people want to be more involved in owning the solution to any challenges they face in their lives rather than relying on a service. If we work together, we can help more local people help themselves. This will mean being more open, enabling and facilitating, building on the strengths of individuals, working on a place-basis so we tailor services to various communities, and supporting local community groups to do even more to support residents. To make these shifts we commit to delivering training and support to public service workers to ensure every opportunity is

taken to genuinely listen to local people, build on the strengths of our citizens, and enhance their resilience. We will ensure that Council communications are written in plain English and will improve all our communication, consultation and engagement platforms and processes to celebrate local successes, make it easier to get informed, engaged through powerful stories and involved in things that matter to local people. We will also consider different ways for people to engage on complex topics including deliberative approaches. We will also further develop our strategic relationship with the voluntary and community sector, engaging with the Local Voices Framework being developed by Cheshire West Voluntary Action, playing to our respective strengths and supporting the sector to be sustainable.

## Case Study

Cheshire West and Chester is a **cooperative council**, committed to building an equal partnership with local people. The Council works in line with the values and principles of the International Co-operative Alliance, working with partners on challenges such as digital inclusion and making the voice of lived experience heard in decision-making.

Social Partnership



Democratic Engagement



Co-production



Enterprise and social economy



Maximising social value



Community leadership and a new role for Councillors



New models of meeting priority needs



Innovation



Learning



Walking the talk



### Scaling up our approach to prevention:

We want to shift more focus towards prevention and tackling the root causes of the challenges people have in their lives. This will be enabled by better data to spot issues earlier, shifting services into communities to better tackle issues, improving joined up advice and guidance, and also taking a strengths-based approach to supporting individuals with complex needs. More services will be located within communities, so they are rooted in neighbourhoods and services will have the local knowledge to support people at an earlier stage.

### Taking our approach to using digital and insight to the next level:

The role of digital and artificial intelligence is changing the way we live our lives and will continue to do so. We want to embrace the opportunities to ensure that we use technology to make services more responsive, effective, secure, and accessible. We will also reinforce our approach to digital inclusion, working across a range of partners to agree a cohesive approach to supporting digitally excluded residents to have the motivations, skills, data and devices to play their part. Utilising digital and artificial intelligence technologies and internet of things devices to automate more activities and make our services more accessible will be key so that we can focus our resources on the most pressing issues. We will use technology to bring together data sets from multiple services and organisations so that we can have better insight about the needs of the people we serve. We will be able to better forecast and plan for the future. It will also help us understand the impact of our interventions, inform proposals for redesigning services, and ensure we remain focused on our priorities.

### Transforming our land and buildings:

We will use the assets across the public estate to help deliver our goals. This will include supporting economic growth, making our services more accessible, developing stronger communities, tackling the climate emergency by re-imagining the use of our land and buildings.

### A workforce for the future:

Underpinning all the above will be a culture change and skills programme for our valued public service workforce. The design of our future workforce will be a key consideration, our approach to recruitment and retention, as will the tools and skills that they will need to thrive. As we empower our communities, we must also empower our staff and providing the opportunity for innovation and accountability at all levels will be crucial.

### Building stronger partnerships across the borough:

We will develop effective and impactful partnerships based on trust, openness and clear communication, aligned to common goals which strengthen communities. We know that people don't fit into neat boxes and often an effective and more upstream response requires us to work across departments, organisations, and sectors working together with a common aim. We will use these stronger partnerships to promote 'keep it local' procurement and employment principles. The Local Transport Plan is an example of a new style of planning and engagement, engaging multiple communities in multiple ways across longer time frames, to allow more residents and businesses to have a say and share their ideas for improving transport. We have specifically targeted young people, as future transport users, and this will help to broaden the partnerships across the borough.

### Remaining focused on financial resilience:

We will remain strong stewards of the public purse and continue to take action to ensure we are resilient for the long term. This will mean prioritising our money and wider resources in line with our priorities, rooting out inefficiencies, seeking out leading practice, and continuing to transform our services.

