

Cheshire West & Chester Council

reviewing **your** services

Your views about how **your council services** could be delivered in the future



Cheshire West
and Chester



Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services

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যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

Pokud byste požadovali informace v jiném jazyce nebo formátu, kontaktujte nás

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.

ਜੇ ਚਿਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਭੁਗਾਣੂੰ ਵਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਵਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ. ਤਾਂ ਚਿਹ ਸਾਥੋਂ ਮੈਰਾ ਲਓ।

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

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Message from the Leader of Cheshire West and Chester Council

Council Services 2014 and Beyond

As you know all public services across the country are facing real and pressing financial challenges. Here in Cheshire West and Chester Council we are more fortunate than most areas because we have always planned ahead and we are in a good position to meet those challenges as we move forward.

We've done this through being innovative, working closely with our staff and partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors and by developing new ways to deliver services. In doing this we've managed to save money and improve services.

However, in spite of what we've achieved so far, we still have to save a further £50 million by 2018. That means we need to look hard at how we maintain services but still achieve those savings.

The good news is that the progress we've made so far means we have already been thinking about how we can tackle the challenge ahead of us.

Therefore we plan to review all of our Council services to improve the quality and reduce how much it costs to provide them. We've already done this with some services and we have a number of new, successful arrangements in place.

The process - known as '**Make or Buy**' - will lead to a number of options that could mean big changes in the way some services work and may involve some services being delivered by private and voluntary organisations on behalf of the Council.

It's important before we embark on this process that we take account of your views, to ensure we approach the reviews in a fair and responsive way.

We are continuing to consult with all our staff on these proposals and they will be fully involved in helping to shape our thinking.

The potential for change is huge. Therefore, it is vital that we understand what you think about it as it will affect your services. I urge you to read this booklet and complete the feedback form, or respond to us in the other ways described on page 7. Once we've received your feedback, if there is likely to be significant change to a service you receive we will consult further before making any changes.



Cllr Mike Jones

Leader of Cheshire West and Chester Council

Background

The story so far

Since it was created in 2009, Cheshire West and Chester Council has made savings of over £113 million of which £44 million has been re-invested to protect and improve front-line services.

We have done this by looking ahead, listening to what residents tell us are their priorities, and finding new ways to deliver services more efficiently.

Planning for the future

There are further improvements we can make and it is clear that in the current economic climate additional savings need to be made. We think the best way to do this will be to review all our services to ensure we can provide the best possible service for the money we have available. We call this process **'Make or Buy'**.

What does 'Make or Buy' mean?

This review will ask: Are Council services delivering what our residents need and want? How much do they cost? Could we change the way services work so that they cost less? Could other organisations outside the Council deliver the same or better services for less money? How can we improve quality and innovate?

This process will lead to a number of options that could mean big changes in the way some services work and may involve some services being delivered by private and voluntary organisations on behalf of the Council.

Councillors will make the final decision and will consider a range of factors including the views of residents, ideas from our staff, maintaining the quality of services and the scale of potential savings.

What are we consulting on?

We are committed to consulting with our communities and staff throughout the process, even at this early stage. We are therefore asking you for your views on:

1. Different ways of providing services:

What are your thoughts on the different ways we could use to provide services in the future?

2. The review approach:

Are we considering the right information to make informed decisions about how services could be delivered differently?

We would like to know your comments so have enclosed a short feedback form.

What happens next?

Feedback from this consultation will be summarised and presented to Councillors at a meeting towards the end of this year to help inform their judgements about this process. This will be an open meeting, publicised in advance, and you are welcome to attend. In making their decisions, Councillors will need to weigh up the different points of view of our diverse communities from across the Borough. Our summary report will be freely available in November 2013 and we will prepare a separate feedback document. This will outline the findings from the consultation together with the subsequent decisions taken by Councillors before the end of the year.

If it is proposed that there are significant changes to the way a service is delivered, we will consult with you further. In addition, where proposed changes impact on particular groups of people, we will consult directly with them and those who may have an interest.

Part 1: Different ways of providing services

There are a number of different ways that services could change to make them more efficient and effective. We don't think there is a one size fits all approach; each service is different and we should consider all options on their merits.

Below are four possible options, which will be considered as we review our services. Some services are already delivered in these ways.

1. Redesigned in-house (by the Council)

A service could continue to be directly provided by the Council but redesigned to operate in a more efficient way. The Council has already made efficiency savings in services, but a redesign would mean a major innovative change in ways of working.

Example Our Customer Services has been redesigned to make Council services more accessible for local residents through the use of new technology. As well as the traditional ways of contacting the Council, our i-connect video kiosks have been introduced in some libraries and Council offices and allow residents to see and speak to a customer services advisor through a kiosk screen and a telephone handset. Guided by the advisor, members of the public can make enquiries, fill out forms and even exchange documents for Council services such as benefits, registration services and bin collections, simply by using the touch screen. This may be more convenient for the customer and it saves money compared to seeing an advisor in person.

2. Joint services

The Council could join-up its services with other organisations to reduce its costs. By joining up similar services with organisations, savings could be made by buying in bulk, reducing duplication, or requiring fewer staff to deliver the same results.

