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LATEST**• COUNCILS TOGETHER EVENT – 16 September 2014**

Following on from last month's bulletin, please find further information in relation to the Local Councils Event on 16th September (daytime at Cheshire View, Christleton).

As part of our work to transform and devolve services to more local control we are working in partnership with Local Councils. As part of this work we are planning to hold an event on the 16th September for Local Councils across Cheshire West and Chester. The purpose of this event is to showcase good practice, highlight work that has been done around transfer of services and assets to existing town and parish councils, look at innovation in finance, including social finance, looking at ways in which community benefit can be unlocked from the planning system and provide information about sources of support available nationally and locally.

Draft programme to follow.

Please register for this event as soon as possible as we have limited places available.

To register for this event, please email:

partnershipsandareaworking@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

CONSULTATIONS**• HOUSING STRATEGY FOR WEST CHESHIRE**

A new Housing Strategy for Cheshire West and Chester has been published as a draft for public consultation. The draft strategy has been produced following an extensive process of consultation with key partners and other stakeholders. It sets out the Council's vision and aims for housing in the borough for the next five years, the key issues affecting the local housing market and what the Council intends to do to help overcome these challenges and improve housing outcomes for local people.

The strategy recognises that housing is not just about bricks and mortar. A safe, warm and well-designed home helps to provide the best start in life for children and helps older and disabled people to maintain their independence and continue to play an active part in their local community. Furthermore, a resilient and active housing market is a crucial component of the framework needed to underpin sustainable economic growth.

The draft strategy identifies three key priorities and a series of proposed actions, setting out how the Council intends to work with its partners to meet common objectives and encourage a co-ordinated approach to tackling common issues, creating the right conditions to support growth and improve housing outcomes.

The three priorities we have identified are:

- Priority 1: Increasing and enabling supply: more homes stable growth
- Priority 2: Improving access to housing
- Priority 3: Improving housing quality, sustainability and design

The Housing Strategy will cover a five year period, but will be reviewed annually. The Council's Strategic Housing Partnership has been instrumental in developing the draft strategy to this point and will receive regular updates on delivery, ensuring that progress is monitored and outcomes evaluated, so that the strategy remains relevant and fit for purpose throughout its lifetime.

Consultation on the draft strategy will be open until Friday 26 September 2014. The consultation aims to capture the views of as wide a range of people as possible, from all tenures and backgrounds, including those living and working in the borough and those involved in the local housing sector.

Full details of the consultation, including an online questionnaire, can be found on the Council's website here: <http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/housingstrategyconsultation>

Paper copies of the strategy will be available in local libraries, partner offices and main Council buildings, and the feedback we receive will be used to inform the final version of the Housing Strategy, which will go to Executive Committee for approval in November and will be launched later this year.

• **GROWTH & PROSPERITY TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**

Cheshire West and Chester Council has launched a formal 12 week consultation from 14th July to 5th October to seek the views of stakeholders and residents on a number of services that are being reviewed within the Growth & Prosperity Directorate.

Since 2010, the Government's priority to address the national budget deficit has had a significant impact on councils and driven the need for the council to explore new and innovative ways of delivering services with less funding.

Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC) has also given a firm commitment to increasing economic growth within the borough to ensure West Cheshire:

- ✓ is the place of choice for people to invest, live, work and visit
- ✓ has a prosperous, growing and dynamic economy
- ✓ is a place that enables our residents and communities to thrive and prosper

To balance these two priorities, a number of services are being assessed to ensure that they are providing value for money and incorporating best practice, whilst meeting the needs of our customers.

To help us do this, we would like your views on the following services:

Service	Description
Museums	- This service manages the museums that are owned by the council.
Development Planning	- Deals with the process of managing the development of land and buildings, ranging from large developments to house extensions.
Total Environment	- Brings together a broad range of environmentally related functions encompassing both the built and natural environment within the borough.

Housing Solutions	- This service supports people that are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless and the Trust Homechoice register for social housing.
Markets	- This service manages the council owned markets.
Property	
Asset Management	- This function deals with the strategic decisions in relation to the operational buildings that are owned by the council
Estates Management	- This function deals with the commercial buildings that CWaC owns and all related landlord functions.
Capital Delivery	- Supports all the council's capital construction building works delivered by the private sector from procurement, through the design process and construction activities on site, to handover.
Investment and Development	- A specialist team focused on maximising investment or development opportunities using the council's land and buildings.

It is envisaged that during the service reviews, changes may be identified to improve services and identify efficiencies that could have an impact on the public and businesses. Therefore this consultation document is asking for:

1. suggestions to help improve local services
2. opinions on different ways of working
3. views on who should deliver these services in the future

The consultation period runs until 5th October 2014.

The consultation document and on-line questionnaire can be viewed on the Council's website at: www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/consultation.

Hard copies of the consultation documents will also be available from libraries, museums and council offices, or can be requested by emailing: GandP.consultation@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk or telephoning 0300 123 7031.

Feedback from the consultation will inform recommendations being considered by the council's Executive later in the year.

UPDATES

• COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – UPDATE

At its meeting on 25th June, the Community Governance Review Committee considered phase one consultation feedback and draft recommendations for the parishes of:

- *Capenhurst and Ledsham;*
- *Bache, Moston and Upton-by-Chester;*
- *Darnhall;*
- *Little Budworth;*
- *Whitegate and Marton;*
- *Cuddington;*
- *Weaverham; and*
- *Acton Bridge*

These have been published for a further period of consultation prior to be finalised.

The Community Governance Review Committee also considered final recommendations for the parishes of:

- *Churton-by-Aldford, Churton-by-Farndon and Edgerley;*

- *Lea-by-Backford;*
- *Mollington;*
- *Backford, Caughall and Chorlton-by-Backford; and*
- *Beeston.*

These have been formally published within the parish and on the Council's website for further representation prior to being agreed by Full Council later in the year.

Finally the Committee considered the final recommendations for the parishes of:

- *Tattenhall, Golborne Bellow and Newton-by-Tattenhall;*
- *Ashton Hayes and Horton-cum-Peel;*
- *Willington*
- *Kingsley; and*
- *Frodsham.*

These have been agreed at Full Council on 17 July 2014.

The agenda and supporting paperwork for the 25 June 2014 meeting can be viewed at: <http://cmttpublic.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=852&MId=4340&Ver=4>

At the next meeting of the Governance Review Committee to be held on 30 July 2014, the Committee will receive:

- Phase one consultation feedback and draft recommendations for the reviews of the following parishes:
 - *Comberbach; Anderton with Marbury; Little Leigh; Whitley; Antrobus; Great Budworth; Marston; Wincham; Lostock Gralam; Lach Dennis; Allostock; Lower/Nether Peover; Byley; Sproston; Moulton; Bostock; Davenham; Rudheath; Barnton; Hartford.*
- Final recommendations for the reviews of the following parishes:
 - *Tushingham-cum-Grindley, Macefen and Bradley;*
 - *Bickley, Edge, Hampton and Larkton;*
 - *Chorlton;*
 - *Cuddington;*
 - *Poulton and Pulford;*
 - *Eaton, Eccleston and Claverton;*
 - *Dodleston, Lower Kinnerton and Marlston-cum-Lache;*
 - *Burwardsley;*
 - *Aldersey, Barton, Carden, Clutton, Coddington and Stretton;*
 - *Broxton, Duckington and Harthill;*
 - *Saughall and Shotwick.*

The agenda and supporting paperwork for this meeting will be available on the Council's website from 23rd July 2014:

<http://cmttpublic.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=852&MId=4341&Ver=4>

Information relating to the overall process is available on the Council's website at: http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your_council/voting_and_elections/community_governance.aspx

For further information, please contact:

Alison Armstrong, Senior Manager - Partnerships & Development

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E-mail: alison.armstrong@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

- **CONNECTING CHESHIRE – UPDATE**

The latest update from the Connecting Cheshire superfast broadband project is attached to this bulletin.

REMINDERS

- **CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

Town and Parish Councils are reminded that they need to notify Cheshire West and Chester Council's lighting team about their plans for installation of Christmas outdoor lights and decorations.

The deadline for new installation requests for 2014 is **Thursday 31 July**.

Full information regarding the process is available on:

www.yourwestcheshire.co.uk/christmaslighting

Whether you are installing lights for the first time, changing existing fixtures or keeping the same decorations in place you must fill in the 'permission to install electrical apparatus' form, which you will find on the webpage.

Information that is of particular importance to the lighting team is where equipment has an electricity supply and is situated on or above the highway.

The lighting team are available to provide you with help and assistance in relation to festive lighting.

If you have any questions please:

Telephone: 0300 123 7036

Email: Christmaslights@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

OTHER INFORMATION

- **POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER: LIVE WEB CHAT**

John Dwyer, Police & Crime Commissioner for Cheshire, is holding a live web chat on Monday 11th August, and is inviting members of the public to ask him questions.

The web chat will focus around the Commissioner's 'Community Remedy' consultation, wanting to know your thoughts on ways to deal with low level crimes and anti-social behaviour.

John Dwyer said "*I enjoy talking to members of the public, whether that's face to face, on the phone or through digital media channels. I'm interested to see if anyone wants to elaborate on any thoughts they've had regarding suitable punishments for offenders committing low level crime, or whether someone has thought of an alternative punishment which isn't listed in the consultation*".

Although this web chat is focusing on the Community Remedy Consultation, you are encouraged to ask questions, no matter what they relate to.

The Commissioner is inviting your questions through:

Twitter using the #askJohn,

via email: police.crime.commissioner@cheshire.pnn.police.uk

facebook: www.facebook.com/cheshirepcc or by calling 01606 364000.

You can also ask questions live on the night. The web chat will run from 6.00 – 7.00pm.

The 'Community Remedy' consultation is available at: www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk and the closing date is **15th August 2014**.

- **“GET ACTIVE” and “GET GOING TOGETHER” with AGE UK CHESHIRE**

Taking some form of physical activity can be an enjoyable way to spend your leisure time, as well as being of great benefit to your health. It is also the best way to keep both mind and body feeling young.

Activities run by *Age UK Cheshire* are for people aged over 55 and are designed for varying levels of mobility and aimed to keep you both physically and mentally fit. They run from Monday to Friday throughout the day in West Cheshire at the following locations: *Northwich, Winsford, Chester, Ellesmere Port, Neston and rural areas.*

Activities include: *Tai Chi; Swimming lessons (beginners + improvers); Nordic Walking; Pilates/Yoga/ Health Walks; Horse Riding; Tennis; Badminton; Golf; Indoor Bowls.*

Age UK Cheshire can also provide information about new or existing groups running in your area.

For further information on “Get Active”, or to book one of the activities, telephone: 0151 348 5497/98.

Age UK Cheshire also provide gentle exercise classes – balance and strength exercises done seated or standing to help reduce the risk of a fall. Activities include: *Otago; Crown Green Bowling; Cardiac Rehabilitation; Walking Football; Strolls; Mindfulness; Able & Stable.*

To book an activity, or for more information, telephone: 0151 348 5493/94.

‘Get Active’ and ‘Get Going Together’ also give talks and carry out promotions to local groups and communities – if you’re interested, please do get in touch.

- **BIG ENERGY SAVING NETWORK – GRANT SCHEME**

The Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) has announced the launch of its Big Energy Saving Network - Grant Scheme.

This is a £1 million grants programme to support eligible third sector organisations, parish councils and community groups, deliver help and advice to vulnerable consumers. The aim is to help them reduce their energy costs through assisted action on tariffs, switching and the take up of energy efficiency offers. DECC is inviting third sector organisations to submit bids to:

- Provide Network champions that deliver a defined programme of outreach provision to vulnerable consumers
- Recruit eligible additional volunteers
- Provide prescribed evaluation and monitoring information.

Each grant award is for a sum of £5,000 per ‘Champion. Eligible organisations can either bid to deliver a single ‘Champion’-led project or they can bid for funding for multiple ‘Champions’, each leading and delivering their own programme of outreach.

The closing date for applications is 5pm on the 8th August 2014.

For more information, please visit the following website:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/big-energy-saving-network-grant-offer-fund>

USEFUL CONTACTS:

Cheshire West and Chester Council’s dedicated Hotline number exclusively for the use of Town and Parish Council representatives is: **0300 123 7049**

Best wishes.
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