**In addition to the above we will always remain focused on providing the best possible customer experience for our residents, businesses and all who use our services.**

## How we can all play our part

Our part	Your part
<p>Working alongside our communities to make west Cheshire more resilient</p> <p>Scaling up our approach to prevention</p> <p>Taking our approach to using digital and insight to the next level</p> <p>Transforming our land and buildings</p> <p>A workforce for the future</p> <p>Building stronger partnerships across the borough:</p> <p>Remaining focused on financial resilience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get online if you can and <b>access services digitally</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Have your say</b> on how local services could be more effective and efficient.</li> <li>• Treat your services and public servants with <b>mutual respect</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Tell us</b> when we get things right and also when we don't.</li> </ul>

“Use technology and a more positive, willing closer co-operation with e.g. parish councils to effect real improvements”

Join the conversation respondent

“Everyone should work together and communicate with each other and follow up with each person who interacts with the organisation,”

Join the conversation respondent

## Supporting plans and strategies

- ▶ Medium term financial plan
- ▶ Property Asset Strategy
- ▶ People Plan
- ▶ Digital Strategic Programme



# Being accountable

We will develop these aspirations into a clear delivery plan which will be published every year. One key learning point from the last few years is that we can't plan for everything, but we will remain focused on the vision and goals in this plan. We will hold ourselves to account against these commitments through a clear and publicly available performance framework and take action to remain on track or change some more detailed elements of our plans if required. We will continue to understand the wellbeing of our communities through regular engagement and a 'story of the borough' data platform, bringing together different social, economic and environmental data to provide a picture of what the borough is like as a place to live and work. Further information is available in Appendix three.

## Thanks to

All those who engaged with this process to develop this plan and, in particular, our local communities, businesses, and public services that make the Borough a remarkable place





## Appendix one: glossary

**Adoption:** The legal process by which a child who cannot be brought up within their birth family become the full, permanent and legal members of their adoptive family

**Affordable home:** An affordable home is one that is offered at 80% or less of the market rent or price

**Anaerobic digestion:** An environmentally friendly waste treatment, where micro-organisms breakdown biodegradable materials

**Apprenticeship levy:** The apprenticeship is a tax on large employers that funds apprenticeship training for all employees

**Attainment gap:** The gap between the educational attainment of all pupils and those who are disadvantaged, often those who are eligible for free school meals

**Carbon neutral** : A situation where the amount of carbon generated by person, process or organisation is equal to the amount of carbon they absorb or remove from the atmosphere

**Care leaver:** Someone who is leaving or who has left local authority care

**Care-experienced:** Someone who has previously been in Care of a local authority and who may be eligible for some ongoing assistance from social services

**Children in Care Council:** A group of young people who are all cared for by the Council and which gives children and young people the chance to shape and influence the parenting that they receive at every level

**Climate emergency:** The recognition that climate change is an urgent and existential threat

**Commission:** A group of people who have been asked to explore a difficult issue and make recommendations

**Cooperative council:** A council that works to the co-operative values and principles

**Coproduce:** The building of respectful and empowering relationships alongside the sharing of ideas between those with lived experience and other stakeholders. Both contribute their knowledge, skills and experiences to co-create actionable change. Co-production is a challenging process that requires reflection and dedication to ongoing collective learning.

**Digital divide:** The divide between those who have the skills and physical access to ICT devices, broadband or data that they need to access digital services

**Digital inclusion:** Ensuring everyone has the skills and physical access to ICT devices, broadband or data that they need to access digital services

**Edge of care:** Support put in place for families and children on the verge of being taken into council care

**Five ways to wellbeing:** An evidence based approach to wellbeing supported by the NHS and reminding people to connect, get active, learn, give to others and take notice

**Food insecurity / food poverty:** The lack of reliable access to sufficient affordable, nutritious and healthy food

**Foster carer:** A way of offering children and young people a home whilst their own family are unable to look after them

**Fuel poverty:** When a household is unable to afford to heat their home to an appropriate temperature

**Gigabit broadband:** An internet service that offers a maximum connection speed of 1 gigabit per second

**Growth Track 360:** A partnership launched to secure £1bn of rail improvements, which would transform the North Wales and Cheshire regional economy

**Housing first approach:** An approach which prioritises getting people into stable accommodation before looking to tackle other challenges they may face

**Integrated offender management:** A cross-agency approach to offender management that allows local and partners agencies to co-ordinate the management of offenders

**Local enterprise partnership:** Non-stutory bodies that are responsible for local economic development in England.

**Mainstream schools / settings:** A school which is not a special school. Special schools provide for pupils with special educational needs

**Marmot borough:** Marmot places are places that have committed to tackling local health inequalities. They are named after Professor Michael Marmot

**Missions:** The six key objectives set out within this plan

**Net zero:** A situation where the amount of carbon generated by person, process or organisation is equal to the amount of carbon they absorb or remove from the atmosphere

**No wrong front door:** The concept that, even in a complex system, there is no wrong way to request a service and people are able to present at any point in the system

**Northern Powerhouse Rail:** A major rail infrastructure programme seeking to boost the economy of the North through better connecting economic centres by rail

**Poverty emergency:** The recognition that poverty is an urgent threat affecting the lives of a significant number of local people, families and communities

**Person-centred:** Focused on, and arranged around, an individual person rather than a set organisational approach

**Sanctuary:** A Place of Sanctuary or Council of Sanctuary is one that provides a safe welcome for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants

**SEND:** Young people with special educational needs and disabilities

**Skills escalator:** A model that helps people understand and access the skills they need to progress within a profession or careers

**Smart Towns:** Towns that use a range of different electronic methods to collect data which is used to better plan and deliver services

**Social mobility:** The opportunity for people to have different life experiences and life chances from their parents

**Strength based practice:** A social work based model of work that emphasises what a person can do rather than what they cannot

**Sustainable food place:** A place with a healthy, sustainable more equitable food system

**The Pledge:** A partnership in Cheshire and Warrington working across the education, private and community sectors to inform and inspire young people about potential careers

**Think Family approach:** A way of supporting families by identifying the needs of both the parents and children

**Trauma informed approach:** An approach to health and care interventions which is grounded in the understanding that trauma exposure can impact an individual's development

**UKSPF:** The United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund - A Government fund to support local economic recovery and growth

**Universal services:** Services that are provided to all local people, such as waste collection

### The ambition of our communities:



### Our Vision

A stronger future where we all **play our part** in thriving, caring and sustainable communities.

### Our Missions

- S**tarting well
- T**ackling hardship and poverty
- R**esilient people living their best lives
- O**ppportunity in a fair local economy
- N**eighbourhood pride
- G**reener communities

### Our Values

- T**eamwork
- H**onesty
- R**espect
- I**nnovation
- V**alue for money
- E**mpowerment

### Doing things differently to make a difference

- Working alongside our communities
- Prevention
- Digital and insight
- Transforming our land and buildings
- A workforce for the future
- Building stronger partnerships
- Financial resilience

### Being Accountable

- Robust planning
- Managing our performance
- Acting on your feedback
- Strong financial stewardship

### How you can play your part

- Eat well and be active
- Engage with the five ways to wellbeing
- Consider your impact on the planet
- Volunteer in your community

# Appendix three: Borough Plan 2024-2028

## Performance Management Framework

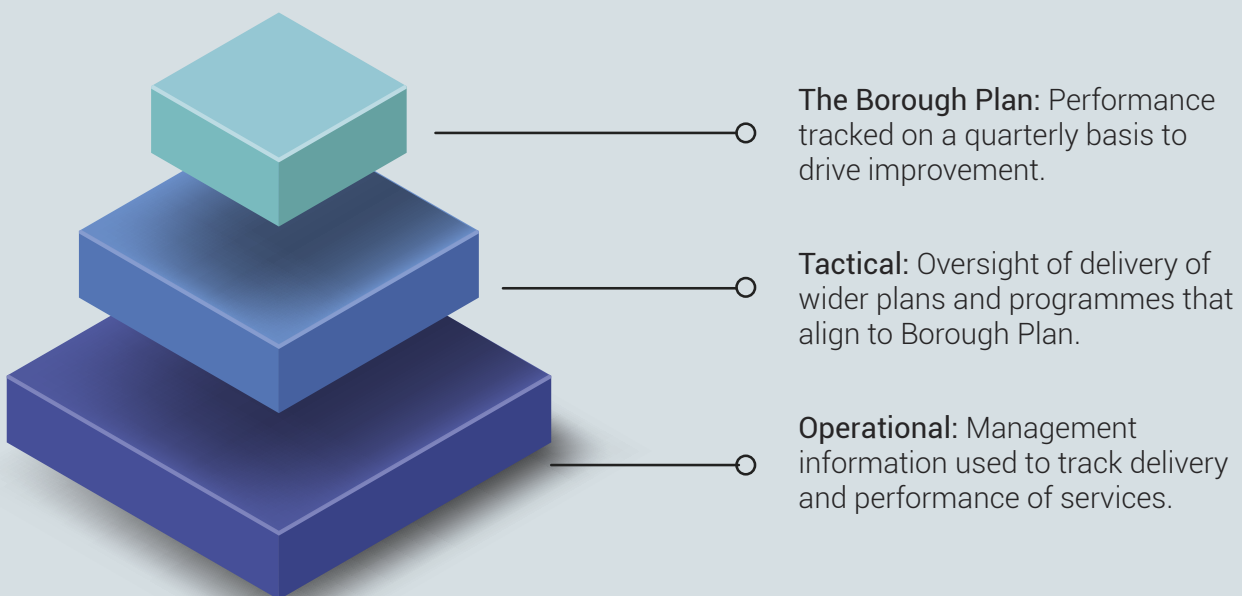
### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The following report outlines a new framework to ensure the borough's progress relating to the six missions in the Council Plan is measured, monitored and managed. The delivery of the missions will not be left to chance and effective processes will be in place to grip and track progress.
- 1.2 This framework applies to all those engaged in the delivery of the Borough Plan. It is designed to:
- set out the principles of good performance and delivery management
  - provide a reporting framework to ensure progress is tracked on a regular basis
  - fully integrate with the Council's approach to managing financial performance and risk
  - embed mechanisms to ensure underperformance and challenges with delivery are tackled
  - support continuous improvement against all of the borough's missions.

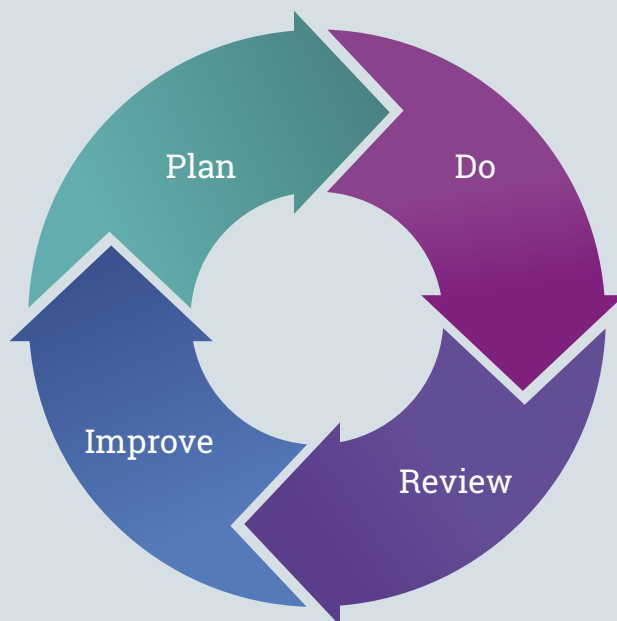
### 2. Background

- 2.1 The ability to manage the performance of an organisation is critical to its success. It enables Members, officers, partners and the public to assess whether the organisation is achieving what it set out to do, delivering value for money and meeting the needs of residents. Without this information, it is difficult to define clear actions that drive continuous improvement and tackle under performance.

- 2.2 The focus of this framework is on the strategic aspects of the borough. It links to more tactical and operational delivery across the organisation.



2.3 Performance and delivery management should be viewed as a cycle that drives continuous improvement as illustrated by the following diagram



### Plan

Identify citizen needs and the outcomes they want us to achieve

Set priorities, actions, resources and measures

### Improve

Take action to tackle underperformance against objectives

Identify what worked well and how it can be further improved

Refresh actions and measures

### Do

Implement key projects and actions

Gather information to track performance and progress

### Review

Review performance information on a regular basis

- 2.4 The first stage is to develop a clear plan. This needs to be informed by a clear understanding of the needs of customers, residents and wider stakeholders. It should set out a vision for change, clear missions, and actions to achieve the missions, as well as indicators to track improvement against objectives.
- 2.5 For Cheshire West and Chester, the overarching Borough Plan provides this direction. This document drives a range of plans across the organisation and its partners. It covers the period 2024-2028 and was informed by extensive public consultation, needs analysis, the priorities of partners, consideration of areas for improvement, and engagement with elected Members. The document sets out six missions and a summary of key actions. An annual delivery plan will also be produced that sets out the major strategic actions and projects that will be delivered to achieve our missions. In addition, a wider 'State of the Borough' dashboard is produced to monitor wider issues impacting on the quality of life of residents that are influenced by the local system of services and partners across the borough but are not in the direct control of the Council.

- 2.6 The second stage of performance management is to deliver against the plans. At this point key actions will be implemented, and information will be gathered to track progress on a regular basis.
- 2.7 The third stage involves reviewing performance against the original plans. This involves routinely considering whether performance measures have improved. Often this is formally reported to senior decision makers to ensure key individuals are aware of progress and held to account. For Cheshire West and Chester, this progress will be reported to Cabinet four times a year and Cheshire West and Chester Overview and Scrutiny twice a year. Performance reports are also discussed with partners through a variety of strategic partnership arrangements. Residents can monitor the performance of the council through an interactive dashboard, open data, peer reviews and wider data sets that are published on a regular basis.
- 2.8 The final stage involves taking stock of delivery and identifying actions for improvement. With clear information about previous performance and projections for the future, it is possible to identify clear changes that will address underperformance and build on good performance. This approach requires openness to learning lessons, evaluation and responding to challenges in a positive way.

### 3. Principles of good performance management

- 3.1 The following principles have been used to shape this Performance Management Framework. They are based on best practice and reflect how high performing organisations ensure they deliver their priorities:

Principle	Rationale
Alignment to missions and services	Members and officers focus should be on the missions and key services stated by Council, not on all activities of the Council.
Accountability	Clarity over who has responsibility – and the ability to influence performance.
Driving improvement	Performance reporting adds no value unless it directs, and is supported by, improvement processes.
Accessibility	Information should be clear, understandable and useful.
Depth vs breadth	There needs to be a balance between the range of information available and the depth of understanding it can give. Fewer indicators enable more insight, analysis and focused improvement.

Proportionality	Performance management will track and focus on the issues that make a biggest difference, being tailored to the appropriate audience, rather than being an end in itself. The focus will be on improvement supported by efficient processes for reporting, analysis and data collection.
Robust data quality	There is confidence in the accuracy and veracity of the data to inform sound decision-making.
Comparison	You are able to compare your relative performance against other organisations. You are also able to compare performance over a period of time to identify trends. You can also compare service outcomes against customer perceptions to enable a rounded view.
Intelligent planning and target setting	Targets and actions are set on a medium term basis, where possible. Targets will be set by using benchmarking information, considering historical trends, considering resources and levels of ambition. Where possible, a balance will be struck between ambition and realism.
Managed flexibility	A transparent process is in place to make any changes to key actions and what is measured as circumstances evolve.