Example Cheshire Shared Services is a shared service between Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire East Council, delivering nine services including ICT, Human Resources and Finance. We also share a Director of Children's Services with Halton, we share Adoption Services with Halton and Knowsley and we share a highways maintenance contract with Shropshire. All of these arrangements have both improved services to customers while delivering economies of scale.

3. Council-owned companies

Services that are currently delivered in-house could be moved into a new company owned by the Council. Staff would transfer into the company which would sell its services to the Council and would also be free to sell services to other organisations.

Example After extensive consultation with staff and service users, we decided to launch a company to run elements of our Adult Social Care Services. This includes day services, autism services and some elements of respite care. The company will be owned by the Council but will have flexibility to sell its services to other organisations.

4. Outsourcing

It could be that the Council is not best placed to provide a service because another organisation could deliver service improvements and provide better value for money. The organisation could be:

- a private company

Example Our highways maintenance contract is operated by a private company - Ringway Infrastructure Services. They are contracted to maintain West Cheshire's highways and are committed to delivering responsive customer services while providing better value for money.

- **a voluntary or charitable organisation**

Example Age UK offer the following services on behalf of the Council:

- Information, advice and guidance to older people and their families
- 'Get active' service to promote physical activity
- 'Supporting you' – a home visiting service for people over 55 who do not require social care

- **a cooperative or mutual owned by its members or workforce**

Example The Civil Service Pension service, responsible for administering pension services on behalf of government departments, is 25% owned by its employees. The remaining stake is owned by central government and a private sector partner. Employees are represented at Board level and are involved in key decisions on how the service operates.

Companies that provide a service on behalf of the Council do so as part of a formal contract which includes important quality standards, regular monitoring and a 'get out clause' if standards are not met.

Part 2: The review approach

The **Make or Buy** process will involve a team in the Council reviewing all services over the next two years. They will consider a range of factors to ensure their recommendations are well informed including the following:

- 1. Residents' perspective** This will look at how well the current service meets the needs of residents. It will assess how the service improves the quality of life of local people and what the results are for those who use the service.
- 2. Value for money** The Council has a duty to make sure services are continuously improving. We will measure value not just in terms of cost but also economic, environmental and social value. We will look at potential savings but also the additional benefits that can be achieved from providing services in a different way.
- 3. Staff views** During each review employees will have the opportunity to help shape and influence change and help us to truly innovate. We will evaluate potential service improvements and efficiencies, developed through extensive staff consultation.
- 4. Opportunities for economic growth** We will measure how the service could contribute to the economic growth of the local area. The way we deliver our services will have different effects on the local economy and these will be evaluated.
- 5. The market place for services** We will look at who currently delivers similar services, focusing on quality and cost.
- 6. Ease of changing services** We will consider how a change in the way we deliver services will be implemented. It will be important to evaluate the impact on local residents and how we can minimise any disruption or inconvenience.

7. Risk The Council will always be responsible for the overall outcomes of services, no matter how they are delivered. However, who delivers services affect what the Council is directly responsible for. When services are delivered in-house, the Council manages everything, including recruitment, training, sickness and absence of staff and investment in new equipment and machines. When services are undertaken by external providers on behalf of the Council, the responsibility for these business risks is transferred to them. This reduces the risks that the Council has to manage, and therefore also reduces costs to the Council.

Once each review is complete there will be further consultation with those affected by any significant changes to the service.

Tell us what you think

This initial consultation on **reviewing your services** will last for 12 weeks. Your feedback will help us to shape the future direction of public services in Cheshire West and Chester. To tell us what you think please complete the enclosed feedback form and return it to us by **25 October 2013**.

Other ways to take part

There are a number of other ways you can tell us your views:

- Complete the feedback form online at www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/makeorbuy
- Write to us
Research, Intelligence and Consultation Team, Cheshire West and Chester Council, HQ, Nicholas Street, Chester, CH1 2NP
(please mark it 'Make or Buy')
- Telephone **0300 123 7031** and ask to speak to the Research and Intelligence Team
- Email **makeorbuy@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk**

What services does the Council provide?

Below is a list of just some of the services provided by the Council. This is by no means a complete list of everything your Council Tax pays for – such a list would run to pages! Our aim is to give you a flavour of the variety of things the Council is responsible for.

- Benefits (Council Tax and Housing) and advice
- Car parks and Park and Ride
- Cemeteries and crematoria
- Child protection
- Children's services (including Children's Centres)
- Community safety and CCTV
- Concessionary travel (including bus passes) and Blue Badges
- Corporate support services (including Finance, Legal, HR)
- Customer Services – Council call centre and face-to-face service
- Elections
- Food safety and environmental health
- Highways management
- Housing support, social rented housing and homelessness
- Leisure centres and swimming pools
- Libraries
- Markets
- Museums, arts and festivals
- Parks, open spaces and play areas
- Planning
- Pollution, air quality and pest control
- Public health and health promotion
- Regeneration and local economy (including tourism promotion)
- Registration of births, marriage and deaths
- Road and pavement maintenance and repairs
- Schools and education
- Social care
- Spatial planning (use of land to meet local needs)
- Street cleaning/litter
- Waste collection and disposal



Produced by Cheshire West and Chester Council

If you would like further information about this booklet,
please contact:

Research, Intelligence and Consultation Team
HQ, Nicholas Street, Chester CH1 2NP

Tel: **0300 123 7031**

Email: **makeorbuy@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk**