

How To Engage with Council Decision Making

There are a wide variety of ways in which citizens can engage with Council decision making, from responding to a consultation through to standing as a Councillor. This document focuses on the main routes for local people to engage with Council decisions and the way in which the Council plans and delivers its services.

[Addressing Council meetings](#)

Fifteen minutes are reserved at the start of most public meetings for local people to address the meeting and either make a statement or ask a question.

Advisory boards and working groups

The Council supports a range of advisory boards and working groups that meet to discuss and explore specific issues. These can either be temporary or more longstanding. Current examples include: the [Disability Access Forum](#), considering and advising on accessibility; the [Poverty Truth Advisory Board](#) which is made up of local people with lived experience of poverty; and the [Sustainable Transport Taskforce](#), which considers plans for transport within and across the borough.

[Citizen panel](#)

The Panel is a cross section of more than 1,200 local people, who volunteer to take part in regular research and engagement activities, to help us understand residents' views and ideas about a range of important issues.

[Comments, compliments and complaints](#)

Cheshire West and Chester Council are committed to delivering excellent service and value any comments, compliments and complaints you make about your experience of using our services

[Community Champions](#)

This is an opportunity for local people to play their part to keep communities safe, and to share important information and advice with residents and report any feedback you have.

[Community right to bid](#)

Allows communities and parish councils to nominate important local buildings or land for listing by the local authority as an asset of community value

[Community right to build](#)

Allows certain community organisations to bring forward smaller-scale development on a specific site for uses such as housing, shops or community facilities without going through the traditional planning process.

[Community right to challenge](#)

Allows communities to submit an expression of interest in running services of local authority and fire and rescue authorities on behalf of that authority.

[Community right to reclaim](#)

Allows communities to challenge local councils and some other public bodies to release their unused and underused land.

[Community right to asset transfer](#)

Allows communities to ask to take over control of publicly owned land or buildings.

[Consultations](#)

The Council regularly consults and engages with local people. Participate Now is a dedicated website that will help you find and take part in consultation and engagement activities that interest you. You can share your ideas and influence decisions that matter in your area. You can also follow projects as they develop and see how your views make a difference.

[Contacting your Councillor](#)

Councillors are elected to represent the residents of their ward. You can contact your local Councillor about any issues, complaints or concerns you have about your local area or about the Council.

[Crowdfunding](#)

You can use Cheshire West Crowd to propose projects that will make a positive difference in their community, to see the ideas that others are putting forward and pledge financial support for a proposal.

[District Advisory Panel](#) (not currently meeting)

District Advisory Panels are meetings of all the councillors who represent a specific area of the borough. They consider issues relevant to the geographic area that they represent: Chester; Ellesmere Port and Neston; Northwich and Winsford; and the rural area.

The Panel approach is currently being reviewed and they are not currently meeting.

[Find out about decisions the Council has made](#)

There is a publicly available register of decisions taken by the Council, Cabinet and other bodies and individuals with delegated authority.

[Petitions](#)

The Council website supports people to set up and canvass for support for petitions.

[Stand as a Councillor](#)

A Councillor is someone who is elected by local people to represent them on a council. You can be elected to be a parish councillor or a member of the Council. Councillors are elected for a four year term. If Councillors are elected at a by-election, they will serve until the next scheduled elections take place.