## 4. Clear accountability

- 4.1 To ensure political accountability and ownership, Cabinet Members and senior officers will be allocated to lead on the delivery of each mission. This provides a point of accountability but clearly all lead Members and officers will work together across the six missions and the 'Do things differently' objective to ensure a joined up approach.



## 5. Tracking progress

- 5.1 The framework focuses on tracking progress against both performance indicators, actions and risks.
- A. Performance Indicators**
- 5.2 Performance indicators provide measurable information to understand whether an organisation is achieving its goal. This could include measuring a process, an output or a perception. Effective performance indicators should be:
- relevant to the aims and objectives of the council.
  - clearly defined, to ensure consistent collection.
  - easy to understand and use.
  - cost effective to collect.
  - SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-related.
- 5.3 The Office For Local Government publishes a developing set of metrics to enable the public to understand the performance of councils across the country. Due regard has been given to inclusion of relevant indicators within this performance framework.
- 5.4 Each of the indicators in the Borough Plan will have an annual target for 2024-2028, as targets define more precisely what outcome is intended. Without a

clear definition of the level of achievement an organisation wants to secure, it is difficult to understand whether it is making sufficient progress. Targets can:

- promote accountability: by providing a clear understanding of progress organisations and individuals can be held to account
- stretch performance: Identifying a goal that is ambitious and difficult to achieve can drive creativity and productivity
- provide confidence: Clear improvements can be measured and demonstrated.

- 5.5 Targets can also drive perverse behaviours where achieving the target rather than the wider goal becomes an end in itself. To prevent this happening, it is important to ensure targets are relatively low in number, sensibly set and carefully monitored. Targets have been carefully set by engaging fully with Directors and Cabinet Members, forecasting future performance, and considering the performance of similar councils. By comparing or benchmarking with similar councils it is possible to grasp what high yet achievable performance looks like in order to inform an annual target. Future annual targets can also be revised when on an annual basis to ensure they are set with the benefit of understanding 'real world' delivery against the Plan. This refresh process will be considered in an open and transparent way with a clear rationale for any changes.

- 5.6 It is important to have consistent definitions to understand if progress is being made towards a target. A red / amber / green / measured categorisation is often used with the following definitions:

<p><b>Green</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The measure has achieved its target OR</li> <li>• The measure is on track to achieve its target.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Amber</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is some uncertainty that the measure will achieve its target.</li> <li>• The indicator is 5% variance from target</li> </ul>	<p><b>Red</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The measure has not achieved its target. OR</li> <li>• It is unlikely for the measure to achieve its target at this stage and is more the 5% variation from the target.</li> </ul>	<p><b>N/A</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The measure reports on an annual basis and therefore performance cannot be reviewed in-year.</li> <li>• Further information is required regarding the development of a target for this measure.</li> <li>• Further information is required regarding the development of an appropriate baseline for the measure.</li> </ul>
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- 5.7 This framework also measures the 'direction of travel' for performance indicators. This measures whether progress is moving in the right direction compared to the last reporting period.
- 5.8 Finally performance indicators will be benchmarked where possible with comparator authorities throughout the year. This provides context about the Council's relative position. This benchmarking information will be reported from quarter two onwards when more data is available.

## B. Delivery plan

- 5.9 An annual delivery plan will provide information on the strategic programmes and actions that will help achieve desired outcomes over the period 2024-28. Each action has a clear start and end date and owner. Further detailed plans at service and programme level are also produced to enable more tactical and operational oversight.

## C. Risks

- 5.10 Strategic risks which may impede the delivery of the Borough Plan missions are included, measured and monitored through this framework. Risks are scored based on their probability and impact. Mitigating actions to avoid, transfer or limit risks are identified and implemented.

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## 6. Reporting Progress

6.1 Progress will be reported in a timely and regular fashion to ensure information is available to drive improvement. For officers, where possible, there will be a monthly internal report on key indicators which will be managed through Management Teams. For Members and the public, a more comprehensive progress report will be published four times a year alongside at the same time that financial performance is reviewed.

Period	Dates covered	Reporting month
Period one	April - July	September
Period two (mid-year)	August – September	November
Period three	October – November	January
Period four (year-end)	December – March	June

6.2 Information will be summarised in an interactive dashboard (see below) and be published alongside reports on financial performance to enable a rounded view of value for money.

**1.01 Household waste: kilograms of waste collected per household that could not be reused, reduced or recycled**  
 Status: **G** (Low is good)  
 Current Value: **101**  
 Historical Data: 497 (2020-21), 440 (2021-22), 417 (2022-23), 101 (2023-24-2)

**1.02 Recycling level: percentage of waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting**  
 Status: **G** (High is good)  
 Current Value: **64%**  
 Historical Data: 55% (2020-21), 55% (2021-22), 56% (2022-23), 64% (2023-24-2)

**Summary of indicators by status against target**  
 Amber: 1  
 Green: 4

**5.15 Litter & Detritus: percentage of sites inspected that meet the acceptable standard for litter and detritus**  
 Status: **A** (High is good)  
 Current Value: **81%**  
 Historical Data: 76% (2020-21), 77% (2021-22), 81% (2022-23), 82% (2023-24-1), 81% (2023-24-2)

**5.19 Cleaner streets: Flytipping - the % of fly tips removed within the standard of 5-10 days**  
 Status: **G** (High is good)  
 Current Value: **95%**  
 Historical Data: 66% (2021-22), 91% (2022-23-4), 96% (2023-24-1), 95% (2023-24-2)

**5.20 Cleaner streets: The number of Green Flags being maintained by the Council**  
 Status: **G** (High is good)  
 Current Value: **10**  
 Historical Data: 8 (2021-22), 9 (2022-23), 10 (2023-24-1), 10 (2023-24-2)

\* Indicators 1.01 and 1.02 report in arrears due to the time taken to collate data.

## 7. Tackling underperformance

- 7.1 There will always be instances where the borough falls short of their original goals. It is crucial that where this happens corrective action is taken to move back on track.
- 7.2 Corrective action will be summarised in reports. Where underperformance and under delivery remains a persistent issue, this will likely trigger a more in-depth review. Overview and Scrutiny Committees play a key role in this process. In addition, performance clinics will be established where officers and partners where necessary will attend a facilitated workshop to explore the root causes of underperformance and appropriate actions. A process known as turning the curve will be used based on the results-based accountability methodology.

## 8. Linking to wider service improvement

- 8.1 This Performance Management Framework is just one part of a wider approach to service improvement. Delivering against priorities demands a consistent focus on the targets, actions and data however this on its own is not sufficient to drive improvement. As clear and accurate performance information may be, it will always be the imperfect representation of the real experience and real-world outcomes that matter to citizens. To ensure this is addressed a wider approach to service improvement includes:
- use of mystery shopping to understand and improve the customer experience
  - interactive sessions to do a 'deep dive' into particular outcomes
  - improved techniques to understand resident perceptions
  - process reviews and journey mapping to drive improved customer focused service delivery
  - peer reviews to ensure representatives from services across the organisation can challenge and support their peers;
  - consideration of quality through analysis of complaints, compliments and wider perceptions
  - inspections
  - external peer challenge

## 9. Links to performance management of colleagues

- 9.1 Within the Council, each team has linked their vision and priorities to the Borough Plan vision and missions – known as a Play Your Part Charter. This enables individual team members to consider their personal performance and development with their manager on a regular basis.

## 10. Assurance

- 10.1 The Performance Management Framework and regular performance reporting will be subject to periodic internal audit review to ensure the accuracy and rigour of supporting processes. It will be considered as part of the production of the annual Internal Audit Plan, which is compiled and informed on a risk assessed basis

