



Meeting: **Scrutiny Commission**

Date/Time: **Wednesday, 4 November 2020 at 10.00 am**

Location: **Microsoft Teams Meeting**

Contact: **Mrs J Twomey (Tel: 0116 305 2583)**

Email: **joanne.twomey@leics.gov.uk**

Membership

Mr. S. J. Galton CC (Chairman)

Mr. T. Barkley CC	Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC
Mr. P. Bedford CC	Mr. D. Harrison CC
Mr. D. C. Bill MBE CC	Mrs. R. Page CC
Mr. G. A. Boulter CC	Mr. A. E. Pearson CC
Dr. T. Eynon CC	Mr. T. J. Richardson CC
Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC	Mr. M. B. Wyatt CC

**Please note: this meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's web site at <http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk>
– Notices will be on display at the meeting explaining the arrangements.**

AGENDA

<u>Item</u>	<u>Report by</u>
1. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 September and 14 September 2020	(Pages 5 - 20)
2. Question Time.	
3. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).	
4. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.	
5. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.	

6. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.
7. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 35.

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|----|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| 8. | Draft City of Leicester Local Plan 2020 to 2036 | Chief Executive | (Pages 21 - 54) |
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Grant Butterworth, Head of Planning at Leicester City Council has been invited to attend for this item.

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| 9. | Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium 2020 | Chief Executive | (Pages 55 - 208) |
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| 10. | East Midlands Development Corporation
'Interim Vehicle (DEVCO)' and Freeport
Proposals | Chief Executive | (Pages 209 -
218) |
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| 11. East Midlands Shared Services Performance Update | Director of Corporate Resources | (Pages 219 - 224) |
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The Lead Member for Resources, Mr J. B. Rhodes CC, has been invited to attend for this item.

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| 12. Financial Resilience | Director of
Corporate
Resources | (Pages 225 -
246) |
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The report to be considered by the Cabinet on 20th November 2020 is attached for the Commission to consider and comment on.

The Lead Member for Resources, Mr J. B. Rhodes CC, has been invited to attend for this item.

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| 13. Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring - Period 6 | Director of Corporate Resources | (Pages 247 - 278) |
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14. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled to take place on Monday, 25th January 2021 at 10.30am.

15. Any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent.

QUESTIONING BY MEMBERS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The ability to ask good, pertinent questions lies at the heart of successful and effective scrutiny. To support members with this, a range of resources, including guides to questioning, are available via the Centre for Public Scrutiny website www.cfps.org.uk.

The following questions have been agreed by Scrutiny members as a good starting point for developing questions:-

- Who was consulted and what were they consulted on? What is the process for and quality of the consultation?
- How have the voices of local people and frontline staff been heard?
- What does success look like?
- What is the history of the service and what will be different this time?
- What happens once the money is spent?
- If the service model is changing, has the previous service model been evaluated?
- What evaluation arrangements are in place – will there be an annual review?

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Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 2 September 2020.

PRESENT

Mr. S. J. Galton CC (in the Chair)

Mr. T. Barkley CC
Mr. P. Bedford CC
Mr. D. C. Bill MBE CC
Mr. G. A. Boulter CC
Dr. T. Eynon CC
Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC

Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC
Mr. D. Harrison CC
Mrs. R. Page CC
Mr. A. E. Pearson CC
Mr. T. J. Richardson CC
Mr. M. B. Wyatt CC

1. Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that Mr. S. J. Galton CC has been appointed Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission for the period ending with the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2021 in accordance with Article 6.05 of the Constitution.

2. Election of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED:

That Mrs R. Page CC be elected Vice-Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2021.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2020 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

4. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

5. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

6. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items for consideration.

7. Declarations of interest

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

All members of the Commission who were also members of a district council declared a personal interest in the report on Place Marketing for Leicester and Leicestershire (agenda item 10), the Growth Unit Update (agenda item 11) and Air Quality and Joint Health Action Plan (agenda item 13).

Mr T. J. Richardson CC declared a personal interest in the report on the Growth Unit Update (agenda item 11) as a LLEP Director.

Dr T. Eynon CC declared a personal interest in the report on Place Marketing for Leicester and Leicestershire (agenda item 10) as a member of the Coalville Heritage Society.

8. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

9. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 35.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 35.

10. Place Marketing - Leicester and Leicestershire

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on the work of the Place Marketing team for Leicester and Leicestershire. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

The Commission also received a presentation from the Director of Inward Investment and Place Marketing, Mr Mark Oakley. A copy of the slides forming the presentation is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion and questions raised, the following points were made:

- (i) The Tourism Advisory Board was a public/private sector partnership that comprised of representatives from a number of different organisations such as the City and County Councils, district councils, the LLEP, accommodation, sport, and transport businesses, the national forest, Twycross Zoo and the National Space Centre. The Board had been in place for 3 years and gave a good steer on tourism opportunities across all areas of the City and County.
- (ii) As a result of Covid 19, alongside the LLEP, the Inward Investment Team had considered those businesses that could best be supported during this difficult time. The Investment Team had worked with space and live science sectors which were considered key to the area, providing a source of great strength and opportunity to attract new investment. Such businesses also generated employment opportunities, particularly for younger people leaving higher

education or university who had been particularly hard hit by the pandemic.

- (iii) Raising awareness and promoting opportunities both in the City and County was considered critical to both secure visitors in the first instance, but also to ensure they made the most of the area as a whole. Members noted that this was largely done through website promotions and social media, but expressed concern that this relied on people choosing to research the area and did not actively reach out to new potential visitors. Members noted that a new Place Marketing Manager was being appointed and their role would be to raise awareness of what Leicester and Leicestershire had to offer.
- (iv) Leicestershire was seen as an attractive area for businesses to invest in due to its central and well connected location. It also provided great value for money as high quality venues were often priced slightly lower than those in surrounding areas. Business tourism was a very competitive area and it was suggested that this was worth promoting further.
- (v) The PMO (Place Marketing Organisation) worked closely with district councils building on and utilising their local knowledge to promote each area at a strategic level. It did not dictate activity but worked to support what was being done locally.
- (vi) Concern was raised about the lack of detail as to how funding had been split across each district area and how this translated into increased visitors to those areas. A member further expressed disappointment that the report did not provide quantifiable evidence of what promotion activities had worked well and what hadn't and suggested that without this information local areas would not know where or how best to improve their local offer.
- (vii) Members noted that performance was measured using STEAM data, a tourism economic impact modelling process, but that this varied across areas and could often be out of date which made it difficult to make comparisons. However, Members were advised that some data was collected and provided to Visit Britain by the PMO every 2 weeks and assurance was provided that this along with the information collected through STREAM could be used to provide a clearer picture in the next annual report to the Commission.
- (viii) Covid 19 had had a significant impact on Leicester and Leicestershire particularly as a result of the local lockdown and it was acknowledged that building confidence to bring people back to the area would be critical.
- (ix) The PMO provided support to tourism businesses and helped them develop their businesses plans in light of Covid 19 following advice from Visit Britain. Also, the County Council had introduced a recovery grant fund of £750,000 to help businesses survive and protect employment during the pandemic which had been very well received and already had provided much needed help to all types of business including those in the tourism sector.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update now provided be noted;

- (b) That a further report be submitted to the Commission in a year's time, detailing how funding was split across each district area and how this translated into increased visitors to those areas, together with quantifiable evidence of what promotion activities had or hadn't worked in the preceding 12 months to guide future activity.

11. Growth Unit Update

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on the establishment of the County Council's Growth Unit, its current activity and areas of focus and which set out examples of specific work now being led by the Unit. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points arose:

- (i) The Unit was now fully established and taking on a growing number of projects. Its focus was not only on large development schemes like Lutterworth East SDA, but also to oversee and manage risk, particularly financial risks to the County Council as the major infrastructure provider, arising from growth in the County.
- (ii) The Unit played a critical role in supporting the Council's economic recovery plans to address the impact of Covid 19 and worked with partners such as the LLEP in the development of its wider response to support local businesses.
- (iii) The work of the Unit would be affected if the proposals set out in the Planning White Paper came into force, as this would create new challenges and areas of responsibility, but this would not affect its core purpose. Members noted that in fact the role of the Unit could become even more critical.
- (iv) It was noted that environmental considerations and issues such as air quality were considered as part of each individual workstream. It was suggested that these should also be included on the Unit's identified areas of focus to ensure they were given sufficient prevalence and weight in light of the Council's zero carbon commitments.
- (v) The work being undertaken by the Unit with partners, particularly health partners, was welcomed. It was acknowledged that it was a difficult and complex area where often tensions existed, but it was one that needed to be addressed to ensure wider health impacts resulting from developments were considered and managed, particularly when securing section 106 and other developer contributions.

RESOLVED:

That the update now provided be noted.

12. Corporate Asset Investment Fund Annual Report 2019-20

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which set out the performance of the Corporate Asset Investment Fund (the Fund) during the

2019/20 financial year. A copy of the report marked Agenda Item 12', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- (i) The Adults and Communities Department had established a scheme (the Social Care Investment Programme) to consider proposals to invest in Adult Social Care properties. This scheme was independent of the Fund as the performance metrics of the two did not align. The Fund was predominantly focused on generating an income for the Council. The Social Care Investment Programme and any proposals to invest would be considered by the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.
- (ii) It was confirmed by the Assistant Director of Corporate Resources (Strategic Finance and Property) that external borrowing was not needed to support those projects currently being delivered through the Fund, nor was this being considered at this time. The Fund had sufficient capital allocated to it in the current Medium Term Financial Strategy and it was not proposed that this would change in the 2020/21 refresh.
- (iii) The Head of Strategic Property Services confirmed that the J2 M69 development proposals were being led by Blaby District Council and private developers, not the County Council which was only a minority landowner in the area. However, the County Council was working to use its position, and its minority land ownership, to ensure that any proposals that came forward (after an allocation in the forthcoming Blaby District Council Local Plan review) would be appropriate for the area and supported by necessary infrastructure.
- (iv) In response to a question raised about the proposals to the west of the M69 (Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange), the Head of Strategic Property Services confirmed that the Fund did not have any direct involvement in these proposals. Mr D. C. Bill CC asked that his opposition to any development in this area including the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange be placed on record.
- (v) Members noted that Covid 19 had so far not affected the performance of Fund, but suggested that the situation needed to be closely monitored and requested that should the economic impact of Covid 19 start to have a substantial and deleterious effect on the performance of the Fund, an in year report be brought back to the Commission for consideration.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the performance of the Corporate Asset Investment Fund during 2019/20 financial year be noted;
- (b) That the Head of Strategic Property Services be requested to bring back a further in-year report should the economic impact of Covid 19 start to have a substantial and deleterious effect on the performance of the Fund.

13. Air Quality and Health Joint Action Plan

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Public Health which provided an update on work being undertaken with partners to develop a Leicestershire Air Quality and Health Action Plan, a draft of which was appended to the report. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 13' is filed with these minutes.

The Commission also received a presentation which set out the effects of air pollution on health and plans to address poor health outcomes linked to air pollution in the future. A copy of the slides forming the presentation is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- (i) The priorities identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board in May 2019 formed the basis of the actions now set out in the Action Plan. Members welcomed the Plan and recognised that both nationally and locally air pollution was the biggest environmental hazard in terms of mortality impacts.
- (ii) Members noted that the County Council had responsibility to deliver the Action Plan and sought to work with and influence partners including district councils as the local planning authority, to secure the outcomes identified within this. However, it was district councils that had responsibility to monitor and manage air quality and they had to balance this against the need to deliver increased housing numbers set by central government. Members raised concerns that no single body had oversight or control of the issue and that this hindered the ability for real action to be taken. A member suggested that an explanation of these conflicting issues and how disjointed the current set up was would be helpful to enable the public to understand the difficulties local authorities faced in addressing this issue.
- (iii) Members considered that air quality needed to be prioritised as part of the local plan process so that mitigation measures could be identified early. Growth was necessary to boost the local economy and provide housing. However, this often came at the cost of air quality and other environmental considerations. Partnership working would be critical. However, concern was raised that action by consent might no longer suffice and would not deliver the outcomes required quickly enough. Members suggested that the Plan could be strengthened in this area. It was also suggested that the County Council might need to be more direct and clear about actions required to address air quality and should challenge district council local plans on this basis.
- (iv) It was noted that unlike on highway matters, the County Council was not a statutory consultee when it came to air quality. Whilst it had the ability to undertake modelling and the expertise to provide advice and support on this issue it was up to individual district councils to take up that offer. When provided it was also up to district councils what weight to apply to that data.
- (v) Members agreed that air quality needed to be brought to the top of the agenda and district councils and developers brought on board. However, it was recognised that without support from central government, it would be difficult for local planning authorities to give this the weight needed when deciding planning applications. Refusal of an application based on the adverse air

quality impacts a development may have would likely be overturned on appeal based on current planning legislation.

- (vi) Members felt more monitoring needed to be undertaken to give a true picture of the extent to which air quality was a problem across the County and to identify those key areas requiring action. Improved data would also support future decisions around where developments could and could not take place as part of the local plan process, or if planning applications were to be refused on the grounds of air quality impacts. Members commented, however, that district councils did not have sufficient resources to do this and would require further support to take this forward.
- (vii) Members welcomed work by the Strategic Planning Group to produce a health planning guide and hoped that this would help developers understand what was expected in respect of air quality measures as part of a development. However, it was not clear how this would address existing problems arising from existing or current developments.
- (viii) It was suggested that the data now presented for each district should be shared and publicised to drive the need for change.
- (ix) Concern was expressed that there was currently no member involvement in the development of the Plan or its delivery. The Director agreed and undertook to revisit the governance structure to ensure political oversight was properly reflected in the Plan.
- (x) A member suggested that it would be helpful to understand what work was being done in surrounding areas including the City Council, which would likely impact the air quality position in some boundary areas, particularly those like Oadby and Wigston which had much higher levels of pollution than other parts of the County.

RESOLVED:

That the comments now made be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration.

14. Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2019-20

The Commission considered a report and presentation from the Director of Corporate Resources which presented the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report covering the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. A copy the report marked 'Agenda Item 14', and the presentation slides are filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion and questions raised, the following points were made:

- (i) The substantial increase in financial payments made had predominantly been due to several larger settlements relating to SEN provision. This increase mirrored the position being seen nationally, the Ombudsmen considering this to be its key area of concern and upholding 9 out of 10 complaints in this area for all Councils.
- (ii) Whilst it was a national issue, it had been recognised that improvements could be made locally to address some of the issues arising. SEN Services had

been the focus of a recent Ofsted inspection and a written statement of improvements had been prepared in response. A comprehensive plan was being developed by the Department alongside the Transformation Unit to review and improve current operating systems and processes across the service and this would be something that would be considered by the Children and Family Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course.

- (iii) The Council looked at complaints in detail and offers were made in line with the Ombudsmen settlement formula where it was considered right to do so. This avoided both unnecessary delay for the complainant in getting the matter resolved and costs to the Authority in time spent dealing with the complaint.
- (iv) The Complaints Service was in regular contact with Departments regarding complaints received to discuss how these were managed and trends and increases being seen to ensure wider issues arising could be addressed.

RESOLVED:

That the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report for 2019/20 be noted.

15. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

It was noted that the next meeting of the Commission would be held on Mnday, 14th September 2020 at 10.30am.

1110.00 am - 1.45 pm
022nd September 2020

CHAIRMAN

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Commission held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 14 September 2020.

PRESENT

Mr. S. J. Galton CC (in the Chair)

Mr. T. Barkley CC
Mr. P. Bedford CC
Mr. D. C. Bill MBE CC
Mr. G. A. Boulter CC
Dr. T. Eynon CC
Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC

Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC
Mr. D. Harrison CC
Mrs. R. Page CC
Mr. A. E. Pearson CC
Mr. T. J. Richardson CC
Mr. M. B. Wyatt CC

In attendance

Mr N. J. Rushton CC
Mr B. L. Pain CC
Mr T. Pendleton CC

16. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

17. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

18. Urgent items

There were no urgent items for consideration.

19. Declarations of interest

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

All members of the Commission who were also members of a district or parish council declared a person interest in Item 8 on the agenda – Planning for the Future White Paper (minute 24 refers).

20. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

21. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 35.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 35.

22. Medium Term Financial Strategy Update

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the 2020/21 revenue budget and capital programme monitoring position and set out the proposed approach for updating the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2021 to 2025. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 7' is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mr J. B. Rhodes CC, the Cabinet Lead Member for Finance and Resources.

In introducing the report, the Director of Corporate Resources used a power point presentation to highlight the key issues and a copy of that presentation is filed with these minutes. The Director emphasised the following key points:

- (i) The position now outlined showed an in-year overspend of £18million which was a reduction from the previous forecast. However, given the volatility of the situation it was difficult to forecast precisely the likely year end impact. If the overspend was maintained at this level the use of the General Fund could be avoided which would be a significant achievement;
- (ii) Whilst noting the impact of Covid 19 on the budget it was important not to lose sight of the other significant budget pressures facing the Council in particular around SEN and Children Social Care budgets. The Government had indicated it was reviewing SEN funding, but the outcome of that review was yet to be published and the indications were that this could be delayed until later in the year;
- (iii) The Government had not progressed their commitment to Fair Funding and implementation had been delayed until at least April 2022. In addition, given the recent decision by the Government to pause the need for payment of business rates there was some concern about the risk to authorities continuing to pursue business rate retention as a funding stream in the long term;
- (iv) The Comprehensive Spending Review would provide the earliest indication as to whether the Government would make additional resources available to local government. Given the significant pressures across all Government Departments the likelihood of additional resources was felt to be remote.

Regarding the Capital Programme the Director outlined the changes that had been made so that resources could be released to underwrite the overspend in the current year. This included removing the requirement for funding of the Lutterworth Development Spine Road. Members noted that the position on this would be monitored and looked at again if the Council were to be successful in obtaining other government funding for the scheme.

In response to questions the Director and Cabinet Lead Member advised:

- The reduction in funding of School Accommodation related to a reduction in forward funding of schemes and greater reliance on developers building directly. This was a review of funding approach for schemes several years in the future rather than a change to planned places;
- Further investigations were being undertaken in relation to Zouch bridge including going out to competitive tender with a view to reducing costs. Works on the bridge were not likely to start this year as previously planned;
- All Departments had been asked to look at how additional savings could be delivered to meet the financial gap in the MTFS. These discussions had just started, and it was noted that given the significant financial savings already delivered the task ahead would be challenging. The Director, however, pointed out that the experience gained from working with Newton Europe to develop a new Target Operating Model for Adult Social Care had shown that there were still areas of the Council which might benefit from a new approach and to that end Newton Europe had been asked to work with staff in Children Social Care on processes and demand management.

Members of the Commission noted the challenges facing the Council and commended the Director of Corporate Resources and other officers for their work and effort to ensure financial sustainability.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update on the 2020/21 revenue budget and capital programme monitoring position be noted;
- (b) That the proposed approach and timetable for developing and rolling forward the MTFS for 2021 to 2025 be noted.

23. Planning for the Future White Paper (August 2020)

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive concerning the Government consultation on the Planning for the Future White Paper and the proposed draft response that had been prepared by officers which would be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on Friday, 18th September. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

The Commission welcomed to the meeting the Leader, Mr N. J. Rushton CC, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Planning, Mr B. L. Pain CC, and the Lead Member for Highways and Transportation and Strategic Planning, Mr T. J. Pendleton CC.

The Commission was advised that the Government had issued a separate consultation paper regarding proposals to improve the current planning system including the method for assessing local housing need which appeared to significantly increase housing numbers for the County. Members noted that this was a technical consultation affecting the current system and had not therefore been covered as part of the report now presented.

The Assistant Chief Executive confirmed that officers would, in line with usual practice, respond to this technical consultation and would raise robust concerns about the substantial increase in housing numbers proposed to be built in the County, as well as question the underlying evidence to support this. Members were invited to submit comments for consideration by officers for inclusion in the response but were asked to provide these by no later than Wednesday, 23rd September given the short timetable for submitting a response to government.

With regard to the Planning for the Future White Paper the Commission was advised that the aim of the changes proposed was to simplify the current planning process and increase the number of houses built. Members acknowledged the need for reform and noted the Government's view that the current system was overly complex and delayed development.

In response to a question regarding existing Local Plans, members were advised that those agreed more recently would be likely to remain in force for about two years before local councils were asked to renew these. Those with plans agreed some time ago are expected to be asked to prepare new plans in line with the timetable set out in the White Paper.

Members welcomed the general proposal for a quicker and clearer planning process as this would provide certainty for residents. However, in considering the draft response to the White Paper consultation, outlined in the Appendix to the report, Members raised a number of concerns and asked the Cabinet to have regard to the following points when considering its response:

- (i) There was a general lack of detail in some key areas of the White Paper which made it difficult to understand the true impact of some of the changes proposed. This affected the ability for local authorities to respond in full and it was suggested that this be highlighted as a general issue as part of the Council's response.
- (ii) The White Paper was overly focussed on the shortcomings of the current planning system but was silent on the failure of developers to always build on land when granted planning permission. To ensure housing was delivered in practice, this needed to be addressed under any new system as it was currently a matter outside the control of local planning authorities;
- (iii) The proposal that Local Plans would in future allocate land for 'Growth' and that applications to build on such land would then automatically be awarded outline planning permission was of particular concern as this would:
 - place significant pressure on the process of developing local plans and therefore require a greater degree of robustness in that process;
 - require developers to be clear and transparent on their development proposals early on to ensure there was sufficient clarity for impact assessments to be carried out and appropriate mitigations such as highway improvements identified. The White Paper was currently vague about what would be expected from developers during this part of the process which could negatively impact a Council's ability

to undertake its role as the Highway Authority. If the onus was not put on the developers to provide the information necessary at this earlier stage, the process would not be meaningful and add to uncertainty;

- risk members of the public feeling disenfranchised from the planning process. Members warned that experience showed that the public generally failed to engage in the local plan process which was seen as too generic and strategic. However, they became actively involved when specific applications were received and the impact of a proposal on their neighbourhood known in detail. The new approach would cut out the ability for the public to be involved in the process at that later stage;
- mean that evidence and supporting statements carried out during the local plan process become out of date by the time specific permissions were sought and which could detrimentally affect the Council as infrastructure provider and local residents.
- add expense to the local plan development process which was already expensive both in terms of time and money. This would particularly impact district councils.

In respect of the points raised in (ii) above, Members requested that the Director of Environment and Transport be asked to identify the implications of the Department having to engage early in the process and for these to be captured in the response more firmly.

- (iv) The opportunity for authorities to borrow against future receipts to support the delivery of infrastructure was welcomed, but greater understanding of how that system would work in practice was needed. It was unclear if proposals to introduce a national infrastructure levy would ensure that local councils received the right level of resources required for each development, and such funding would be vital if local councils were to be encouraged to borrow against this. Whilst the merits of a standardised and clear system were noted, there was concern that the new arrangements would not provide the flexibility currently offered through section 106 agreements. The Commission made comparisons with the current CIL system which it was felt disadvantaged the County Council when compared with section 106 agreements.
- (v) The focus on increasing the number of houses built would not necessarily address the current housing crisis and the White Paper did not pay sufficient regard to the issue of homelessness and affordable and social housing. Developers as private businesses would not by themselves focus on less profitable areas such as social housing. The response to question 24 (a) of the consultation needed to be firmer on this point.
- (vi) The White Paper needed to be more robust in ensuring any new planning system addressed the growing crisis of climate change and to ensure that new developments were environmentally sustainable. In addition, given the

move to greater homeworking all new developments should have superfast broadband. Failure to capture such issues would be a missed opportunity to drive future change in these areas.

- (vii) Air Quality and the health impacts of emissions were a major concern and the White paper did not address this issue in any significant way.
- (viii) The use of the term 'beauty' would likely be contentious and lead to disagreement and appeals. The term was too vague and subjective and would not be helpful in ensuring clarity in the system. There needed to be greater focus on quality and sustainability.
- (ix) The current arrangement for dealing with appeals was often seen as being weighted in favour of developers and whilst it was acknowledged that accountability rested with the Secretary of State, some argued that the process diluted local democratic accountability. It was suggested that the current appeal process needed to be more reactive and timely, particularly when dealing with enforcement matters, and that these issues should be addressed centrally as part of the new proposals. It was highlighted that the zonal allocations in the Local Plan would likely reduce the number of appeals in any event.
- (x) Consideration should be given to requiring developers of commercial sites which generated increased HGV traffic on specific routes to make an appropriate contribution to mitigate future costs arising from the impact of such vehicles on the existing local road network.
- (xi) A member requested that reference to 'the golden triangle' as an example on page 22 of the draft response be removed.
- (xii) The White Paper should encourage developers to ensure that local companies and tradesmen are given priority much in the same way as local councils are asked to have regard to social value in contracts.
- (xiii) The removal of a duty to co-operate was disappointing and it was unclear how a zonal system could be introduced and operate effectively without this.

Members of the Cabinet present thanked the Commission for its comments on the White Paper and gave an assurance that these would be taken into consideration when discussing the response to the White Paper.

RESOLVED:

That the comments now made be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration.

24. Covid 19 Recovery Update - Chief Executive's Department

The Commission considered a report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on progress made within the Department in implementing its interim recovery plans following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, and to set out initial proposals for longer term recovery planning and strategic change in accordance with the Council's Recovery Strategy. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

The Director of Law and Governance in presenting the report expressed thanks to staff within the Department for their approach to the crisis and commended them for their flexibility and hard work to respond to new areas of work and ways of working and in ensuring that services continued to be delivered to a high standard throughout the period.

Arising from the discussion, the following points arose:

- (i) The Trading Standards Service continued to work closely with district council's regarding the local lock down and the enforcement of the new Coronavirus Regulations which empowered the County Council to take action against businesses where a threat to public health was identified.
- (ii) Some areas of trading standards enforcement work had ceased or reduced in output such as age restricted products enforcement and rogue trading investigations. It was intended that such services would be resumed to normal levels as soon as possible. However, many staff were still focused on enforcement work arising from the local lock down and Coronavirus Regulations which remained a priority. Members emphasised the need for the Trading Standards Service to be properly resourced to enable it to deliver on this new and substantial area of work.
- (iii) School appeals had been undertaken as normal, though by remote means. The number of appeals had not diminished during the pandemic and in total approximately 800 appeals had been dealt with so far. Members noted that those appeals received on time had been dealt with within the statutory timeframes. Some appeals were still ongoing and would likely continue into mid-October. Feedback received from parents had been largely positive.
- (iv) The Regulations regarding remote meetings had not changed and meetings would likely continue to be held in this way for the foreseeable future.

RESOLVED:

That the update now provided be noted.

25. Covid 19 Recovery Update - Corporate Resources Department

The Commission considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources regarding progress made within the Department in implementing its interim recovery plans following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, and to set out initial proposals for longer term recovery planning and strategic change in accordance with the Council's Recovery Strategy. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were noted:

- (i) The Council continued to advise staff to work from home where possible. Enabling staff to meet in person in a safe and socially distanced environment was being looked at. The Council's Workplace Strategy would be reviewed to consider longer term working options but for now the situation remained very fluid.

- (ii) Whilst up to 3,000 people would normally be able to attend at County Hall this was now limited to 550 following a full review of the site having been undertaken with Public Health and Health and Safety colleagues to ensure it was a Covid safe environment.
- (iii) Many events held at Beaumanor Hall had had to be cancelled. In particular, its largest traded offer of outdoor activities for children could not be resumed and so staff had been furloughed and the Hall remained closed.
- (iv) School meals were being provided as normal though take up had reduced which was a concern and would be monitored. Many staff had worked throughout the lock down period as schools remained open during that time. Those that had been furloughed had now been brought back to work.
- (v) A member expressed concern that in some schools children were not receiving a hot meal. It was noted that the Council's school meals service offered both hot and cold meals which were well balanced and highly rated (gold level accreditation). However, it was a matter for schools as to whether this offer was taken up. There was some concern that hot meals might not be being provided for practical reasons, as children in some schools were having to eat at their desk to ensure they remained in their Covid 'bubble'. The Chair of the Children and Family Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirmed this would be a matter that would be monitored by that Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the update now provided be noted.

26. Dates of future meetings

RESOLVED:

It was noted that the next meeting of the Commission would be held on 4th November 2020 at 10.30 am.

1 10.30am – 13.15 pm
14 14th September 2020

CHAIRMAN



SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 4 NOVEMBER 2020

DRAFT CITY OF LEICESTER LOCAL PLAN 2020 to 2036

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to brief the Commission on the content of the draft City of Leicester Local Plan 2020 to 2036 and to seek its views on the draft consultation response (see Appendix attached to this report).

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Government's Planning White Paper, considered by the Cabinet on 18 September 2020, proposes 'end to end' reform of the current planning system in England. Local Plans are proposed for retention but with a greater role and tighter timeframe. Once the consultation responses have been considered by Government legislative change and revision to national planning policy will take place and will impact on plan making processes.
3. The County Council's Strategic Plan (2018 to 2022), most recently approved by the County Council in July 2020, following the County Council's declaration on climate change, agreed by the County Council in May 2019, has five strategic outcomes. The delivery of 'Affordable and Quality Homes' and 'Strong Economy' are most directly impacted by the draft City of Leicester Local Plan.
4. The Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) for Leicester and Leicestershire, approved by the County Council in November 2018 (and by the other nine partners in late 2018), provides the long-term vision for future planned growth to 2050. It recognises the pivotal role Leicester City has in Leicester and Leicestershire and looks for the City to develop its role as the 'central city' supporting the market towns and rural area around it through more jobs, leisure, arts, culture and entertainment. With the strategic regeneration area along the Waterside developed as a mixed-use area balancing new jobs with the need for new homes. The SGP recognises the City needs to grow in such a way that full use can be made of existing services and infrastructure within the City. Also, the SGP notes that by providing more homes close to jobs in the City Centre and other employment centres this will relieve development pressures in other parts of the surrounding authorities.

5. The Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA, 2017), informed the SGP and set out a housing need figure for the City of 1,668 dwellings (dws) per annum (2011 to 2036). The existing Standard Method introduced by Government in 2018 is used by Leicester City Council in the draft City of Leicester Local Plan. This provides a housing provision figure of 1,712 dws per annum.
6. Consultation on 'Changes to the current planning system' recently ended on 1 October 2020. The County Council has raised strong concerns to the proposed changes to the Standard Method which if introduced would result in significant increases for all districts other than Melton Borough.
7. A strategic transport priorities document is being developed alongside the SGP for the City and County to ensure the long-term development needs and associated transportation requirements are coordinated.
8. Leicester City Council previously consulted on emerging issues and options at an earlier stage of its local plan making in 2017. An officer response was made at this time.

Background

9. The City of Leicester Local Plan 2020 to 2036 is a draft Local Plan for consultation (hereafter called the draft Local Plan).
10. Consultation on this draft Local Plan forms a Regulation 18 consultation, which means that once Leicester City Council has considered comments received during the consultation period the draft Local Plan will be refined and there will be further consultation held on the Submission Plan (Regulation 19). A date has not yet been set but this is likely to be in late 2021/early 2022.
11. Leicester City Council intended to start consultation on 23 March 2020. However, this was postponed due to the onset of COVID-19 and the resulting local lockdown restriction. Therefore, consultation started on 14 September 2020, alongside the release of evidence prepared to inform the draft Local Plan. Consultation closes on 7 December 2020.

Overview of content of Draft Local Plan

12. The draft Local Plan has been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to assess its environmental impacts, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to assess environmental, economic and social effects and a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is being prepared.
13. A key aspect of the draft Local Plan is to identify the amount of new jobs and homes needed and translate these into the provision of sufficient land.
14. In brief, the draft City of Leicester Local Plan includes:
 - 1,712 dws per annum (29,104 dws over plan period to 2036)

- Almost 5,000 dws of which are to be located in the Central Development Area (CDA), within which nine distinctive character areas are identified with a specific vision for each.
 - 9,827dws of which will be met through commitments (extant outline and full planning permissions as at 31 March 2019).
 - 2,594 dws of which will be through five strategic allocations, all to include 30% affordable housing and self-build/custom build plots:
 - i. **Western Park Golf Course:** 52.1 ha, 466 dws, seven permanent gypsy and traveller pitches, 20.5ha employment land. Also City Council owned land in Blaby District submitted through Blaby District Council's 'Call for sites'.
 - ii. **East of Ashton Green:** 53 ha, 660 dws, new secondary school (1,200 pupils), includes small employment site.
 - iii. **North of A46 Bypass:** 33ha, 611 dws.
 - iv. **Land west of Anstey Lane:** 17 ha, 325 dws.
 - v. **General Hospital site:** 28 ha, 532 dws.
 - 1,486 dws of which will be small allocations outside the CDA.
 - 2,550 dws of which will be windfall and small sites.
 - Quantified unmet housing need of 7,742 dws to be redistributed through agreement with districts.
15. Housing provision in the early years of the draft Local Plan will largely rely on existing housing sites being delivered including those with current planning permissions and allocations. Development of the strategic sites will be towards the later years, mainly due to the infrastructure needed to support new housing.
16. To bring new jobs and investment to the City the draft Local Plan looks to:
- continue the delivery of offices in the City Centre, with two proposed office allocations around the railway station and at Southampton Street;
 - Pioneer Park for science, research and innovation;
 - Cultural Quarter for business start-ups and creative industries;
 - New manufacturing, high quality new employment areas at former Western Park Golf Course, Beaumont Park and land east of Ashton Green; and
 - Retention of 'fit for purpose' textiles areas and neighbourhood employment areas.
17. Infrastructure, retail and leisure growth and the strategic green network are also considered essential components for the strategy to deliver planned growth for Leicester.

18. The draft Local Plan is supported by a wide range of evidence which has informed its formulation.

Duty to Co-operate

19. Leicester City Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with the County Council, other neighbouring authorities, the LLEP and other bodies. The collaborative work on the SGP also exemplifies this.
20. A Joint Position Statement relating to Leicester's Housing and Employment Land Needs published on 14 September 2020 was signed up to by all ten partners. This sets out how authorities continue to work together to accommodate a potential unmet need for housing and employment land identified in the draft Local Plan.
21. To ensure that the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) housing and employment need is fulfilled up to 2036 a Statement of Common Ground is being produced and will be signed in due course by each local authority within Leicester and Leicestershire. It is anticipated this will be completed in 2021.

Analysis - Corporate perspective

22. The City of Leicester lies in the centre of the County and forms the main cultural, tourism, leisure, employment and retail hub for the County area, and for many in our local communities it also forms the place where they live and/or work.
23. Other cities in close proximity such as Nottingham and Derby provide a similar role, yet none provide the unique identity, sense of place and pride regarding strength, diversity and sporting prowess as our 'Central City', Leicester.
24. Cities by their nature are dynamic, ever changing, and some of this change is likely to have been accelerated by the current COVID-19 pandemic. In particular an acceleration in online retail and related implications such as a decrease in demand for retail floorspace, an increase in demand for floorspace for fulfilment centres, and differing logistics requirements etc. Other change includes an increase in remote working, use of local centres, walking, cycling and use and appreciation of local green spaces. Although it may be considered untimely in this period of uncertainty to plan for the next 15 years it is wise to do so to provide a robust framework and clear direction of travel which provides sufficient flexibility to deal well with uncertainty and accelerated changes.
25. Most homes and businesses in Oadby and Wigston Borough, and many homes and businesses in Blaby District, Charnwood Borough, Harborough District and to a lesser extent in Hinckley and Bosworth Borough are located within the built framework of Leicester. This emphasises the importance of ensuring that for these communities, as well as those who live in the Leicestershire market towns and more rural settlements in Leicestershire, the policies and proposals of the new emerging City of Leicester Local Plan seek to protect, enhance and create attractive and desirable places to live and work. This is in addition to the

need for the City Centre to function well and effectively in the 21st century. Often this will relate to the function of more local urban centres, the quality of the local built and natural environment and the ability to access by sustainable modes open spaces, other nearby communities as well as the City Centre.

26. It is noted that the quantified unmet need for housing for the City means that all five strategic sites, CDA sites, general sites and windfalls are all required to come forward in the plan period to lessen the unmet need that needs to be redistributed to Leicestershire districts. The need for Leicester City to maximise delivery is in the interests of all authorities in the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA and reflects the long term spatial growth steer given in the SGP.
27. On the whole the draft Local Plan is clear, comprehensive and well balanced in its proposals for future planned development. However, there are areas for improvement, clarification and where assurances needs to be given. The key comments are listed below with the full detailed comments included in the appendix.
28. Key comments include:
 - a) Whilst recognising that options for the City of Leicester to meet its own needs are significantly constrained, the County Council will expect the final Local Plan to provide a robust policy basis for dealing with the cumulative and cross-boundary impacts of growth, including where this impacts on Leicestershire's transport system and other infrastructure it provides.
 - b) Support for a strong vision for the CDA and support the achievement of strong delivery of housing within the CDA, many sites of which are brownfield.
 - c) Support the achievement of strong delivery of housing elsewhere in the City, and look to continued and closer working with Leicester City Council and other partners, including on masterplans and the delivery of the five strategic sites, in particular, the Western Park Golf Course which includes City owned land within Blaby District, East of Ashton Green which includes a new secondary school, and in respect of the General Hospital site which includes allowing for potential contributions to the South East Leicester Transport Strategy Area (SELTSA).
 - d) Suggest the inclusion of a further objective regarding the role of the City in the wider Leicester and Leicestershire HMA, maintaining and enhancing connectivity for County residents to services and facilities, such as to the main hospitals (Glenfield Hospital and Leicester Royal Infirmary).
 - e) Commitment to working with Leicester City to understand the impact of growth for the City across the HMA, including its transport system, the infrastructure and measures required to enable and mitigate the impacts of that growth, to ensure there is a robust policy framework in place to underpin development, funding and delivery of such infrastructure/measures, especially where that might be necessary to deal with cumulative and/or cross-boundary impacts.

- f) Ensure the 'Strategy for Leicester' explicitly refers to continued joint working with the County Council, builds on the collaborative approach the City Council is taking to transport evidence development, and includes a policy/policies that provide for cross-boundary assessment and funding of transport measures required to enable and support growth.
- g) Concern that some of the housing provision outlined may not be deliverable within the plan period, and the current unmet need figure of 7,742 needs to be regarded as a minimum.
- h) Green infrastructure: support a proactive approach to provision of further green space, such as designation of further parks so communities can have access to open space, the valuable function they fulfil as cool havens in heatwaves, and note potential loss of existing green assets, which includes release from green wedge.
- i) A map showing ecological permeability and physical connectivity could be incorporated into the evidence base to ensure that developers understand the impacts on wider strategic activity. The proposed changes to land use encouraged by the Environment Bill will need to be considered for Urban fringe and wider rural-urban links.
- j) Suggest a greater profile for the River Soar and Grand Union Canal waterway corridor which forms a very striking asset which extends into Leicestershire to the south and north of the City, with value from environmental, recreational, leisure, tourism and regeneration perspectives.
- k) There is potential to combine action for biodiversity with the provision of increased access to natural greenspace for both urban and rural communities through joint working between the County and City council. Suggested provision of large-scale accessible natural greenspace serving the south and east of the city could be investigated further. Considered there are opportunities within the Leicester Urban Area to provide for this and follow the River Soar corridor. Scope for net gain and the opportunities for cross boundary working to identify and bring forward suitable sites.
- l) Recognising change will/may have been accelerated by the current COVID-19 pandemic, such as acceleration in online retail, and related implications such as an increase in demand for floorspace for fulfilments centres, differing logistics requirements, use of buildings across the City, increase in remote working, use of local economic centres and walking and cycling etc.
- m) Climate change and air quality refers to the need to reduce emissions from transport and new development but doesn't include energy and heat infrastructure for existing housing which needs to be addressed to reach net zero.
- n) Recognise need to boost the City's economy but consider may be appropriate to direct some of proposed employment land to the districts to 'free up' more land for housing development.
- o) Value of good schools to support sustainable communities needs to be recognised in the draft Local Plan and promoting strong progression

routes to further and higher education and employment. The County Council supports the development of the proposed secondary school within the proposed East of Ashton Green strategic site allocation, recognising that the development of this school will help mitigate City pupils attending County schools.

- p) Would like to see inclusion of reference required on environmental aspects of design, relating to the use and sourcing of sustainable materials etc and associated cost implications.
- q) Reference to rail is too narrow, needs to be broadened to refer to how people travel to Leicester by rail, direct rail services to Coventry, enhances services to Birmingham, and provision of an HS2 classic rail compatible link at Toton, opening up direct access to Leeds.

Resource Implications

- 29. The proposals of the draft Local Plan will have an impact on the County Council's finances.
- 30. Given the connectivity of infrastructure in the City and County which includes transport, education, adult social care etc, it is of paramount importance that close working is undertaken between the City Council and County Council (and other partners) in the delivery of infrastructure and related proposals. Formalising partnership arrangements to minimise risk for all partners involved will be helpful.
- 31. The Government's ambitions in the Planning White Paper (August 2020) will also need to be factored into the delivery of this Local Plan, necessitating adjustment and perhaps major changes to the mechanisms used to secure and deliver infrastructure.
- 32. Meeting the City Council's unmet need will increase the pressure on County Council infrastructure. This is likely to be further exacerbated if the proposed changes to the Standard Method of calculating housing need (which the County Council opposes) are introduced, leading to further increases across all but one of the County's districts.
- 33. Therefore, it is crucial that there is flexibility wherever possible around timing of spend and what money is spent on. Flexibility is important as some schemes will need to subsidise the cost of other schemes. Early identification of cross-boundary issues with regards to infrastructure funding will be essential and the draft Local Plan will enable this to happen, as well as ensuring developer contributions to local infrastructure costs can be secured in a coordinated and equitable manner.
- 34. This strengthens further the need for formalised partnerships which are likely to place all partners in the best position to minimise the risks linked to handling and addressing the major changes to the English planning system.

Timetable for Decisions

35. Following consideration by the Scrutiny Commission, the draft County Council response to Leicester City Council's draft City of Leicester Local Plan 2020 to 2036 will be considered by Cabinet on 20 November 2020. The comments of the Scrutiny Commission will be reported to the Cabinet at that meeting. Consultation responses are required to be submitted by 7 9 December 2020.

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

36. There are no equality or human rights implications arising from the recommendation of this report. The draft City of Leicester Local Plan seeks to provide a sustainable strategy for the future of the City, setting out how it proposes to protect environmental assets and provide new homes and jobs for the City. In quantifying the likely scale of the unmet need unable to be accommodated in the City, the City Council is seeking to work with other partners elsewhere in the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA to provide for the homes and jobs required.

Recommendation

37. The Scrutiny Commission is asked to comment on the County Council's draft response to Leicester City Council's draft 'City of Leicester Local Plan 2020 to 2026'.

Background Papers

Leicester City Council 'City of Leicester Local Plan 2020 to 2036' Draft Plan for Consultation March 2020.

https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/draft-local-plan/user_uploads/draft-local-plan-final.pdf

Various evidence documents informing the above draft Local Plan.

<https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/draft-local-plan/>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None

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List of Appendices

- Appendix – Draft Response from Leicestershire County Council to draft City of Leicester Local Plan 2020 to 2036.

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City of Leicester Local Plan 2020 to 2036 - Draft Plan for Consultation, March 2020

Leicestershire County Council – Detailed comments

Chapter	Page No.	Policy Ref. / Para. No.	Comments
Overall Plan	Overall Plan	Overall Plan	<p>The Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) approved in 2018 provides the long-term vision and framework for the emerging new Local Plan for the City, and for other emerging Local Plans in Leicestershire.</p> <p>It recognises that Leicester has a pivotal role to play and that it should develop its role as the ‘central city’ supporting the market towns and rural areas around it. More jobs, leisure, arts, culture and entertainment facilities are envisaged within the City Centre. The strategic regeneration area along the Waterside will develop as a mixed use area, extending the economic opportunities available within the centre of the City, but balancing new jobs with the need for new homes.</p> <p>Growth in the City needs to be done in such a way that it makes full use of existing services and infrastructure. Also by providing more homes close to jobs in the City Centre and other employment centres development pressures will be relieved in other parts of the surrounding authorities.</p> <p>The SGP is referred to in the draft Local Plan, informing the policies and proposals within it. Further direct reference to the SGP is sought to embed and strengthen further the role the City performs for the whole Housing Market Area (HMA), specifically in the vision, objectives and policies within the Strategy for Leicester, and specifically on housing and employment.</p> <p>The County Council supports in principle the work that is being undertaken by Leicester City Council to put in place a new, up to date Local Plan, including the development of a transport evidence base to underpin the Plan. The County Council and County Highway Authority (CHA) has an interest in seeing the Plan successfully adopted and will seek to continue to work with Leicester City Council where possible/appropriate to achieve this. It is considered that an up to date adopted Plan represents the best</p>

			<p>way to seek to manage the future growth of the City and the impacts that this growth may have (directly or indirectly) on Leicestershire’s transport system and is in the best interests of delivering long-term growth more widely across Leicester and Leicestershire.</p> <p>The County Council recognises that options for the City of Leicester to meet its own needs, in respect of housing, are significantly constrained. Whilst recognising this, equally the County Council will expect the final Local Plan to provide a robust policy basis for dealing with the cumulative and cross-boundary impacts of growth, including where this impacts on Leicestershire’s transport system and other infrastructure it provides. It is also important that the final Plan acknowledges the important role that the City serves for Leicestershire residents and that as appropriate it contains robust policies that seek to help maintain and enhance (transport) connectivity for county residents to services and facilities within the City of Leicester.</p> <p>(NB: The matters highlighted in the above paragraph are raised on a number of occasions in comments on particular aspects of the draft Plan. The County Council would welcome the opportunity to discuss and agree which of these draft Plan aspects might be appropriate to revise and update to provide the necessary robust policy basis it is seeking.)</p> <p>The CHA welcomes Leicester City Council’s ongoing commitment to undertaking transport evidence work to build on the Transport Infrastructure Assessment (TIA). Flowing from that it remains committed to working with Leicester City Council to understand: the impacts of the growth of the City of Leicester across the Housing Market Area’s transport system; the infrastructure and measures required to enable and mitigate the impacts of that growth; and to ensure that there is a robust policy framework in place to underpin the development, funding and delivery of such infrastructure/ measure, especially where that might be necessary to deal with cumulative and/or cross-boundary impacts.</p> <p>The remainder of the CHAs comments reflect these general points and are intended to be constructive in helping to develop the final Plan and achieving its successful adoption.</p> <p>The phrase ‘Leicester Urban Area’ (LUA) is used variously throughout the draft Plan and is shown in a number of diagrams (most notably Diagram 01). In doing this, care needs to be taken not to create confusion in the readers’ mind or to give rise to misleading impressions. For example, in respect of highways and transport issues, the County Council’s adopted Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy</p>
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			<p>(PTPS) applies to areas of the LUA beyond the City boundary; reading of the text and policies in the Transport Chapter might give a different impression in terms of ambitions for passenger transport. Likewise, it might be misunderstood that there could be some form of 'transport strategy' for the LUA; whilst the CHA remains committed to working with Leicester City Council on highways and transport matters of common benefit/interest, it will nevertheless be developing its own Local Transport Plan that will cover all areas of the LUA outside the boundaries of the City of Leicester. The CHA would ask that the text for the final Plan be reviewed and additional clarifying text be added as necessary to minimise the risk of any potential confusion/misleading impressions.</p> <p>The Draft Local Plan was developed pre-Covid and has not acknowledged the rapid acceleration of existing trends and how this could affect the use of buildings across the city, i.e. increase in remote working, on-line retail, use of local economic centres and walking and cycling.</p> <p>Further observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A development proposal map included within the document would be useful to provide readers with a context of where the development proposals are and identify likely cross boundary sites; • The spatial strategy diagram 2 on page 32 could be improved to enable the cross referencing of site allocations; • Information on proposed access and infrastructure is required for the sites to identify if/how they may be deliverable; and • Information of any site feasibility works should be included.
2. A Profile of Leicester: A Spatial Portrait	18	2.10-2.11	Refers to the need to reduce emissions from transport and new development but doesn't include energy and heat infrastructure for existing housing which will also need to be addressed to reach net zero.
2. A Profile of Leicester: A Spatial Portrait	21	2.30	Support recognition of the River Soar and Grand Union Canal as in itself an important Green Infrastructure Network for wildlife and access to the Countryside. This is supported by Natural England, Canal & River Trust and other local authorities. There perhaps should be recognition that the River Soar is also one of the assets under threat from Climate Change suffering more frequent flooding and drought.
2. A Profile of Leicester: A	21	2.31	Should reflect the role of green spaces in supporting resilience to a changing climate e.g. cool havens in heatwaves

Spatial Portrait			
2. A Profile of Leicester: A Spatial Portrait	21	2.34	Welcome recognition of green spaces to health but specific reference to mental health could be added
3. Vision for Leicester	24	3.1 – The Vision	<p>The Vision is generally clear, aspirational and reflects dynamic nature of cities. Keen for further recognition that most residents and business in Oadby and Wigston Borough, and many residents and businesses in Blaby District, Charnwood Borough, Harborough District and to a lesser extent in Hinckley and Bosworth Borough are located within the built framework of Leicester.</p> <p>Emphasising the importance of ensuring for these communities, as well as those who live in the Leicestershire market towns and more rural settlements in Leicestershire, that the policies and proposals of the new emerging City of Leicester Local Plan seek to protect, enhance and create attractive and desirable places to live and work. This is in addition to the need for the City Centre to function well and effectively in the 21st century. Often this will relate to the function of more local urban centres, the quality of the local built and natural environment and the ability to access by sustainable modes other nearby communities as well as the City Centre.</p> <p>Whilst there is reference to a healthy, clean and just city in the objectives they are not explicit in the vision.</p>
3. Vision for Leicester	24	3.2 - Objectives	<p>The objectives outlined at Para 3.2 are generally supported given that they recognise the importance of meeting housing needs, promoting economic growth in addition to health and wellbeing and a commitment to combating climate change all of which align with the County Council's strategic policy objectives and the Strategic Growth Plan which is seen as a primary driver to achieving growth across the HMA.</p> <p>It is suggested that an additional objective be included that reflects the role of the City of Leicester within the wider Housing Market Area (HMA) / Strategic Growth Plan, including the importance of maintaining and enhancing accessibility of services and facilities for residents of the county. This could be supplemented by additional evidence provided throughout the Plan, e.g. journey to work data.</p> <p>Despite reference to increased on-line shopping on page 20, 2.25 (and by association, deliveries) the transport objective omits to tackle freight and delivery traffic.</p>

3. Vision for Leicester	25	Policy VL01	Conformity to the NPPF is essential to achieving a sound local plan. Potential changes stemming from the Planning for the Future White Paper will need to be considered as the draft Local Plan advances through the plan preparation process.
4. Strategy for Leicester	27 to 40	Policies SL01 to SL06 – General Comments	<p>Policy SL01 outlines a framework for the delivery of development across the City. It demonstrates that the current Standard Method has been used in the determination of overall housing numbers and provides a breakdown of how the housing will be delivered including details of the level of shortfall that needs to be met within neighbouring authority areas. It is noted that further studies are ongoing to compliment the HEDNA (2017) in respect of housing mix.</p> <p>Policies SL02 – SL05 consider in greater detail the five strategic housing sites to be delivered as part of the plan. In respect of these sites no reference is made to constraints to delivery. For example, Policies SL04 – SL06, which are to deliver 57% of the housing from strategic sites, do not refer to the need for CPO powers to be considered for use to secure delivery of sites (see Appendix 4). Further, there is little or no evidence as to how any major infrastructure or mitigation measures would be delivered to facilitate development.</p> <p>Similarly, the draft Local Plan assumes that all the potential sites within the CDA are deliverable especially as it is recognised at Policy E07 that employment uses will be required to relocate. It is likely that the bulk of these sites will be brownfield which in itself introduces an additional delivery risk, not least in relation to viability, for which no allowance appears to have been made.</p> <p>In respect of the small sites detailed in Appendix 5 it is noted that a significant proportion comprise school playing fields, allotments, public playing fields, recreational assets or local areas of open space. Notwithstanding the likelihood that the loss of these assets will be resisted by the local communities they serve and the need for other consents (for example from the Department for Education), the development of such areas of land would be contrary to other plan policies including HW01 and OSSR02 without adequate alternative provision.</p> <p>Hence, It is concluded that a minimum of 20% of the housing needs to be met from within the City itself (excluding existing commitments) could be undeliverable or constrained within the Plan period. This would lead to an additional shortfall in housing supply of c.2,300 dwellings to be met elsewhere within the HMA increasing unmet needs to a figure in excess of 10,000 dws. Accordingly, the current figure of 7,742 dws needs to be regarded as a minimum, and provision made within the draft Local Plan, and the Statement of</p>

			<p>Common to Ground, to take account of the potential for further shortfalls in order to provide the flexibility that would support a robust approach to allocations across the HMA. Bearing this in mind it is most important to encourage the City Council to ensure strong delivery within the CDA, across the smaller sites and on the five strategic sites.</p> <p>The County Council recognises that options for the City of Leicester to meet its own needs, in respect of housing, are significantly constrained; there are very limited location options available to accommodate 'strategic sites'.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, the County Council wishes to see the Plan strengthened in a number of respects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To ensure that the policies and text in this chapter explicitly reference the need for continued joint work with the County Highway Authority and other infrastructure providers at the County Council. 2) Building on the collaborative approach that the City Council is undertaking in its approach to transport evidence development, to include a policy(ies) that provide the basis for the assessment of the cumulative impacts of the strategic sites in the north western side of Leicester City, including with sites beyond the boundary of Leicester City as appropriate. 3) To include a policy(ies) that provide for the cross-boundary assessment and funding of transport measures required to enable and support growth. In this respect, it is important to note that the County Council would not foresee site promoters being necessarily responsible for dealing with such wider matters; rather the intention is that it would provide a policy basis for joint working to address cumulative impacts, for example as work on the South East Leicester Transport Strategy Area (SELTSA) has flowed from the development of the Harborough District and Oadby and Wigston Local Plans. 4) In respect of Policy SL06 General Hospital Site, to amend the policy and/or add additional supporting text to allow for potential contributions to SELTSA. <p>Additionally, it is surprising that policies SL01 to SL06 do not refer to sustainable transport provision; as a minimum it may be worth cross-referencing policies T01-T04 (as appropriate) to help amplify the strong sustainable travel credentials/opportunities associated with these sites.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the above points, the CHA reserves the right to make further comments on these strategic sites as and when they come forward through the Development Management process.</p>
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4. Strategy for Leicester	30	4.14	Suggest need to reassess demand for offices in the city centre post-Covid and the use of green spaces for economic development
4. Strategy for Leicester	31	4.21	The 'green infrastructure' as part of the City's active transport network is not sufficiently acknowledged here. The paragraph suggests a conflict although green infrastructure with active transport can support (and should be integrated into) sustainable growth and development.
4. Strategy for Leicester	34	Policy SL01	It is suggested that consideration be given to including a policy(ies) that deal with the cumulative impacts of the remaining 1486 homes. Some of these sites are sizable (50 to 100 dws) and the cumulative impact within an area (Inner, NW, NE etc used in Appendix 5) could be significant for infrastructure provision.
4. Strategy for Leicester	35 & 36		Welcome the recognition that developments must have "due regard to the surrounding Green Wedge" to preserve connectivity of green spaces.
4. Strategy for Leicester	36 to 40	Strategic Sites	The County Highway Authority welcomes the work undertaken by Leicester City Council to assess the transport impacts of these sites and will continue to work collaboratively on taking forward any further work to develop the necessary enabling/supporting transport infrastructure that is required in the County.
4. Strategy for Leicester	36 to 39	Policies SL02 to SLO5 (Strategic Sites 1 to 4)	Grouped as they are in the northwest quadrant of the City of Leicester and falling broadly within the A46 Corridor – albeit without direct access to that road – the transport impacts of these sites are likely to interact with both existing and emerging planned growth in neighbouring areas, particularly in Charnwood and Blaby. It will be important to ensure that a joined-up approach is taken to identifying the potential cumulative transport implications of growth in and around this area; ensure robust policies are included in the final Plan to deal with such cumulative impacts and to provide a firm foundation for securing funding from developments to help to deliver the necessary mitigating transport measures; and to put in place a strategy to underpin the securing of any necessary publicly funding (full or in part) towards those measures.
4. Strategy for Leicester	36	Policy SL02	Specific to Policy SL02, it is recognised that part of the site lies within Blaby District. Whilst the plan assumes the total allocation is included within the City's housing trajectory, the plan needs to make clear that the unmet need is net of the housing delivered from outside the city boundary on this site.
4. Strategy for	38	Policy	The policy should ensure that development in this location does not prejudice any potential future

Leicester		SL04	<p>proposals/aspirations for upgrading the A46 Leicester Western Bypass, for instance arising from studies led by Midlands Connect.</p> <p>The A46 Leicester Western Bypass is a significant barrier to connectivity with the rest of the Leicester Urban Area; however, the policy as written is silent on how this will be overcome. Based on experience of other local plans and strategic site allocations with similar connectivity considerations, the final policy may need to be more explicit on how this will be addressed.</p>
4. Strategy for Leicester	39	Policy SL05	The CHA is aware of the potential for this allocation to potentially form part of a more comprehensive development embracing land beyond the city boundary in Charnwood and Blaby. It would be helpful if the policy and/or accompanying text were to provide for this allocation coming forward as a part of a more comprehensive development.
4. Strategy for Leicester	40	Policy SL06	Given its location, development of this site would potentially need to make a contribution towards the delivery of measures within the South East Leicester Transport Strategy Area.
5. Housing			<p>Regarding education, discussions have commenced with Leicester City Council regarding the cross-boundary implications likely in relation to 4 of the 5 large housing sites identified in the plan. It is important that these continue as housing allocations look likely to be made in adjoining sites in Leicestershire by districts.</p> <p>It is important that the Strategy recognises the value of good schools to supporting sustainable communities and promoting strong progression routes to Further/Higher education and employment.</p> <p>The need for additional school places arising from each development should also be adequately recognised and ensure that new schools or expanded schools in each locality are provided. This will help alleviate the pressure on out of catchment demand for places on County schools placed close to the City boundary.</p> <p>The County Council supports the development of the proposed secondary school within the proposed East of Ashton Green strategic site allocation, recognising that the development of this school will help mitigate City pupils attending County schools.</p>
5. Housing	45	Policy	See comments in Section 4 above

		Ho01	
5. Housing	46	Policy Ho02	It is noted from Table 1 that the anticipated delivery from unallocated and windfall sites will deliver 150 houses per annum based on previous delivery levels. However, there appears to be no evidence to support this assumption in the evidence base, further explanation required.
5. Housing	47	Policy Ho03	Whilst the overall housing mix is seen to meet the assessed need across the plan area the different densities detailed in Policy Ho05 requires that the mix within individual sites and the CDA be reflected in the policy requirements of those areas. The delivery of homes to meet the needs of the ageing population and those with special needs is welcomed, but there will need to be clarity as to where such housing is delivered in order that shortfalls in specialist housing can be translated into the Statement of Common Ground.
5. Housing	48	Policy Ho04	The plan details a target level of 30% affordable housing on all major schemes without defining what constitutes a major scheme although it is noted that current affordable housing policy applies to all housing developments of more than 15 units. Whilst the policy suggests that there would be a degree of flexibility in delivery rates to reflect the viability of individual sites it is considered that the plan needs to be specific in this regard in order to secure the delivery of an adequate housing supply. Again, the implications of under supply needs to be addressed in relation to the wider HMA.
5. Housing			Note the housing trajectory on p213 indicates for the five strategic sites the delivery of significant numbers of new dwellings from 2024/2025 through to 2032/2033. To enable this to happen continued and closer working with partners will be required.
6. Climate Change and Flood Risk	59	Policy CCFR01	<p>It is suggested that the “Energy and Carbon Reduction” section of the policy should also include the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure as part of new developments.</p> <p>For balance, it is suggested the policy should also refer to making developments sustainable from a transport perspective more generally; as a minimum it may be worth cross-referencing policies T01-T04 (as appropriate).</p> <p>How will the requirements of this policy be assessed and what minimum standards will apply?</p>

			Support and welcome the climate change policies CCFR01, CCFR02
6. Climate Change and Flood Risk	59-61		This chapter only refers to the Strategic Green Network in the City & urban area. It recognises the importance of networks in the Leicester Urban area that feed into the City Networks. The plan should refer to how these support wider strategic green networks as part of the partnership with the Strategic Growth Plan especially as the impacts of Leicester's need for homes will impact areas outside the city. The networks are based on land ownership and a map showing Ecological permeability and physical connectivity could be incorporated into the evidence base to ensure that developers understand the impacts on wider strategic activity. The proposed changes to land use encouraged by the Environment Bill will need to be considered for Urban fringe and wider rural- urban links.
6. Climate Change and Flood Risk			<p>The communities of Leicester are poorly served by accessible natural greenspace, particularly to the south of the city. There is potential to combine action for biodiversity with the provision of increased access to natural greenspace for both urban and rural communities through joint working between the County and City council.</p> <p>Provision of large-scale accessible natural greenspace serving the south and east of the city could be investigated further. There are opportunities within the Leicester Urban Area to provide for this and follow the River Soar corridor.</p>
8. Delivering Quality Places	73	Policy DQP01	<p>Section 2 (Built Form), bullet point (c) – it is suggested that the text should be amended to reflect that this will often be cross-boundary (especially with regards to the proposed strategic allocations) and require a joined- up approach with the County and Neighbouring District Councils:</p> <p><i><u>“Consider development comprehensively and in a co-ordinated way, <u>across administrative boundaries where necessary</u>, to enable the efficient and most effective use of land to allow a sustainable amount and mix of uses to support local facilities and transport networks – across multiple sites where possible.”</u></i></p> <p>Section 7 (Resources and Lifespan), bullet point (c) – it may also be worth referring to changing travel behaviour/technology with a particular emphasis on being ready for a future switch to electric vehicles.</p> <p>How will this policy work with CCFR01?</p>

8. Delivering Quality Places	79	Policy DQP04	<p>Will this policy also take account of the changing climate and how this will affect landscape design and the plants etc that will/will not be able to survive in the changing climate?</p> <p>Would like to see some reference here to the environmental aspects of design – relating to the use and sourcing of sustainable materials etc and the associated cost implications.</p>
8. Delivering Quality Places	84	8.33	Lighting and media screens should maximise efficiency and support the net zero carbon targets.
9. Central Development Area (CDA)	88	Background	The Plan should be strengthened to stress the importance of the role of Leicester City within the wider Housing Market Area (HMA) / Strategic Growth Plan, including the importance of maintaining and enhancing accessibility of services and facilities in the CDA for residents of the wider Housing Market Area.
9. Central Development Area (CDA)	90	Policy CDA01	The County Highway Authority wishes to see an additional criterion added to the policy in respect of maintaining and enhancing accessibility of services and facilities within the CDA to residents of the wider Housing Market Area.
11. Culture and Tourism			Reference needs to be made to the Leicester and Leicestershire Tourism Growth Plan, given the strong interlinkages and complete tourism offer that Leicester and Leicestershire presents and is looking to evolve further. The Leicester and Leicestershire Tourism Growth Plan visualises the area as a single, integrated visitor destination where more tourism growth, more visitors, more economic value and more jobs can be achieved. Specific reference needs to be made to it in the evidence, and it needs to inform the policies of the draft Local Plan; in particular, this chapter, the CDA chapter, Delivering Quality Places chapter, Town Centre and Retail chapter, Employment chapter and Transportation chapter.
11. Culture and Tourism	119	Policy CT04	The County Highway Authority recognises the important role that current Park and Ride sites play in helping to address traffic issues within and around the City of Leicester. But, any proposals for new sites would need to be founded on an evidence-based assessment of options/needs, demonstrating a clear business case and avoiding the need for additional financial costs to local authority budgets. (See also comments on Policy TR04.)
12. Employment			The further review of the Employment Land needs of the City is welcomed and should take account of the revised working practices that are currently being adopted by businesses and changes to the Use Classes

			<p>Order.</p> <p>With regards to the draft Local Plan provisions it is noted that to 2031 there is a requirement for an additional 45 hectares of land to meet the needs for Light Industrial and industrial sectors. Further it is proposed that future strategic distribution needs be met outside the City. It is understood this will be informed by an emerging L&L Strategic Warehousing study.</p> <p>The likely potential unmet need of 23 ha of employment land (2019 to 2036) is also noted. Work is currently being undertaken by authorities in L&L, including the County Council, as part of Duty to Co-operate, on a Sustainability Appraisal to assess options for where this unmet need could be appropriately distributed across L&L. This will inform a statement of Common Ground setting out how any unmet need from Leicester will be distributed amongst the HMA authorities, which is intended for completion in early 2021.</p> <p>A wide range of strong employment policies are set out in the draft Local Plan, which include four new types of 'Economic Development Areas' (General Quality, High Quality, The Science Park and Neighbourhood).</p> <p>An EZ specific policy was anticipated, thought note partially covered by Policy E04 for Pioneer Park.</p> <p>P 122, the LLEP economic recovery plan needs to form part of the evidence base moving forward for the draft Local Plan and future evidence work being undertaken by the L&L strategic planning partnership.</p> <p>The creative Industries, the Cultural Quarter (Policy E.06), and the development potential of this area which is set out in the St George's Character Area (Ch9, CDA) is supported.</p> <p>Support is also given to Policy E.07 on Employment: Support Strategies, though it is noted at Policy E07 c.) the plan indicates that employment uses will be relocated from within the CDA without an indication of the quantum of land likely to be involved.</p> <p>Support for the continuation of the 'Other Regeneration Areas': Abbey Meadows and Pioneer Park, Waterside, University of Leicester and Leicester City Football Club.</p>
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			<p>Note (p128) three new strategic employment sites are proposed, two as part of wider strategic sites at Western Golf Course and east of Ashton Green, and the third at Beaumont Park. With this new provision to the employment land portfolio is there scope for some 'general' employment to be released for housing with further employment requirement possibly located in surrounding districts?</p> <p>Understand rate of change has been accelerated by the current COVID-19 pandemic, such as acceleration in online retail, and related implications such as an increase in demand for floorspace for fulfilments centres, differing logistics requirements, use of buildings across the City. Do policies need to be adjusted?</p>
13. Town Centre and Retail	144	The City Centre	The Plan should be strengthened to stress the importance of the role of Leicester City within the wider Housing Market Area (HMA) / Strategic Growth Plan, including the importance of maintaining and enhancing accessibility of services and facilities in the city centre for residents of the wider Housing Market Area.
13. Town Centre and Retail	145-146	Policy TCR03	<p>The County Highway Authority wishes to see an additional criterion added to the policy in respect of maintaining and enhancing accessibility of services and facilities within the city centre to residents of the wider Housing Market Area.</p> <p>The reference to rail within the transport section of the Policy feels rather too narrowly drawn. For a City of its size and location, Leicester currently has very poor transport connectivity. In this respect, it is suggested that the policy is broadened to reference also how people travel to Leicester by rail (not just how they get from the rail station elsewhere). In particular, there appear to be opportunities here to tie in with business case work development that has been undertaken by Midlands Connect, especially in respect of direct rail services to Coventry; enhanced services to Birmingham; and the provision of an HS2 classic rail compatible link at Toton, opening up direct access to northern Cities such as Leeds.</p>
13. Town Centre and Retail			<p>Many shopping centres are seeing closures of mainly high street chains which occupy larger units that are becoming difficult to re-let. Smaller retail units tend to re-let quite quickly, possibly because they are cheaper to rent and attract transient hospitality businesses. In totality, there is considered to be less of a need for retail space.</p> <p>Also understand that the rate of change has been accelerated by the current COVID-19 pandemic, such as acceleration in online retail, and related implications such as an increase in demand for floorspace for</p>

			<p>fulfilments centres, differing logistics requirements, use of buildings across the City.</p> <p>Suggest the Retail Leisure Study considers and reflects this accelerated change.</p> <p>Para 13.4 refers to fosse Park and the extension currently under construction. Suggest the role of Fosse Park is underplayed, and it is wider than an adjoining authority issue, as Fosse Park has a wider than L&L sub region role, drawing in shoppers from further afield, in particular, Southern Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and eastern Warwickshire. This may change in the future with the accelerated move to online retail, but the appeal may remain albeit at a smaller level for shopping for comparison goods.</p>
14. Open Space, Sports and Recreation	161	Policy OSSR01	It is suggested that the policy should be clarified with regards to the provision of new transport infrastructure through green wedges, to avoid this becoming a potential barrier to infrastructure required to support growth and wider aspirations.
15. The Natural Environment	168		We recognise that the Biodiversity Action Plan is under-way and we would expect the work that is being led by the County Council supported by the Local Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust around Ecological permeability and connectivity to be utilised within the evidence base for the Biodiversity Action Plan.
15. The Natural Environment	168	15.1 Evidence base	<p>I would have thought reference should be made here to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategic Growth Plan, including the evidence commissioned or undertaken, in particular, <i>The Landscape Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Study for Leicester & Leicestershire</i> • <i>Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Landscape & Woodland Strategy 2001 (Amended 2006)</i> <p>I noted that the 6cs strategy was also not mentioned alongside the Woodland Strategy but then these may be too old and superseded by the Leicester Green Infrastructure Strategy and the City Tree Strategy. Clarification would be welcome.</p>
15. The Natural Environment	169		The chapter does recognise the opportunity mapping produced in the GI & Landscape Sensitivity Study produced for the Strategic Growth Plan. The policy should at least reference this document.
15. The Natural	169-170	Policy	Unclear as to whether the net gain requirement is in addition to the requirement to minimise harm to

Environment		NE01 & NE02	biodiversity. NE02 says 'Development should seek to provide a net gain in biodiversity' – is this not a legal requirement? (10% net gain). Seek to reads as if it is optional.
15. The Natural Environment		Policy NE03	Will this policy take account of the changing climate and how this will affect what green infrastructure will/will not be able to survive in the changing climate?
15. The Natural Environment			<p>Green infrastructure is crucial to health and well-being as well as being an important component of the natural environment.</p> <p>Green wedges are an established local planning policy tool in Leicester and Leicestershire, preventing the merging of communities, guiding development form, providing a 'green lung' into urban areas (including connecting to wider open countryside) and providing a recreational resource.</p> <p>Whilst it is desirable to retain them intact it is recognised that a review of green wedges needs to be undertaken from time to time to consider whether the strategic functions are being met and whether there is scope for release for development beyond that ordinarily permitted in green wedges. It is acknowledged that Leicester City Council has undertaken such a review and this has informed land release from existing green wedge designation.</p> <p>Support is given to a proactive approach to the provision of further green space, such as designation of further parks so communities can have access to open green space, particularly in the light of the potential loss of existing green assets for future development.</p> <p>As the outer areas of the City are extended further through the delivery of planned growth, existing and proposed communities will be located further from either formalised green space or access to the open countryside. The mental health benefits have been emphasised during the recent COVID-19 pandemic, and this renewed recognition of the importance of green space being available locally needs to be factored into future planning.</p> <p>Suggest a greater profile in the draft Local Plan for the River Soar and Grand Union Canal waterway corridor. It forms a very striking asset which extends into Leicestershire to the south and north of the City, with value from environmental, recreational, leisure, tourism and regeneration perspectives.</p>

16. Transportation	173 to 194	Overall chapter content	<p>The County Highway Authority (CHA) recognises that it is for Leicester City Council to frame its own transport policies that meet its own objectives and needs of a constrained and congested City. The CHA will continue to work with Leicester City Council to support its initiatives where appropriate (e.g. Transforming Cities Fund projects).</p> <p>Notwithstanding the above and reflecting comments on other aspects of the draft Plan.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Care needs to be taken to avoid the risk of creating confusion / misleading impressions in the use of the term 'Leicester Urban Area'. The CHA would ask that the text for the final Plan is reviewed to minimise such risks in respect of the extent of intended transport strategies and applicability of transport policies. 2) The chapter lacks any particular narrative or structure in respect of dealing with the impacts of growth; (neither does Chapter 18 Development and Infrastructure). Specific examples are given in comments below, but as an overall comment it is suggested that the Plan should be strengthened so that policy(ies) clearly identify and provide a robust basis for dealing with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required infrastructure/measures to enable/mitigate the impacts of specific sites; and separately • the cumulative impacts of growth, including cross-boundary. <p>In doing so, consideration needs to be given to work that is likely to flow on from the development of the Plan, including the need for additional study work and strategy development. The CHA would wish to work with Leicester City Council to discuss the need for and nature of such further work, and how that might be reflected in the final Plan. (An example might be the narrative included in the adopted Melton Local Plan around the development of a Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy to enable the town's strategic growth.)</p> 3) The text and policies should be reviewed and strengthened to ensure that the important role of Leicester in providing services and facilities to the wider Housing Market Area is properly reflected. 4) The Local Plan could be strengthened to reflect the objectives of the Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy to significantly improve the City of Leicester's rail connectivity to cities elsewhere, particularly in the north and south of England. It perhaps surprising, too that HS2 Phase 2b is not referenced. This overall comment is reflected in comments on specific aspects of this chapter.
16. Transportation	174	16.1	As a point of clarification, is bullet point three in fact supposed to reference the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities document?

			It is suggested the Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy should also be included in this list.
16. Transportation	174	16.2 to 16.3	<p>It is suggested that the Background section could include, with reference to the Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy, a short piece of text on why improved rail connectivity is important for the City of Leicester. For example:</p> <p><i>“16.4: More widely, improving the city’s rail connective to cities in the West Midlands and Northern England – including through opportunities arising from HS2 Phase 2b – will bring significant economic benefits and help to reduce the carbon impacts of long distance, inter-city travel to and from the City.”</i></p>
16 Transportation	174	16.3	The sentiments of this paragraph are supported; the CHA would wish to see it reflected more widely through the Plan, in line with its other comments (including within the Transport Chapter) relating to recognising the Housing Market Area wide role of the City of Leicester.
16. Transportation	174	16.4 to 16.7	It is suggested that this text is strengthened to highlight how the ‘Transport Strategy for Leicester’ will consider how residents from the wider Housing Market Area (HMA) travel through the City of Leicester to gain access to services and facilities within it. In this context, travel by car for people in the wider HMA will continue to be an important mode of travel.
16. Transportation	175	After 16.7	<p>Suggest that it would be beneficial to include a short piece to cover HS2. For example:</p> <p>National Context</p> <p><i>“The constructions of HS2 will transform the UK’s rail connectivity. Whilst Phase 2b will not serve the city, nevertheless it will open up significant opportunities to improve Leicester’s rail connectivity to other major cities across the UK.”</i></p>
16. Transportation	176 and 177	16.9 and 16.16 and Diagram 16	References to new City Local Transport Plan, bus services serving the ‘Leicester Urban Area’ (LUA) and a Bus Strategy in the context as quoted is an example of how confusion about the applicability of respective policies and strategies could be created in the mind of the reader of the Local Plan, i.e. it might confuse them about the applicability of the County Council’s adopted Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy in areas of the LUA beyond the boundaries of Leicester City.

			In this instance it may be beneficial to include additional text reiterating those specific areas of the LUA that are beyond the city boundary and illustrating how the LUA bus network does not respect the city/county boundary creating interdependencies between city and county passenger transport policy, highlighting the need for joint working between the City and County to ensure that any planned enhancements to cross-boundary services are effective and align with both city and county policy.
16. Transportation	179 and 180	16.22 to 16.32	Suggest it may be worth adding text to recognise that there may be a need for “cross boundary” cycling and walking connections (over and above the city’s own proposals/strategies/LCWIP), which will need to be considered jointly by the CHA and Leicester City Council as part of future study work/strategy development.
16. Transportation	181 and 187	16.38 to 16.40 and Policy T04	The County Highway Authority (CHA) recognises the important role that current Park and Ride sites play in helping to address traffic issues within and around the City of Leicester. But, any proposals for new sites would need to be founded on an evidence-based assessment of options/needs, demonstrating a clear business case and avoiding the need for additional financial costs to local authority budgets. The CHA would wish to see the Plan to be reviewed to reflect this.
16. Transportation	182	16.41	Suggest adding wording to clarify that some transport interventions may need to be outside the city boundary to address the spill-over impacts of the plan and associated interventions within the city e.g: <i>“Modal shift to sustainable transport options, together with localised improvements to support resilience of the main radial and orbital routes, is therefore key to managing growth in the city <u>and addressing its impacts within and beyond the city’s administrative boundaries.</u>”</i>
16. Transportation	184 to 188	Policies	Suggest inclusion of a specific rail policy. For example: <i>“Policy T0x Rail The Council will continue to work closely with partners to improve rail connectivity for the City, including to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• seek to make the most of the opportunities arising from delivery of HS2 Phase 2, including provision of a classic rail compatible link at Toton;</i> <i>• seek delivery of further upgrades to the Midland Main Line;</i> <i>• achieve the earliest possible delivery of projects identified by Midlands Connect, including provision of direct rail services to Coventry and significant enhancements to Birmingham services;</i>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>achieve the earliest possible delivery of upgrades to the track network in the vicinity of Leicester Station and the provision of an additional platform at the Station.</i> <p>There would also appear to be opportunities to reference the Station Masterplan and its delivery.</p>
16. Transportation	184	Policy T01	<p>Whilst the County Highway Authority is supportive of the sentiments of this Policy, it does not consider cumulative impacts; cross-boundary impacts; nor recognise the importance of wider Housing Marker Area residents being able to travel through the City of Leicester to access services and facilities within in it.</p> <p>Will this policy support the provision of on-street charging infrastructure and possible future smart charging solutions?</p>
16. Transportation	185	Policy T02	<p>Welcome and support Climate change and air quality policy</p> <p>Will the requirement to for new developments to make provision for electric and low emission vehicles also include refurbishments?</p>
16. Transportation	186	Policy T03	<p>Whilst the County Highway Authority is supportive of the sentiments of this Policy, it does not consider cumulative impacts; cross-boundary impacts; nor recognise the importance of wider Housing Marker Area residents being able to travel through the City of Leicester to access services and facilities within in it.</p> <p>For buses, it is suggested that the policy would benefit from an additional objective of ensuring that any new bus services/route alterations provided to serve development are financially viable beyond the initial period of developer subsidy/contributions. This particularly applies to large sites close to the city boundary, which are most likely to require dedicated passenger transport provision, and to have additional transport impacts beyond the city boundary if this provision diminishes after any developer subsidies end.</p>
15. Transportation	187	Policy T05	<p>Not British Waterways now the river freight is managed by Canal & River Trust a partner in the River Soar and Grand Union Partnership.</p>
16. Transportation	188	Policy T06	<p>As a minor point, the Policy title does not really seem to reflect its content. Additionally, the Policy does not consider cumulative impacts or cross-boundary impacts.</p>

16. Transportation	188	Parking aims and objectives	<p>It is suggested that an additional aim/objective be included that reflects the role of the City of Leicester within the wider Housing Market Area (HMA) / Strategic Growth Plan, including the importance of maintaining and enhancing accessibility of services and facilities for residents of the county. In this context, travel by car for people in the wider HMA will continue to be an important mode of travel, requiring the provision of appropriate levels of car parking.</p> <p>Additionally, it is suggested that the City's proposed parking aims, objectives and policies should be considered in conjunction with those of the County and neighbouring District Councils, to ensure a coherent approach to parking policy/management across the Leicester Urban Area as a whole. This is particularly important with regards to large sites located close or adjacent to the city-county boundary, where the potential for significant cross-boundary interaction is greatest.</p>
16. Transportation	190	Part B) Parking NOT associated with new development	<p>It is suggested that this part of the Plan is amended also to acknowledge the parking needs of those who might need to travel into the City (and park) from across the wider Housing Market Area.</p>
16. Transportation	192 and 193	Policy T07	<p>It is suggested that section C) of the Policy should be amended to include a criterion relating to the taking into account of any parking demand associated with residents of the wider Housing Market Area accessing services and facilities within the City of Leicester.</p> <p>The application of this policy will need to be considered in conjunction with parking policy/provision in the surrounding areas of the County/Districts, to ensure a coherent approach to parking policy/management across the Leicester urban area as a whole. This is particularly important with regards to large sites located close or adjacent to the city-county boundary, where the potential for significant cross-boundary interaction is greatest.</p>
16. Transportation	194	Policy T08	<p>Welcome and support the Supporting Low Emission Vehicles policy</p> <p>Will the 5% install and 25% future install requirements be enough in light of government proposal to move the ban on petrol and diesel cars to 2030?</p>

			Will this policy have scope to deal with other future zero carbon fuels such as hydrogen?
16. Transportation			<p>Note reference within the draft Local Plan to Local Transport Plan being prepared for the City; though no reference to the emerging Strategic Transport Priorities which will inform future transport provision in the City and County.</p> <p>In addition to the City Centre, all County and City residents need to be able to access other service destinations, in particular the main hospitals with relative ease, speed and by a range of sustainable modes. It is understood Glenfield Hospital and the Leicester Royal Infirmary are to be retained as main hospitals with Leicester General retained as a local hospital serving the east of the City. Maintenance of routes and accessibility by a range of sustainable modes of transport need to be secured and retained in the longer term as further planned growth is built out.</p>
17. Future Minerals and Waste Needs	198-199	FMWN01/ FMWN02	<p>With regard to FMWN01 (new and existing waste uses) states that “applications for new, and existing to existing facilities, will be assessed against the following criteria: a) There is a proven local need for a facility to process an identified waste stream(s);”. However, the National Planning Policy for Waste states that when determining waste planning application, waste planning authorities should only expect applicants to demonstrate the quantitative or market need for new or enhanced waste management facilities where they are not consistent with an up-to-date Local Plan.</p> <p>This is also the case for criteria a) of Policy FMWN02 (End of Life Vehicles).</p>
18. Development and Infrastructure	202	18.4 and 18.5	The sentiments of paragraph 18.4 are supported; in line with the County Highway Authority’s comments on other aspects of the draft Plan, joint working and dealing with cross-boundary impacts of growth are matters where the Plan should be strengthened in its final version. It is suggested that reference to the ‘Leicester Urban Area’ in 18.5 be amended to read ‘wider Housing Market Area’.
18. Development and Infrastructure	204	Policy DI01	Note reference to monitoring fee on p204, Policy D101 Developer Contributions and Infrastructure for the monitoring of developer contributions, however the Policy does not consider cumulative impacts nor cross-boundary impacts.

18. Development and Infrastructure			Please see related comments relating to education in Chapter 5.
18. Development and Infrastructure			Within Development and Infrastructure would also anticipate reference to Superfast Broadband and 5G as a requirement within new residential and commercial development.
19. Neighbourhood Planning	206	Policy DQP07	States Policy DQP07 (which is Recycling and Refuse storage) does not need to be taken into account when preparing neighbourhood plans. However, many neighbourhood plans we have seen do take Recycling and Refuse storage into account. What is the reasoning behind this?
19. Neighbourhood Planning			The Plan does not seem to acknowledge the new national Resources and Waste Strategy (2018).
19. Neighbourhood Planning			The Plan assumes continuing growth of waste. It is true that there may be growth following an increase in residents in the city, however, waste prevention, reuse and recycling measures will continue to work to help mitigate this growth. This should be taken into account.
19. Neighbourhood Planning			<p>In Leicestershire we provide proactive support for communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans. In Leicestershire by January 2020 there had been 38 neighbourhood plans made and 85 in preparation, demonstrating good take up by communities of the preparation of neighbourhood plans. By a community coming together and preparing a neighbourhood plan it ensures that the local community can inform the Local Plan, rather than a select number of strong voices from a community.</p> <p>We would encourage Leicester City to support the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans, could be particularly constructive in the designation of local green space, understanding which local green spaces are particularly valued by local communities. In addition to preferred locations for planned growth the Planning White Paper has also indicated local communities articulating consensus in their locality regarding design preferences in neighbourhood plans in the future.</p>
Appendices	227	Parks and	Watermead Park is not on the list – should it be?

		Gardens	
Supporting documentation <i>Infrastructure Assessment with Infrastructure Delivery Schedule</i>			<p>Given that transport is not yet properly incorporated into the Infrastructure Assessment at present, as the document itself acknowledges, the County Highway Authority (CHA) is not in a position to respond to the particular consultation questions posed in respect of this supporting document.</p> <p>However, the CHA does have some general comments at this time:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The document does make some useful references to the characterisation of infrastructure ; cross-boundary impacts; and the use of Leicester’s infrastructure not being confined to City residents that chime with CHA’s comments on the draft Plan and that might provide a useful basis for strengthening the Plan to address the CHA’s comments. 2) The CHA remains committed to continuing to work with Leicester City Council to understand: the impacts of the growth of the City of Leicester across the Housing Market Area’s transport system; the infrastructure and measures required to enable and mitigate the impacts of that growth; and to ensure that there is a robust policy framework in place to underpin the development, funding and delivery of such infrastructure/ measure, especially where that might be necessary to deal with cumulative and/or cross-boundary impacts. <p>Additionally, it is noted that the estimated total cost of transport measures quoted in this document (£280.6m) is different to that quoted in the Transport Infrastructure Assessment (£300.5m)</p>
Supporting documentation <i>Transport Infrastructure Assessment (TIA)</i>			<p>Overall this document appears to primarily focus on impacts and infrastructure within the boundaries of the City of Leicester. Whilst it would not be appropriate for the County Highway Authority (CHA) to comment on particular conclusions reached in respect of matters that are considerations for the City Highway Authority, nevertheless the CHA does have an interest in understanding how transport measures proposed within the city could themselves have ‘spill-over’ implications for the county network that would need to be understood and addressed as necessary.</p> <p>Beyond that, the TIA does acknowledge likely wider impacts of growth within the City of Leicester, including beyond its boundaries. Whilst it also highlights some of the wider initiatives already being pursued by other bodies (e.g. Midlands Connect) the TIA does not as yet seek to demonstrate inter-dependencies between such initiatives and the future growth of the City of Leicester (nor the meeting of its unmet needs, especially in respect of housing).</p>

			<p>The CHA welcomes Leicester City Council’s commitment to undertaking further transport evidence work to build on the TIA. Flowing from that it remains committed to working with Leicester City Council to understand: the impacts of the growth of the City of Leicester across the Housing Market Area’s transport system; the infrastructure and measures required to enable and mitigate the impacts of that growth; and to ensure that there is a robust policy framework in place to underpin the development, funding and delivery of such infrastructure/ measure, especially where that might be necessary to deal with cumulative and/or cross-boundary impacts.</p> <p>Given the further evidence work, it is likely that the current estimated total cost given in the TIA for transport infrastructure is likely to increase.</p>
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SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 4 NOVEMBER 2020

ANNUAL DELIVERY REPORT AND PERFORMANCE COMPENDIUM 2020

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present the draft Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium for 2020 which set out the Council's performance over the past year. The Delivery Report itself (Appendix A) focuses largely on delivery against County Council priorities as set out in the Council's Strategic Plan 2018-22 and other main service strategies, particularly during the first half of the year. The report also sets out some of the impact, significant new work and reorientation required to support the major response to the coronavirus pandemic, which impacted the second half of the year and ongoing.
2. The Performance Compendium (Appendix B) includes information on comparative funding and performance, financial pressures, recovery and need for more savings plans, a higher level of service pressures and associated risks. The views of the Scrutiny Commission are sought on the Annual Delivery Report, prior to submission to the Cabinet on 20 November and full County Council on 2 December 2020.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

3. The Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium 2020 form part of the County Council's Policy Framework. The documents provide performance data which will help the Council and its partners to ensure services continue to meet standards, provide value for money and that outcomes are being achieved for local people.

Background

4. It is best practice in performance management, implicit in the LGA Sector-Led approach to local authority performance and part of the Council's Internal Governance Framework, to undertake a review of overall progress at the end of the year and to benchmark performance against comparable authorities. It is also good practice to produce an annual performance report and ensure that it is scrutinised, transparent, and made publicly available.

5. The National Audit Office has issued best practice guidance for annual reports highlighting that the annual report is a key mechanism for transparent disclosure of an organisation's in-year performance and governance matters. Disclosures in the annual report will help to provide information about the impact of covid-19 on the organisation to users of annual reports. The report should discuss how the entity has performed in the year, including areas where performance has deteriorated or below expectations, where money has been spent and the other key risks.
6. The Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium (appended to this report) covers County Council delivery over the last 12 months or so. It draws largely on 2019/20 comparative data, although older benchmarking and other data is included where more up to date information is not available. In some cases, the data is more recent, particularly where looking to consider the emergent impact of covid-19.
7. The report is divided into two parts – the first part is narrative, describing delivery, progress with implementing agreed plans and strategies, and achievements over the last 12 months. It largely focuses on performance against County Council priorities as set out in the Council's Strategic Plan 2018-22 and other main service strategies. The report also sets out some of the impact, significant new work and reorientation required to support the major response to the coronavirus pandemic, which impacted the second half of the year and ongoing.
8. The second part, the 'performance compendium', contains information on:
 - Current inequality in funding and the Council's Fair Funding campaign and proposals;
 - Current financial pressures and savings needs;
 - National and local service pressures and corporate risks;
 - Comparative performance, cost and service benchmarking 2018/19 including lower comparative performing areas;
 - 2019/20 end of year performance figures, where available, and a summary of progress towards the 2018-22 Strategic Plan outcomes.
9. Comparative data is sourced from a range of acknowledged data sources including the Local Government Association (LG Inform) national data system, Public Health and Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework data, OFSTED and Department for Education data sets, national highways survey, statutory returns, and Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) data. There is some comparative data still to be published due to delays nationally as a result of corona-virus, some of which are due to be published by December 2020. The overall Council benchmarking position for 2019/20 will be updated at that point.
10. The reports are draft documents and will continue to be developed to incorporate points made by the Scrutiny Commission and Cabinet as well as

the inclusion of any final national comparative data which becomes available prior to its consideration by the County Council on 2 December. The final Annual Delivery Report will be properly formatted and published online via the County Council website (<http://www.leics.gov.uk>).

Delivery Narrative Summary

11. Overall analysis of the narrative shows some strong examples of delivery across the theme outcome areas, particularly during the first half of the year. The report has substantial sections on economy and transport, housing, health and wellbeing, safer communities, and children and families' delivery, reflecting a range of work going on to meet priority outcomes in these theme areas.
12. The report includes a full section on delivery of the communities' outcome priority (including environment and culture work), drawing on work taking place in relation to the Communities Strategy and supported by the corporate Communities Team, communities' section of the Adults and Communities Department and Public Health activity such as local area coordinators. A separate shorter section covers key corporate services and enablers.
13. The report also sets out how services have had to adjust operations, such as moving to online or safer delivery modes, to cope with the impact of coronavirus. Many service areas have had to go above and beyond usual service expectations and workloads to support vulnerable people, communities, business, service users and staff during an extremely challenging period. As well as move to a largely online, working from home delivery model, in line with national guidance.
14. There remain good planning arrangements, financial management and governance in place supporting delivery, and these are having to be kept under more regular review and adjusted, where necessary, to reflect the approach to both the pandemic and service recovery. The Council has established Recovery Groups at both member and officer level in order to coordinate recovery planning activity to help manage the overall impacts.

Performance Data Analysis

15. Initial analysis of 2019/20 end of year data shows that of 191 metrics, 88 improved, 56 show no real change and 47 worsened. Direction of travel cannot be determined for 18 indicators, due to the absence of previous data or changes to indicator definitions. Clearly the pandemic has impacted on outcomes in a number of areas since end of year data, and some of these issues are flagged in the associated dashboards. A summary of progress on the indicators is set out in the Performance Compendium along with the actual detailed data and dashboards.
16. Based on current comparative analysis, 31% of indicators are top quartile, 33% second quartile, 21% third quartile and 15% fourth quartile. In late 2019 the Council was identified by the consulting firm IMPOWER as the most productive council using a range of performance and spend measures. The Councils own

more detailed benchmarking shows that the council moved up to 2nd best performing county in England on a wide range of performance measures in 2018/19, despite being the lowest funded.

Fair Funding

17. The report analysis identifies that low funding remains the Council's Achilles heel. Leicestershire remains the lowest-funded county council in the country with greater risks to service delivery as a result. If it was funded at the same level as Kensington and Chelsea it would be £366m better off. London Boroughs are particularly prevalent at the top of the funding league table.
18. The list of authorities with serious financial issues continues to grow with some counties having moved towards providing services to the statutory minimum level. Last year the Council published a new simplified funding model based on factors that drive demand for local services. It allocates money fairly, based on need, and narrows the gap between the highest and lowest funded councils. If implemented, the model would unlock up to an extra £47m for Leicestershire. The extent of service reductions made has already affected most areas of service delivery and some areas of performance, and further cuts will put other areas at risk.
19. Rising demand means that over the period of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, growth is required due to pressures related to responding to additional covid-19 service costs, child placements, school places, learning disabilities, support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), waste disposal, and the ageing population. As a result, the Council has a funding gap of £15m and £20m in the next two years, rising to £50m by 2023/24. There will need to be an increased drive to identify savings initiatives. Whilst the focus will be on efficiency and productivity, inevitably there will be a need for additional reductions and this will require difficult decisions.

National and Local Service Demands and Pressures

20. In November 2019 the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) reported that social care was swallowing up such high proportions of council spending that other services had suffered cuts of 40%. In its first annual report on local government finance, the IFS said budgets were increasingly focused on meeting statutory duties, with 57% of councils' non-education service budgets consumed by adults and children's care services. Spending on concessionary bus passes accounted for a quarter of all highways and transport spending. Spending per resident on culture and recreation and housing had fallen by 50% on average and highway maintenance by 53%.
21. In May 2019 analysis by PwC on the financial sustainability of councils up to 2025 showed a funding black hole of more than £50bn over six years as a result of rising costs and demand for services, which would mean yearly council tax rises, new charges for services and more cuts. It said that unless extra funding was provided only the bare minimum of services would be possible with many vital services all but disappearing.

22. CIPFA/ILG Performance Tracker – published by the Institute for Government (IFG) and CIPFA, *Performance Tracker 2019* looks at performance, demand and spending on nine public services for the next five years including GPs, hospitals, adult social care, children's social care, neighbourhood services, police, prisons, courts, and schools. The 4th edition of the service performance tracker was launched in November 2019. The report finds that all public services analysed have seen some decline in performance – either in their quality (the standard of public service provided and how satisfied users are) or scope (the range of services provided and the number of people able to access them). Demand is rising particularly quickly for health and care services because of the ageing population, an increase in number of people with multiple health conditions and rising life expectancy for people with physical and learning disabilities. The report's authors express serious concerns about the scope of local government services.
23. In October 2020 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) published its annual report on *'The State of Health and Adult Social Care in England 2019/20'*. The report highlights that, prior to the coronavirus pandemic, quality of care was largely maintained compared to the previous year, but not improved. The CQC, pre-coronavirus, had been concerned about a number of areas including the fragility of provision, struggles of poor services to improve, gaps in access to good quality care, and poorer quality of care types that are harder to plan for.
24. The pandemic has impacted care in a number of ways including unprecedented pressures to work to keep people safe, staff working long hours above and beyond expectations to care for sick people and in some cases dealing with the loss of those cared for and in some cases staff, and challenges in keeping a safe environment. In looking forward CQC highlight that the problems that existed before COVID-19 have not gone away. That there needs to be a new deal for the adult social care workforce that develops career progression, secures the right skills and better values staff with investment in training. Services need to be designed round people's needs.
25. The service pressures and risks section of the compendium highlights a number of reports this year that continue to identify pressures on services, residents and continued good outcomes in addition to the above, including passenger transport, air quality, knife crime, community cohesion, climate change, emergency management and workforce recruitment, and wellbeing. These have been exacerbated by the corona-virus pandemic and a range of areas are now subject to monitoring.

Areas for Continued Focus

26. Given the significant financial challenges, demand, and delivery pressures facing the Council and the need to maintain both a strong recovery and continued pandemic support, areas for focus include:
 - Continuing to support communities, vulnerable people, business and staff and maintain a strong public health and regulatory response to the

corona-virus pandemic and progress, as appropriate, on service recovery plans;

- Continuing to maintain the Fair Funding Campaign, pursue savings initiatives and cost mitigation measures and seek more sustainable funding for local services;
- Continuing with implementation of the Outcomes Framework, subject to any amendments as a result of the pandemic, Medium Term Financial Strategy and an updated Strategic Change Programme, including more digital delivery and a new workplace strategy;
- Taking forward actions arising from the Climate Emergency Declaration and a refreshed Environment Strategy;
- Progressing the continued delivery of improvements to support vulnerable children and families and meet demand pressures on children's social care and SEND;
- Maintaining the good progress on health and care integration and pressing for a government solution to the challenges in adult social care;
- Continuing with effective and targeted responses to various public health challenges;
- Implementing enhanced economic recovery and skills plans and measures to support the economy and those affected;
- Continuing partnership work with the Police and Crime Commissioner to pursue targeted crime areas such as domestic violence;
- Maintaining the focus on supporting workforce health and wellbeing.

Proposals/Options

27. The Cabinet on 20 November will be asked to consider the following recommendations, that:

- (a) The overall progress, particularly during the first half of 2019/20, in delivering on the Council's Strategic Priorities as set out in the draft Annual Delivery Report, be noted;
- (b) The significant and ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic on outcome delivery and services across a range of areas from late February be noted, together with the strong local response from the council and partners to support vulnerable people, communities, business, voluntary sector, staff and others throughout the pandemic;
- (c) The current comparative funding, performance position, and escalated service pressures and risks set out in the Performance Compendium be noted;
- (d) The delay in implementing the national fair funding system creates significant uncertainties in the medium term with risks to being able to

address the many service challenges and priorities now facing the County;

- (e) The Council continues to press its case for a fairer funding settlement and other major savings initiatives; and
- (f) The Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader, be authorised to make any amendments to the draft Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium prior to its submission to the County Council on 2 December 2020 for approval.

Resource Implications

- 28. The report has no direct resource implications.

Timetable for Decisions

- 29. The views of the Scrutiny Commission will be taken into account in the development of the report to the Cabinet on 20 November. The Annual Delivery Report is scheduled for consideration by the County Council at its meeting on 2 December 2020.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

- 30. There are no equality and human rights implications directly arising from this report. The Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium incorporate the progress of the County Council against key equalities commitments and indicators.

Crime and Disorder Implications

- 31. The Report highlights progress against key community safety priorities and targets.

Environmental Impact

- 32. The Report includes progress against a number of environmental priority areas.

Partnership Working and associated issues

- 33. The Report considers progress in relation to the key priorities of key County partnerships.

Background Papers

Report to the County Council – 8 July 2020 - Leicestershire County Council's Revised Strategic Plan 2018-22

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s154181/LCC%20Strategic%20Plan%202020.pdf>

Institute for Fiscal Studies Report on Local Government Finance - 2019

<https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/13814>

PWC Report – Sustainability of Local Authorities to 2025

<https://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/local-government-finance/>

CIPFA/IFG Performance Tracker 2019

<https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publications/performance-tracker-2019>

The State of Health and Adult Social Care in England 2019/20.

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications/major-report/state-care>

Local Government Association: LG Inform Benchmarking System

<https://lginform.local.gov.uk/>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Draft Leicestershire County Council Annual Delivery Report 2020

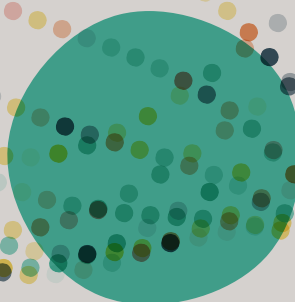
Appendix B - Draft Performance Compendium 2020



Leicestershire
County Council

Annual Delivery Report

| 2020



Published December 2020

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Separate Annual Performance Compendium with performance data

Introduction

In December 2017 the County Council agreed a four-year Strategic Plan and Outcomes Framework to 2022. The Plan focused on the things that make life better for people in Leicestershire. We also developed a shared vision across the Council of what we want people to experience in their daily lives. Whilst the outcomes are, in places, aspirational they outline the sort of end results we want to see for the people of Leicestershire.

In October 2019 we reported on responses to a major consultation on priorities for the county. 4,300 people took part in a survey which highlighted that support for vulnerable people, such as residential and community support for older people and mental health, plus special educational needs and disabilities, child protection and children in care were in the top 10 priority services. The survey also showed 86% supported protecting the environment by using renewable energy and reducing carbon. The survey was the biggest exercise we've run since 2013

In July 2020 the Council agreed an updated Strategic Plan to 2022 to further enhance our commitment to vulnerable people and supporting the environment and minimising climate change. Whilst supporting the most vulnerable remains our top priority, the Council's Strategic Plan sets out 5 revised high-level priorities –

Key Priorities

A Strong Economy - Leicestershire's economic prosperity benefits everyone and supports resilient, clean growth;

Wellbeing and Opportunity – that the people of Leicestershire live in a healthy environment and have the opportunities and support they need to take control of their health and wellbeing;

Keeping People Safe – that people in Leicestershire are safe and protected from harm;

Great Communities – that Leicestershire communities are thriving and integrated places where people help and support each other and take pride in their local area; and

Affordable and Quality Homes - Leicestershire has a choice of quality, sustainable homes that people can afford

The Council is here to make a positive difference to the lives of Leicestershire people. We want Leicestershire's economic prosperity to support clean growth that creates the best life chances for all. That Leicestershire is a place where people are well and safe, living in a healthy environment as part of great communities where people enjoy life and work together to enhance their local area. That there is a good supply of quality, sustainable homes that provide maximum independence and are affordable to own and run. We aim to be a carbon neutral organisation by 2030, use natural resources wisely and contribute to the recovery of nature. We are a green council and as a key place leader we will work with our partners to deliver our ambitious environmental goals.

The global coronavirus pandemic which took off in early 2020 has further highlighted the vital role that we play in keeping people safe, particularly vulnerable people, supporting public health and wellbeing and working closely with communities and partner agencies to support communities. The aftermath of the initial coronavirus wave has also underlined the importance of our efforts to help business and rebuild a strong and sustainable economy.

The last year has provided the biggest challenge of a lifetime and the challenge continues. The Council has supported the efforts in many ways, many set out in this report, including ensuring that thousands of volunteers and communities needing help were brought together, distributing a £1.6m communities fund to help sustain local community groups, supporting 25,000 people on the Government's shielded list, providing daily support to care homes, keeping vulnerable children safe, advising and supporting schools staff and working to ensure that vulnerable people didn't fall victim to scams and substandard goods.

Indeed, in July 2020, the Communities Secretary praised the "*absolutely heroic job*" done by councils during the crisis, saying they had played a central role in recent months. In September the Prime Minister also paid tribute '*to everybody in local authorities who have been the unsung heroes of our fight against the pandemic*'.

This Annual Delivery Report summarises the work that the Council has undertaken over the last 12 months to both progress its priorities, but also, in the second half of the year, to significantly reorient itself to manage this once in a generation public health and economic crisis.

A separate and related Performance Compendium sets out current comparative performance data using a wide range of performance measures. The compendium also includes information on the Council's low funding position and critical impact that the virus has had on finances, the service pressures and risks now faced and the campaign for Fairer Funding. Soaring demand for services plus uncertainty over the national economy and funding means that the Council is needing to look at all options to respond.

Financial Context, Challenges and Fair Funding Campaign

Delivering on priority outcomes and ambitions for Leicestershire continues to be hampered by low funding levels, and the coronavirus pandemic has added significantly to the service and financial challenges faced. The Performance Compendium sets out our comparative low funding position and how this translates into low funding for local services. The Council now faces a critical financial scenario. Over the medium term the combination of an ageing and growing population and reduced income means there is a need to continue to save money. The Council has already saved £210m since 2010 with a further £80m to save by 2023/24.

The OECD estimates that the global economy will contract by 6% this year. The UK economy is expected to be hard hit with a forecast contraction of 11.5%. The impact on the wider economy and council income and expenditure has added to the seriousness of the council's financial position and threatens the continued provision of services and delivery of outcomes. Over the last year the coronavirus pandemic has further escalated the crisis in local government finance with many authorities warning of significant job losses, further major budget reductions and formal notices of the inability to balance budgets. The financial situation facing the Council is challenging on all fronts.

Covid-19 Impact - our previous four-year financial plan set out the need for £80m savings. £24m of detailed savings have been set out and a plan to reduce SEND costs by £17m. However, the financial impact of the pandemic will now be profound. In September we reported that the pandemic would significantly push up the Council's budget gap from £39m to £50m by 2024. Extra costs and loss of income have increased costs by £90m in 2020/21 alone – which after Government grants and guidance reducing the need for extra bus services, leaves an £18m gap this year. Key covid-19 costs include in supporting vulnerable people through increasing care fees to providers, higher costs of keeping services going such as IT and construction and lost commercial income, council tax and business rates. To meet the changed financial environment the Council has also had to reduce resources available to its capital programme by £115m.

The financial position faced by the County Council is extremely serious and challenging. This is a particularly difficult situation for a low-funded authority such as Leicestershire as room for further savings is limited. The financial difficulties experienced pre-Covid, relating to demand for services, have not gone away and the mitigations have been disrupted by the crisis. Additional financial pressures are expected to continue after the current financial year due to reduced council tax and business rates income, a continuation of costs to maintain infection control and the economic impact upon suppliers who may request further support, for example bus operators.

Based on current information, it is very unlikely that the County Council, when it rolls forward the MTFS into 2024/25, will be able to identify sufficient savings to bridge the funding gap in the later years. To balance the budget without a significant impact on services will require a major efficiency initiative and a successful outcome to the fair funding campaign. The financial situation also requires the Government to deal with the structural national issues such as funding for social care and the relentless growth of demand for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services. The Council has already made savings of £223m (excluding DSG), to the end of 2020/21.

Therefore, the identification of new savings will be very challenging and is likely to require much more radical service transformation. Further efficiency/productivity targets for services will drive the focus for identifying where additional savings can be delivered. Inevitably, though, further service reductions will be needed to ensure the Council can operate within the increasingly tight budget envelope.

Fair Funding – given low comparative funding and the financial crisis it is vital the Council is given a fair share of overall national resources for local government services. A number of low-funded councils have got behind the call for fairer funding from the Government. The County Council's Network has also backed the campaign for reform.

The Council report, looking at the issue of Fair Funding, showed that if we were funded at the same level as Kensington and Chelsea we would be £366m a year better off or £135m compared to Cumbria. The current system of funding is broken, and we need a new approach which matches funding with need, based on a smaller number of cost drivers, which produce a fairer distribution of resources.

With social care pressures rising, a new fair system matching funding with need is essential. We've drawn up a new model which would unlock millions of pounds for under-funded councils, including £132m for Lincolnshire and £29m for Kent. The funding crisis is leading councils to service and financial failure. Our proposed new model allocates money using factors such as the number of older people, the length of roads travelled by HGVs and the number of school-age children.

National funding reform remains key to future plans. Our campaigning secured a Government review and it is very disappointing the Government has delayed plans to implement a new model. We are continuing to do all that we can to shape a new funding formula and get a better deal for residents. A move to a fairer funding model is an urgent requirement to help tackle the Council's financial challenges.

Local Government Structure – local government now faces severe, long-term financial challenges and these are likely to get worse. In October 2019 the Council published a detailed road map setting out the benefits of re-shaping local government in Leicestershire. The draft, 100-page blueprint compares different options and concludes that one, single unitary council – bringing together the eight county and district councils - offers the best opportunity to save money, reduce duplication and protect front line services. The report concluded that creating a council fit for the 21st century would save £30m each year, improve services, reduce confusion and duplication and get a better deal for residents. An independent review of the draft strategic business case by Price Waterhouse Coopers says it represents a sound basis for presenting potential savings and planning next steps.

A Strong Economy

Our economy outcome focuses on ensuring that there is a thriving, balanced and inclusive economy in Leicestershire that manages resources sustainably, and provides employment, business opportunities and growth that works for everyone. Leicestershire remains well placed to become a centre for jobs in science, technology and engineering. Ensuring access to the latest digital infrastructure and the development of skills will support uptake of digital technologies, enabling businesses to improve productivity and remain competitive in future markets.

Impact of Covid-19

Analysis by the Centre for Economics and Business Research indicates that the economy of the East Midlands is likely to be hit harder by Covid-19 than any other part of the UK, due to its sizeable manufacturing sector. During the early stages of the pandemic, three out of five (63%) of businesses were forced to suspend operations temporarily, while 93% reported a negative impact on sales. The immediate impact can be seen in the increase in the number of people claiming out of work benefits, from 7,125 in March to 18,340 in July. This represents an increase from 1.5% to 4.3% of the working age population, although these figures remain below regional and national levels.

The Leicester and Leicestershire Business Survey interviews carried out during August and September indicate that 55% of businesses had been closed or operating at significantly reduced levels between mid-March and the end of June 2020. Of those that had closed, 80% had re-opened for business at the time they were interviewed, with a further 15% expecting to open soon. Two-thirds of establishments had used the Government furlough scheme. Survey interviews carried out prior to Covid-19 restrictions and during August and September indicate that 31% of businesses think that general business conditions would improve over the next two years, compared with 27% in the 2017 survey.

Job postings data, a useful gauge of economic activity and optimism, show a significant drop between April and June, followed by a rapid recovery across the County in July. The level of postings does, however, remain slightly below that of July 2019.

Economic Recovery Strategy and Cell – a partnership response is key to recovery and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP), working closely with the County and City Councils, has led on the development of an Economic Recovery Strategy for the area, using the foundations in the Local Industrial Strategy. The focus has been on creating short-term economic recovery plans with a following long-term Economic Strategy. An Economic Recovery Cell was created to coordinate across partners and identify potential interventions. The LRFs Business Cell has also provided advice and support to local businesses and carried out planning for economic recovery. The Council's Economic Growth team has also supported this work including providing sector-specific support to the tourism, hospitality and creative sectors.

Local Industrial Strategy – following on from the publication of the UK's Industrial Strategy in November 2017, the Council is working with the LLEP to develop a strong and robust Local Industrial Strategy which will help set out our economic vision and identify things we need to do to grow our economy further. The LIS will identify the

important growth sectors for Leicestershire such as life sciences, advanced logistics and advanced manufacturing.

Midlands Engine – is a coalition of local authorities and LEPs set up to help the region compete with London and the South East as well as the Northern Powerhouse, based in Greater Manchester. We are continuing to engage fully with, and influence, the Midlands Engine, raising the profile of the Midlands both nationally and internationally and securing increased government funding to boost economic growth. In September 2017 the Midlands Engine Partnership launched its ‘Vision for Growth’ focusing on five areas of collaboration which support economic growth and prosperity across the East and West Midlands. These include: Connect the Midlands; Invest in Strategic Infrastructure; Grow International Trade and Investment; Increase Innovation and Enterprise and Shape Great Places.

Strategic Growth Plan – over the past two years we have worked in partnership with Leicester City Council, the seven district councils and LLEP to take a strategic, long term approach to growth. Underpinned by a comprehensive Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment, the Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) identifies the need for 190,000 new homes and sets out ambitious plans for supporting road infrastructure. The plan sets out a long-term strategic planning framework for future housing and economic growth and associated infrastructure provision, looking forward to 2050. This will help to build and support better communities in the future.

Infrastructure for Sustainable Growth

To support economic recovery and growth, people and businesses need infrastructure that provides excellent connectivity to meet their everyday needs. By building quality premises we want to help firms take their first step on the ladder, and to grow. We had committed to spending £289m on roads, schools, broadband, supporting new homes and boosting the local economy, funded by one-off government grants and land and property sales. We set out our largest ever capital investment programme in vital infrastructure. However, the crisis in local government funding means we are having to revisit a number of areas moving forwards.

Growth Unit - Leicestershire’s population is projected to rise to 860,618 by 2043 – an increase of 162,350 (23%) from 2018. Just under 200,000 new homes are set to be built in the city and county by 2050. There is a need to ensure that the growth is matched by new roads, schools, transport and other infrastructure – which are estimated to cost £600m over the next 25 years. In June 2019 we approved the establishment of a new team to help coordinate the Council’s role in supporting growth. The team will also help to secure millions of pounds of funding from the Government and developers to help deliver infrastructure – the costs of which would otherwise fall on the local tax-payer.

Enterprise Zones – we are continuing to support work to develop and deliver the county’s Enterprise Zones. During the year there have been some significant developments, including; at Loughborough Science and Enterprise Park (LUSEP) in November a topping out ceremony took place to celebrate the latest milestone in the creation of a new HQ for a leading software company. The Access Group’s 100,000 sq. ft. office on the Enterprise Park (LUSEP) is due to open in November 2020. The innovative venture is expected to generate £1.6m per year for Council services and create more than 500 jobs. The project represents a pioneering partnership between

the council and Loughborough University. As one of the UK's top employers and innovators and a Tech Unicorn – valued at \$1 billion – Access' continued expansion at LUSEP is good news with potential for future collaboration with the University and LUSEP's community of over 90 startups to established businesses.

Loughborough Town Deal - Loughborough was invited by the Government to develop a Town Deal and bid for up to £25m funding to support town centre regeneration, broadband, further and higher education and skills, social and cultural facilities and transport infrastructure. The Council is ready to work with partners to ensure this brings real benefit to the town. Loughborough is also an area of innovation, an initiative led by the university to help drive local growth.

Apollo Court Business Park, Coalville - in October 2019 a new £5.5m industrial park in Coalville, set to create 120 jobs, opened for business. Apollo Court Business Park aims to boost business in the town by supporting start-ups and firms looking to expand. A range of high-spec industrial units ranging from 1,000 to 9,000 sq. ft. were built by construction company, Willmott Dixon. The venture is part-funded by a £2.4m allocation from the Local Growth Fund, a pot of government funding awarded to the LLEP for projects that benefit the local area and economy. During its construction £437k was invested into local communities through engaging with schools and colleges and ensuring 91% of spend and 78% of labour were within 40 miles of the facility. The first business, Sella Controls Ltd, moved into the site in early 2020.

Airfield Business Park - work to create a £5.2m business park in Market Harborough was completed at the end of November and the site opened in December. Airfield Business Park will create more than 200 jobs while boosting business and employment opportunities in the town and local economy. The scheme offers a range of high-spec industrial units to let. Several companies expressed an early interest in renting the units, with 6 of the 12 units reserved by prospective tenants. The site also features 692 solar panels, which are part of our ongoing commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030. In March 2020 it was announced that Airfield Park had been awarded a coveted regional prize at the National Energy Efficiency Awards 2020 – being named the Regional Large-Scale Project of the Year. The award recognises firms involved in delivering a successful large-scale project which costs more than £250,000 to build and demonstrates a high standard of quality workmanship.

Leaders Farm Development – in May 2020 Cabinet approved proposals for the £8.2m development of the Leaders Farm site near Lutterworth. The proposals make provision for a 50,000 sq. ft light industrial unit, further light industrial units and two drive through restaurants. The plans would generate a good rate of return to reinvest in service delivery as well as supporting the creation of new jobs.

Superfast Leicestershire and Better Broadband – ensuring that Leicestershire is equipped with the latest digital technology will drive economic growth and innovation. In April it was announced that some of Leicestershire's most rural primary schools were using new, full-fibre broadband to connect teachers, students and parents during the coronavirus lockdown. The schools, all part of Learn Academies Trust (Learn-AT), were keeping essential services running following an upgrade to some of the fastest broadband available in the UK. The improved connectivity was made possible through a grant scheme from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, Openreach and Leicestershire County Council. This was the largest broadband grant given to a single

organisation in the UK. Across the County, 96.5% of premises now have access to high speed broadband.

Development Corporation – in March 2020 we agreed proposals to support the establishment of Project Alchemy – the Midlands Engine Development Corporation and the submission of a bid for an Inland Freeport. The ambition of the Development Corporation is to deliver outputs across three connected areas in the East Midlands including East Midlands Airport and land around it, including additional homes, jobs, freight capacity, a green corridor connecting the areas and £4.8bn GVA growth for the region.

M69 Junction 2 Strategic Development Area – in March 2020 we agreed a proposed approach to the promotion and delivery of the M69 Junction 2 Strategic Development Area. By collaborating with others, the Council can ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is provided for any development. The proposals would support delivery of growth in line with the Strategic Plan and Strategic Growth Plan.

A Highly Skilled and Employable Workforce

Ensuring that people have the skills and aptitudes to access employment will help them to find decent employment opportunities and help businesses to recover and begin to grow and provide a more inclusive economy which in-turn supports a good quality of life for everyone. The most recent Leicester and Leicestershire Business Survey, carried out in early 2020, found that 27% of businesses had experienced recruitment difficulties, similar to the 2017 result. These were often linked to skills issues with 42% of businesses concerned about skills shortages or finding staff, higher than in the 2014 and 2017 surveys. The business survey results were obtained prior to Covid-19 restrictions.

European Social Fund – we have worked with key partners, including the LLEP, to help influence priorities and effective delivery of the current European Structural and Investment Fund programme. We are strategic delivery partners in a number of projects that support people to enter the labour market and upskill once in work, these include MoneyWise Plus and Work Live Leicestershire (WiLL).

Skills for Local Development Sites – the Council works closely with partners to ensure that local people are able to access new job opportunities through large scale development sites. SEGRO Logistics Park East Midlands Gateway is a 700 acre site and includes the creation of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange. An Employment and Skills Group is supporting apprenticeships and work placements on the site during the construction and end user phases. HS2 is another key development and the Council is supporting the HS2 Skills and Supply Chain Delivery Board to make sure local people have the skills required to access future employment opportunities.

Skills for the Future – the Council works with the LLEP to forecast future skills needs, including considering new and growth sectors, and skill requirements emerging from advancements in technology and artificial intelligence. The role of Universities and Colleges is crucial to link business to knowledge and to local talent, and this will be further exploited through the development of the Local Industrial Strategy. Universities and colleges are integral to much of the partnership work we undertake in relation to key sectors and developments.

Health and Social Care – working with relevant partners the Council has adopted a Health and Social Care Sector Growth Plan which identifies key priorities for the development of health and social care providers and their workforce. There was a review of the delivery plan in autumn 2019 and a list of activities produced that aligns the relevant Local Workforce Action Board subgroups and partners with the priorities in the Health and Social Care delivery plan. The main gap identified was around communications and the Steering Group is coordinating communication activity. A new plan for the sector will be developed once the Economic Recovery Strategy has been finalised. The new plan will fall within the economic recovery work being led by the LLEP. New governance arrangements will be put into place for the Economic Recovery Strategy and will incorporate work on this sector.

Unemployment and those furthest from the labour market – the Council continues to provide support to residents in CV development, job search and digital skills through library-based work clubs. We are working with local partners to deliver the £2.4m European Social Fund project, Work Live Leicestershire (WiLL) which targets those furthest from the labour market living in rural areas. The project provides training and volunteering, self-employment advice, work experience, job and apprenticeship opportunities. This is the only national ESF programme which specifically targets rural areas and will deliver until December 2020.

Adult Learning – funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, our Adult Learning Service (LALS) aims to engage adults and provide the learning they need to progress into work and deliver courses that support personal development and wellbeing. During 2019/20 LALS enrolled 6749 learners to programmes, down from 8,310 the previous year. Courses, delivered in 54 venues across the county, provided targeted support to those with low skills and furthest away from the labour market. In March 2020 most activities were moved online following the closure of learning centres. Where this was not practical, tutors continued to provide other forms of remote support. To encourage those who had the opportunity during lockdown to study, a range of free online resources were uploaded and promoted through the GoLearn website. Our Family Learning teams also developed packs of resources to support parents to deliver home schooling.

Apprenticeships - our Leicestershire Adult Learning Service apprenticeship programme delivers apprenticeship training to a number of employers including the Council. The service is currently training 39 LCC employed apprentices in roles such as administration, finance and customer services. In addition, the service is providing training for 11 apprentices working for external employers.

Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme - our Adult Learning Service has continued to work with Charnwood Borough Council to resettle refugees through the Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme. A range of discrete courses, designed to support families develop their language skills, have proved valuable in helping these learners access employment and become independent. The service will continue to work with partners and support the new UK Resettlement Scheme when the programme is resumed.

Information, Advice and Guidance – we have commissioned service providers to ensure that vulnerable 16-19 year olds are able to remain in education or find suitable employment or training. Through our Matrix accredited Adult Learning Service, adults are provided with individual support to enable them to make informed choices about their best options to find work and progress up the career ladder.

Supporting Business to Flourish

We aim to support activities which encourage and support businesses to invest, grow and flourish in Leicestershire. It will be particularly important as we manage recovery from coronavirus and the implications of Brexit that we work with partners and businesses to plan effectively for changes in trade, regulation and workforce.

Supporting Businesses – we are working with the City Council, LLEP and East Midlands Chamber to ensure there is high quality and targeted business advice for our local SMEs. Collectively we have secured over £5.5m European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) to provide 1-2-1 business advice, a series of workshops covering a wide range of subjects, and £2.5m for business growth grants. Work is now underway to secure further ERDF funds that will enable partners to deliver intensive and targeted business support up to 2021.

The Council also provides advice to businesses through its Trading Standards service and is an active partner in the Better Business for All Programme which aims to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses. Our Resilience Team supports local businesses to prepare for disruption in order to increase resilience in the event of major incidents. It's important to us that local businesses are able to maximise the benefits of public sector procurement and we therefore attend and host events which promote the opportunities available.

Growth Hub and Digital Growth Programmes - businesses in Leicestershire are benefitting from county-wide support projects designed to assist them with their growth and expansion plans. The Growth Hub and Digital Growth Programmes, funded through ERDF and partners, are supporting small and medium sized businesses through grants and tailored advice. The Growth Hub Programme also provides an inward investment service for businesses looking to relocate. The Digital Growth Programme offers technology grants from £2,000 to £40,000 providing around a third of the total investment for eligible businesses. In August 2019 the Digital Growth Programme was extended with £5m of additional funding to enhance the digital skills of businesses across Leicestershire. As at 30 August 2020 this programme had worked with 641 businesses and had given out 91 Grants.

In August 2019 a new Growth Hub Project was approved with £8m of additional funding to provide business support via workshops, seminars, 1-2-1 support and grant funding and a dedicated programme for scale up and investor ready businesses. Over 255 businesses have received 1/2/1 support through the programme and 64 businesses have received a grant through the Growth Hub. The County Council employs a business adviser funded through the programme who is specifically working in the east of the County. Numbers of enquiries increased hugely to 200+ per month as businesses struggled to survive through the pandemic.

Business Grants – local authorities across Leicestershire made grant payments to 15,000 businesses (84% of the 16,740 eligible businesses) through the Small Business Grant Fund and Retail Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund.

Business Recovery Fund - in July 2020 the Council launched a brand-new fund to help businesses get back on their feet. The £750,000 Leicestershire Business Recovery Fund was aimed at small businesses within the county to help them recover from the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Applications could be made for grants between £2,000 and £10,000. Businesses could use the money to ensure their survival by, for instance, developing online selling and diversifying into new product areas. The Council is committed to helping businesses get back on their feet, so that the economy of Leicestershire can continue to grow and prosper. Grants were open to businesses with 50 employees or less. All small businesses from every sector were encouraged to apply including those from the tourism, retail, agriculture, and creative sector. Businesses who apply were able to talk through their business plans with an advisor who assisted with the application. At the 23 September 47 applications had been approved to a value of £296,000 from Agriculture, Tourism and Hospitality, Creative, Retail and Independent businesses with a mixture of COVID recovery projects and business growth.

Creative Industries – more than 100 businesses from across Leicestershire's art and creative sector applied for specialist support to develop and grow. Creative Leicestershire, a County Council initiative which offers advice, support, and growth for creative enterprises across the area came together with partners across the East Midlands to offer WebinArt. Webinart is a one-year professional development programme which connects new and improving creative businesses with industry giants and mentors. It offers help and support in everything from financial and business growth advice, to confidence building and help with covid-19 related concerns. Not only do creative people contribute to the rich culture of Leicestershire but encouraging them to become experienced in the business market will create jobs and help boost the local economy.

Market Town Covid-19 Preparedness – in June 2020 high streets in Leicestershire and Rutland geared up for increased trade as lockdown restrictions started to ease. Councils in Leicestershire worked with local businesses, partners and the NHS to ensure high streets were safe places for customers, traders, staff and visitors. They included issuing guidance to traders to help them protect customers and employees inside their premises, introduction of one-way systems for pedestrians and traffic, suspension of some parking bays to provide more pedestrian space and closure of some streets. Doing all we can to support a safe return to shopping and trading and provide a much-needed boost to the local economy. The Council also developed 'pop-up' walking and cycling routes and bid for funding from the Government's Emergency Action Travel Fund to progress the plans.

Rural Economy and Market Towns – chaired by the Council, the Leicestershire Rural Partnership (LRP) continues to champion the importance of the rural economy and market towns. The LRP are currently working with the LLEP on the development of a Natural Capital Plan which will look at opportunities to improve, sustain and better utilise our natural assets. The Partnership has sponsored a number of projects to support rural businesses including the Council run East Leicestershire LEADER programme which has supported 21 projects with over £600k of EU grant funding since 2015; a further 38 projects have been invited to full application. The LRP has

also advised the LLEP on priorities for the £3m European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) which has supported 9 projects since 2015, with a further 12 in the pipeline. The County Council worked with District Councils and the LLEP to install free consumer wi-fi in 9 towns and this technology has proved invaluable in collecting consistent data on the impact of footfall due to Covid and measurements to improve safety in town centres.

Inward Investment and Trade – the County and City Councils work collaboratively to provide an Inward Investment service across the sub-region. The service is part funded through ERDF and recent activities have focussed on attracting investment from outside the EU including from China, India and the US, working alongside the Department for International Trade. A Leicestershire China Strategy was developed to boost trade and investment. The Council has a particular focus on developing trade links with Sichuan Province; and following celebration of its 30-year twinning anniversary with Sichuan, has hosted further meetings with Sichuan government representatives to explore opportunities and investment.

Tourism – is an important asset for any area to increase visitor spend and to make the place attractive for businesses to invest and people to live, study and work. We worked with partners to establish a Tourism Advisory Board which has key public and private sector members from across the industry. The Board aims to raise the profile of the sector's positive contribution to the local economy, identifying key priorities for future investment and lobbying Government and local stakeholders to ensure that policies and plans are in place to support the tourism sector. Our joint Place Marketing Team with the City Council delivers place marketing, inward investment and strategic tourism services across the sub-region. We have agreed a new Tourism Growth Plan which provides a framework for future sector growth by setting down key priorities, activities and projects that partners feel offer the best prospects to increase competitiveness of the destination and the wealth it can generate. One of these activities is the establishment of a business tourism service to realise the full economic potential of the business tourism sector.

Tourism Awards – in October 2019 five county attractions were shortlisted for tourism awards. The Bosworth Medieval Festival, Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre, the 1620s House & Garden, Charnwood Museum and Melton Carnegie Museum were all shortlisted as finalists in the Leicestershire Promotions Tourism and Hospitality Awards 2019. The awards are a tribute to the depth and breadth of our cultural offer, as well as to the hard work of the staff and volunteers involved.

Economy – Transport

People and businesses need infrastructure that provides excellent connectivity that meets their every-day needs. Transport infrastructure is a key enabler providing access to opportunity and opening up sites for growth. We aim to ensure good connectivity within the county and across the UK through working closely with partners to realise the Midlands Connect Strategy. We also continue to progress delivery of our local transport priorities to help business recovery and growth, reduce congestion, allow safe travel and support more sustainable travel options.

Midlands Connect – the Midlands Connect Strategy outlines the region’s vision to become an engine for growth through investment in transport infrastructure. It proposes a 25-year programme of investment in strategic road and rail improvements to reduce congestion, improve journey times and support housing growth. We are currently involved in a number of Midlands Connect projects that are directly related to the successful delivery of our Prospectus for Growth. These projects include improvements to rail services to places such as Coventry and Birmingham and upgrades to the A5 and A42. These projects will greatly enhance people’s ability to travel efficiently and safely around and through Leicestershire in the context of much needed houses and jobs to meet the demands of the area’s growing population.

Transport for East Midlands (TfEM) – through our involvement in TfEM we have set out our top priorities for transport improvements across the East Midlands including making the most of the HS2 development, securing a Midland Mainline fit for the 21st century, improving access to East Midlands Airport, the A5 Improvement Corridor and transforming East-West connectivity.

Strategic Transport Priorities – in February 2020 we launched consultations on a new 30-year transport blueprint for Leicester and Leicestershire. The Strategic Transport Priorities (STP) set out where the city and county will work together, particularly around tackling poor air quality and the effects of climate change, alongside continued support for the local economy and jobs and the delivery of new houses. Improvements in rail and public transport and better provision for walking and cycling schemes are among the priorities set out. The STP acknowledges a drive to attract greater numbers of car users on to public transport and on to cycling and walking routes. The ambition is to continue to encourage use of the commercial bus network, of electric vehicles and to increase the number of bus lanes and cycleways/pedestrian routes developed over the past few years. The county will develop its own cycling and walking strategy as part of the list of priorities. Another key thread of the STP is a big push to improve rail services. The report outlines that while services to East Midlands cities such as Derby and Nottingham are good, improvements are needed in reaching West Midlands cities such as Coventry and Birmingham.

Rail Strategy – developed with the City Council and LLEP it sets out rail priorities up to 2043. We have used it as a basis for working with Midlands Connect, who are developing business cases for the reinstatement of direct rail services between Leicester and Coventry and for the improvement of services to Birmingham, which would result in significant improvements in journey times to these places. We have used it also to inform our input into the HS2 project and the wider considerations of the Infrastructure Commission who have been asked by Government to consider an integrated package of rail improvements that would be associated with delivery of the

Eastern leg. Potentially this package could include completion of the Midland Main Line electrification, which we are continuing to push for because of the service improvements that it would deliver but also because of its carbon reduction benefits.

HS2 - will bring significant benefits to Leicestershire and the wider economy and radically improve connectivity to cities in the north. We are committed to playing an active role to ensure Leicestershire gets the most out of HS2 as well as mitigating its impacts. In January the Council considered work on preparations to manage the impact in Leicestershire of the proposed HS2 rail link. The benefits of pro-actively engaging with HS2 on many issues including developing opportunities for small and medium-sized businesses in Leicestershire to win HS2-related contracts; work with ecological and environmental partners to enhance the natural environment and minimise impacts of climate change; avoid proposed 12-month long road closures on key county roads, and seek adequate advance notification of disruptive work. Also, to seek a classic compatible connection of the Midland Mainline at the proposed high-speed rail station at Toton, giving more journey choices for Leicestershire residents and businesses.

Ivanhoe Line - we are providing our support, including financial, to the group the Campaign for Reopening the Ivanhoe Line (CRIL). CRIL are currently working with the Department for Transport to develop a business case to bring back passenger services on the line.

Major Road Schemes Supporting Growth

The Council has a strong record of securing funding to deliver transport infrastructure to enable growth, supporting the delivery of outcomes to promote a strong economy and ensure a supply of quality and affordable homes. We will continue to lobby to secure vital funds to invest in homes, regeneration and infrastructure across Leicestershire.

Coalville Transport Strategy - in June 2020 we set out work to support the delivery of successful growth and evolution of Coalville and Ashby de la Zouch, including a list of projects covered by the Coalville Transport Strategy.

Ashby Road, Coalville - in January we unveiled proposals to improve Ashby Road in Coalville. The proposed scheme involves improving the street scene and creating on-street parking to improve traffic flow. The £250,000 scheme, jointly funded with North West Leicestershire District Council, is also designed to create additional on-street parking facilities and improve vehicular and pedestrian access with the focus on vulnerable road users. The proposed scheme represents part of a wider initiative to invest in Coalville, including a revamp of Snibston Country Park.

Coalville – A511 - in August 2019 the Council's A511 Coalville Growth Corridor plans were included in a priority list for government funding by sub-national Transport Body Midlands Connect, with a request for £42m to deliver it. The scheme was among 11 in the Midlands submitted to the Department for Transport, as part of a £3.5 billion fund available for local road improvements from 2020-2025. The proposals include junction improvements at nine locations between the A42 Junction 13 at Ashby-de-la-Zouch and the M1 Junction 22, some localised widening and a new link road, connecting the A511 to Bardon Link Road, creating a new north-south link across

Coalville. The proposals will help cut congestion and improve bus journey times, as well as support the M1 and M42 as a major gateway to East Midlands Airport. The proposals will also include improvements to the pedestrian crossings and cycle-ways along the road. Public consultation on the proposals took place in October 2019. It was announced that the Council had been awarded almost £1.3m in development funding for the scheme on 30 September 2019.

Loughborough A512 – in September 2019 work started on a £25m County Council road scheme involving improvements at Junction 23 of the M1 to improve overall journey times and road safety in the area. The scheme aims to reduce traffic on the A512 and some residential roads and support commercial and residential development in Loughborough, by increasing employment and providing new, more accessible development. A stretch of the A512 between Junction 23 and Snells Nook Lane, Loughborough, is changing from a single to dual carriageway with a new roundabout for two large housing and employment sites. The scheme is being funded by developers, with an additional £5m from Highways England and through a £12m allocation from the LLEP's Local Growth Fund.

Melton Distributor Road – we are continuing with work to deliver this multi-million pound project (which is key to delivery of nearly 4000 new homes and to addressing the town's existing traffic and environmental conditions), including recent publication of the necessary Statutory Orders for the Northern and Eastern sections. As part of work towards the Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy a broader package of measures will complement the distributor road, including possible improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure and the town centre highway network. The Melton Mowbray Distributor Road scheme took the top award in the Natural Environment category in October 2019 at the East Midlands Town Planning Institute. The collaborative work between the county council, AECOM, Natural England and the Environment Agency in developing the diversion for the River Eye was particularly highlighted during the ceremony. The planning application included substantial environmental mitigation including tree and hedge planting, ecological enhancement areas and sustainable drainage.

Anstey – A5630 and A46 - in September 2019 work commenced on the delivery of improvements involving a range of measures on the A5630 Anstey Lane and A46 to increase capacity and improve journey times. The scheme sees the existing single lane section of road between the A46 interchange and Bennion Road roundabout turned into a dual carriageway. Additional lanes will be created at the approach to the roundabouts at both junctions with new traffic lights installed. Pedestrian and cycling routes along the busy stretch of road will also be improved as part of the scheme. The improvements are designed to help accommodate extra traffic that will be generated by the 3,000-home Ashton Green development. It will also support growth anticipated from future housing developments in the north of Leicester and in the county. In March it was reported that the £10.7m scheme was progressing well and on track for delivery, with the scheme finished on schedule in July 2020.

Nailstone Junction – in October 2019 a £2m scheme to reduce congestion, provide improved transport links and manage the extra travel demand created by the new country park development at Nailstone commenced. The Council led on delivery of the scheme on behalf of the colliery developer, which saw a range of measures including new traffic signals, a new roundabout and traffic calming introduced at a number of junctions linking the B585 with the A511 to the north. Improvements to these junctions

provide access to homes and employment, and the new country park development site.

Hinckley - in October 2019 consultation commenced on £5m plans to improve Rugby Road and Hinckley town centre. Proposals include plans to improve both the Hawley Road and Brookside junctions. There are also plans to improve safety for pedestrian and cyclists in the Granville Road, Spa Lane/London Road and Coventry Road areas, introduce new traffic signals, signage, and a review of resident and town centre parking facilities. The £5m scheme aims to maximise the area's economic potential by reducing congestion and shortening journey times. It also aims to improve air quality by encouraging more people to walk and cycle. In March 2020 we approved improvements to Rugby Road and Hinckley town centre. The scheme will support growth and the economic performance in Hinckley, improve journey times and air quality, better cycle facilities and reduced congestion.

Lutterworth East - £2.4m to design highways improvements and provide access to proposed new housing development in Lutterworth. The programme was paused until further funding could be secured.

Fosse Park Improvements – in June 2020 we launched a series of road improvements to support the development of Castle Acres, a large expansion of Fosse Park on the site of the former Everards brewery. The area is one of the busiest routes in Leicestershire and will only get busier as Fosse Park develops. The improvements will ensure Fosse Park can expand and bring economic growth to Leicestershire without negatively affecting congestion and journey times.

Highways Capital Programme – in March 2020 Cabinet agreed a new highways capital programme and works programme. The highways and transport elements of the programme comprised of £267m of capital works over the four years to 2024. The transport asset management programme in 2020/21 has an indicative cost of £16.32m in 2020/21 for capital maintenance of roads and footways. Zouch bridge replacement construction and enabling works. Advanced design works include the Melton Mowbray transport strategy, Loughborough Growth Area Strategy and development of a Cycling and Walking Strategy with accompanying Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Traffic Management and Safety

Average Speed Cameras – there are communities across the county who feel that speeding motorists are having a negative effect on life in their local area. A successful trial scheme saw cameras installed at seven locations; Sharnford; Walcote; Oadby; Groby; Measham, Woodhouse Eaves; and Freeby. Since the cameras have been operational, just over 17million vehicles have passed through the sites in Sharnford, Walcote, Measham, Oadby, Woodhouse Eaves and Groby, with 0.09 per cent of those vehicle owners (15,300) issued with notices. Proposals to roll out more average speed cameras across Leicestershire were approved by the Council's Cabinet in October 2020. The Authority is considering introducing a further seven average speed camera sites across the County. The proposals would see the average speed cameras move locations yearly to change driver behaviour in towns and villages across Leicestershire. The Council and the Police will review sites where communities have previously raised concerns about speeding. Once sites have been identified assessed and any other measures introduced that can influence driver behaviour, the Council

would consult with residents about the proposed locations. The County Council is also continuing to press the Government to consider a new approach to funding the camera sites. At present, funds generated through camera fines are retained by HM Treasury. The council has made several requests for the revenue to be retained to cover the capital cost of the speed cameras, after which the revenue would revert to government coffers. This would enable further roll-outs of this type of enforcement measure across the County.

Reducing Rural Speeds – in March 2019 we announced that we were expanding our speed reduction scheme to include a further 24 rural routes. The project sees stretches of roads with a speed limit of 60mph reduced to 50mph. The move follows a study in 2017 which found that around 60% of collisions which caused injury on rural routes involved motorists exceeding the 60mph limit and the routes chosen all had well evidenced collision reduction reasons to reduce the speed limit. The speed limit reductions also incorporate reviews of the existing road markings and signs to ensure that they provide adequate warnings of the road conditions.

Driver Education - we have continued to offer our popular pre-driver days in 2019 to promote safety and highlight potential risks. They include an introduction to driving and cover issues relating to speed, safety and also a practical driving session, accompanied by a qualified driving instructor. Our older driver scheme Safer Driving with Age (SAGE) has also continued. The scheme encourages safe responsible driving by providing older drivers with a practical driving assessment in their own car with a qualified driving instructor. Driver education is an increasingly important part of speed management and driver behaviour change. The council facilitates the running of national driver education workshops on behalf of Leicestershire Police. In 2019/20, 25,880 drivers opted to attend courses as an alternative to receiving a fine and points on their driving licence. The aim of the courses is to help drivers understand the adverse consequences of their driving behaviour and give tips and advice to improve compliance and improve safety.

School Keep Clear Scheme – in September 2019 schools across Leicestershire were encouraged to sign-up to a scheme to combat the problems of inconsiderate parking. The School Keep Clear scheme aims to address concerns that parents, residents and teachers have about parking during the school run by using a camera car to enforce mandatory zig-zag zones outside school entrances. A total of 68 new schools became enforceable in September 2019, in time for the new school term. Since it launched in September 2018, the scheme has seen 146 schools sign up, with a further 11 schools set to join the scheme later this year, subject to consultations. We know that inconsiderate and dangerous parking outside schools can be a real problem, and the School Keep Clear scheme has gone some way to alleviate concerns in communities. Since the beginning of the scheme, 22 warnings have been issued and 241 penalties have been processed to motorists parking illegally.

Parking Enforcement - with traffic levels rising, parking enforcement teams have been increasing patrols to keep vehicles moving and keep the roads safe.

Motorcyclist Safety - we remain supporters of The Shiny Side Up Partnership (SSUP) an East Midlands motorcycle safety partnership. Originally set up to try and drive down casualties relating to sports-bike riders, this has now broadened to include lower capacity scooters and motorcycles. The Council uses a variety of roadside posters at sites that have a poor motorcycle casualty history. These messages include

Bike Crash Site Ahead and Think Bike. The roadside posters are bright yellow and have become a regular seasonal way of reminding riders and other road users to take extra care and look out for each other.

Community Speed Watch – this scheme continues to be a popular initiative which encourages local communities to get involved in identifying speeding motorists; and thereafter encouraging them to drive at more appropriate speeds. In 2019 there were 13 schemes and the details of more than 2,000 speeding vehicles were passed through to the police who, where possible, wrote to the registered keeper of the vehicles reminding them of the dangers associated with speed.

Sustainable Travel

Choose How You Move – in January the Choose How You Move initiative, a joint venture between the Council and City Council, launched a new-look website to help the county and city travel smarter, through more sustainable and active methods. On ChooseHowYouMove.co.uk walking routes, cycling maps, bus timetables, and park and ride information can be viewed and downloaded, as well as finding out and signing up to cycling courses, and active travel events. Businesses have their own dedicated page where they can receive help and advice to introduce active and sustainable travel. Teams also work alongside schools to offer fun activities and competitions promoting active travel. They regularly visit schools to teach cycling skills, road safety, and encourage pupils to keep active.

Transforming Cities Fund and Air Quality – in October 2019 we supported proposals by the City Council for a bid to the Transforming Cities Fund in response to the Government's Air Quality Directive. They have been awarded over £32m, which will enable initiatives in Leicester to improve public transport, cycling and walking provision to improve overall air quality. This will benefit both city and county residents.

Active Travel – in September 2019 a free, family-friendly event promoting active travel took place at Watermead North Country Park. The Council's safe and sustainable travel team led activities including treasure trails, and competitions. The council aims to encourage and help more families take advantage of the benefits of active travel, including improving levels of physical activity, reducing stress, and helping reduce pollution levels. Getting children involved in active travel at an earlier age is also helping to support adults to stay healthy. In October 2019 businesses were urged to apply for funding of up to £5000 to help them implement active and sustainable travel initiatives in the workplace. The grants, which were available from the council and funded by the Department for Transport, aimed to help businesses increase levels of activity amongst their staff by promoting active and sustainable travel as part of everyday life. The council also leads the way in sustainable travel by offering staff car-sharing spaces, electric charging points, as well as an electric pool car and pool bikes to use to and from meetings, all of which helps the council meet its targets of lower carbon emissions.

In September 2020 we reported that Travel clinics were being held across Leicestershire to encourage residents to cycle or walk to work or school where possible. The Council held three free travel advice events to help more residents make the change to walking, cycling and scooting for everyday journeys. Free bike checks and security markings were available at the events, along with electric bike trials and

travel advice. Since lockdown there has been a huge increase in people cycling, and we want to support them.

‘Pop Up’ Cycle Lanes – in the summer the Council started to introduce ‘pop-up’ cycle lanes and other measures supporting walking and cycling, fulfilling the requirements of the Government’s £250m Emergency Active Travel Fund initiative as part of the response to Covid-19 (EATF). Funded by £335,000 of EATF monies, the cycle lanes were part of a mix of temporary and permanent schemes aimed at encouraging more people to walk and cycle rather than take public transport or a motor vehicle. The schemes introduced over an eight-week period, include Birstall – a ‘pop-up’ cycle lane on the A6 Loughborough Road in both directions. Leicester Forest East – extending existing cycle lanes on the A47 Hinckley Road in both directions. Market Harborough – Kettering Road’s existing cycle lanes widened, and traffic flow improved by installing temporary traffic signals. ‘Park and Pedal’ sites – new facilities available at Enderby and Meynell’s Gorse park and ride sites and at County Hall with new facilities including secure, overnight bike shelters. The council is awaiting a Government decision on the award of a further £1.2m EATF monies to roll-out more schemes.

E-Bike Scheme - electric bikes for loan to workplaces across the county is another initiative by the Council to encourage active and sustainable travel to and from work. The loan scheme is already proving to be a hit at fashion giants Next, with 10 bikes now being used by staff at their Enderby base. The bikes are available for staff to use to commute to work as well as for travelling to meetings or events during the working day. The Council is encouraging businesses to take the opportunity to borrow the electric bikes free of charge.

Public Transport – the Council supports public transport in a variety of ways including by providing or supporting 100,000+ concessionary bus passes to help elderly and disabled pass holders travel free on local bus services. School transport is provided for 6,000+ school children, both mainstream and for those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Over 33,000 blue badge permits are provided to allow disabled residents to have preferential parking closer to their destination. Three park and ride bus services provide fast and frequent buses in to Leicester and around 30 supported local bus service contracts are provided carrying bus passengers where commercial operators do not operate. Over 40 demand responsive transport services as an alternative to buses are provided and we also support community transport providers across the County to provide services for those residents unable to use bus services or who are rurally isolated.

On Demand Travel - in April 2019 the first use of a Section 106 planning gain agreement was used to finance an on-demand bus service in Leicestershire. Bus operator Arriva began providing the demand responsive, ride-sharing service, named ArrivaClick at the New Lubbethorpe development. Passengers book journeys using an app showing their preferred pick up point and destination and are matched with others and provided a seat on a 15-seater minibus.

Passenger Transport Changes – since the adoption of its Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy in October 2018 the Council has been progressing a comprehensive review of all of its contracted bus services to make savings of around £400k per year. Proposed changes to bus services follows careful assessment of current bus usage in a bid to deliver value-for-money services. In addition, communities were invited to help find solutions to local transport issues that may either

complement, improve or replace the council's transport offer. Good progress has been made on the review with changes made to over 50% of the services to improve efficiency, provide better value for money and ensure access to essential services. The next phase of service reviews was due to commence, however, following the COVID-19 outbreak and significant impact on passenger numbers and provision, it has been decided to pause work on the reviews until Summer 2021.

Covid-19 School Bus Support - in September 2020 we announced extra funding to provide extra school buses across the county to help youngsters to socially distance on their journeys. Where students use ordinary public bus services to get to school extra services were provided at the beginning and end of the school day so that demand can be met while still ensuring enough space for social distancing. Precautions are also being taken on the services run just for children by the Council and schools themselves. All public buses running in Leicester and Leicestershire have social distancing measures in place, with limited seating available.

Highways Maintenance and Management

The County Council faces significant challenges in looking after its highways' assets. Present levels of government funding are insufficient to maintain even Leicestershire's A roads in their current condition.

Highways Maintenance - a total of £14.9m was invested in highways asset maintenance including £12.5m on carriageways, £0.6m on footways and rights of way, £0.6m on bridge maintenance and strengthening, £0.4m on flood alleviation, £0.2m on traffic signal renewal and £0.6m on other activity. In July 2020 we announced that a £5m government funding boost would see major maintenance carried out on three key routes in the county in late autumn 2020. The cash injection through the local highways maintenance challenge fund was awarded to go towards improving the state of roads and support Covid-19 recovery efforts. Resurfacing work will be carried out on the A6 Market Harborough bypass on the Leicestershire and Northamptonshire sections; the A426 Blaby Bypass – including the four roundabouts; and the A47 Hinckley in two locations - the Dodwells Road section between the A5 and the Triumph roundabout and the Normandy Way roundabout with Wykin Road. Footway and cycle track improvement work will also take place. The Council also continued with vital road maintenance works across its 2,789 miles of road to take advantage of the reduced traffic levels during the Coronavirus lockdown and ensure minimum disruption. All our highways teams observed Public Health England guidelines on social distancing, hand sanitising and safe working guidelines where possible.

Flood and Storm Response – in September 2019, crews were called out to more than 88 reports of flooding across Leicestershire and we dealt with 250 calls across highways, police and fire. Our crews were out distributing sandbags, clearing gullies and closing flooded roads following a period of heavy rain. Police and fire crews attended badly affected areas. Areas particularly affected included Stoney Stanton, Earl Shilton, Loughborough, Sileby, Mountsorrel, Barrow-on-Soar, as well as Hugglescote and Worthington. Extra staff were called in overnight to deal with flooding issues. In February 2020 the Council's highways teams again worked round the clock in response to the effects of both Storm Ciara and Storm Dennis. Extra gangs had already been drafted in ahead of the storms to support the clearing-up efforts – with five teams dealing with forestry work while highways and street-lighting teams also supported the response.

As a result of storm Ciara, highways responded to 170 call outs, mainly for fallen trees and branches. Storm Dennis saw heavy rainfall and high winds with a total of 82 call outs. The Highways Control Room remained open throughout the weekend, with 13 gangs responding to 124 incidents. Increased rainfall resulted in 65 residential properties and 9 commercial properties flooded. 33 roads were closed due to floodwater. In order to address the impact of severe weather events an additional £550k was allocated to the highways budget for the coming year. Government has included in its manifesto £4bn for a new flood defence programme over five years and we continue to press the government to maximise funding to help us address the substantial flood related issues across the county.

Winter Gritting – during the winter our gritters and drivers were out treating key routes to keep the county moving, spreading approximately 312 tonnes of rock salt across 3900 miles of road to combat the drop-in temperature. Keeping the county moving and motorists safe is our top priority each winter. Our gritting crews are on standby 24 hours a day, seven days a week – including Christmas and New Year – and ready to respond to the forecasts. We monitor the weather constantly and if freezing temperatures are forecast, our fleet of gritters go out at night to treat major roads and key routes which equates to almost half of the county's road network. The Council has a fleet of 23 gritters available, three of which were recently replaced with new state of the art vehicles. The other twenty vehicles have also been fitted with the latest sat-nav technology, to ensure all routes are gritted correctly. This year, the council's grit barns were stocked up with 18,000 tonnes of rock salt.

Snow Wardens - in addition to winter gritting, there are also a number of snow wardens based in communities across the county who grit paths, as well as farmers who during deep snow, fit ploughs to their tractors and assist the council in clearing roads. The authority is working with parish and town councils to train and encourage more people to sign-up to its Snow Warden Scheme to help keep the county moving during the winter. The council also has a team of carers and health visitors who can reach their patients if there is prolonged heavy snowfall.

Grass Cutting - the grass-cutting season commenced in April 2020 with the council's teams mowing the equivalent of 532 football pitches each month. The authority maintains nearly 3.8million square metres of urban grass in residential areas. Residents who want to find out when verges are scheduled to be cut in their area can use the council's interactive grass-cutting map. Work is also ongoing with communities around areas to be maintained as wildlife verges rather than being cut.

Gully Cleaning - to tackle blocked drains we are applying a new 'risk-based' approach to gully cleaning that includes increasing the number of roadside drains treated from 64,000 per year to 92,000 without costs rising. The change follows a seven-month trial to find a more cost effective and focused way of cleaning the county's 130,000 gullies. The trial found that it would be beneficial for more regular visits to roads at high risk of flooding due to the drains filling faster with silt. Previously drains were cleaned on an 18 to 24-month fixed programme, whether the road was at risk of flooding or not. The changes are part of our new highways asset management plan and were rolled out across the county from early 2019.

Parish and Communities Fund – our Highway's Parish and Community Fund was a one-off grant scheme made available to parishes and communities to help support them on issues with social distancing and active travel due to the Covid-19

pandemic. As part of this fund we gave parishes and communities the opportunity to apply for a grant of between £2,000 to £10,000 dependent on population, which they could use on variety of projects, specifically relating to areas that supported village recovery including the installation of temporary road closures; temporary speed restrictions in urban areas; the creation of pop cycle lanes; additional signage; and the removal of overgrown vegetation, that would not normally meet our criteria for maintenance. As of the end of September over 90 parishes and communities had applied to take advantage of this fund.

Affordable and Quality Homes

Housing is a key enabler to delivering other outcomes as a secure, quality, and affordable home in the right location is essential for a good quality of life. Housing matters, it influences people's security, resilience, health, access to education and employment and can enable the effective provision of care.

We have established a much stronger focus on the delivery of homes through a Chief Officer Champion, Lead Delivery officer and supporting Outcome Advisory Board. Our aim is that Leicestershire has a choice of quality, sustainable homes that people can afford, and that development contributes to the health and wellbeing of existing communities. Also, that there is enough suitable housing to support independence for those with care needs and that both existing and new homes will be low carbon and environmentally sustainable.

Impact of Covid-19 - in the short term, a package of government measures is protecting tenants from eviction, mortgage lenders are offering payment holidays and the "Everyone In" scheme has helped to house rough sleepers. In the longer term, however, the impact of Covid-19 on the wider economy is likely to have an impact on a wide range of housing issues.

Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire (SGP) – the ten partners (City Council, County Council, seven Leicestershire districts and the LLEP) approved the SGP in late 2018. The SGP sets out a long-term strategy for the delivery of planned growth up to 2050. Thousands of new homes will be needed in the city and county between 2031 and 2050, and the strategy enables us to help choose locations, protect environmental and historic assets, and bid for money to put the right roads, transport and other infrastructure in place. Without planning ahead, we could face dispersed, developer-led development, making it harder to put the right infrastructure in place and secure funding for it. We've worked closely with the city and district councils and this collective approach is important to the process.

Planning Award - in October 2019, at the East Midlands Town Planning Institute, the Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire was announced as winner in the category for Excellence in Plan Making. The plan focuses on four key matters: delivering new housing; supporting the economy; identifying essential infrastructure; and protecting the environment and built heritage. This award-winning plan is testament to the forward-thinking proposals for future developments in housing to support population change, major infrastructure improvements to allow for new growth and congestion relief and rail improvements to improve connections.

New Homes Needed - the Strategic Growth Plan states that Leicester and Leicestershire needs 96,580 new homes and 367-423 hectares of employment land from 2011-2031. Some of these homes have already been built or have planning permission. Beyond 2031 the plan identifies the need for a further 90,500 dwellings and additional employment land, which is why further land needs to be unlocked. Local Plans deal with the detailed allocation of which sites will be brought forward.

Areas for Housing Growth - key areas for potential growth are the city of Leicester and land to the south and east of Leicester. A secondary area for growth is identified in the north of the county, called the Leicestershire International Gateway. New housing would be built closer to where people work, to minimise congestion from commuters. In spring 2019 the Whetstone Village proposal was announced by

Government as a successful Garden Village, one of two garden villages in the Midlands.

Supporting Infrastructure - draft proposals put forward in the Strategic Growth Plan include major infrastructure improvements on which new growth is dependent. These include new infrastructure to the south and east of Leicester. The A5 and A42 would also be upgraded, supporting growth in these areas. Rail improvements are also proposed. These road and rail improvements would require significant Government investment and would relieve congestion pressures along the M1 and more widely across the Midlands. It would also unlock land for the required housing and employment.

Affordability and Affordable Homes – the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) considers the extent of households who require financial support to meet their housing needs and thus who would be eligible for affordable housing. This identifies an annual net need for 2,238 such households per year across the housing market area for 2011-36. The HEDNA identified that to deliver the affordable housing needs of 2,238 new homes per year with an average delivery of affordable housing of 24% would require 9,293 homes per annum. This is over twice the need shown in the demographic analysis, justifying upward adjustments to boost affordable housing delivery in all of the local authorities in the housing market area.

Promotion of Development Land - over the past three years consents for in excess of 450 houses and 170,000sq ft of employment space have been achieved. Planning permission is expected for two further applications in respect of an additional 3,040 houses and 1m sq. ft of employment space on completion of the necessary Section 106 Agreements, including the East of Lutterworth SDA which is now wholly owned by the County Council. Further opportunities, including a number where planning applications have been submitted or are in the course of preparation (with the potential to deliver an additional 3,250 houses and employment space on County Council owned sites) have been identified and are being progressed through the planning system enabling long term housing delivery into the next two decades.

East of Lutterworth Expansion - in April 2020 the Council's plans to help deliver 2,750 new homes, community facilities and business space near Lutterworth were put forward. The 550-acre development on land east of the town will deliver nearly 250 acres of green space, two new primary schools, a community hub and a network of foot and cycle paths connecting to the town centre. Sustainable design, community and life-long living are at the heart of the plans. The development would offer a broad range of high-quality houses, including around 1,100 affordable homes. It also incorporates a wide-range of green features designed to maximise renewable energy and support low-carbon living, underlining our commitment to tackling climate change.

The proposed scheme features 50% green space – including Swift Valley Community Park, playing fields, allotments, woodland, trees and hedgerows and new ecological habitats. It also includes nearly 60 acres of retail and business space, creating 2,500 jobs. Roads and transport improvements to main roads and the M1 will boost capacity, including a new M1 bridge, a new spine road to reduce town centre traffic and new bus routes. The community hub would accommodate shops, restaurants, cafes, health centre and community hall. Harborough District Council's planning committee resolved to grant permission (subject to signing of a s106 Agreement) for the scheme at the end of July 2020. The permission is expected to be granted by December 2020.

Rural Housing Enabler – the Council together with the District Councils, EMH Group, Waterloo Housing Group and Nottingham Community Housing Association jointly fund the Leicestershire Rural Housing Enabler Service. Since 2014 this has been run by Midlands Rural Housing and has led to the development of a robust rural housing need evidence base for Leicestershire and facilitated the delivery of rural housing where a need is identified. Since its establishment the Rural Housing Enabler Service has helped secure homes for local people, completed local housing need surveys, supported neighbourhood plans and raised awareness of rural and affordable housing needs across the county.

Mitigating the Impact of Development - the Council's Planning Obligations Policy sets out a variety of requirements to help mitigate the impact of new developments on local communities and the environment. So that developments make a positive contribution to services and infrastructure in the area. The Council in July 2019 published a revised Policy which identifies improvements and enhancements. In May 2019 the Council included a commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030 for our own operations. The Council aims to 'lead by example' working through how we are going to deliver services in a carbon neutral way including working with developers and others to build 'green' new homes.

Housing to Support Independence

Our aim is that people with social care needs have access to well-located and suitable housing which promotes their independence. The number of older people is forecast to increase significantly over the next few years, leading to a greater need for specialist accommodation. Both dementia and mobility problems are projected to increase significantly. Some of these households will require housing adaptations to meet their changing needs, some will need more specialist accommodation or support. Our older people and working age adult strategies consider what appropriate housing provision might look like for adult social care client groups and our 'Place to Live Board' is looking at how this provision is delivered.

Social Care Accommodation Support - in June 2019 we approved a Social Care Accommodation Development Plan and Investment Prospectus 2019-2037 to increase the supply of social care accommodation-based support services.

Extra Care Housing - we are looking to extend our offer to older adults seeking to live independently in accessible, telecare enabled housing with flexible on-site care and support, as an alternative to residential care. We successfully contributed towards the provision of 62 new extra care places in Loughborough, with the scheme opening on schedule. We will make an important contribution to the allocation process for a new Extra Care Housing scheme in Ashby-De-La-Zouch developed by East Midlands Homes with support from our colleagues in North West Leicestershire District Council, first tenants should move in in Spring 2021. Our social care investment strategy includes opportunities to extend our extra care offer in Leicestershire further. The Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment estimates a need for an additional 9,460 specialist dwellings for older people in Leicestershire over the period 2011 to 2036.

Social Care Investment Plan (SCIP) – where people cannot remain within their own home, community-based accommodation options in the form of extra care and supported living can provide a cost effective and positive alternative to residential care.

In October 2019 we agreed an additional £10m capital to fund properties to meet needs identified within the Social Care Investment Plan. The money will support priority supported living properties and a specialist dementia care facility. At the time of writing five schemes have been secured offering up to 50 units of accommodation and a further three schemes are being explored offering a further 14 units of accommodation.

Box Tree Farm – the Council is developing housing for older people, adults with learning and physical disabilities and adults with mental health needs as a priority. In September 2019 a new scheme to provide homes for adults experiencing mental health needs was launched in Ratby. Box Tree Farm provides accommodation for six people with mental health needs, prioritising those moving out of residential care. This scheme underlines our commitment to providing the best care that we can across the County. Box Tree Farm provides residents with the opportunity to develop their independent living skills in a supported environment before securing a long term home.

Dementia Care - in October plans were approved for a specialist dementia care facility in Leicestershire. The £5.5m scheme will see an element of a council-owned site at Snibston Colliery transformed. The ambitious scheme will see specialist accommodation for up to 36 people built, with the aim of supporting those with complex dementia to live as independently as possible. The scheme forms part of a wider plan to provide more choices for older people and will see an Extra Care Housing scheme developed on adjacent land.

Hinckley Care - Housing - in November 2019 it was announced that a new housing scheme enabling young adults with disabilities to gain valuable life skills and live as independently as possible was to be launched in Leicestershire. The Council has worked with a registered provider to provide a six-bed bungalow in Hinckley, for people with autism or learning disabilities moving from children's social care to adult social care. The first in Leicestershire, the scheme will see people aged between 18 to 25, who are not used to living on their own, get support to help develop daily living skills to manage their own home in the future. Support staff will be on site and provide night time support.

Warm Homes - the council is working with E.ON Energy and Age UK to help people across Leicestershire improve their heating. The work involves the installation of 500 first-time gas central heating systems in eligible residents' homes. The Leicestershire project follows a successful funding bid by the Council to the Warm Homes Fund. In addition to the first-time gas central heating, eligible residents may be able to receive free insulation measures for their homes and can also benefit from free energy efficiency advice and support on how to better manage their income from Age UK Leicester Shire and Rutland.

Over the past two years, the Warm Homes Service, which is part of our Public Health Department, has provided more than 3,700 Leicestershire households with free, impartial advice to help them stay warm at home and keep their energy bills down. Many of these households have benefited from the support needed to switch energy supplier. On average, these households have saved £233 a year, with the highest saving for a single household being £1,341 a year. In addition, over 1,900 referrals have been made to access grants, benefits, energy discounts and related services. We're committed as a council to tackling fuel poverty.

Lightbulb – lightbulb offers practical housing support, keeping vulnerable people independent in their homes, helping to avoid unnecessary hospital admissions and facilitating timely hospital discharge. It offers a range of help with issues such as aids and equipment, major adaptations, assistive technology, and advice and support to choose the right housing option. The Lightbulb Housing Support Co-ordinator offers a holistic housing need assessment, single point of contact for practical housing support, signposting and helps to arrange solutions in response to any needs identified. They work at each site across the districts in conjunction and supported by Occupational Therapists. The Lightbulb Hospital Enabler Team offer housing specialists, working directly with patients, relatives and hospital staff to identify housing problems that are a barrier to discharge and putting in the right steps to address this. They also assist with the transition from hospital to home and provide support with setting up a new tenancy or managing the existing home, support with furniture packs and rent deposits, working across 3 hospital sites and the Bradgate Mental Health Unit.

Homelessness Prevention – being homeless has significant negative impacts on both physical and mental health. We currently commission services to support people at risk of becoming homeless in Leicestershire. This includes a 30-bed hostel in Loughborough and an outreach service. In May 2019 we began consultation on proposals to replace the current outreach provision with a redesigned in-house community-based service which will enable us to provide a range of specialist, holistic support to individuals and families most in need. The 30-bed hostel in Loughborough will not be affected by the plans.

Health, Care and Wellbeing

We want people to be enabled to take control of their health and wellbeing throughout their lives and to be as independent as possible. To do this, people need the right support in the right place at the right time. Although some people can fulfil their potential by themselves, others need help, sometimes throughout their lives.

Health and Care Integration

Leicestershire's vision for health and care integration is to create a strong, sustainable, person-centred and integrated health and care system which improves outcomes for our citizens. Our model of care is designed to deliver more care outside hospital, provide integrated and holistic services and work in partnership to maintain health, wellbeing and independence for as long as possible.

In order to transform and integrate health and care we are working intensively in partnership across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR). We are making a difference by committing to joint plans, delivering change using blended teams across organisations, and pooling funds across NHS and local authority partners. We are increasingly providing care and support in a more consistent way, modernising how care is delivered, providing care which is easier to access and navigate, and moving more integrated care into community settings.

Better Care Fund - our Better Care Fund (BCF) plan, spanning both the NHS and local government, supports the joining up of health and care services so that people can manage their own health and wellbeing independently in their communities for as long as possible. This involves providers and commissioners of health, care and housing services to ensure integrated services are planned and delivered effectively in partnership. We agreed a refreshed BCF plan for 2020/21 worth c£62.4m, setting out our approach to integrating care around the person; integrating services at county and neighbourhood level; effective use of disabled facilities grants to help meet housing needs and changes to the wider health and care system.

Integrating Care Around the Person – our approach includes integrated neighbourhood teams, integrated teams for hospital discharge and reablement, a new target operating model for adult social care, redesigned NHS community services, 'Lightbulb' housing service, unified prevention offer, easy access to urgent care, and technology enabled care.

Person Centred Approaches – our integrated reablement and crisis response service has a joint holistic person-centred assessment which directs care planning across community nursing and adult care. Work continues to develop this approach to ensure services are fully integrated as part of an end-to-end approach to delivering care.

The current jointly commissioned domiciliary care service has integrated, person centred approaches built into the process of assessment, placing and review of care packages. This service is currently being redesigned with a view to implementing a new service from the autumn of 2021 that is better aligned to our vision for integrated services. The operating model of integrated teams is focused on person-centred care planning for patients who are frail, multi-morbid or who have high health needs, investing further in care coordinators for this cohort of patients. The multiagency frailty

check has been adopted into assessment and care planning in the acute sector and integrated teams.

Leicestershire's model of personalised care includes the 'home first' philosophy, LLR Carers' Strategy, supporting learning disabilities through the LLR Transforming Care Programme and council's accommodation strategy, and personal budgets and direct payments. There is also the Unified Prevention Board, Local Area Coordinators, First Contact prevention hub and approach to social prescribing.

Unified Prevention Offer – the Leicestershire BCF has, since its inception, placed a high priority on developing a Unified Prevention Offer for local communities, making the best use of community assets and building community capacity. It is recognised that many of these interventions should be non-medical and can be provided by a range of partners, including the voluntary sector. The menu of prevention interventions includes lifestyle services, housing support, local area coordinators, support for carers, home safety and falls prevention.

Prevention at Scale Project – evidence shows that up to 30% of GP appointments are taken up by patients seeking non-medical interventions. Leicestershire's 'prevention at scale' project worked with a number of GP surgeries to develop better insights into the reasons for these types of attendances, how the local prevention offer can be improved and how best to support patients and GPs with easy access to the most suitable support for their non-medical needs. This support may come from a GP, self-referral into First Contact Plus, via other agencies or the community itself. The aim is to release more GP capacity for those activities that only GPs can deliver.

Integrated Neighbourhood Teams – the implementation of Integrated Neighbourhood Teams, whereby community nurses, GP practice and social care staff work hand in hand to support the same cohort of people in their locality, continues to be embedded. This delivers multiagency care planning and improved care coordination in the community, keeping people at home as long as possible. Neighbourhood teams are currently testing integrated working for people with frailty, multiple long-term conditions and other complex needs.

Hospital Discharges – health and care partners across LLR are working hard to deliver improvements to transfer patients out of hospital and reduce delays in Leicestershire, through focused efforts across partner agencies, we have seen a significant reduction delays from hospitals – helping reduce pressure on hospital beds. An LLR-wide action plan is in place which has been based on analysing LLR's position against the high impact changes framework for hospital discharge, including key initiatives to help the D2A guidance. This includes Home First, which focuses on services designed to provide rehabilitation and reablement in people's homes. The programme has supported the development of an integrated discharge team at University Hospitals of Leicester and has developed a blueprint for integrated intermediate care services. Work to implement the integrated health and care reablement offer including referral and access points, skill mix, triage and service delivery commenced in 2018, and aligned to the redesign of community nursing and therapy services. The integrated approach is offered to adults when they have a change in need, requiring additional or new interventions that if not met, will result in admission to hospital or care home, or the person having to remain in hospital when they are medically fit for discharge.

Integrated Discharge Team – the Integrated Discharge Team (IDT) encourages and promotes an integrated way of working across all organisations to ensure smoother and faster resolution of delays to discharge. There has been a significant improvement to multi-agency working with a discharge hub where all professionals working on discharge can be co-located.

Integrated Domiciliary Care – since November 2016 home care in the county has been delivered principally through the Help to Live at Home service. The service is commissioned jointly by the Council and CCGs with lead providers appointed to lead the delivery of home care services.

Adult Social Care - Covid-19 Response

Social care teams at the Council went above and beyond to support Leicestershire's most vulnerable residents during the coronavirus pandemic. During Easter, just under 240 additional staff members worked across the Bank Holiday weekend, with over 120 staff and managers on standby to provide extra support. This included staff from adult learning and library teams redeployed to new roles - such as providing care and support to those in need, working in our customer service centre to make essential calls to vulnerable people, and supporting the council's care worker recruitment drive. Across the adults and communities department, more than 100 people were redeployed into different roles.

Adult Mental Health professionals (AMHPs) were on call and worked closely with partners in the Leicestershire NHS Partnership Trust (LPT). Customer service staff provided support, where needed, in processing referrals and advice on support available. Staff in the 'Discharge Hub' worked with University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust and out-of-county hospitals to ensure timely discharge and care support to people. First Contact Plus worked on ensuring that vulnerable people, who have registered for help, got the support they needed. Contracts and commissioning staff supported independent sector providers to care for people at home and in residential care, including emergency access to Personal Protection Equipment. Social care staff supported people with a learning disability and their carers to understand and practice government guidelines on social isolation and protection. For many people with a learning disability and/or autism the measures put in place to protect people from COVID-19, for example social distancing, represented a significant risk to their health and wellbeing. Through the COVID-19 Learning Disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder Sub Cell, social care worked alongside health colleagues, providers and other partners to put in place the interventions necessary to keep these people safe and well.

In April 2020 we backed calls to urge companies to donate personal protective equipment (PPE) for key workers, to bolster the equipment for staff in the NHS, social care, children's homes, homeless shelters, community pharmacies and more. Firms were asked to donate any new and unused items such as fluid-resistant surgical masks, nitrile gloves, goggles, disposable aprons or overalls, sanitising gel and overshoes, and to consider using their factories or equipment to produce more of these specific PPE items. Drop off centres were set up at various locations across the county, where businesses can take their donations and we had support from Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, which opened up six fire stations as drop off

points. The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) took on the role of distributing PPE to key workers in preparation for a national mechanism coming on-line. The LRF worked 24/7 to build stock, prioritise and distribute PPE, using scientific and technical advice.

Care homes across the county did everything asked of them to keep people safe and to ensure their care needs have continued to be met through the pandemic. Staff have worked tirelessly in often very difficult circumstances and at personal risk to themselves in order to care for residents. Care homes were supported to receive additional and repeat whole care home testing for all residents and staff. Care homes also received online training on testing and how to use test kits.

Adult Social Care

We want people to be cared for at home, in their own community, wherever possible and for as long as possible. We commission and provide a wide range of services to support people to maintain their independence, enable them to be part of society, protect them and meet a variety of care needs. Ensuring that eligible support needs are met, and people can exercise choice and control over their lives. We have used extra resources provided through the Improved BCF to meet increased pressures on adult social care, tackle delayed transfers of care and help stabilise the local social care provider market.

In October 2020 we launched a new Adults and Communities Strategy. The aim is to improve wellbeing and opportunity for people and communities including happier, more prosperous, connected and fulfilled lives.

Enabling Choice and Control – our Personal Budgets Service offers advice and guidance to direct payments recipients in being an employer and managing their budgets. We encourage people who use our services to take an active role in their assessment and support planning. We have one of the greatest take-up rates for direct payments in the country.

Improving Adult Care Information – we reviewed all key areas on our website and content to reflect our strategy to provide residents with the choice and information to self-serve and developed new online tools. We have developed an online service directory with Children and Family Services - the Leicestershire Information and Support Directory. In December 2018 we were shortlisted in the Driving Efficiency through Technology category in the LGC Awards for our work to improve online self-service opportunities for residents in need of adult social care services. The changes have already demonstrated benefits to people and will also save c£50k a year.

Technology Enabled Care – ‘Care TEC’ is emerging as an inclusive term to describe a range of IT and digital solutions that can be used to support service user outcomes across the care pathway. It includes assistive technology, aids and adaptations, telecare and telehealth. We are planning to modernise and increase the utilisation of digital solutions that help service users achieve their planned outcomes. Work is being undertaken to better understand the positive impacts on outcomes, and potential digital partners in this area of work.

LLR Carers’ Strategy – unpaid carers are invaluable, and this year’s situation has really highlighted the need to continue to develop the ways we support them. The joint LLR carers strategy was due for renewal in 2021 however COVID-19 has impacted

plans for engagement and consultation throughout this year. Plans are to now complete this engagement over the course of 2021 and roll out the renewed Carers' Strategy in 2022. The current strategy is still very relevant and respective organisations are working consistently to ensure unpaid carers of all ages are identified early and feel valued, respected and supported. During the autumn of this year the LLR partners will be releasing a carers' passport scheme which will ensure carers are visible and supported appropriately within their communities.

Support for Carers – we continue to encourage unpaid carers to come forward for an assessment of their support needs, and the facility to allow carers to submit their assessment online at any time of day, has proved a huge success. Continuous monitoring and review of our offer has led to agreement for expansion of the dedicated carers Customer Service Centre team. The Support for Carers service has been recommissioned to continue providing telephone advice, telephone befriending, local carer support groups including specified evening groups to allow attendance from working carers and we have become a referral partner to Carefree for provision of carers breaks to be launched in autumn/winter 2020.

Strengthening the Social Care Workforce – we have created the 'Inspired to Care' team to support the resilience and growth of the sector by offering expert advice to care providers on attracting a high-quality workforce and developing and retaining the current workforce. The initiative also promotes social care careers to members of the public by actively improving the image of careers within the sector, through engagement activities and the Inspired to Care website, as well targeting the future workforce by working with education establishment and students across the county.

Improving Care Quality – ensuring that high quality care and support is being delivered by care homes is a priority, providing important reassurance to relatives and friends. We monitor all contracted services to ensure they are compliant with their contract, and seek feedback from people who use the services, staff and family members. We monitor information from a range of other sources including staff, whistle-blowers, council services, and from partners such as the Care Quality Commission and health bodies. Officers within our Quality Team support providers with areas of non-compliance as well as areas where they want to improve the quality of the service. The team offers training in falls management and positive behaviour support, and providers can receive best practice support in any area of care delivery including the Mental Capacity Act, medication, support planning, health and safety and auditing. The team is currently running a pilot with care homes on improving care for people who are living with dementia.

Social Care Recruitment – in September 2019 job seekers and students from across the city and county considering careers in social care were invited to attend a specialised careers event. The Social Care Experience was open to people of all ages. The event, run by the Inspired to Care team and Leicester City Council, aimed to inspire people to consider a career in adult social care.

More than 30 employers from across the city, county and Rutland, with vacancies in all areas of social care; including older people, mental health services and learning and physical disability services were on hand to answer questions and demonstrate the value of pursuing a career in care. Those who attended had the chance to take part in workshops on dementia, autism and practical social care skills. There were also interactive activities, demonstrations, a film and photography exhibition and

opportunities to talk to people in front line care roles about their roles and career journeys.

Inspired to Care – in October 2019 a project to inspire people in Leicestershire to consider a career in adult social care was shortlisted for a regional award. Inspired to Care was nominated in the Care Innovator Award category of the East Midlands Great British Care Awards. Inspired to Care is a project which supports people to explore the different pathways into careers into the sector and the different types of social care roles available, to meet a growing demand for care. We invested in the Inspired to Care programme and website to help develop the workforce in the care sector, by improving the sector's image; developing and retaining current staff; and attract new staff. In April, Inspired to Care launched a campaign to increase provider capacity, in response to the COVID pandemic, to recruit people in a variety of adult social care roles, in particular supporting people discharged from hospital back into the community and home care providers. This support to the home care sector made a big difference to local people and communities. By the end of July, over 2000 people had enquired or applied for positions with 200 interviewed and 96 offered jobs. Social care support has never been so important, and the roles give Leicestershire residents the opportunity to make a difference in their local communities.

Helping People Stay Well and Independent - Adults Aged 18-64

Transforming Care – meeting the housing and support needs of individuals presenting with complex learning disabilities, Autism and mental health difficulties under the Transforming Care agenda is a priority for LCC and the wider LLR Transforming Care Partnership. A four-unit specialist housing scheme is being developed in Markfield by a partner agency, Affinity Trust. The scheme, due to complete in spring 2021, will offer housing and support to Leicestershire people traditionally excluded from housing due to their complex needs.

Learning Disabilities – Transforming Care - the LLR joint health and social care Transforming Care Programme continues to work with providers of social care and housing to support individuals with complex learning disability and/or autism spectrum disorder, with behaviour that is challenging, to resettlement within the community from an in-patient setting. Through co-ordinated work across statutory, non-statutory, third sector and local community provision, individuals are enabled to live as independently as is possible for them and be a tenant in their own home. Furthermore, work is ongoing to put in place the awareness, processes and interventions needed to prevent individuals from being admitted into mental health in-patient units. The programme is being supported by significant investment from the Better Care Fund.

Learning Disabilities – in March 2020 we agreed a new partnership arrangement with the CCGs to manage a pooled budget to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for people with learning disabilities in Leicestershire. The council under the arrangement will act as lead commissioner and manager of the pooled budget. The current budget supports the health and social care of c200 people with a learning disability in Leicestershire.

Whole Life Disability Strategy – in May 2019 we launched a new plan to support people with disabilities to live as independently as possible, access support and develop skills. The plan, shaped following engagement with more than 1,000 people, aims to help prevent and reduce the need for long-term care services and support

people to lead independent and fulfilling lives. The plan also focuses on young people who have an EHCP, with the aim of achieving a smooth transition from school to further education, training and work, together with the continuation of support to meet health and care needs.

Disability Services in North West Leicestershire - in June 2019 we agreed plans for the re-development of short breaks services, supported living accommodation and Community Life Choices at a site in Coalville. The development responds to demand analysis which suggests an additional 39 supported living units are required in the area by 2027. Plans include a new £3.7m adult social care facility in Coalville involving supported living properties for up to 16 adults with learning disabilities to live as independently as possible as well as a six-bed short breaks building. The plans will also see suitable space used on the site to provide the council's Community Life Choices service. Work is due to complete in summer 2021.

Supported Living - we continue to support around 360 individuals within supported living across the county. Providers work with individuals in an enabling way with household and community experiences, to promote the opportunity to live a more independent lifestyle within their local community. We are also committed to supporting those people who can to move out of residential care into supported living or other independent accommodation. To meet the growing demand for Supported Living in June 2019 we committed to a Social Care Investment Plan (SCIP) 2019-2037, which proposes major capital investment in Leicestershire into accommodation-based support options, including supported living.

Community Life Choices - community life choices supports around 750 individuals of all ages to maintain and build on existing roles and skills, natural support and community involvement, through the delivery of tailored support activities. Delivered via group-based or individualised support, individuals are encouraged to gain more independence, actively engage within their local community and develop confidence and skills to move into employment, education, training or volunteering. Through community life choices support, individuals are currently working within social enterprise schemes, volunteering at local charity shops, taking part in land-based activities, singing and disability sport. The Council ensures that the Community Life Choices framework reflects people's needs and interests.

Shared Lives - shared lives involves a carer using and sharing their home and their family (or community) life with the person using or living in a shared lives arrangement. It can be offered to any adult with any type of care and support needs. During 2018/19 between 105 and 116 service users were benefitting from shared lives. Support for all shared lives carers now includes manager visits to all carers within their own home, an ongoing training programme, a quarterly carer network meeting, telephone advice, local carer support groups, support to complete carer assessments and signposting to other useful services.

Helping Older People to Stay Well and Independent – 65+

Frailty – our approach to frailty across LLR includes a number of proven interventions that should take place in the community, in hospital, and on hospital discharge if someone is assessed as having certain frailty markers. The LLR area has adopted the Rockwood scale for assessing frailty consistently across the health and care system, and all practitioners will be using the same set of prompts to check how someone's care could be managed most effectively at every opportunity.

Dementia Services and Strategy - there are 9,458 people over the age of 65 years with a diagnosis of dementia, and 184 people between the ages of 30 and 64 diagnosed with early onset dementia in Leicestershire. The number is predicted to rise to 17,028 by 2035. In October 2018 we adopted a new strategy aimed at improving the quality of care, access to information and advice and training for staff. The joint LLR Living Well with Dementia Strategy 2019-2022 uses the guiding principles developed by NHS England named the 'Well Pathway for Dementia'. The five principles of the pathway are Preventing Well, Diagnosing Well, Supporting Well, Living Well and Dying Well. A jointly commissioned Dementia Support Service began in October 2017, offering a single point of access for people with dementia, carers and professionals. Other support includes advice, information, training and carer respite. Advocacy and safeguarding services are in place, assistive technology solutions are widely offered, and a variety of social opportunities such as activity groups and memory cafes are available to support people and carers to live well with dementia.

Re-procurement of the Dementia Support Service, jointly commissioned between the CCG and Leicester and Leicestershire County Council, was paused due to the impact of COVID-19 and the current service, provided by the Alzheimer's Society, was extended by 6 months. Tender evaluations for the new service are due to commence in October 2020 and a new service will be in place in April 2021. Commissioners have had regular meetings with the Alzheimer's Society to ensure that people living with dementia are still being supported through online groups and telephone services. The Alzheimer's Society will also be supporting people waiting for appointments at LPT's Memory Clinic as the waiting list has increased significantly since COVID-19 forced the temporary cessation of memory clinics at LPT.

Extra Care Housing - our social care investment strategy includes opportunities to extend our extra care offer in Leicestershire. We are also continuing to work on our advice and information offer for prospective extra care applicants and existing tenants, to promote extra care as a positive alternative to residential care in later life. We work in partnership with community health and hospital discharge teams to avoid hospital admissions, offer reablement within extra care, and speed up discharges for those returning to extra care following a period of treatment or ill-health. Extra Care Schemes are linked into their local area enabling them to be actively involved in their local communities.

Public Health

Leicestershire County Council's vision is for its residents to be able to make informed and healthy choices for themselves, contributing to a reduction in health inequalities and an improved healthy life expectancy. We support the population to stay well through prevention and early intervention and through influencing the wider determinants of health and wellbeing such as the environment, housing, employment and education. Our public health function plays a key role in contributing to these aims. A number of public health issues are prioritised in our Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

This year the vital importance of effective local public health services has been highlighted by our response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In early March the first case of covid-19 was reported in the county. Close contacts were given health advice about symptoms and emergency contact details to use if they become unwell in the 14 days after contact with the confirmed case. The second confirmed case was reported on 9 March.

In May 2020 it was announced that LLR had been chosen among the local authorities to lead work and share best practice on the Government's new trace and test service. This was a positive step for local people to support the fight against Covid-19. The council also received around £6.6m to support care home providers to tackle the spread of Covid-19 and accepted additional funding to support the role in the trace and test service.

On 29 June 2020 the Secretary of State for Health reported a high number of positive cases in Leicester. The Council confirmed its commitment to keeping residents safe following the decision to institute the first local lockdown of Leicester as a result of the spike in a number of areas within the county. Some areas that bordered the city were included in the lockdown zone as a result of local case levels, and risks of further increases in positive cases. We worked closely with Leicester City Council and the Government to bring down the overall number of cases. The Council also produced a map and a postcode checker detailing which parts of the county would be impacted by the increased restrictions. It has supported the closure of schools in the affected areas as well as a range of service changes such as a pause of birth registrations and ceremonies. Baroness Harding and the Secretary of State, Matt Hancock, spoke of the impressive local partnership working.

Incident Management Teams (IMTs) - have been established in areas in the County where there has been a high incidence of Corona virus (Covid-19) positive cases, these meetings have been led by the Director of Public Health involving colleagues from different organisations to implement rapid local actions to restrict further spread of infection including: communications, testing, contact tracing contacts of positive cases and outbreak management.

Public Health Services

The Council has been moving to a social model of public health with greater involvement of public health across other services and a strong emphasis on prevention for a number of years.

Online Health and Support Information Hub - we want people to get support as quickly as possible when they need it. Our online information hub provides an access point for immediate support. First Contact Plus enables people to search from their own home through a broad range of wellbeing information, all in one place. The service includes information and links to organisations which provide support around topics such as health, falls, feeling safe, living independently, debts and benefits, work, learning, volunteering and families and relationships. First Contact Plus also signposts people to community groups, national charities and public health services.

Unified Prevention – our Unified Prevention Board (UPB) oversees the development and delivery of Leicestershire's prevention offer, a key part of the Health and Wellbeing Board's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The UPB coordinates activities across a wide range of partners, ensuring everyone collaborates to deliver our prevention priorities, services and communication plans. The UPB has continued to develop links between the prevention/social prescribing offer and the new Integrated Teams across Leicestershire. Work has focussed on strengthening engagement between partners and Integrated Teams in each locality. District Council and Public Health representatives are now part of each Integrated Team's board, helping shape the prevention focus in each area.

Social Prescribing - the board has worked on the social prescribing model for Leicestershire. In January 2019, further work began to develop the social prescribing model as the wrap-around prevention offer to support Integrated Teams. This initially focussed on the needs of 3 cohorts of people, those who are frail, those who have multiple long-term conditions, and those with high health and care costs. The UPB partners are focusing on achieving a joined up social prescribing model across Leicestershire that supports the framework for social prescribing in primary care in the NHS Long Term plan. Continuing the development of the wrap-around prevention offer for Integrated Teams is one of the core activities of the UPB with Social Prescribing Link Worker roles starting to be established within the new Primary Care Networks.

Integrated Healthier Lifestyle Services - helping people live healthy lifestyles is vital. Our weight management and stop smoking services are designed to give people the right support that will have a positive impact on their overall health and wellbeing. The services include the support of friendly advisors offering free, tailored support to help with weight loss, giving up smoking and becoming healthier in general, either via text, Skype, phone or face-to-face appointments. The weight management service offers tailored support and intervention for people who are overweight that can fit into daily routines straight away. The team offers advice to people struggling to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and nutritional advice together with becoming more physically active. The service consists of a two-part approach and includes adult and children weight management services. The Quit Ready stop-smoking service offers a range of behavior intervention, medication and support. Both services consist of a 12-week intervention with the patient.

Stop Smoking – in April 2020 we reported an increase in people wanting support to give up smoking. Covid-19 acted as a catalyst for this increase in demand. More than 200 people contacted our Quit Ready service in March and received tailored digital support and intervention from the comfort of their homes. Quit Ready offers a 12-week, evidence-based treatment programme run by a team of specialist advisers via the service's helpline and digital service. In addition to weekly advice sessions, service users – including those who were self-isolating or shielded due to coronavirus – could also receive nicotine replacement therapy or e-cigarettes through the post, with no face-to-face contact required at any stage.

Local Area Coordinators (LACs) – LACs support vulnerable people by developing networks of community-based support and utilising existing community assets. They operate in local neighbourhoods, closely linked to housing and community health services and to recreational and social opportunities. There are now 16 LACs covering 23 locations. By improving the quality of life and independence of individuals and building stronger community links, LACs help to prevent people from reaching crisis point and reduce demand for health and social care services.

NHS Health Check – this is part of a national mandated programme in England. It is aimed at 40-74-year-olds to help reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, stroke, kidney disease and some forms of dementia. In Leicestershire, residents who are GP registered are invited every 5 years to take up their free health check via an invitation from their GP practice. It's free, and helps people understand the chances of getting health problems as they get older and what they can do to improve their health. The health check programme in Leicestershire is the responsibility of our Public Health Department.

Healthy Weight and Diet – good nutrition is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle. Diet combined with physical activity can help people reach and maintain a healthy weight, reduce the risk of chronic disease and promote overall health. To help combat overweight and obesity we commission Tier 2 Leicestershire Weight Management Service that sits within the Integrated Lifestyle Service and makes one part of the provider arm service. As part of the weight management offer we also provide the Cooks4Life programme that works with schools and families in Leicestershire and the Master Gardeners programme helps people to learn to grow nutritious food

Weight Management - the weight management service offers support to Leicestershire residents who are overweight. Its programmes set a 5% body weight loss goal, giving a results-focused approach that enables service users to track their progress. The service features a team of senior dietitians and nutritionists who help those looking to manage their weight, through a 12-week intervention programme. The service also offers low level support for those who are not in need of intensive support i.e. Weight Watchers App support together with 3 contact telephone support sessions from a Nutritionist. The service has been operating since January 2020 and have received approximately 500 referrals to by mid- May. The Childrens' weight management programme supports children who are overweight and provides group interactive sessions called *Healthy Eating Healthy Activity*. This group support offer provides parents and children with advice and support on making healthier food choices, nutritional information and recipe ideas to maintain a healthy weight. This is also in collaboration with the National Child Measurement Programmes and working with schools and School Nurses in providing support to children who are considered

not having a healthy weight. This, together with the Cooks4Life programme in schools provides for an overall healthy eating offer for families.

Good Food Charter and Plan – food is important for Leicestershire’s health, economy and sustainability. In December 2018 we approved a new Good Food Charter and Plan for Leicestershire. The Food Plan provides a strategic approach that values and prioritises sustainability, local provenance and healthy food in policies and procurement, whilst also developing community capacity and assets in relation to food growing, cooking and eating. The Good Food Charter provides an over-arching ambition to drive the future of food in Leicestershire. The plan includes supporting Melton Borough Council and Harborough District Council in the national Sustainable Food Cities scheme by promoting healthy and sustainable food and alleviating food poverty and diet-related ill health and improving access to affordable healthy food. It will mean Leicestershire can become a member of the Sustainable Food Cities network which would open up funding opportunities and support from national experts.

Substance Misuse - this year has been dominated by the response to the Covid-19 pandemic for both the Public Health Department and our commissioned providers. The focus in the early part of the year was to support substance misuse treatment services to adapt their service delivery whilst continuing to deliver safe, high quality interventions for people with alcohol and/or drug related problems. We are pleased to say that both our community substance misuse treatment service and in-patient detoxification service remained open and accessible to service users. Where safe to do so interventions moved to digital and remote applications including e-modules and video, and phone calls. All service users were re-assessed and where clinically indicated face-to-face support was continued with all Covid-19 safety precautions strictly in place. The annual Substance Misuse Recovery Week of events planned, organised and delivered by the local recovery community during September moved to a digital festival and staff both supported and took part in the ‘virtual festival’ which has been a great success. The planned re-procurement of substance misuse treatment services due to take place throughout this year in readiness for 2021 has been postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the joint work with commissioning partners continued and is now preparing for new contracts for April 2022.

Sexual Health Strategy – poor sexual health can affect anyone, often when it is least expected. In April 2020 we commenced consultation on a new Sexual Health Strategy for the next three years. The Strategy was approved in June 2020. It will see us continue to work with partners to ensure services meet the needs of residents. The proposals focus on giving people the right information to make positive decisions about their sexual and reproductive health and reducing health inequalities by focusing on the needs of people at high risk of poor sexual health. There is continued focus on supporting schools in their work around relationships and sex education and in access to services through new technology. The 2020-23 Sexual Health Strategy which was approved, will build on the progress of the previous strategy and will aim to reduce the impact of Covid-19 on people’s sexual health and wellbeing. A new integrated sexual health service model has been implemented, incorporating more self-service access such as online services and vending. This provided a good base to promptly respond to service changes required in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Workplace Health Programme - the top priorities for our workplace health programme include poor sleep management, low physical activity levels and poor fruit and vegetable consumption. As the work continued, the programme is addressing

these priorities with organisations to achieve better outcomes for the Leicestershire workforce with a workplace health tool being developed for use by partners and staff within their organisation and the workplace charter.

Homelessness Prevention and Housing Related Support - in October 2019 following consultation we agreed a revised approach and new model for homelessness prevention and housing related support. The model provides a combination of 30 beds of hostel-based accommodation and outreach housing-related support for people at risk of, or experiencing homelessness, with 3 full time specialist housing-related support workers.

Warm Homes Fund – the Warm Homes Service supports and educates members of the public and organisations to reduce fuel poverty and provide practical advice. In December 2019, following a successful funding bid which resulted in a £3.4m award, we entered into a contract with E.ON. to deliver a 2-year project to address fuel poverty in Leicestershire. The project aims to reduce excess winter mortality and ill-health caused by cold homes. It will provide physical improvements to the home and financial and behavioural advice to ensure residents maintain a level of resilience and independence to keep warm at home. There will be an additional advisor post within the Public Health First Contact Plus service.

Children Get the Best Start - Child Health

Ensuring that our children get the best start in life is a priority and also an investment in our future. We want to support parents to get it right in the 1001 critical days after birth and to ensure that children are prepared and ready for school, whatever their background.

0-19 Healthy Child Programme - our service model for the Healthy Child Programme comprises a combined health visitor and school nursing service. The service prioritises the health of looked after children, children with SEND, traveller families and those at risk of exploitation.

Breast Feeding and Maternity Support – low breastfeeding rates are linked with inequalities in health, deprivation and reduced life expectancy. Breastfeeding peer support services are available in 6 areas and breastfeeding champions have been nominated in both health visiting and family wellbeing centre teams. The ‘baby buddy’ app and ‘meals on heels’ app have been embedded across the county.

Early Years Support - in spring 2018 we brought together our Early Years Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Service, our Early Learning and Childcare Service and our Early Years Autism Team into a single Early Years and Child Care Service in order to pool our early years expertise. The single service provides support to ensure that young children get the best start in life and that their health, development and learning are the best they can be. The service works directly with children and families as well as with early years’ providers and schools.

Healthy Tots and Healthy Schools – following the launch of new websites in 2018, the Leicestershire Healthy Schools programme (LHSP) will launch a new and updated accreditation process. The new process is aligned with the most recent evidence and guidance and provides schools with the best guidance to improve pupil wellbeing. Both LHSP and Healthy Tots programmes continue to provide a range of evidence-based

workshops for school staff, including staff and pupil mental health, bereavement, RSHE and much more. LHSP is also supporting the delivery of the DfE Wellbeing for Education Return to ensure pupils mental health and wellbeing is supported during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Oral Health Promotion – the Oral Health Promotion Team moved in house to the Public Health Department in August 2018. The service provides oral health training in supervised tooth brushing for pre-school settings, training for frontline staff, oral health resource library and advice and displays. The service works with professionals to promote oral health and prevent tooth decay.

Mental Health

The considerable burden of mental illness means that strengthening individual resilience and helping people with mental illness to recover remain priorities for us. We are a partner in the Better Care Together Mental Health work-stream. The supporting programme incorporates a range of interventions aimed at helping people avoid becoming mentally ill and at mitigating the impact of mental illness in those who experience problems.

Mental ill Health Prevention - our RU OK? website provides information about sources of support. As part of the local Mental Health Partnership group we have developed supporting practices. Mental Health First Aid training is offered to front line staff. Our adult learning service has also designed a number of opportunities for adult social care users including those anxious and depressed. Healthier in Mind is progressing a mental health strategy for LLR owned with local communities. During Mental Health Awareness week in May 2020 councils, police and the NHS across the area came together to encourage residents who were experiencing mental health concerns during the pandemic to seek support. Tailored mental health information, advice and support was available via the Start a Conversation website on a three-tier basis: for those in crisis, who require urgent or emergency help; for those experiencing symptoms of depression or anxiety, who are struggling to cope; and for those who are more worried than usual and wish to improve their mental wellbeing. The resources help to signpost people to the most appropriate support for them in a clear and effective way.

Children's Mental Health - as part of the approach a toolkit has been launched for schools and an emotional wellbeing curriculum pack developed by young people on our County Youth Council. The pack has been launched to Leicestershire Secondary Schools as part of their Mental Health Awareness campaign and includes a variety of activities for work with young people aged 11 to 18. Through 'routes to resilience' we have supported an evidence-based approach to helping schools and families in their work developing the character, resilience and emotional wellbeing of children and young people. The programme has been offered to all state maintained and state funded primary schools, secondary schools and colleges across the county.

Suicide Prevention - local suicide prevention plans are led and delivered by the LLR Suicide Audit and Prevention Group (SAPG). The group consists of key partners and stakeholders from the Council, local NHS trusts, Leicestershire Police and many more. The group also lead the collective suicide awareness and prevention campaign, Start a Conversation.

Start a Conversation is a suicide prevention campaign that aims to build a community that is committed to the mental health and wellbeing of residents. A non-judging environment where care and support is available to those in distress or those bereaved or affected by suicide. Through a raised awareness and open and honest conversations about suicide we believe that every person has the potential to make a difference and save a life. The campaign is led by the council, working in partnership with a number of organisations, from a variety of sectors from the community, that have come together with a commitment to prevent suicide. We would like residents and communities to be more aware of the warning signs of suicidal behaviour and to have an open and honest approach to conversations about suicide.

In September 2020 we delivered a week-long series of events over World Suicide Prevention day to raise awareness of the LLR suicide prevention campaign. The events were taken up by more than 400 people and events ranged from exploring novel research in suicide first-responders to providing suicide bereavement training. The Suicide Audit and Prevention Group also continues to meet regularly and have been meeting weekly since the start of official Covid-19 lockdown, in March 2020. The group are providing a rapid response to support residents throughout the pandemic and are continuing efforts to deliver the local suicide prevention strategic approach, agreed in June 2020.

Physical Health - Sport and Physical Activity

The role of physical activity in improving our health and wellbeing is increasingly acknowledged, helping to reduce the major causes of premature death and illness, as well as the prevention and management of chronic diseases. Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sport (LRS), working closely with the County Council, play a key role to deliver sport and physical activity opportunities which support communities in achieving the UK Chief Medical Officers physical activity guidelines.

Physical inactivity directly contributes to one in six deaths in the UK. In November we supported recommendations in the Director of Public Health's Annual Report, on physical activity. This involves a coordinated approach to promote healthy weight across the life course by a range of different organisations, including an active environment, travel, early years and schools, people and families, workplace and workforces, active communities and physical activity as medicine. A strong overall systems leadership approach being essential. LRS led on developing Leicestershire's Physical Activity and Sport Strategy, which sets out a long-term vision for physical activity and sport and a framework for local action.

Working with the Council LRS, in partnerships with wider organisations implements range of services.

Sport and Physical Activity Grant - the Sport and Physical Activity (SPA) Grant Agreement represents a collaborative commissioning approach in Leicestershire to link up the physical activity related work of the County Council, Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sport (LRS) and the district councils and their local leisure, sport and physical activity providers. Each year, districts produce a commissioning plan, based on the Public Health Commissioning plan, outlining how they will deliver local programmes and campaigns.

Early Years Physical Activity - purposeful physical play/physical activity: high quality training course opportunities and an annual Conference with Awards, that Early Years practitioners or anyone that works with children under the age of 5 can access. Also supporting early years settings to deliver active travel interventions and to promote walking, cycling to parents.

Active Travel - working with the Safe & Sustainable Travel Team to support the School Sport & Physical Activity Networks and local Schools to implement Active Travel Initiatives such as Active Travel Month, Active Travel Grants, School Banner Competitions and Bike-ability.

Active Families - Active Families is a 4-year project funded by Sport England to engage inactive families in physical activity, creating behaviour change and encouraging families to become more active. In relation to weight management, supporting the Leicestershire Weight Management Service to integrate physical activity into the children's group-based sessions.

Workplace Wellbeing - public health and six local authorities have also funded LRS to develop a Wellbeing @ Work package which organisations across LLR can access free of charge to support the implementation of workplace health initiatives. One of the major programmes is the Workplace Health Needs Assessment which provides practical advice on workplace health and standardised survey questions to identify the key priority areas including healthy eating, physical activity, smoking and alcohol awareness and sleep and stress management.

Getting People Active – during 2019/20 £580,294 was invested into County Locality Sport and Physical Activity Plans. £798K DfE funding was also secured for holiday activities and food programmes within Leicestershire and £569K secured for 77 local clubs and organisations resulting from funding officer support. 43 organisations were supported to complete a Workplace Health Needs Assessment, engaging with 6,100 employees. £80,619 was invested in the development of 25 new Satellite Clubs. 58 clubs have been sustained since the beginning of the programme.

Healthy at Home - as the COVID-19 pandemic saw the country fall into lockdown, the Healthy at Home online offer was developed to help support the public get and stay active safely. The Healthy at Home landing page has seen over 8,500 page visits with the 4 key sub-pages on Working at Home, Wellbeing at Home, Active at Home and the virtual activity search engine totalling over 13,000 page visits. A partnership with BBC Radio Leicester saw over 2,016 hours of activity logged by the public on the LRS Activity Tracker during the Active Foxes Challenge. Creative social media content featuring videos, staff imagery and staff blogs was developed to engage the public during the lockdown. Over 4,300 Healthy at Home activity bags containing information and support along with activity equipment were delivered to targeted groups across Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland.

Sports Organisational Support - the Sports Organisation Support (SOS) initiative was designed to provide assistance to sports clubs and organisations to help them navigate through the COVID-19 restrictions. Specialist financial, risk management and health and safety advice was provided to over 100 sport and physical activity organisations to help them continue to operate and re-open safely. The SOS grant fund was established to help clubs and organisations pay essential costs to ensure

they were able to continue operating and provide an invaluable service to the many people that attend them. Nearly £50,000 was granted to support 35 sports organisations in the county through the fund.

School Games Virtual Summer Championships - COVID-19 meant the School Games Championships could not run in its traditional format, however this didn't stop school children from across the county coming together, virtually, to take part in the first School Games Virtual Summer Championships in June. With over 3,000 young people putting forward their best score in a range of challenges, and there were over 15,000 entries into the 4 sports categories. The week-long championships started in mid-June during National School Sport Week and ran throughout the week, with young people able to take part in the challenges and upload their scores to represent their school. The virtual Championships gave even more young people the opportunity to participate and represent their school in this interactive county-wide competition, as the challenges were open to all and accessible, whether they were taking part individually at home, or back in a school environment. 123 schools were represented in the competition over the week.

Active Together - is a physical activity movement designed to support the residents of Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland to become more active. Whilst central coordination of Active Together is driven by LRS, it is designed to be owned and utilised by a wide range of partners to support them to promote consistent physical activity messages which link to their own organisational programmes and outcomes. The focus during this time has been on developing a public facing campaign supported by our partners. Active Together along with the straplines of "My Way", "Let's Do This" and "Welcoming You Back Safely" have been used via social media to promote being active in your local place, return of the leisure facilities and active travel to school. October and November will see an offline offer being develop through use of billboards, ad-vans and radio.

Keeping People Safe

In 2020 we agreed a new Children and Families Plan setting out our priorities for the next three years. We want Leicestershire to be the best place for all children, young people and their families. We also want children and young people to be safe and living in families where they can achieve their potential and have their health, wellbeing and life chances improved within thriving communities. We want to ensure that all children are given opportunities to be happy, healthy and to achieve their best outcomes. We also want children to enjoy positive experiences in safe and supportive families, well connected to their local communities and where necessary well supported by a wide range of targeted support services.

Safeguarding

We continue to work in close partnership with other agencies through the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership to implement strong interagency arrangements for the protection of children from harm and provide a range of support for children in need.

Safeguarding Children – in September 2020 we agreed a new Safeguarding Children Plan to 2021. Areas of development last year include embedding new safeguarding partnership arrangements, a quality assurance and performance framework, engagement approach with schools and young people and safeguarding practice review policy. The partnership also carried out an assurance process regarding mental health and safeguarding children and continued work on Case Reviews. The partnerships multi-agency safeguarding training programme has seen 44 courses delivered to around 1,200 participants across agencies.

In April 2020 residents were urged to be extra vigilant of children's welfare during lockdown and report any concerns they had. The 'Their door is shut. Ours is open' campaign launched following a fall in calls to local safeguarding teams since the introduction of social distancing measures. The Leicester and Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Partnerships were concerned that, despite this fall, cases of child abuse may be on the rise, with fewer opportunities for it to be seen, reported and stopped, with additional pressures on families potentially leading to increased safeguarding concerns for children. Residents were asked to look and listen for signs that may indicate abuse. The campaign was recognised as good practice by the LGA.

During the pandemic children's social care teams continued to carry out vital visits and online contacts to keep vulnerable children safe. Schools staff continued to provide innovative teaching with on line programmes and opened schools including school holidays so essential workers could continue to work. Schools have also provided support to families in need. Our educational psychology service also helped parents and carers support children during lockdown

Ofsted Improvements – in November 2019 Ofsted published a report on the Council's Children's Social Care Services. The report identified considerable progress made since the last inspection in 2017 with ratings for supporting children in care and leadership improved to good. The report also identified that services for children in need of help and protection and overall effectiveness of the service was still undergoing some further improvement to be good. In February 2020 we considered a report on the inspection and agreed an action plan to address the recommendations in the report. Action is being taken to address issues identified, including more

consistent oversight of care plans, quality of case recording, and tackling the timeliness of assessments for children, who are not identified as being in immediate risk of significant harm. This is driven through our continuous improvement plan – Road to Excellence.

Keeping Children Safe and Cared For

Our aim is that all children are living in stable environments and have secure attachments and that families are self-sufficient and able to cope. Like other local authorities we have seen the number of children in care increase significantly over the last few years. Leicestershire had c620 young people in care in 2020. Children considered to be at risk of Significant harm (Section 47, The Children Act 1989) or in need (Section 17) are referred into the service through First Response, who screen contacts and if they meet the threshold for intervention assess their needs. First Response is also the front door into Children and Family wellbeing services. Children and Families requiring longer term social care involvement are supported via Locality based Children Social care teams or the Disabled Children's teams.

The Service has continued to work with partner agencies to identify and support children at risk of criminal exploitation (including Child Sexual exploitation), and children living with the risk of domestic abuse via the Vulnerability Hub based at Wigston police station. Out of hours services are also based at The HUB. Children whose long-term plan is to be in the care are supported by dedicated Children in Care teams. The Care Leavers team supports our older children post 18 to successfully transition into adulthood.

Children's Innovation Partnership – since forming a partnership with Barnardo's to work together on the Innovation Partnership we have successfully bid for £798k for the Holiday Activity and Food Programme to specifically focus on school hunger and to run holiday activities. 2023 children accessed the programme over the summer. Youth engagement funding has been secured to work with around 3,000 children over 2 years on advanced life-skills for 11-14 years olds. We have also secured £234k DfE funding for 18 months to deliver 102 Family Group Conferences, though implementation has been delayed due to Covid-19.

Children's Placement Strategy - the placements and homes where children, young people and their families live are key to achieving our priority outcomes. For our children in care we provide good quality care and placements to help them reach their potential. Our Care Placement Strategy outlines how we design and commission services of a high quality that place children and their needs firmly at the centre. Our Care Placement Strategy also determines what services may be necessary to meet the needs of children both on the edge of care and in care and how permanence for children and young people can be achieved at an earlier stage in the child's journey. The Strategy acknowledges the need to co-invest and co-deliver services with partner organisations to optimise outcomes for young people. Our partnership with Barnardo's is also reviewing and looking to strengthen our commissioning of best value placements for children and young people. A key priority for this partnership is the residential redesign and the establishment of high-quality residential provision for our children in care whose needs are best met, for a period of time not to live in a family-based placement.

Care Placements Support - as part of the Care Placement Strategy, MISTLE, a wraparound therapeutic support project, has been developed and implemented with Action for Children to support some of our most challenging young people in care to successfully experience family-based placements and support their stability moving forwards. This project will end in December 2020 with the establishment of the ART team as part of the residential redesign.

The Department's well-established dedicated placements support team has been instrumental in targeting improving placement stability for young people living in foster care who present the most challenging behaviour. There has also been an expansion of the specialist foster carers scheme and increase in capacity of the independent visitor scheme. Providing children with additional support, mentoring and role models.

Fostering – we aim to ensure that Leicestershire children in care remain locally in the county and to recruit more in-house foster carers. We have been working hard to increase the number of foster carers, recruiting carers for specific groups and to retain carers once they foster. In October 2019 a new fostering campaign was launched focused on what children in care want from a foster carer, all in their own words. The campaign is designed to help people who are curious about fostering to understand the little things which make all the difference for children in care.

With more than 600 children and young people in care across the county, the campaign is a catalyst to help spur on new foster carers looking to make a big difference to a young person's life. The council also hosts monthly events to give prospective foster carers an insight into this hugely rewarding role. In May 2020 a fostering campaign was launched during Foster Care Fortnight. The thirty second video, was shown on Sky TV channels to county residents, and voiced by one of Leicestershire's children in care.

Adoption - in October 2019, residents were urged to consider adoption as part of a week-long campaign. There were 22 children waiting for adoption in Leicestershire. The Adoption Week aimed to find forever families for some of the most vulnerable children across the country. This year the campaign focused on finding permanent, loving homes for children who wait the longest, including sibling groups, older children and those with complex health needs.

Leicestershire has been working in partnership with Leicester city, Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and Rutland to establish a formal partnership to meet the requirements of a Regional Adoption Agency. The Partnership will formally launch in October 2020 following extensive collaborative working over recent years to align practice and processes. The Partnership will ensure a strengthening of work across the partnership to provide high quality adoption services.

Corporate Parenting Strategy – in February 2020 the Council approved a revised Corporate Parenting Strategy underlining the Council's commitment to its responsibility to be a good parent to children and young people in care and care leavers, so that they grow up happy, achieve well and lead successful lives. Children in care and care leavers have been working closely with children's social care teams in developing the revised strategy. The report also looked at progress in extending the role of elected members as corporate parents with 'champions' looking at three areas, education, training and work, housing and accommodation and health. The strategy outlines the vital role played by the council's Virtual School in promoting the education

of children in care through working closely with schools, alternative settings and wider services within and beyond Leicestershire.

Care Leavers – the Leaving Care Team is well established and has been working hard to support Care Leavers. Care leavers across Leicestershire also supported their communities in key worker roles during the coronavirus pandemic. Vital areas the county's young people worked in include roles in healthcare, delivery services and retail. We support them in a number of ways, including with finances and housing as they leave care and begin their adult lives; starting careers and having families of their own. Care leavers are visited regularly by their personal assistant/social worker who will provide advice, listen, and signpost to the right services if they are experiencing difficulties.

Leicestershire Virtual School – the school, also known as The Fox Academy, promotes the education of children in care, working with schools, alternative settings and wider services within and beyond Leicestershire to secure prompt access to quality education, appropriate to their needs. The virtual school support this work through personal education plans, and monitoring including the use of Pupil Premium Plus. The school also leads a broad spectrum of engagement and learning opportunities including music workshops, university experience days, theatre trips and independent living courses. In November 2019 the Department hosted a visit from the DfE National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers who noted the rapid progress made in relation to care leavers, with his view being the authority was in the top ten of improving local authorities.

Homelessness – we provide timely responses to young people who are 16/17 and homeless to support them to remain in their friends and family network. We have worked with housing commissioners to improve the range of options available to ensure the individual needs of young people can be flexibly met and to assist transition to adulthood.

Support for Vulnerable Children

We have agreed a SEND Strategy setting out our vision and priorities for developing support and provision for children and young people with SEND. The Strategy is overseen by a Strategic SEND Board. Priorities include supporting schools to develop their provision and developing local specialist services to ensure sufficient places across a variety of needs.

SEND Local Offer and Advice – our local offer brings together details about local health, education and social care services in one place for children and young people aged 0-25. This one stop shop provides a valuable resource and experiences of services and facilities can also be submitted via the site. Our SENDIASS service continues to provide free, impartial and confidential advice and support on all matters relating to SEND including education, health and social care issues. Its aim is to empower parents, carers and children to voice their thoughts about the support they need in place.

Early Help SEND – our SEND Early Help Service supports and manages referrals for a specialist summer play scheme and has successfully supported families to access the scheme. The team have also supported a range of families of children with SEN and early feedback from these families is positive.

SEND Family Support Team – our SEND Family Support Team has been established to support parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-19 who have a disability. SEND Family Support and Assessment Workers help with information and advice, applying for early help short breaks and specialist summer play schemes and parenting support including managing family routines and boundaries.

Specialist Teaching Service – we reviewed our Specialist Teaching Services and brought them together into a single service including the Autism and Learning Support Team, Hearing Support Team and Vision Support Team. The Specialist Teaching Service has supported children with SEN over the last academic year to successfully engage with education and to reach their outcomes. From September 2019 schools can access early advice regarding autism free of charge, thus preventing the potential escalation of problems.

Educational Psychology Service – we carried out a review of our Educational Psychology Service (EPS) to ensure that we maximise the opportunities for schools and other providers to benefit from expert psychological input into whole school activity as well as timely statutory support. The EPS also supports schools in helping children with emotional needs through a very successful emotional literacy programme (ELSA).

SEND Inspection Improvements - in May 2020 the Council and partners announced preparation of a plan of action and further service improvements following an inspection of the area's SEND offer by Ofsted. The report identified many strengths, as well as areas for improvement, such as the way partners work together to identify and meet the needs of children and their families, the value parents put on the county's specialist educational units and special schools, and the range of health and leisure services available to young people with SEND. There were two main areas for improvement: the way education and health care (EHC) plans are assessed, planned and monitored, and that a clearly defined joint commissioning strategy needed to be drawn up.

SEND Inclusion Strategy to 2023 - in September 2020 we unveiled further plans to improve support available to Leicestershire children with SEND. The Council has developed a range of improvements for services and the offer for families with a child, or children, with SEND. These include the introduction of a handbook for parents and professionals working with SEND children, plans to improve the way education and health care (ECH) plans are delivered and the development of the inclusion service, which offers early support to children and young people. The plans form part of a new SEND and Inclusion Strategy.

Investing in SEND Provision – in October 2019 we reported that ambitious plans to develop local provision for children with SEND across the county were on track. Planning, building and refurbishment work at 15 new 'resource bases' was progressing as part of our commitment to invest over £30m in SEND and create almost 700 extra places, some of which opened for the start of the academic year. The resource bases will cater for pupils with communication and interaction needs which includes Autism Spectrum Condition or social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH). Selected schools in towns such as Loughborough, Melton, Hinckley and, Ashby are either having existing space refurbished, or extensions built. A new 80-place communication and interaction school in Barwell also opened in September 2020. In November 2019 Forest Way School opened a new extension to provide extra space for pupils to learn, as well as increasing capacity by an extra 12 pupils. 11 schemes started admitting

pupils in September 2019 with a further opening from Easter 2020. The council is progressing the expansion of all six existing local special schools. The new provision is geared around local placements. A 15-place centre 'The Shine Centre' for students with SEMH at Winstanley School. Braunstone is also progressing.

New Special Schools - in March 2020 we announced that a new academy sponsor had been selected to run a new special school in Leicestershire. The new 50-place school for pupils with SEMH needs is being developed on the former Oakfield School site in Blaby. The Community Inclusive Trust (C.I.T) has been approved as sponsor. The C.I.T currently has 12 academies across Lincolnshire and an excellent track record in supporting young people with SEND. The school is due to open in autumn 2020. In July 2020 we announced that a new special school had been approved in Shepshed. The new school, which is also being set up by the Community Inclusive Trust (CIT) is due to open in September 2023. Bowman Academy will also be for children with social, emotional and mental health needs. The school will meet the needs of 50 children from across Leicestershire. It will ensure SEND provision is available to families in the county, as close to their homes as possible.

Ashmount Special School - the school was highlighted for its best practice in the 2019/20 parliamentary review. The school was designated as a National Support School by the DFE and headteacher recognised as a national leader in education.

Anti-Bullying – in November 2019 the council was recognised as one of the country's leading local authorities for tackling LGBT bullying and celebrating difference in its schools. The authority was awarded gold Stonewall Children and Young Persons Service champion status - one of only five authorities to receive the recognition. The award success for the council's Beyond Bullying team is a sign of the continued hard work put in by the team and testament to the work being done to promote diversity and equality in schools.

Supporting Families and Early Help

We seek to intervene early, when children are assessed as requiring services above universal provision and provide a range of targeted early help and preventative services to support children and families and ensure that problems don't escalate. Doing this helps save the costs of more expensive interventions for a range of agencies.

Family Information Service and Directory – our Family Information Service aims to provide information, advice and guidance to all families and families to be. Our Family Information Directory provides information on many useful organisations and activities such as childcare, children and young peoples' activities, support groups, providers offering advice, support services across education, health and care and the SEND local offer.

New Children and Families Wellbeing Service – in April 2019 we launched our new Children and Families Wellbeing Service. The service focuses on supporting the most vulnerable families in Leicestershire and brought four existing services into one. The integrated service is delivered from 21 family wellbeing centres across the county and provides targeted support to families in need in a more joined up way. Making the best use of staff and resources. The new 0-19 service is delivered through drop in clinics, group work and/or casework.

Children and Family Wellbeing Services - the service (incorporating the Supporting Leicestershire Families Programme) helps people tackle a range of issues including drugs, truancy, unemployment, domestic violence, health problems and anti-social behaviour. Last year it reached its target to claim for 2,770 families that achieved positive outcomes and surpassed this figure at the end of March 2020 by 82 families. The Authority was the first in the region to meet its government target. Of the 2,770 families claimed for, 2,102 achieved sustained and significant progress across the 6 headline outcomes and 668 families achieved sustained employment.

The Children and Family Wellbeing Service has also continued to provide a wide range of services to families during the Covid-19 pandemic. A mix of face to face visits, video calls, on-line groups and skype sessions have been provided to families and to young people throughout. At the start of the pandemic in March, the Service was able to deliver over 1000 food parcels to families who were struggling to access essentials – these were delivered to families either in receipt of support through the service or who were open to Children's Social Care.

School Support and Place Planning

In April 2020 schools and early years' providers were praised for the efforts of staff as they continued to support children and young people through the Covid-19 pandemic. Schools and childcare providers continued to provide care for vulnerable children and youngsters whose parents were 'key workers'. Teachers and support staff generously took care of families in need – by providing care, food and vital supplies when it was required. Schools also donated equipment, such as gloves, masks and aprons, to support hospitals and other services at the front-line of the COVID-19 response. Staff at the County Council helped to support Leicestershire's schools to keep going through advice and guidance, round-the-clock, to ensure the county's children could go to school if they needed to.

From June nearly 13,500 primary school children across the county were back at their desks, with most primary schools in the position of being able to open for a wider age range. Secondaries were planning to welcome back years 10 and 12. On 29 June there were 18,217 pupils attending schools across Leicestershire, 21.3% of the total school population. 5,215 children of key workers were attending on 6 July and 2,480 vulnerable children.

New School Places – we want children to have access to first-class local schools and remain committed to creating more places where there is growing demand. To create additional school places, we successfully completed projects at 12 different schools. 1000 new primary school places and 32 new secondary school places were delivered. SEND saw five new units for pupils with either social, emotional and mental health needs or communication and interaction needs delivered alongside expansion of existing specialist provision across the county. Work also commenced on two new special schools and a number of additional units will be completed during 2020/21.

New Ashby School - in August 2020 a ground-breaking ceremony took place to officially mark work on an ambitious scheme that will see a new 210-place primary school built in Ashby. The state-of-the-art Holywell Spring Farm Primary School, in Burton Road, is being created as part of a new 400-home development being built in

the area. The school is expected to open for the start of the 2021-22 academic year and will reduce pressure on school places in the area.

First Choice Secondary - in March 2020 it was confirmed that around nine out of ten young people across the county have secured a place at their first choice of secondary school. A total of 89.2% - around 6,600 students - have been offered their preferred place, 5.1% their second choice and 1.2% had received their third-placed choice. The figure for securing a place at one of their top three choices stood at 95.6%, with around 7,400 applications received.

First Choice Primary - figures released in April 2020 showed that 92.4% of children across Leicestershire had secured a place at their first-choice primary school – an increase of 2.1% on last year's figure. Also, more than 7,600 applications had been received - an increase of 0.33% compared to 2019 – with 98% of applicants being offered one of their preferred options.

Safer Communities

We place high priority on keeping Leicestershire communities safe by helping minimise crime and anti-social behaviour, reducing youth offending, supporting victims of crime and providing consumer protection services.

Community Safety Strategy – in February 2020 we agreed a new Community Safety Strategy. Priorities to reduce crime and disorder are coordinated by the Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board. The Council's Community Safety Team works with other agencies to plan and coordinate the work and helps provide a coordinated response to emerging threats such as serious organised crime, child exploitation and cyber-crime. The Strategy sets out a number of priorities including protecting the most vulnerable, reducing crime and the fear of crime, reducing anti-social behaviour, reducing harm from alcohol and substance misuse, reducing the risks of cybercrime and bullying, increasing reporting of domestic abuse and protecting the vulnerable and increasing confidence in reporting hate crimes.

Youth Crime – young people being drawn in to violent crime is an issue of huge concern for communities across the country. In October 2019 the Council was awarded c£480K over two years, through the Home Office's Youth Endowment Fund, to tackle violent youth crime. The funding is supporting the innovative Advanced Life-skills programme in schools across Leicestershire. From intensive family therapy to street-based and school mentoring programmes, 30,000 young people between the ages of 10-14 will directly benefit from the interventions that the Youth Endowment Fund will support.

Youth Justice – during 2019/20 our youth offending team was integrated into a new Youth and Justice Service, embedded within the Children and Family Wellbeing Service. In July 2020 we agreed a new Youth Justice Strategic Plan to 2023. During the last year there has been an increase in staff to focus on providing consistent and intensive support to the most complex children through Project Responsive. This offers intensive youth support to those young children at risk of and involved in Child Criminal Exploitation. A joint project with the CCGs and City YOS has also led to the introduction of a clinical psychologist and a forensic psychologist to offer direct work with children with adverse childhood experience and provide advice to practitioners.

The plan highlights continued positive performance of the YOS in relation to first time entrants to the criminal justice system. The rate of young people receiving custodial sentences is also low compared to others. There still continues to be challenges concerning the % of young people in employment, education or training at the end of their period of work with the YOS. Also risks linked to child criminal exploitation with a variety of work linked to the risk. The service works closely with colleague in children's social care to support children at risk of criminal exploitation and children in care at high risk of offending.

IMPACT Project – the IMPACT project continues to work with young people involved in Anti-Social Behaviour. The IMPACT team carries out street-based work with young people in areas where ASB has been identified as a problem. The team undertakes work in relation to drugs, knives, sexual health, risks of exploitation on line and on the street. YOS has also worked with the Police and other partners to develop a response to knife crime. A knife crime awareness programme has been developed and is being delivered in schools. Multi-agency work has also progressed to seek to tackle 'county-lines' drug dealing activities.

Domestic Violence and Abuse – in February 2019 we approved a revised delivery model for domestic abuse and sexual violence services following a review of need across the area. The revised delivery model aims to meet increased demand on services. In relation to our First Response Services a specialist resource is in place to deal with domestic abuse notifications since October 2017 and is successfully delivering a joint approach with the police. The Partnership arrangements have been strengthened by co-location. Ofsted found that the resource had resulted in tangible improvements to the speed and quality of response to domestic abuse concerns and better safeguards for children. In April 2020 we were selected to receive a £700k share of government funding to support survivors of domestic abuse. The funds are supporting the Hope Project, a multi-agency provision that delivers an all-round support service for men and women from all backgrounds with complex needs, together with dedicated specialist services for BAME groups who may be at risk from honour-based violence and forced marriage. The services include refuge provision for women and their children within the city and county, outreach domestic abuse support for men and women across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, mental health support to suit a variety of needs, substance misuse support and emotional management programmes.

Hate Incidents and Crime – the council operates alternate reporting centres for hate incidents through local libraries. There is also a 'Stamp IT Out' website which has online reporting. Leicestershire Police has a dedicated hate crime officer who provides advice and support to those dealing with hate crime and incidents. In February 2020 we adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism. Hate crime of any sort is unacceptable and adopting the definition helps show that the Council is taking the issue seriously.

Prevent – our Leicestershire Corporate Prevent Group delivers our responsibilities for stopping people becoming involved in or supporting terrorism, in support of the Government's national Prevent Strategy. The group leads on the departments work on Prevent and associated counter terrorism under the national counter-terrorism strategy Contest3.

Safeguarding Adults - in September 2020 we agreed a new Safeguarding Adults Plan to 2021. Areas of delivery last year include implementing the signs of safety approach used in safeguarding children. Safeguarding and mental capacity has also been a focus including through a joint safeguarding conference, and work has been carried out to develop a partnership approach to adult criminal exploitation. Work has also been carried out to review transitions between children's and adult's services for a range of different needs.

Consumer Protection

Our Trading Standards Service continues to play a key role in ensuring a good level of consumer protection, that businesses are able to trade in an environment that is fair and that consumer goods are safe. The Service has also played an enhanced regulatory role as a result of a range of new Covid-19 regulations that have affected businesses in a variety of ways.

Intelligence-led enforcement - the Trading Standards Service adopts and intelligence-led approach in supporting local businesses by identifying and proactively engaging with those that produce or supply high risk products. Complaints levels are monitored to ensure that the Service can intervene as early as possible to reduce the risk of non-compliance, addressing causes of harm and prevent a recurrence.

Safer consumer goods - Trading Standards Officers have continued to examine goods entering the country at East Midlands Airport (EMA) and since October 2019 have seized and recycled more than 185,000 items with a value of over £6 million. In the last three months alone Trading Standards has prevented over 82,000 unsafe consumer items from entering the supply chain, amounting to a saving to society (based on a calculation relating to fires, serious injury and fatalities, and other societal costs resulting from unsafe goods) of over £2.5 million.

Items examined and tested included small electrical items, toys, jewellery and cosmetics. At the start of the pandemic in the UK and owing to immediate high demand for PPE items such as face masks and hand sanitiser, Officers dealt with large quantity of unsafe and incorrectly labelled goods. However, volumes of PPE arriving at EMA have reduced in recent months as more goods arrive via sea rather than airfreight, given that speed of delivery has become less crucial as stocks are more readily available.

Protecting the food chain and food hypersensitive consumers - officer's complete inspections of business and undertake the sampling of feed for farmed animals to ensure it is safe and high standards of animal welfare standards are maintained. This work also ensures that traceability within the food chain is conserved to help prevent or control the spread of disease. Work continues to be undertaken with food business operators to ensure they understand their legal obligation to supply accurate information about allergens in the food they sell so that hypersensitive customers can make informed decisions about whether food is safe for them to eat. Samples of food are also taken to confirm that correct allergen information has been provided.

Covid-19 – identifying compliant Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - as the need for PPE increased following the current pandemic, Trading Standards officers provided support to the Council's procurement team to ensure safe and compliant equipment was purchased for staff to use. Since this work began, over 1300 hours of officer time at almost all levels within the Trading Standards Service have been spent undertaking the review of PPE items offered to the Council or associated activities, including advice to local businesses seeking to enter the market place or diversify their business model.

Covid-19 – ensuring businesses comply with restrictions - the Service is also playing an important role as a result of the range of new and evolving Covid-19 regulations aimed at regulating trading premises, public outdoor spaces and events. Officers have been tasked to investigate matters that in the opinion of the Director of Public Health pose a serious and imminent threat to Public Health. The investigations may require the service to issue, enforce and review closure or restriction notices. Once a direction closing or placing restrictions on a business is in place, the situation continues to be monitored and a process of consultation with the business followed. Directions are reviewed weekly with partner agencies that include Public Health, Environmental Health and the Police.

Scams and financial abuse - having seen a significant increase in scams, particularly those relating to Covid-19, Trading Standards has issued numerous warning messages to the public and businesses via its Facebook page and other channels such as community radio and newsletters published by District Councils. Examples included scams offering discount vouchers from supermarkets that don't exist (14,256 Facebook engagements and callers e posing as health officials to gain financial information (11,537 engagements). These messages not only raised awareness of current scams but also advised residents and businesses how they could protect themselves.

Investigations are also ongoing in relation to a number of complaints about home improvement work where consumers suffer harm to their physical and mental health as well financial detriment. It is estimated that up to £5 million has been saved for local residents or prevented from being lost by residents and the local economy following our interventions in relation to scams and with rogue businesses.

Great Communities

We want Leicestershire communities to be thriving and inclusive places where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities participate and help each other; feel included; are resilient and safe and take pride in their local area. We also want to support communities to embrace diversity and maintain a strong sense of place, celebrating culture and heritage.

Recent work carried out with our communities has included a focus on developing active, resilient and inclusive communities, helping to manage demand for services through prevention and early intervention and supporting communities to design and deliver services locally, sometimes with the support of grants and funding. We have also agreed a partnership statement which sets out how the council will work with the voluntary and community sector in a mutually supportive way to deliver improvements to quality of life.

Community Emergency Management - the Local Resilience Forum - LLR Prepared – has coordinated the response to Covid-19 across LLR. A Gold Command Group has led the response, supported by a Tactical Coordination Group and number of topic and task specific cells. The Council is a key partner on LLR Prepared and officers were heavily involved in each of the Groups. LRF Recovery was also supported including a Strategic Recovery Group, Tactical Recovery Group and variety of supporting cells. In addition to supporting the Covid-19 response the Resilience team also provides a 24/7 365-day emergency response first point of contact for local authorities, assesses and coordinates community emergency information such as flood alerts, flood warnings and severe weather warnings and supports communities in responding to and recovering from incidents. A further area of work is the continuing roll-out of Community Emergency Stores which has encouraged communities to produce Community Response Plans focussed on developing resilience. The Council is working closely with partners through the Resilience Forum to ensure the county is prepared for a No Deal Exit from the EU transition period should that happen. The County Council has in particular to secure effective traffic management around East Midlands Airport, a priority port for Brexit purposes.

The Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority has worked with residents, parishes and the flood risk management authorities to investigate flooding, the priority being to investigate areas where properties have flooded. We have also worked with the LLR Resilience Partnership to ensure adequate plans are in place to deal with sudden extreme weather events.

County Council Communities Fund – in March 2020 the Council announced a £1 million fund to support voluntary and community sector organisations in the county to manage the financial impacts of the coronavirus outbreak. This hardship fund was established to enable local groups, impacted by reduced income from sales/trading, room rental or donations, to keep on providing essential support to vulnerable people, including those isolating and with reduced social contact. Charities, constituted voluntary and community organisations, and social enterprises were able to apply for a maximum of £25,000 and the first awards were announced in April 2020. A homeless prevention service, a centre to support youngsters with autism and an independent foodbank based in Coalville were among the first community groups to be awarded funding.

Towards the end of April 2020, the Council announced it was increasing the amount available through the fund to £1.5m following a very high level of demand from the sector, with more than 180 voluntary organisations applying by mid-April. In total 245 organisations applied for funding and 160 were supported through the initial £1.5m. Some of the community groups that received funding were the Melton Learning Hub, a diverse charity supporting young, older and vulnerable was awarded £17,500 provide foodbank services supporting those in need. Two community groups in Leicestershire that joined forces to cook and deliver 200 meals a week to the most vulnerable during the pandemic. The Coalville Education Partnership (CEP), which delivers education to excluded students, after school activities as well as community lunches to people facing poverty, is one group that carried out vital work and received £22,700 from the fund. While the CEP created hundreds of meals a week, a team of 60 volunteers from the Hugglescote, Donington Le Heath and Coalville Community Response Hub delivered the meals. A voluntary group that responds to medical emergencies which thanked the Council for helping it to save lives in Leicestershire during the pandemic. The National Forest Responders, a small group of trained ambulance medics, received £6,000 to help them continue going out to emergency 999 calls ahead of East Midlands Ambulance Service when required.

In July 2020, in response to the local Leicester lockdown, we announced that we were committing another £100k to the Communities Fund to help community groups supporting vulnerable people in the areas of the county affected by the extended lockdown. This additional funding was well received by voluntary and community groups delivering vital work to support people who were vulnerable or shielding as well as delivering activities which help to improve mental health and wellbeing. In addition to providing grant support to the voluntary sector, the Council has also loaned £90k to the Bradgate Park Trust to help compensate for the loss of income during the pandemic.

Together We Care Award - in recognition of the efficient and responsive way the Communities Fund has supported the voluntary sector, the County Council received an award from the charity Leicestershire Cares, for our role in continuing to support local communities in challenging times. The pandemic has also offered many examples of positive community spirit and shown the vital role played by our communities. With the willingness of many people to volunteer to help others and provide support to their neighbours, particularly the most vulnerable.

Shielding Vulnerable People – we set up a dedicated team to ensure that people identified as ‘shielded’ by the NHS had support and care in place, if required, and delivered hundreds of emergency food parcels and prescriptions. Work was carried out to support and ensure that 14,450 of 25,000 Leicestershire people on the Government’s shielded list registering for support were contacted and provided with the support they needed. 25,059 Leicestershire residents were identified as shielded as at 15th July. 14,450 people on the Shielding List registered for support, of whom 5,301 registered for support obtaining essential supplies and 1,203 registered with basic care needs. The Council made 14,018 calls to people who registered as shielding, and district councils contacted an additional 9,181 people of those responding to say that they had existing food networks, and no identified care needs. 5,658 people received a Government food parcel, with 349 County Council emergency food parcels delivered. 68 volunteers engaged through Voluntary Action LeicesterShire (VAL) undertook activities including ‘safe and well checks’.

Food Support for those in Need – in July 2020 we reported that over £0.5m was being given to food banks and community groups to support Leicestershire residents most in need. The Council used a £540k government grant to help vulnerable people and those shielding access food, toiletries, and other essential supplies through local foodbanks and community hubs across the county. The money also bolstered the work of voluntary groups, supporting vulnerable people and those self-isolating, and helped the council to deliver emergency food parcels to people who were shielding.

SHIRE Community Grants – the SHIRE Community Grants programme continues to be a successful initiative which provides grant funding to VCS organisations for projects that improve the health and wellbeing of people experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage. In 2019/20 90 community-based projects were awarded a total of £368,715. Community grants empower communities to take responsibility for local issues and develop and strengthen the local VCS. They also help reduce the demand on council and other public services. Rural Coffee Connect were awarded £10k towards a pop-up mobile coffee van that will travel to 20 rural locations to engage with rurally isolated people, breaking down social barriers and connecting them to other members of their community. The New Life Community Church in Loughborough established a food bank in December 2019 providing emergency food for over 130 people. Extra capacity was required, and a grant given to support its expansion.

Supporting Volunteering – we continue to support people to volunteer, to help their communities, meet new people and learn new skills. Volunteering is promoted and supported by our Communities Team. Our Volunteer Managers Network has helped to coordinate and promote practices and policies and guide new managers working with volunteers and developing volunteer programmes. The Network helps support hundreds of volunteers in various roles. The Team also took a lead role in working with partners to ensure a coordinated approach to supporting volunteers during the pandemic.

Countywide Voluntary Sector Infrastructure Support Services - support for the VCS in Leicestershire is provided by an infrastructure service contract held by Voluntary Action Leicestershire. The service supports the shared objectives of the Council and CCGs, specifically around managing demand through early, community level intervention and prevention, increasing community resilience and more effective delivery of services by community groups. The service brings together commissioners and sector groups in information, advice and learning events, provides advice and support around topics such as governance, group development and funding and promotes, develops and supports volunteering.

Leicestershire Communities Website – the website provides a range of useful information to help support and facilitate social action in communities and to help people to actively participate in their communities. The website includes resources on setting up a community group and accessing grants and funding. Use of the website has grown steadily and in 2019/20 it attracted 76,000 page views and 17,000 users. The website also now provides an online presence for the Youth Council for Leicestershire and has supported effective delivery of the Communities Fund through promotion and enabling the submission of online applications and grant monitoring information.

Social Enterprises - the Cooperative and Social Enterprise Development Agency (CASE) provide a social enterprise support service across Leicestershire. In 2019-20 CASE supported over 40 existing and emerging social enterprises to develop their businesses through help with: strategic planning; partnership links; developing robust income streams and accessing other sources of funding. As a result of CASE's input, over 100 jobs were created or saved in the social enterprise sector.

Community Libraries Support – there are 35 community managed libraries embedded in local areas and offering a wide range of hub services including adult learning, work clubs, keep safe places, café facilities, meeting areas for community groups and bases for Local Area Coordination, in addition to traditional library services. The Communities Team has continued to work with colleagues in the Communities and Wellbeing Service and with Voluntary Action Leicestershire to support service delivery, collaboration between libraries, sustainability and financial management.

Parish and Town Councils – we continue to support parish and town councils in their role as community leaders and providers of community services. We have made good progress on the development of a Devolution Framework which will guide our future working relationship.

Neighbourhood Plans – the Communities Team continues to support Neighbourhood Plan development. Well-designed plans help communities to take responsibility to develop a shared vision for local neighbourhoods and to shape the development and growth of local areas. There are now 123 active neighbourhood planning groups in Leicestershire which have produced 38 Adopted Plans and 64 designated areas. There are also 250 members signed up to the Neighbourhood Planning Network.

Leicestershire Rural Partnership (LRP) - the Partnership brings together a range of stakeholders to improve services and to support rural communities and businesses. During the past year the Partnership has championed issues relevant to rural communities including rural inclusion and skills, supporting those furthest from the labour market to move closer to work. The Work.Live.Leicestershire (WiLL) project led by Vista, in partnership with the Council and LRP, has enabled access to employment in rural areas of the county. The Partnership has also supported the rural housing enabler project which is increasing the supply of affordable houses in rural areas.

East Leicestershire LEADER - since its launch in 2015 until closure in October 2019 there were 45 contracted projects with a total grant value of £1,147,128. 18 of these projects supported farm diversification and small and medium sized enterprises, 18 increased farm productivity, 6 developed rural tourism, 2 have provided rural services and 1 has supported culture and heritage. Of the 45 contracted projects, 7 remain live this year and are due to be completed by December 2020 when all the grant funding will have been allocated. Despite the Covid-19 crisis causing delays to the completion of the remaining projects, all remain on track to be completed by the end of the year and will receive their grant payments.

Time-banking - an innovative scheme where residents are rewarded for helping others in their community launched across Leicestershire in January 2020. Time4Leicestershire is a skills exchange initiative, which sees people carrying out good deeds for others and being rewarded in return by having somebody do a good deed for them. Part of the national Time-banking UK initiative, Time4Leicestershire is

run by our Public Health team, who encourage people to sign up, register what skills they can offer and see what expertise they could benefit from. The scheme is designed to help people swap skills, connect with their community by meeting new people, contribute to their local community and receive help or support with practical tasks, such as gardening. The benefits for people from being connected within their community include improved mental health and wellbeing as well as improved physical health from engagement in activities.

Tackling Loneliness – the Council has an established priority and strategy to help tackle loneliness in Leicestershire. In 2019/20, the Council has made further progress in its work including a social media communications campaign undertaken during the winter months, to promote the principle of looking out for others, using the strapline 'within your gift to give'. A Council Loneliness Project Team was established with associated programmes of work. A VCS Stakeholder Group was also established to help take forward some of the recommendations which arose at a Loneliness Summit in 2018. The Council's Communities Board approved the development of a new Loneliness Toolkit and the document and associated resources were launched in December 2019.

Friendly Communities of Leicestershire – this open and innovative approach aims to support social action and scale up existing initiatives such as the Friendly Bench, autism friendly environments and dementia friendly communities, to help lessen isolation and loneliness. During the year the Communities Team have continued to work with communities to support inclusive community initiatives.

Equalities – a new four-year Equalities Strategy 2020-24 was approved by the Council in July 2020. The Strategy sets out our commitment to equalities through evidence-based decisions, increasing participation of under-represented groups, and providing inclusive services. We aim that Leicestershire is a place with good relations, equality of opportunity and outcomes for everyone. The Strategy is underpinned by more detailed action plans. Progress over the final year of the Equality Strategy 2016-20 included maintaining a Top 100 rating in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index as one of the top 5 local authorities represented in the Index in 2020. The council also gained Gold level in the new Stonewall Children and Young People Champion Awards in 2020 to build on its work in tackling anti-LGBT+ bullying in schools under the previous Education Equality Index. A further area of work was with partners to develop the first LGBT+ Inclusion Award scheme to recognise the commitment of local business and other organisations to LGBT+ equality. These and ongoing activities such as participation in Leicester Pride support LGBT+ staff and residents. Support has been provided to faith and belief communities during covid-19 through the LRF Faith Cell, to share guidance about funeral and other important life cycle practices, that were impacted during lockdown restrictions.

Leicestershire Interfaith Forum - jointly organised a public event with the unit for Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement (DICE) at the University of Leicester in October 2019 with the suffragan Bishop of Loughborough, the Rt Rev Guli Francis-Dehqani, as keynote speaker on the subject of 'Justice, faith and belonging in a changing world'. The Forum supports a range of umbrella and local faith and belief communities through sharing news about their activities and services that promote good relations and shared values across a range of cultural backgrounds.

Armed Forces Covenant - the Council continues to support the Armed Forces Covenant and Armed Forces Family in Leicestershire and beyond. Work is focused on encouraging local communities to support their local armed forces community and vice versa, promoting public understanding and awareness of issues that affect that community, recognising the sacrifices made and encouraging activities which help integrate the armed forces community into local life. The Council has a strong track record of supporting the armed forces and in the past year has supported a regional Civil and Military Partnership Board to develop and deliver a regional action plan co-ordinating the work of local authorities, universities, military charities and our armed forces. The Council has also worked with the National Defence Rehabilitation Centre to design a programme of work experience placements for service personnel to help them gain experience of working in a civilian environment and to support their transition out of the military. In Summer 2020 the Council was successful in securing the MOD Employer Recognition Scheme Gold award for its armed forces covenant work.

Great Communities – Libraries, Heritage and Culture

Our aim is that our cultural and historical heritage and the natural environment are enjoyed and conserved.

Libraries – in October 2019 Libraries Week showcased the resources that local libraries offer to connect communities, combat loneliness and support people with their digital skills. Libraries Week highlighted the variety of free newspapers and magazines in our digital library, the extended opening hours available through Smart library technology and the types of digital support offered. The range of digital services available across the county's libraries include a free digital library of over ten thousand books, magazines and newspapers offering something for everyone. Visitors to their local library also had the chance to find out about regular digital coffee mornings, offering assistance with devices, getting set up to access the digital library or simply updating skills.

Community Managed Libraries – over 30 sites continue to be managed by local communities. Communities have undertaken valuable work to sustain and develop these libraries as important community assets. In September we outlined how community managed libraries, affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, were being supported. A grant of nearly £60,000 will support the 35 community-managed libraries emerging from the pandemic, with many of them being community hubs supporting the needs of local people. The additional one-off grant towards the libraries' running costs is on top of existing contributions the council is making in financial support. Community libraries have worked enormously hard to generate income through coffee shops, room hire and other activities. That income has been greatly affected, but the libraries are showing tremendous resilience as they recover. The council has supported community libraries with a package of measures since they were launched, including support with some running costs. In September we also increased our support offer to the libraries to allow for a 10-year lease extension and to provide more officer visits for support and training, including for volunteer recruitment, business planning and income generation.

Digital Library Services – in April 2020 digital library services saw an increase in demand during the coronavirus lockdown and the council therefore purchased additional eBooks and eAudiobooks. For every month which libraries remained closed during the pandemic, around 700 new titles and additional copies were added to the collection for adults, young adults and children to access. As well as expanding the selection, it reduced the waiting times for the most sought-after items. Figures showed a 12% increase in digital loans, a 35% rise in eBook loans, and that Borrowbox eBooks and eAudiobooks' users went up by 20%. Members can access thousands of digital books, audiobooks, magazines and newspapers for free through their phones, tablets or computers.

Library Click and Collect - in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, from July 2020 we announced details of a new click and collect library service which was made available across a range of libraries. Selections of books were hand-picked by library staff based on customers preferences, with a loan period of four weeks. Library users were able to request items using a form on the council's website or by ringing their local library. This was followed up from September 2020 by re-opening the library network on a managed access basis where people were invited to book a visit slot.

Summer Reading Challenge Online - the hugely-popular Summer Reading Challenge in Leicestershire's libraries moved online this year because of the pandemic. At the time of writing the 2020 challenge has engaged with 2,000 children and is in its final stages. The year's theme, Silly Squad, was a celebration of happiness, laughter and funny books. Working online, children set their own reading target and collected digital rewards as they worked their way through the books over the summer holidays, collecting additional games, videos and activities along the way. The aim was to encourage children to read whatever made them happy, either books from home or from the libraries vast array of eBooks. It supported their confidence in reading, in what was a time of disruption and change to routine.

Virtual Code Clubs – in May 2020 the Council's libraries' first virtual code club saw more than 25 youngsters create their own animations and games during the pandemic. The county's libraries regularly run code clubs, however lockdown restrictions encouraged the activity to go completely digital. Children, aged between eight and 13 years old, were given a week to complete each self-led session and make their own animations and games, with themes including Rock Band, Boat Race and Lost in Space. The club enables youngsters to learn about coding and practice their skills using a tool that many children use at school.

Isolated but Inspired - a community social media project was supported to collate and curate pictures, videos, artwork and sounds representing how people spent their time during the coronavirus pandemic. The 'CV-19 Isolated but Inspired' campaign project, run by the council's heritage and libraries participation team, invited people from across the county to share their photos and video clips, showing how they lived through the lockdown. The shared contributions create a film to act as a time capsule, demonstrating how people adapted and evolved, both socially and creatively. The project sought out the positivity and sense of community that was evident during the pandemic.

Snibston Redevelopment – major work to revamp the park at Snibston has progressed through the year. Part of the old Snibston Colliery mineral line was moved to lay the groundwork for Snibston Park's redevelopment and to improve access from the town centre through better cycle paths. Work also progressed on planning a new heritage trail, improved country park, a play area, open space and picnic site. Visitors will enjoy cycle routes, mountain bike trails, a new interpretation of the historic colliery site and a new café at the Century Theatre. Work also progressed with the Snibston Heritage Group to provide interpretation and access to the historic colliery buildings and the story of Coalville. In February a ground-breaking ceremony took place to mark the building work starting on the £3m scheme. Not only will the work make the park more attractive for families, dog walkers and cyclists, but it will also reconnect the site with the town and in future provide much needed housing to the area. As part of the plans, the site will also feature solar panels and electric vehicle charging points.

Volunteers Award – in autumn 2019 a project for young people with autism picked up a top award. Project Digby picked up the award for 'Volunteers for Museum Learning' at a ceremony at the British Museum in London. Presented to Project Digby's young volunteers by the British Museum and the Marsh Christian Trust, the award recognises the best and most innovative ways in which volunteers work within local and national museums to engage the public with collections and exhibitions. Developed by the Council and Autism East Midlands, Project Digby was a free five-week programme based at the 1620s House and Garden in Donington Le

Heath. Since the award, more than 30 staff have received autism awareness training. In addition, a guide on autism-friendly activities and how to make autism-friendly adaptations has been created for independent museums across Leicestershire.

Melton Steeplechase Exhibition – in September 2019 a new exhibition on the history of steeplechasing in and around Melton was held at Melton Carnegie Museum. A Day at the Races: Steeplechasing in and around Melton from 1820 to 1938 explored the area's links to steeplechasing, with a focus on the now-vanished Burton Lazars racecourse. The exhibition featured artworks and objects from the County Museums collections and the Melton hunt steeplechase archive from the County Record Office. Visitors to the exhibition learned about how Melton and the wider area played a role in the development of the sport.

Ladybird Books - over 150 people came together at Charnwood Museum to share their memories of the cherished Ladybird books, which were produced and published in Loughborough from 1914 to 1999. The event was part of last year's UK-wide 'Being Human Festival' which celebrates the importance of arts, literature, history, and language in the human experience. Ladybird books conjure up fond childhood memories for many and a new film also offered residents the chance to revisit their favourite titles.

Thomas Cook Archive – in January 2020 it was announced that an internationally significant archive of business and travel history was to be preserved and secured for the future in the county, after the County Record Office was selected as the new permanent home of the Thomas Cook archive collection. The entire Thomas Cook archive, which encompasses records from the earliest days of package travel right up to the modern day, is being transferred to the Record Office in Wigston. The huge collection is made up of thousands of individual items, including minute books and staff records, posters, travel guides and timetables. It also features 60,000 photographic images and souvenirs from Thomas Cook's 178-year history. In addition, the Record Office has also secured a grant from The National Archive to support the cataloguing of this archive.

1620s House – Virtual Tour - in April 2020 mini virtual tours, focusing on the fascinating exterior and architecture of the house were posted on the 1620s House's Facebook and Twitter pages. Armchair historians could watch a new episode every Thursday on the 1620s House's social media pages, where each week a new part of the house, its heritage and secrets was revealed. An expert guide talked viewers through a different room in the house. The 1620s House & Garden is a rare example of a family home built in the 13th century and modernised in 1618, set in beautiful 17th century style gardens.

Bosworth Online Medieval Festival - the annual event at the Council's Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre was affected by the pandemic, but history buffs were still able to enjoy the event through a digital version. The Virtual Bosworth Medieval Festival 2020 took place towards the end of August. Visitors to the website and social media channels from across the world were able to immerse themselves in the virtual festival with specially-recorded videos from re-enactors and traders, including music, cooking demonstrations, a knight school and the Battle of Bosworth re-imagined as a war game by the Battlefields Trust.

Harborough Museum – 2020 marks 20 years since the discovery of the amazing Hallaton treasure near to the small village of Hallaton in South-East Leicestershire. The find includes over 5,000 coins, mysterious offerings and a beautiful and unique 1st century Cavalry Helmet. An online exhibition on the museum website celebrates the discovery through images and description of key items.

Tourism Awards – in October 2019 five county attractions were shortlisted for tourism awards. The Bosworth Medieval Festival, Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre, the 1620s House & Garden, Charnwood Museum and Melton Carnegie Museum were all shortlisted as finalists in the Leicestershire Promotions Tourism and Hospitality Awards 2019. The awards are a tribute to the depth and breadth of our cultural offer, as well as to the hard work of the staff and volunteers involved.

Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre - was named the best small attraction in Leicestershire, after winning the accolade at a ceremony celebrating the best of the county's tourism. The award sends a message that we tell the Bosworth Battlefield story in a range of interesting and engaging ways for visitors of all ages at an attractive and family friendly site. Visitors to the heritage centre have a wide range of activities to keep them occupied, including an award-winning exhibition with eight interactive galleries, a programme of guided and self-led walks around the battlefield trail, Bosworth Discovery Zone for younger visitors, shop and the 1485 Tithe Barn restaurant.

Project Enlightenment - a pilot for a new education programme, which brings together arts, science and history, was delivered at one of Leicestershire's heritage attractions using a £78k grant from Arts Council England and work with partner Charnwood Arts. Project Enlightenment, ran at the 1620s House & Garden and involved schools, artists, young people and family groups collaborating with a diverse range of artists to explore the 17th century Age of Enlightenment. The project used the history and heritage of the council run 1620s site, and its links to the Age of Enlightenment, as a basis to explore the arts and science, technology, engineering and maths.

Green Plaques – in September 2019 a green plaque was unveiled at the former school where a soldier, who wrote poetry in the trenches during the First World War, was a pupil. The plaque was unveiled as a tribute to Hugglescote-born Arthur Newberry Choyce, who became known for his war poetry much of which was written during or inspired by his service in the trenches of France and Flanders. In October 2019 two of Loughborough's renowned suffragettes were honoured with a plaque. Kathleen and Nora Corcoran were prominent supporters of the women's right to vote and helped to establish what became the suffragette movement in Loughborough. The sisters organised many functions to encourage women's involvement in the movement. In January 2020 a clergyman and astronomer, who was one of the founders of the Royal Astronomical Society (RAS), was honoured. The Rev. Dr William Pearson became rector of South Kilworth in 1817 and lived there from 1821 until his death in 1847. During his time in the village, he carried out decades of astronomical observations, first from the rectory where he built a new wing to house his telescopes and later from a purpose-built observatory in the village.

In March 2020 a Leicestershire Regiment soldier who was awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery and went on to be a leading surgeon, was honoured with a green plaque. A lieutenant at just 21, John Cridlan Barrett was recognised for his bravery after leading an attack on enemy positions at Pontreuet in France, just three weeks before the end of the First World War.

VE Day Commemorations – on 8th May 2020, on the 75th anniversary of VE Day, County Hall was illuminated in red, white and blue. The Union flag was also raised in a show of support for all our armed forces. The official VE Day commemorations marked a national moment of remembrance with a two-minute silence and residents were encouraged to celebrate from the safety of their homes. Leicester Cathedral also played host to a virtual service streamed from the cathedral via YouTube. The council also invited residents to share their Second World War stories, family histories and messages of remembrance on its social media channels.

Armed Forces Day – in June 2020 the County and City Councils, in partnership with the Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire and local armed forces units, supported the national Armed Forces Day #SaluteOurForces campaign. This encourages people from across county and city communities to pay tribute to the armed forces community including serving personnel, veterans, reservists and cadets. It's important for us to recognise our armed forces, their service to the country, and the sacrifices that they make to keep us safe. In addition, a new website was launched paying tribute to our armed forces and allowing the counties Armed Forces Day celebrations to move online.

Great Communities – Environment and Waste

Our aim is to ensure that we protect our environment by minimising our environmental impact as a council, tackling climate change and embedding environmental sustainability into what we do. We also aim to enhance the environment across the county and improve the quality of life of residents. In May 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency and made commitments to achieve carbon neutrality for its own operations by 2030. We also committed to work with others and lobby government to achieve carbon neutrality for Leicestershire by 2050 or before. We want to lead the way in creating a clean and green future which will bring economic, social and environmental benefits. A new Environment Strategy was approved in July 2020 reflecting our new commitments.

Net Zero Carbon - in September 2019 the Council agreed to invest £450,000 of funding to develop plans on how to meet our Climate Emergency commitments. A good start has been made by switching to a green electricity tariff, launching a major tree planting programme and working with developers and others to build 'green' new homes. We've already seen real change and initiatives such as LED streetlights and solar panels have enabled us to cut our wider greenhouse gas emissions by 64% to the end of 2018/19 compared to 2008. Signing the UK100 pledge and our membership of the Countryside Climate Network to demonstrate the valuable contribution from rural counties also underlines our commitment to clean energy. A new investment of £16m and a long list of projects signals the Council's determination to tackle climate change. Plans include a 10MW solar farm aiming to create a carbon-neutral industrial estate and replacing some diesel vehicles with low carbon alternatives.

Green Energy and Energy Efficiency - we have switched to a green electricity tariff, so all our electricity is now coming from renewable sources. We have installed electric vehicle (EV) charging points at Council sites which are available for council vehicles, staff and visitors to use. We are also expanding the network of EV chargers at council sites to support the growth of council and privately-owned 'plug-in' electric vehicles. £300k was invested in upgraded lighting, boilers and heating controls at County Council premises last year. The Property Energy Team continues to find ways to reduce the Council's energy consumption and carbon emissions. There are projects in the pipeline to double the amount of solar PV at County Hall and to upgrade lighting to LED at County Hall. The Council has now produced a Zero Carbon Policy for construction projects which includes enhanced building specifications aimed at increasing energy efficiency and working towards the Council's 2030 Net Zero Carbon target. Energy is now incorporated into all construction projects and as a result many projects have had additional energy measures delivered including solar PV, heat pumps and EV chargers. The Energy Team continue to work to deliver low carbon upgrades to all building projects and to embed energy into property processes.

New Solar Farm – in November 2019 we published further details of ambitious plans to develop a solar farm and one of the first carbon neutral industrial sites in the country. The solar farm based on Barrow Road, Quorn, would generate almost 10 megawatts of electricity a year. As part of the plans, the authority is also looking to build a carbon neutral industrial site. The development could include solar roof panels, LED lighting, rainwater harvesting and electric vehicle charging. The development would produce clean, green energy, while building new units would offer local businesses the chance

to get their foot on the ladder or expand. The returns would also generate more than £800k a year, which will benefit services from social care to highway maintenance. Plans for the scheme were formally lodged to the Planning Committee in May 2020. The planned zero-carbon industrial site would be only the second carbon neutral industrial site in the UK.

SHIRE Environment Grants – in November 2019 the Council launched a new 'SHIRE Environment Grant' scheme to help community groups and organisations fund innovative projects to improve their local environment. The scheme is focused toward projects that help reduce the amount of household waste and greenhouse gas emissions produced, improve biodiversity or support the creation and protection of sustainable green spaces in Leicestershire. Community groups and organisations can apply for grants of up to £3k. Projects that have been funded include planting new, wildlife-friendly hedgerows; the creation of a 'green gym' to create a food growing space based on permaculture principles; improving the mix of species of plants on four roadside verges; and a community composting facility. A second round of funding was launched in July 2020.

Vision for Country Parks – in October 2019 the Council announced its ten-year vision for Leicestershire country parks. Over the next ten years we aim to enhance visitor facilities, support more people to get physically active, engage more with communities and community groups, grow volunteering and reduce carbon. We are committed to maintaining and developing our green spaces, which are vital in tackling the climate emergency, improving health and boosting wellbeing. As part of the new strategy, six destination parks, at Beacon Hill, Broombriggs Farm, Bosworth Battlefield, Market Bosworth, Watermead and Snibston, will have dedicated five-year action plans to help deliver the ambitious goals.

Ashby Canal - in September 2019 proposals to transfer part of the Ashby Canal route between Snarestone and Measham to a local charity moved a step nearer. We approved the submission of an application to the Secretary of State for consent to transfer part of the Order to the Ashby Canal Association (ACA), following a consultation which showed widespread support for the proposal. Since 1994 the council has led restoration work on the stretch of canal, with a 500-metre section from Snarestone to the new bridge 62 completed in 2015. However due to limited third-party funding and our own resource constraints the council hopes to transfer the ownership so further restoration of the canal can be progressed.

Tree Management Strategy - in March 2020 the Council agreed a new Tree Management Strategy which will see more trees planted and a greater emphasis on recognising their importance in promoting Leicestershire as an attractive place to live and work. The strategy sets out plans to ensure the long-term conservation, sustainability and development of the precious tree stock for the people of the county and future generations. Trees are an essential resource which provide a wide range of environmental, economic and social benefits, and our focus is to continue to build upon our ever-growing green infrastructure. The Council is responsible for managing approximately 82,000 individual tree specimens and over 400 hectares of woodland on its land holdings. The Council is also working in partnership with the National Forest Company to produce an overview document outlining a countywide approach to tackling climate change and creating a sustainable place through more tree planting.

Tree and Hedge Planting – in October 2019 and in a bid to increase the number of trees across Leicestershire, the council again teamed up with the Woodland Trust to offer local landowners and farmers free tree packs. Designed to help renew and restore existing woodland and vegetation, the packs aim to help regenerate countryside that is under threat from diseases such as Ash Dieback. Each pack includes 45 native trees, and applicants can choose between two different packs. Trees and hedges have an important role to play in keeping our air clean, helping to prevent flooding and providing valuable habitats for local wildlife.

Biodiversity - nature recovery and climate change are at the forefront of the Environment Strategy. In May 2020 Leicestershire residents were urged to stay on the look-out for local wildlife as part of World Biodiversity Day. Recording what they saw on their daily walks using NatureSpot, a website that helps maintain up-to-date county wildlife records. Several other projects aimed at strengthening biodiversity across Leicestershire include the Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership securing £2.7m of investment from the National Lottery to promote, protect and enhance the Charnwood Forest landscape through a programme of eighteen interconnected projects.

Urban Roadside Verges - we have been working with parish councils to give them the opportunity to turn urban roadside verges into dedicated wildflower verges. The Urban Wildlife Verge Project aims to improve biodiversity and encourage wildlife. A total of twelve parish councils signed-up to take part in the project, which will involve volunteers giving up their time to make a difference in their community by weeding, planting seeds and developing more effective management practices to encourage wildflowers at identified locations in the county. The Council have also changed the management of rural verges between towns and villages. This year marked the largest reduction in the areas of rural verges the council has cut, all to allow wildflowers to thrive and encourage pollinators.

Great Crested Newts – in May 2020 we announced that work had begun to restore ponds and provide habitats for endangered Great Crested Newts in Leicestershire. Great Crested Newts, one of the UK's three native newt species, have seen huge decline in their populations over the last 60 years, despite being heavily protected by law. This is largely down to the loss of their natural habitat. The project aims to make existing ponds more attractive to the Great Crested Newt and introduce new ponds, expanding the habitat range of the species. Brabazon Farm in Mowsley and a Kibworth Schools Trust site were identified by Natural England as being areas that could help improve the numbers of and habitat for the species. Further sites located in Leicestershire's country parks are planned for future habitats.

Waste Management

Resources and Waste Strategy – the National Resources and Waste Strategy was released in December 2018 and sets out how the Government will preserve material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy. During May 2019, we responded to several government consultations including consistency in household and business recycling collections in England, a Deposit Return Scheme and Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging.

Environment Bill - we are also engaging with Defra on the Environment Bill which introduces a series of measures that will fundamentally change the way government, businesses and individuals produce and consume products including new legal powers allowing resource efficiency standards to be set for new products and clear labelling enabling citizens to make fully informed purchasing decisions.

Waste Education - in January 2020, we provided theatre sessions to schools with the aim of inspiring the next generation of recyclers to think about reducing, reusing and recycling and to encourage more sustainable behaviours. We offered 50 two-hour sessions to all primary schools in Leicestershire who received an interactive and fun workshop. We also offer free educational workshops, activities and talks to community groups in Leicestershire.

Composting – each year Leicestershire residents produce more than 300,000 tonnes of rubbish and recyclables, some of which is uncooked fruit, vegetables and garden waste which could have been composted rather than put in the residual waste bin. To help we continue to offer cut-price compost bins to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. During 2019/2020 we sold over 900 subsidised bins to Leicestershire residents. Residents can also call on the support of a Master Composter, volunteers who use their own skills to raise awareness of the benefits of home composting.

Food Waste Prevention – we continue to promote the Love Food Hate Waste campaign in association with WRAP (Waste Resources and Action Programme) and its national campaigns, including the 'Keep crushing it' campaign which highlighted the importance of not wasting food. During the national lockdown due to Covid-19, household food waste in the UK reduced dramatically and the campaign aimed to help citizens to Keep Crushing It and reduce food waste for good.

Recycling – in September 2019 the council teamed up with Recycle Now as part of Recycle Week and lit up its headquarters and shared recycling tips to encourage residents to think about what they throw away and how to recycle right. Just under half of all household waste in Leicestershire is currently recycled or composted, however items such as used nappies and food waste are still being disposed of incorrectly in recycling bins across the county, which can spoil recycling. The council wants to inspire residents to make small changes, like rinsing jars, tubs and containers before recycling, or reusing plastic tubs for storage before recycling them, in order to have a big impact on our environment. These messages were accompanied with a video highlighting the recycling process and the problems associated with contamination. During August 2020 we took part in some research to understand why people contaminate their recycling and we will utilise the findings to inform our messages.

Real Nappies – the average child can need 5,000 to 6,000 nappy changes before potty training is complete. We offer a free reusable nappy trial kit to Leicestershire residents to reduce the amount of disposal nappies which make up approximately 6% of the household waste bin. The kit contains a variety of different nappies along with wraps and liners and allows the opportunity to see which nappies suit best over a period of four weeks. During 2019 we distributed over 60 nappy lending kits to Leicestershire residents.

Environment Action Volunteers - during 2019 we consolidated our separate volunteer schemes under one brand, called Environment Action Volunteers. We offered modular training and continued ongoing development opportunities. The Environment Action Volunteers can specialise in a variety of topics such as food waste prevention, composting, biodiversity and carbon reduction and help Leicestershire residents establish positive environmental behaviours.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic our engagement activities have been suspended with more digital events and engagement opportunities being developed and delivered in order to inform and engage on waste prevention, reuse and recycling and home composting.

Recycling and Household Waste Sites – the Council provides 14 sites across the county. A programme of works at the Recycling and Household Waste Sites (RHWS) and Waste Transfer Stations (WTSS) has continued to ensure ongoing environmental compliance and efficient service provision. This includes improvements and a range of preparatory work for future projects. In November 2019 our Shepshed RHWS reopened on schedule following essential maintenance and improvement works. We have also been focusing on raising standards and reducing risk; we have commenced the development of a Quality Management System and Occupational Health and Safety Management System.

Waste Treatment - the Council continues to make efforts to reduce reliance on landfill and increase the use of treatment through existing arrangements. We have also commenced the procurement of additional waste treatment capacity. This will ensure the Council's reliance on landfill as a disposal method for residual waste continues to reduce and we will be able to meet targets set in the National Resources and Waste Strategy.

Waste Transfer Station – in October 2019 we agreed to use part of the land at Interlink Business Park, Bardon for a waste transfer station. The planning application for the waste transfer station was submitted in August 2020; we expect the application to be considered by the Development Control and Regulatory Board by the end of 2020. The new waste transfer station will significantly improve our service resilience and support future service changes likely to arise out of the National Resources and Waste Strategy.

Corporate Enablers – Ensuring a Sustainable and Successful Organisation

Over recent years we have been dealing with major funding cuts and pressures by transforming service delivery and working with partner agencies to integrate and share services. The Council this year has also had to respond to the biggest crisis since the Second World War - the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has had and continues to have a profound impact on local government and on the Council's finances. Current estimates are that the pandemic will cost the Council £90m in 2020/21.

Covid-19 - Corporate Response - the Council has worked hand in glove with the police, NHS and other partners, to do everything it can to support and protect residents. Whilst a variety of contingency plans are always in place, the more detailed Council planning for COVID-19 began in earnest in early February. Business continuity plans were implemented across the Council, which included the identification of the most vulnerable service users to ensure that there was capacity to support them. Non-essential work was risk assessed and put on hold to free staff capacity to enable the Council to deploy rapid responses to ensure core services were delivered and that residents and businesses continued to be supported.

The Council's Crisis Management Group (CMG) met frequently to oversee the Council's response across key issues. CMG was supported by a corporate Resilience Planning Group (RPG) which met four or five times a week including dedicated meetings focused on preparing for 'recovery'. The Council has worked closely with partners on a range of challenges including the supply of PPE, shielding of vulnerable people, co-ordination of volunteering, public health, regulatory and economic advice and excess deaths planning, and has been chairing many of the Resilience Forum cells responding to specific issues.

Thousands of the Council's staff working in areas such as adult social care, school support, children's care, transport, public health, communities, emergency management and back room support staff continued to make a big difference to people's lives despite often having to work remotely and in new ways. 90% of staff were working from home in the early stages of the pandemic. A range of staff were also quickly redeployed into new roles to continue to deliver the support required. County Hall was lit up in blue and green on a number of occasions to thank and celebrate the work of carers and key workers during the pandemic.

Covid-19 Recovery Plans - in June 2020 the Council agreed new recovery plans in response to the pandemic. Supporting communities and the local economy were put at the heart of the plans to help Leicestershire recover, as well as financial stability, tackling climate change and making the most of digital services. Given its major financial challenges the council is also updating all its service plans to minimise costs and ensure a range of options for future service delivery are considered. The council also re-prioritised its capital programme to cover key priorities only and is identifying new savings and spend reduction options. It will not be sustainable for all services to return to levels and outcomes that were being delivered before the pandemic. The first service recovery plans were completed at the end of June 2020 with expected iterations as and when services can transition to a new business as normal. Milestones are also being guided by the UK's national government Recovery Strategy. The Council will also carry out a review of its Strategic Plan linked to a review of the MTFS and Capital Programme.

Transformation Programme – we are continuing to transform local services in order to deliver significant savings whilst seeking to maintain or improve outcomes. However, the scale of the financial and transformation challenge is increasing. The simple changes have been made and the straightforward savings long-since delivered. What remains is complex change, often involving multiple partners and many risks. During 2019/20 the Transformation Portfolio comprised of over forty initiatives across Council services including support to the new integrated sexual health service, the Early Help and Family Wellbeing service, Smart Libraries and reviews in social care direct payments and personal budgets. Efforts have continued on the High Needs Block Programme, including the completion of the school's capital programme, development of the inclusion offer and improvements to key decision making processes.

Covid-19 has given greater urgency to the underlying drivers for change set out in the Council's Strategic Change Portfolio – financial, environment/carbon reduction, digital value and new ways of working. In recent months, the latter programme has refocussed to make all Council buildings and services COVID-secure – ensuring clear guidance is in place for managers and staff to work safely.

Corporate Asset Investment Fund – our Strategy sets out the basis on which we invest some of our financial resources to generate income to support front line services. The Strategy was updated in 2019 to reflect the Declaration of a Climate Emergency by the Council and so future developments will be energy efficient with a low carbon impact. In September 2020 a report showed that we generated £7.1m income from our asset investment fund over the previous 12 months (a slight increase to last year) along with £39m of capital growth in value. The innovative but prudent management of council's assets and money means that the Fund can grow carefully and ensure that it can provide opportunities for new jobs and supporting the economy. Our Investment Fund portfolio now totals £171m, compared to last year's £132m – a 26% increase. It includes buildings at LUSEP, Apollo Business Park (Coalville), Airfield Business Park (Market Harborough). New developments at Lutterworth, Market Harborough and Quorn are in the pipeline as well as longer term housing land schemes around the county.

Commercial Services – the Council approved a Commercial Strategy in June 2018 and considered progress in June 2019. The Council has recently been shortlisted in the Best Commercial Council category in the Municipal Journal Awards, highlighting the development of the commercial traded services operation and related skills. The finalist's brochure also references how the service supports the wellbeing of the community by improving quality of school meals and ongoing accommodation through the Social Care Investment Project. Most services were closed or significantly affected by the impact of Covid 19. Beaumanor Hall, our cafés and the Century Theatre were closed, School food continued a limited service providing meals to the children of key workers, while LEAMIS continued providing their services remotely. Over time venues have reopened and the meals served by school food are increasing week by week over the Autumn Term.

Strategic Property – our Strategic Property Services continue to proactively manage all property and land to ensure that the council has the property it needs to support service delivery in the most effective and efficient way, supporting performance improvements and increasing productivity. Recently the role played by the council's asset investments has supported housing, infrastructure and economic development.

Workplace Strategy – our Workplace Strategy sets out how the Council will maximise the use of its property portfolio and reduce operational property costs. Savings are progressing through the rationalisation of our use of satellite offices and increasing usage of County Hall, as well as the potential to rent out further areas of the building.

Digital Strategy and ICT – last year saw investment in the ICT infrastructure of £0.9m with a new storage area network, completion of the rollout of Windows 10 and Microsoft Office 365. There was also significant investment of £1.4m in the Fit for the Future Oracle system replacement. Major IT support was deployed to implement mobile and home working in response to the covid-19 pandemic, including provision of laptops and other technology to a wider range of staff, as well as enhancements to the speed of the council network and servers.

Website Rating - in July 2020 our website was ranked the most accessible among all county councils. The website climbed 34 places to be placed fifth out of more than 400 councils, whose sites were audited as part of the Silktime Index, a public list of websites graded for accessibility. The audits take samples of up to 125 web pages from each website and tests these against around 200 key criteria. The Council's website achieved a 95% score. Between April and June 2020 more than a million visits were made to the website. The website has been more popular than ever during the coronavirus pandemic as people need clear, transparent information.

Business Intelligence - in 2020 we launched a new Business Intelligence Strategy for the Council which sets out our vision and priorities for the next four years. We have come a long way since the first data and business intelligence strategy was introduced in 2015. We now have a more modern and effective approach to business intelligence centred on the use of Tableau dashboards. We provide daily data to support the delivery of front-line services as well as producing insight to inform strategic decision making, planning and commissioning. The Council is a data rich organisation and we need to maximise the insight we can gain from our data assets to help us make better decisions and plan for the future. The strategy sets out how we intend to build on the firm foundations established over the last four years.

People Strategy - an evaluation of the Council's current People Strategy 2017-2020 was undertaken earlier this year which involved the engagement of a number of key stakeholders in the organisation. The results showed that overall the strategy has been implemented well and has achieved a number of positive results. Further work is required to embed some areas to support the Council in achieving its Strategic Plan and Strategic Change Portfolio. This will be achieved within the new People Strategy – 2020-2024.

Staff Wellbeing – the number of days lost to sickness absence during 2019/20 was 10.07 per FTE. This remains higher than our target. The number of referrals to the staff counselling service has also increased with 2,051 counselling sessions provided during 2019/20. Work continues on the implementation of extra support to employees as well as Attendance Management Support Action Plans, to support the drive to help staff with reduced sickness. Earlier in the year, to provide additional support to employees with stress and wellbeing issues, the Council launched a new support programme that can be accessed by all employees. The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provides a confidential telephone counselling and self-help service. The EAP works alongside the current counselling service and provides a service on a 24 hour, 365 days a year basis.

Equalities - in July 2020 the Council agreed a new Equalities Strategy to 2024 and supporting action plan. The Council is aiming to make Leicestershire a place where equality is at the forefront of council services as well as the experiences of everybody in our communities. We want to have high levels of leadership and continue to improve our performance in advancing equality of opportunity and celebrating diversity and inclusion. We also want Leicestershire to be a place where there is equality of opportunity and good relations with and within its communities. The Council has been proactive in enabling discussion on the issues arising from the Black Lives Matter movement. There has been a special staff newsletter, a “Big Conversation” staff seminar, e-training on unconscious bias, and services have held their own events. Work continues to focus on improving equalities evidence, BAME staff progression, improving EHRIA processes, making information accessible and stronger and more visible communications. We are committed to challenging discrimination in all its forms, providing inclusive and responsive services and strengthening community relations. The new strategy will help us to deliver on these aims.

Financial Planning and Strategy - our last four-year financial plan set out the need for £80m savings but also £16m of investment to tackle climate change, an extra £34m to support vulnerable people and £7m to top up road maintenance budgets. Supporting vulnerable people, tackling climate change and delivering infrastructure were at the heart of the 2019/20 budget. Last year’s budget also included a £100k increase for Shire Grants and £75k extra to help trading standards protect residents from scams. The Council in February 2020 also approved a £600m capital plan featuring a range of investment supporting homes, new roads, school places and social care accommodation and further rolling out broadband as well as maintaining roads and drains. Plans included creating 6,400 more school places, 5,900 mainstream and 500 SEND places, expanding adult social care accommodation and rolling out high speed broadband. Since the MTFS was approved the Council’s financial position has been impacted significantly by the pandemic. A revised capital programme has been approved which reduces the programme by £115m over the four years.

Most Productive Council – in November 2019 the County Council was named as the most productive council in the country for the third year running in the table compiled by consultancy firm IMPOWER. The Index measures the performance of 149 councils against outcomes per pound invested, through seven different service lenses. The Council is one of the lowest funded in the country and this has meant it needs to ensure innovation to drive down costs so that we get the most out of each pound.

Overview and Scrutiny – one impact of the pandemic has been on public meetings. The Council has adapted quickly to make use of technology to hold public meetings virtually, with meetings webcast live allowing the public to engage in the process. Committees have also moved to paperless meetings following a successful trial. The work of overview and scrutiny is critical in ensuring the council’s budget and performance is closely monitored, that services are being delivered effectively and efficiently and that they meet the needs of local people. Environmental concerns have been at the top of the agenda for a number of committees including in plans for economic development, major transport infrastructure, or in the health and care economy. Issues raised include clearer delivery plans for major infrastructure, biodiversity and emissions, cancer waits and delayed transfers of care, completion of child assessments in 45 days and the progress and impact of transformation projects.

Recovery from the impact of covid-19 will take years rather than months given the social, emotional, physical and economic consequences. Scrutiny will play a key role in monitoring how the recovery plans impact on service users and local communities.

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Leicestershire
County Council

Annual Performance Compendium

| 2020



Published December 2020

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PART 1: Inequality in Funding and Fair Funding Campaign

Low funding remains the Council's Achilles heel and without a fairer system local services have increasingly been cut to the bone and council tax increased. The Council's financial position moving forwards continues to be extremely challenging following the impact of the corona-virus on top of ten years of austerity budgets and spending pressures, particularly around social care. The list of county authorities with financial continues to grow - with some counties moving to provide services only to the statutory minimum. The County Council being at the bottom of the funding league has major implications for the provision of services to the people of Leicestershire and for council tax levels.

Extent of Funding Inequality

In terms of the scale of inequality, Leicestershire would be £366m better off if we had the same income per head as the highest funded authority, the London Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. The Core Spending Power Charts (overleaf) set out the extent of current funding inequality. An analysis of funding by PwC in 2019 found that the more generous funding for London boroughs has allowed them to provide more services for their residents while maintaining some of the lowest council tax rates in the country. Given Kensington & Chelsea's funding per head our budget would be over 70% higher and we would be looking to invest in services and not cut them. By 2021 we will have taken almost a quarter of a billion pounds out of the budget. This is why we must succeed in securing fairer funding, so that we can fund statutory services on an equitable basis.

Lowest Funded County

Leicestershire remains the lowest-funded county council in the country with greater risks to service delivery and improvement as a result. If we were funded at the same level as Surrey we would be £106m per year better off. Some of the higher funded counties have traditionally been the better performing ones, though even these are now reducing service standards. Leicestershire's low funded position means that the scope for further savings is severely limited compared to other authorities.

Without fairer funding the forecast position will make it increasingly difficult to maintain good delivery levels and target improvements in response to key local issues. Delivery of the February 2020 MTFS required savings of £80m to be made from 2020/21 to 2023/24. The MTFS set out in detail £23.6m of savings and proposed reviews that will identify savings to offset the funding gap in 2023/24, which the pandemic has increased to £50m. A further £17m savings are required to ensure that High Needs funding can be contained within the Government grant. The coronavirus pandemic has further impacted the Council and worsened the financial environment. Balancing the books will be harder than ever. Without fairer funding and other major savings initiatives, we are increasingly cut to the bone of public services.

National Review

For a number of years, the Council has been pressing the Government for change – and they agreed that a new approach was required. The Government announced that it was revising the way in which local government funding was calculated, with the aim of having a new system in place in the future. However, the implementation of the Fair Funding review as well as a 75% business rates retention scheme have now both been postponed.

Alternative Funding Model

Over two years ago, we presented a new simplified funding model based on factors that drive demand for local services. It allocates money in a fair way, based on need, and narrows the gap between the highest and lowest funded councils. If implemented the funding model would unlock an extra £47m for Leicestershire, reducing the need for cuts. This would be a more just way of distributing money and importantly would give Leicestershire its fair share.

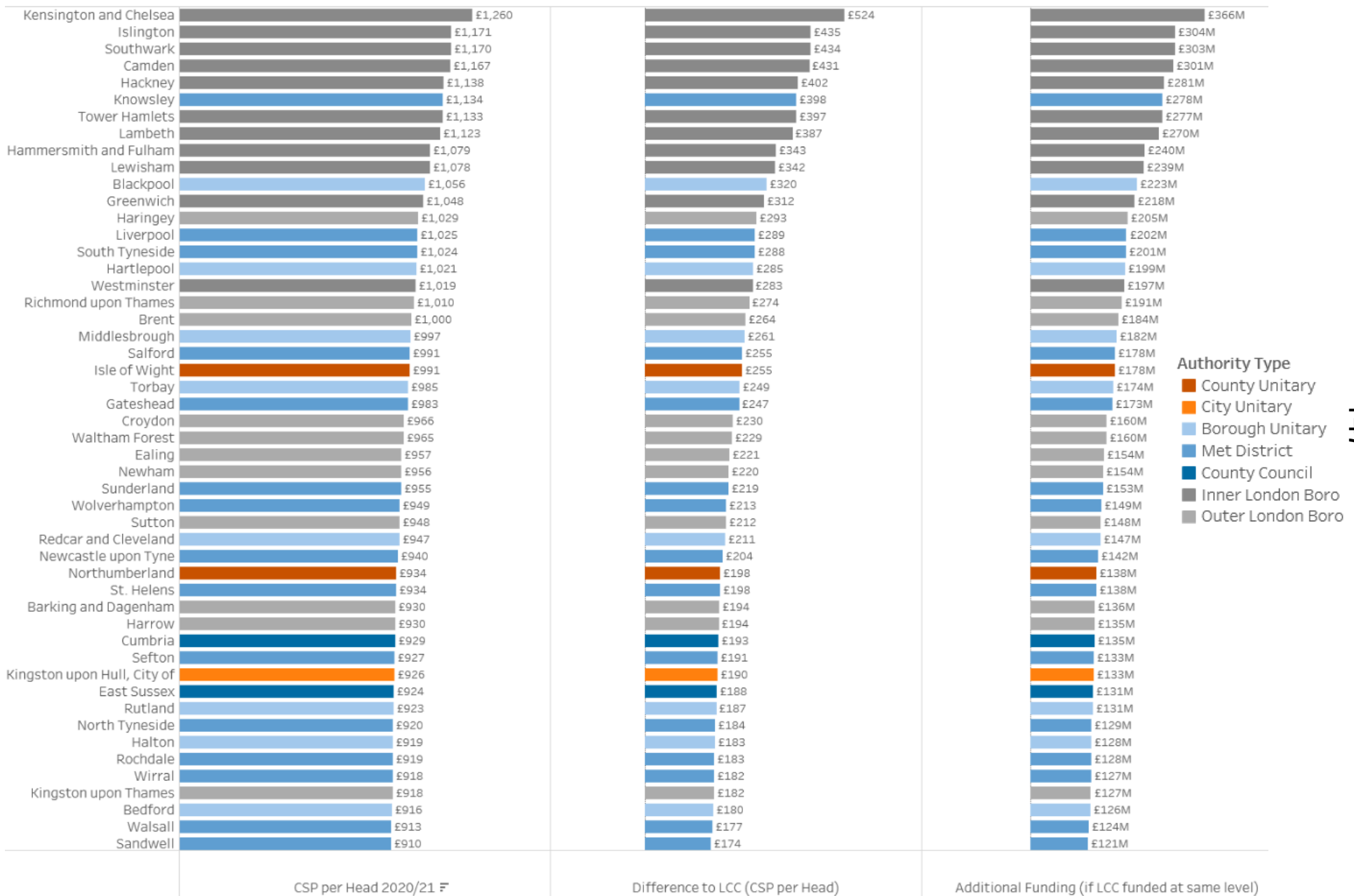
Fair Funding Campaign

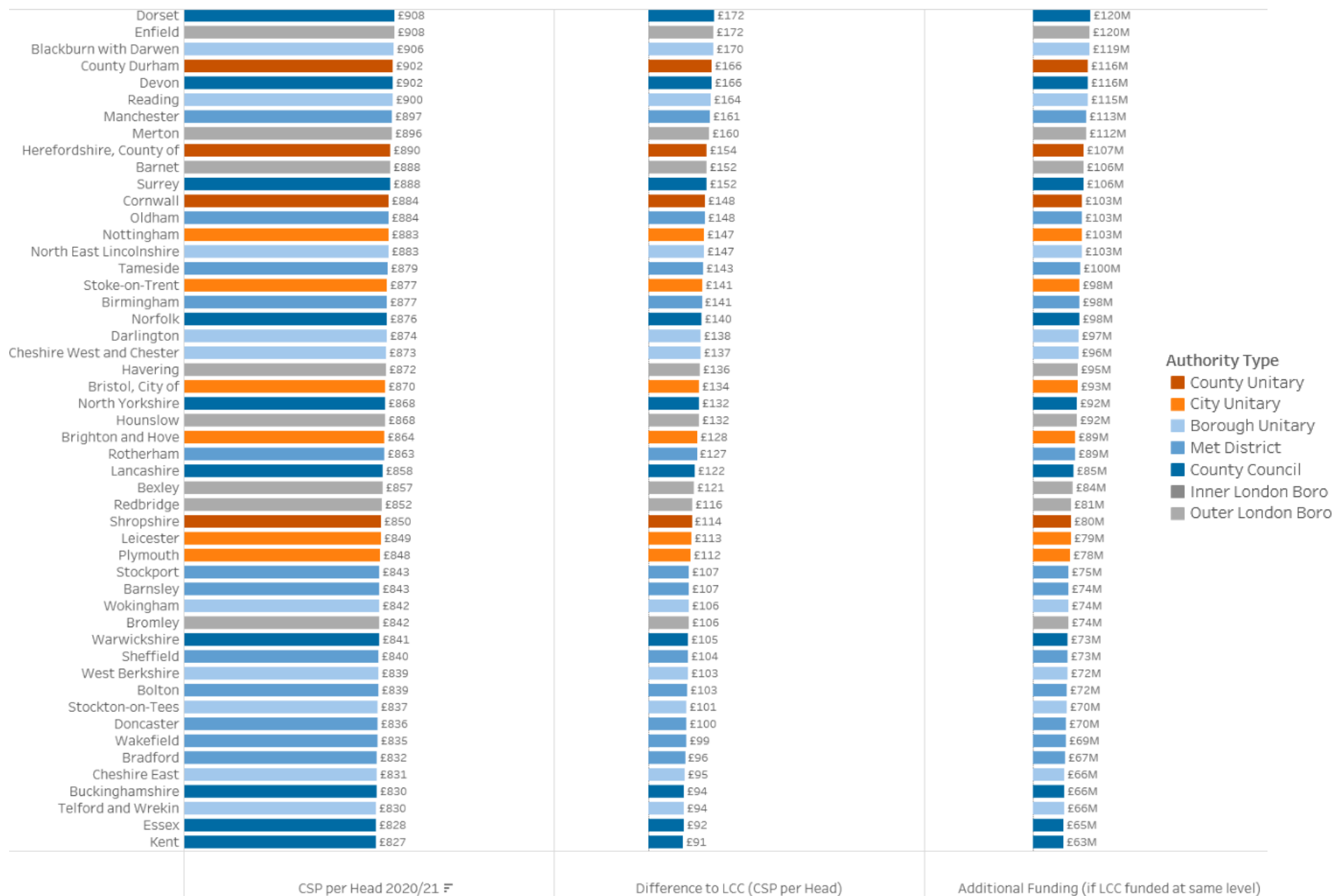
We continue to campaign to ensure that Leicestershire gets a fairer deal. The current funding system is out of date, complex and unclear and based upon old systems which focus heavily on past levels of spending. County Councils have suffered most from the current outdated system of council funding, hence the Council's campaign for fairer funding. The last Government consultation on fair funding was welcome as it outlined a simple formula which is more responsive to population levels and demographics – the failure to progress this is of significant concern.

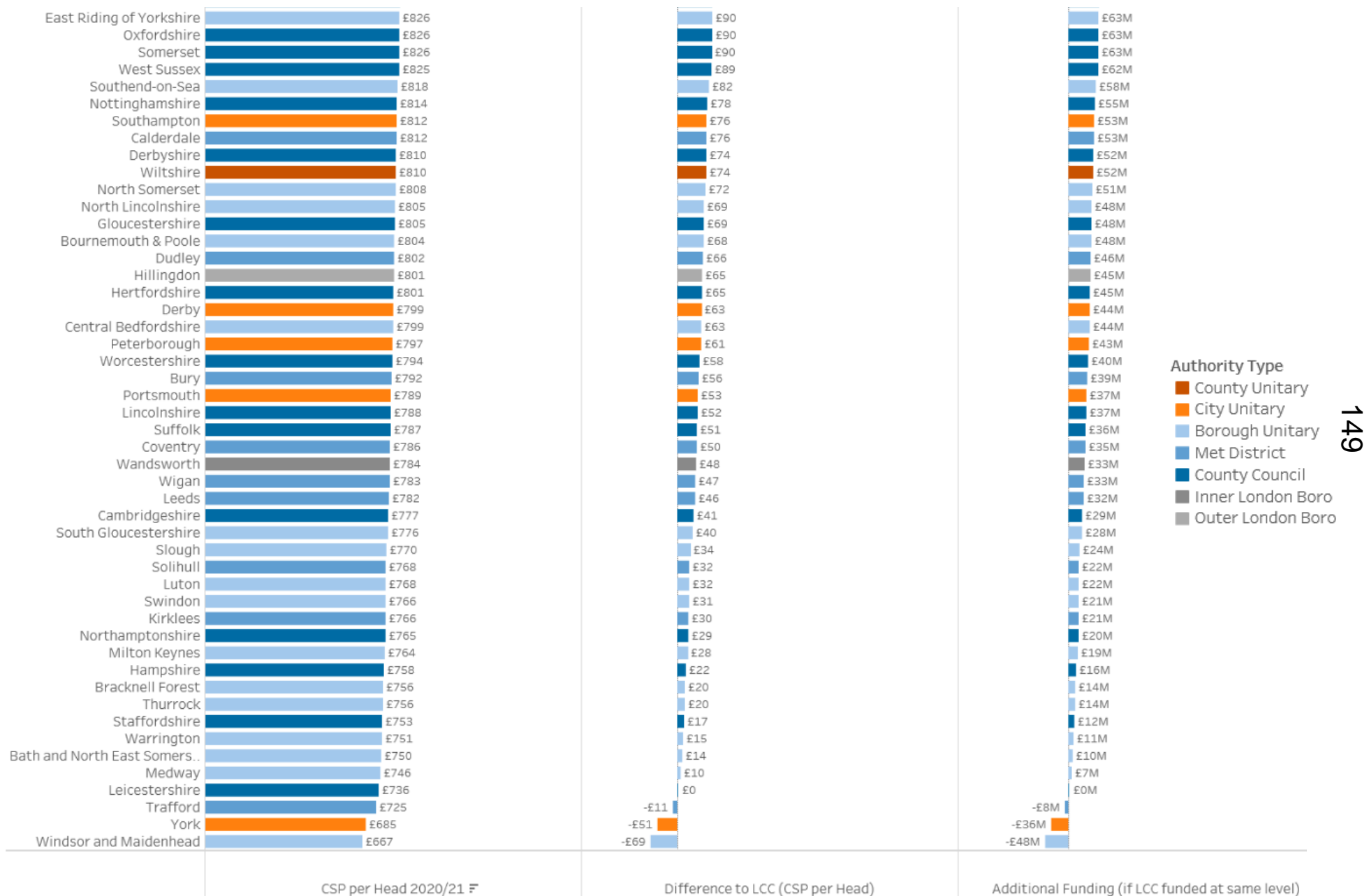
Impact of Cuts on Performance

The extent of service reductions made has already impacted most areas of service delivery and some areas of performance and any further cuts will put at risk other priority areas. The later sections of this report set out the current performance position, service pressures and current risks to delivery. These pressures have been further exacerbated by the financial and service implications arising from the impact of the corona-virus on residents, communities, services and the Council.

Core Spending Power Charts: Funding Per Head 2020/21







PART 2: Financial and Service Pressures

The cost and demand pressures we face, exacerbated by the corona-virus pandemic, is putting the Council's financial position under extreme strain. Over the medium term, the combination of an ageing and growing population and other service challenges and pressures, as set out below, will put us under further financial pressure, with a significant gap in funding forecast.

Institute for Fiscal Studies 2019 Analysis

In May 2019 the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) highlighted that the future funding of local government would have 'profound implications' for the type of country England will be. The IFS said that current plans for councils to rely on council tax and business rates for the bulk of their funding didn't look compatible with the expectation of what councils should provide. We will default to a situation where the services councils can provide are gradually eroded without an explicit decision being taken.

In November 2019 the IFS reported that social care was swallowing up such high proportions of council spending that other services had suffered cuts of 40%. In its first annual report on local government finance, the IFS said budgets were increasingly focused on meeting statutory duties, with 57% of councils' non-education service budgets consumed by adults and children's care services. Spending on concessionary bus passes accounted for a quarter of all highways and transport spending. Spending per resident on culture and recreation and housing had fallen by 50% on average and highway maintenance by 53%.

Council Funding Pressures

In May 2019 the County Council's Network (CCN) reported analysis by PwC on the financial sustainability of councils up to 2025. The analysis showed a funding black hole of more than £50bn over six years as a result of rising costs and demand for services, which would mean yearly council tax rises, new charges for services and more cuts. It said that unless extra funding was provided only the bare minimum of services would be possible with many vital services all but disappearing. The £50bn would only keep services standing still and not improve them or reverse funding cuts over the last nine years. Since the report was written, council finances have been further impacted by corona-virus response and recovery costs, adding further to the critical need for sustainable on-going service funding.

In February 2020 Ministers acknowledged that more funding would be required to put councils on a sustainable footing. It was also acknowledged that fixing social care was one of the defining issues of the generation.

In April 2020 it was reported that finance directors of all types of council were contemplating issuing Section 114 notices amid budget shortfalls due to Covid-19 related costs. CCN estimated county cost pressures of £1.3bn and lost income of £754m, excluding the impact of lost business rates and council tax. CCN also estimated a care cost burden of £1bn as a result of the pandemic. In May 2020 it was reported that many of the 22 local authorities across Yorkshire were considering making a joint declaration that they had run out of money. In June 2020 it was reported that more than 100 councils in England had no reserves to draw upon to cover the financial impact of covid-19.

It was also reported In June, by the Auditor General, that the use of one-off funding measures to prop up local government was inefficient and a system to bring long-term stability was required. He described local government's financial situation as serious. The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) warned that soaring costs for adult care along with indebted local authorities struggling to balance budgets post virus were among the key risks to the government's spending plans.

In August a leaked Cabinet Office report warned that 1 in 20 councils were already at high risk of financial failure. A report by Moody's Investors Services also suggested that UK local authorities were set to be hardest hit financially by the Coronavirus among the five largest European economies. A range of councils had already been forced to implement spending controls.

Council Tax - in February 2020 pre-corona-virus research by the County Councils Network showed that councils already had a funding gap of £19.1bn over the next five years, despite planning council tax increases. Of 133 single/upper tier councils surveyed, 116 were planning to increase council tax by the maximum 3.99% allowed without a local referendum. **The average Band D bill in counties would be £1,853, 40% higher than the average for inner London of £1,332.**

CIPFA/ILG Performance Tracker – published by the Institute for Government (IFG) and CIPFA, *Performance Tracker 2019* looks at performance, demand and spending on nine public services for the next five years including GPs, hospitals, adult social care, children's social care, neighbourhood services, police, prisons, courts, and schools. The 4th edition of the service performance tracker was launched in November 2019. The report finds that all public services analysed have seen some decline in performance – either in their quality (the standard of public service provided and how satisfied users are) or scope (the range of services provided and the number of people able to access them). Demand is rising particularly quickly for health and care services because of the ageing population, an increase in number of people with multiple health conditions and rising life expectancy for people with physical and learning disabilities.

In adult social care, the service facing the most pressure, any government would have to spend nearly £1 billion more just to keep pace with demand. The report's authors express serious concerns about rising prison violence and about the scope of local government services despite cash injections from the Johnson and May governments.

Local Growth Pressures and Population Growth

In June 2019 the Council highlighted the need for it to find hundreds of millions of pounds to pay for new roads and schools to cope with Leicestershire's increasing population. Currently 706,000 people live in the county, but projections say that number will rise 23% over the next 25 years – largely due to people living longer. We estimate that some £600m will be needed to pay for new roads and schools to accommodate new housing and businesses. With 22 extra schools needed. Recently there have also been increased demands on the authority due to unprecedented levels of infrastructure growth.

County Council Budget Overspend - 2019/20

A report in June 2020 highlighted the growing pressures that affected a wide range of council services in 2019/20. The rising cost of placements and transport for young people, challenges recruiting social workers and increased fees for care providers were some of the areas highlighted. It showed that the authority recorded an overspend in the last financial year of just over £3m. The demand pressures that existed before the coronavirus crisis haven't gone away. In particular, the impact of special educational needs and disability reform and the growing national concern about the financial difficulties this placed on councils. The coronavirus crisis has further exacerbated problems and highlights the need to put the whole of local government on a much sounder financial footing and that much of the structure of local government is unsustainable. A cast iron commitment to fair funding and longer-term solution for local government finance and for social care are essential.

Service Pressures

In July 2019 the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee concluded that 10 years of austerity had gutted funding in a range of non-essential services including transport, housing, and culture and left councils with little choice but to provide bare bones services. The section below provides an update on some of the national and local service pressures which have been reported on in the last year.

Overall Staffing - data suggests that local government headcount fell by 240,000 between 2010 and 2019, a 25% drop.

Workforce Stress and Sickness – poor mental health affects half of all employees, according to mental health charity Mind. Only half of those who had experienced problems with stress, anxiety or low mood had talked to their employer about it. 48% of local government respondents felt their workload had increased significantly in the previous year to an almost unmanageable level, while one in ten said it was already unmanageable. Two thirds of respondents reported their job had become more stressful. Three quarters say they know of a colleague who had experienced mental health issues. In the County Council's staff survey, a number of respondents stated that stress at work was a problem. This remains an area subject to continued work.

Economy and Transport

Economy – High Streets – Britain's high streets lost a record net 2,481 shops in 2018. An average of 16 stores closed per day in 2018 compared to 9 opening daily according to PwC research compiled by the Local Data Company. Although store closures remained the same as 2013, a 44% drop in store openings has left the number of high street shops dwindling.

Unemployment - in September 2020, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported that redundancies were rising at the fastest rate since 2009 amid the Covid-19 crisis. Almost 700,000 people, many of them young, had left company payrolls since March 2020. The number of people temporarily away from work was more than 5 million in July 2020. The Institute for Employment Studies estimated there would be 650,000 redundancies in the second half of the year. In May 2020 the government was urged to tackle the record rise in youth unemployment. A think tank warned that the number of unemployed young people could double this year. A £2bn kickstart programme for jobs for young people was announced in July 2020.

Poverty – in January 2020 a debt charity warned that universal credit was driving vulnerable people to use loan sharks. In May 2020 a report warned that child poverty was rising rapidly in Britain's poorest communities. Local welfare schemes have been reduced by £250m over the past decade. In August it was reported that over 400,000 families with children had begun claiming universal credit since the start of the pandemic. It was also reported that coronavirus had left low income families struggling with a significant deterioration in living standards and high stress levels.

Skills – FE - in September 2020 a report by the National Audit Office recommended the need for a clear vision on the funding of the college sector. There had been a 7% drop in funding per student between 2013/14 and 2018/19. In February 2020 the government was intervening in nearly half of colleges to prevent or address financial difficulty. Colleges had narrowed their curriculum and reduced broader support.

Passenger Transport - the LGA has warned that bus services are at risk as local authorities struggle to maintain current levels of support. In May 2019 research found that bus passengers across England were paying significantly more in fares for a single journey than the amount Londoners were charged. The number of passenger journeys in England had fallen by 10% outside London according to the NAO in October 2020. It also found local authorities had had to reduce spending on local transport by 40%. More than 3,000 bus routes in England had been reduced, altered or withdrawn since 2010/11. The LGA estimated that nearly half of bus routes were at risk due to lack of funding. In January 2020 council leaders called for help with a £700m gap in bus funding, with the distance local buses travel dropping to the lowest level since the mid-1980s.

Road Maintenance – local authorities received 700,000 complaints in 2019 about potholes and other road defects according to research. Authorities had to pay out more than £1.9m in compensation for vehicle damage. In March 2020 research also showed that the average local authority faced a shortfall of £4.9m to repair and maintain roads. A CCN report in January 2020 highlighted that spending on road and potholes was skewed towards London and major cities - with councils in London planning to spend double the amount of almost every other region in England. Expenditure per mile was the lowest in the East Midlands. With demand for services increasing, pressure on our highways budget has been keenly felt. We still have some of the best roads in the country, but Leicestershire is at the back of the queue when it comes to funding.

Housing

Housing – in September 2019 the first ever 'state of the nation' report on the housing crisis, published by the National Housing Federation (NHF), found more than eight million people were living in an unaffordable, insecure or unsuitable home. This included 3.6m people living in overcrowded homes, with 2.5m people being unable to afford their rent or mortgage. The country would need 340,000 new homes every year, including 145,000 social homes, to meet the demand identified by the research. Figures in 2019 also showed that more than 1.15m households were waiting for a social home in England – an increase of 4% on the previous year. There were also 17,000 fewer social homes as 23,740 were sold. Over the last decade there has been a net loss of 60,000 social homes.

Decent Homes - in September 2020 a report published by the Centre for Ageing Better and The King's Fund, found that one in five homes in England did not meet national decent homes standards, putting the health of around 10m people at risk. The report called on the Government to ensure at-risk groups have the support they need to ensure their homes are warm and free from damp and mould.

Homelessness - in February 2020 waste companies called for urgent action to stop people sleeping in bins – figures showed a 15% increase in the practice over the last 5 years. In May 2020 campaigners warned that councils were unlikely to cope with a rise in homelessness after figures showed half of homeless households were unable to secure a home before the pandemic. Also, in May, it was estimated that 500,000 were at risk of homelessness as a result of the economic impact of Covid-19. Councils had collectively increased and overspent homeless budgets in the last four years. Shelter warned that young people were disproportionately affected by homelessness. 135,000 children were homeless and living in temporary accommodation at the end of June 2020. There had been an 11% rise in England in children with families in bed and breakfast and hostel emergency accommodation since 2014.

Health and Wellbeing – Adult Social Care

In November 2019 the Institute for Fiscal Studies estimated that the number of older people with unmet care needs already stood at 1.5m and could rise to over 2m in the next decade. Around 700,000 older people had their request for care turned down last year. In November 2019 it was reported that Directors of Adult Services had become less confident they could deliver their statutory duties, with 94% having no or only partial confidence they could provide care market stability in 2020/21. 77% said they had no or partial confidence that they could meet responsibilities relating to liberty protection safeguards. In June the Health Secretary noted that it was incredibly important that social care was put on a sustainable footing, with care homes being pushed closer to the edge due to rising vacancy rates as a result of covid-19.

Weak Care Market - in January 2020 the body representing home care providers increased its guideline price by 9%, following an increase in the national minimum wage – costing £220m per year. Despite this, suppliers were leaving the home care market. In May 2020 care home providers warned the sector was on a cliff edge due to increasing coronavirus costs, although 97% of councils were taking action to address temporary pressures. In September 2020 the President of ADASS warned that social care providers would collapse this winter with around a third estimated to be currently making a loss. He also warned against not pressing ahead with long overdue social care reform.

Autism - in September 2019 a report by a parliamentary group found that 71% of autistic adults in England were not getting the support they needed with 25% needing support to live independently and only 5% receiving this. The National Autistic Society reported that underfunding of social care and poor understanding of legal duties had limited the impact of the Autism Act. Locally there has been growing demand for supported living places for young adults with learning disabilities.

Emergency Admissions - in January 2020 it was revealed that that more than 1,000 dementia patients were being admitted to accident and emergency departments every day. The ADASS survey also found that the focus on delayed transfers of care (DTC) was leading to quick discharge to short-term home placements that then became long-term. There was also concern about the DTC focus on emergency re-admissions.

Carers - in June a charity warned that older carers were bearing the brunt of the pandemic. The ONS has found that social isolation measures introduced to reduce Covid-19 transmission had adversely affected the well-being of care receivers and providers. A common concern throughout the pandemic was that people's access to paid or unpaid care was affected while others expressed concerns regarding their household finances due to care costs increasing. Unpaid carers, who provide support to someone they live with, were most likely to mention feeling worried about the future (36%), with 32% feeling stressed.

Care Quality – think tank IPPR found that over a third of beds were in settings rated as not good enough. In January 2020 it was also reported that a fifth of dementia care homes were rated inadequate or needing improvement, according to an analysis of audits by CQC. In April 2020 the Nuffield Trust and the King's Fund reported that their survey showed that satisfaction levels for social care remained low.

Staffing Challenge - in November 2019 the Health Foundation reported on the acute staffing challenge in adult social care. Around 1100 of the social care work-force leave their job every day and a quarter of staff were on zero hours contracts. 32% of staff left their job in 2018/19 rising to 37% for direct care jobs, compared to 23% in 2012/13. The impact of Brexit on international migrants that work for social care was also highlighted. Non-British nationals account for 17% of the social care workforce. Adult social care has the second largest percentage of job vacancies across the public sector after the NHS.

CQC Analysis - in October 2020 the Care Quality Commission published its annual report on '*The State of Health and Adult Social Care in England 2019/20*'. The report highlights that, prior to the coronavirus pandemic, quality of care was largely maintained compared to the previous year, but not improved. The CQC pre-coronavirus had been concerned about a number of areas including the fragility of provision, the struggles of poor services to improve, gaps in access to good quality care, and poorer quality of care that is harder to plan for.

The report finds that the pandemic has impacted care in a number of ways including unprecedented pressures to work to keep people safe, staff working long hours above and beyond expectations to care for sick people and in some cases dealing with the loss of those cared for and in some cases staff, and challenges in keeping a safe care environment.

In looking forward CQC highlight that the problems that existed before COVID-19 have not gone away. That there needs to be a new deal for the adult social care workforce that develops career progression, secures the right skills and better values staff with investment in training. Services also need to be designed round people's needs.

National Solution - in July 2020 Sir Simon Stevens called for a solution to properly fund adult social care to be brought forward within the next year. In August 2020 a report from the University of Birmingham highlighted the current system had led to greater unmet need, lower quality care and greater pressure on staff and families. In August NHS Leaders also called for urgent action on social care with concern that patients could be stranded in hospital and operations delayed unless the crisis was tackled.

Health and Wellbeing – Public Health

The BMA have reported that preventable ill-health accounts for an estimated 50% of all GP appointments, 64% of outpatient appointments and 70% of all inpatient bed days. It also says that 40% of the uptake of health services may be preventable through action on smoking, drinking alcohol, physical inactivity and poor diet. In May 2019 analysis by the Health Foundation found that the NHS Long Term Plan's focus on prevention was in danger of being compromised by the reduction in the public health grant since 2014/15. The coronavirus pandemic and the vital and significant role that public health services have played in responding to the crisis locally has further emphasised the importance of well-funded local public health services.

Healthy Life Expectancy – in February 2020 a new study by Sir Michael Marmot highlighted how life expectancy had stopped improving for the first time in more than 100 years. The length of time men and women everywhere spend in poor health has also increased and part of the decade saw unprecedented reductions in life expectancy for women living in the most deprived areas outside London - and men in some regions.

Obesity – in August 2020 it was reported that 28% of children in the Loughborough area in year 6 were considered obese, with a further 13% overweight. Among reception age children, 14% were obese and another 15% heavier than they should be. The area has the highest rate of obesity and excess weight in Leicestershire. Nationally 700 children were admitted to hospital because of obesity in 2018/19. In August it was also warned that rising levels of obesity and the stigma attached were in danger of impacting adult social care. In September the National Audit Office warned that government efforts to tackle childhood obesity were slow and uncoordinated, with many commitments not yet in place. The LGA called for greater powers for councils and extra investment in exercise referral and physical activity to meet the target of halving obesity by 2030.

Alcohol and Drugs - in September 2020 it was reported that a near doubling of the number of higher-risk drinkers during lockdown was leading to addiction services struggling to cope. Public Health England data showed that the prevalence of people drinking at higher risk was 19% in June 2020 up from 10.8% in February. The Royal College of Psychiatrists called on ministers to invest in adult services to address the increased need for treatment, with only one in five alcoholics receiving treatment. There has also been a rise in people seeking help for addiction to opiates according to National Drug Treatment Statistics, showing new adult cases in April 2020 up around a fifth on the same time last year and at their highest level since 2015.

Sexual Health - in February 2020 local authority leaders called for more investment into public health services as a report revealed that there was an STI diagnosis every 70 seconds in England. Gonorrhoea cases in England rose by 26% between 2018 and 2019 from 56,232 to 70,936 with an overall rise in STI diagnoses of 5%. The rise is explained in part by an increase in testing and better data.

Mental Health - in August 2020 a report by the NHS Confederation warned that some providers were predicting a 20% increase across mental health services, but that they were likely to be able to care for 10-30% less patients due to infection control and social distancing. In September 2020 it was reported that there had been an increase in anxiety since 2008 with the debilitating illness trebling amongst young adults, affecting 30% of women aged 18-34 and a general increase across the board. The

figures were produced pre-Covid-19. In September 2020 the ONS published 2019 statistics showing that 5,691 people had died from suicide – the rate per 100k being the highest seen since 2000.

Safer Communities – Children’s Social Care

In January 2020 council leaders warned that the child care system was reaching breaking point with the number of children in care rising by more than a quarter over the past decade. Unprecedented demand and cost pressures in children’s social care have led to overspends totalling £3.2bn over the last five years, despite councils increasing budgets by more than an average of £600m a year. Yet Ofsted reported councils were still unable to intervene early enough in the lives of some children and families. Despite the challenges, Ofsted’s Chief Inspector reported that inspection outcomes provided evidence that the effectiveness of children’s social care services had improved.

Lockdown Impact - a spike in demand for children’s services was also expected as result of the lockdown, which is likely to have exacerbated child anxieties and mental health problems, as well as hidden safeguarding issues that went unreported. In May 2020 a think tank also warned of a growing educational gap between better off families and those from the poorest households due to temporary school closures. In July 2020 the president of the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS) warned that during the pandemic services were seeing new families experiencing domestic abuse, neglect and financial hardship and more families reaching a tipping point with increased applications for free school meals.

Care Placements - a report by the Children’s Commissioner in May 2019 found that a significant number of young people were being housed in unregulated accommodation due to lack of spaces in formal secure care. Ofsted’s director called for increased government investment to provide sufficient placements for children in care, with the shortage of appropriate children homes in certain places being the biggest issue. Around a quarter of children were placed more than 50 miles from home. The rising costs of caring for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children was also reported on in February 2020.

Child Mental Health – in January 2020 it was reported that a quarter of children referred for mental health treatment were being turned away from help. In June 2020 the Institute for Fiscal Studies reported research that also showed that mental health had plummeted during the coronavirus crisis. Data in July 2020 showed that a million teenagers were unhappy with their lives, looking at the impact of the lockdown.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) – in January 2020 Ofsted’s Director reported that the fragmentation of health commissioning was posing significant challenges to support for children with SEND in some areas. Half of inspections required written statements of action as a result. In March 2020 senior civil servants admitted the reformed system for supporting children with SEND was not working as well as it should. In May 2020 MPs on the Commons Public Accounts Committee also said the Department for Education (DfE) needed to get a grip on mounting pressures in the SEND system. The government is in the process of reviewing the 2014 SEND reforms. Since the extension of eligibility for SEND support in 2014, councils have seen a near 50% rise in children with Education Health and Care Plans. During the pandemic, councils were also under pressure to be able to deliver agreed SEND support due to school closures, staff sickness and demand on

resources. Locally the High Needs Block continues to face financial challenges with a current overspend of around £6m.

Safer Communities

Domestic Abuse – in May 2020 a national charity warned that the number of women seeking help for domestic abuse had spiked significantly since the lockdown had begun.

Knife Crime - in July 2019 the Home Affairs Committee concluded the increase in youth violence was exacerbated by cuts to youth services and children excluded from school. In March 2020 MPs argued that councils should have a legal duty to deliver a minimum level of youth services to help prevent knife crime. Published figures for Leicestershire police force show 887 offences involving a knife or sharp instrument (81 offences per 1000pop) - a 5% increase compared to last year. Similar to the England and Wales average of 82 offences per 1000 and higher than the regional average of 72. Nationally offences involving a knife or sharp instrument rose by 6% and police recorded “possession of an article with a blade or point” rose by 3% in the year ending March 2020, a continuation of the recent rising trend. Trends have been influenced by increases in targeted police action, such as the recent rise in stop and searches, which typically follow rises in offences involving knives or sharp instruments. In Leicestershire the number of offences for possession of a blade remain low at 98 offences, a decrease of 6% on the previous year.

Total Crime - in Leicestershire has remained stable with 65 crimes per 1,000 pop, similar to the previous year and lower than the England average of 89 crimes per 1,000 and which saw a 1% increase on the previous year. However, violence against the person increased by 7% locally, with violence with injury increasing by 16%. Although there has been a large increase, violence with injury rates are substantially lower than national rates. There were 5 violence with injury offences per 1,000 compared to 9 nationally. Rises in Police recorded crime, particularly violent crime over recent years has been attributed to a combination of factors, including improvements to police recording processes and practices, expansion of the recorded crime collection to include new offences, variations in police activity, more victims reporting crime, and genuine increases in some types of crime. The Crime Survey for England and Wales data show a decrease in the high-volume crimes that individuals were the most likely to be the victims of in the year ending March 2020. This is consistent with the long-term downward trend in CSEW crime estimates.

Burglary and Vehicle offences are thought to be well-reported by the public and relatively well-recorded by the police. During 2019/20 (prior to the lockdown period) there was a 6% decrease in police recorded vehicle offences in Leicestershire to 8.0 offences per 1,000 pop. Nationally vehicle offences have remained stable at 8.0 offences per 1,000 pop and burglary offences recorded by the police have continued a long-term decline, decreasing by 9% in the year. In Leicestershire burglary offences decreased by 11% compared to the previous year to 6 offences per 1,000, similar to the England and Wales rate.

ASB - there were 9 incidents of Anti-social behavior (ASB) per 1,000 pop in Leicestershire for the year ending March 2020, which is much lower than the national average of 22 incidents per 1000 population. During the Covid-19 lockdown period, however, there was a significant increase in reported ASB across the County, and concerns about ASB were reflected in responses to the Council’s Community Survey.

Trading Standards - in April 2019 the LGA reported that the number of trading standards officers had more than halved since 2009 and budgets had almost halved since 2011. Spending on trading standards had fallen from £213m in 2009 to £105m in 2018/19. This puts a strain on the ability to protect consumers. The average spend per head of population in 2017 was £1.69 per year. In May 2020 council leaders reported a 40% increase in reported scams since the start of the coronavirus crisis.

Environment

Climate Change/Action - in September 2019 it was reported that environmental lawyers had threatened legal action against 100 local authorities unless they introduced climate change plans including carbon reduction targets. In February 2020 Bristol became the first major city to declare an ecological emergency in response to escalating threats to wildlife and ecosystems. In August 2020 the Government announced that there was to be a series of legally binding targets under the Environment Bill to combat climate change. This will introduce at least one long term target in four priority areas to drive environmental improvements: cleaner air; cleaner water; less waste; and more biodiversity. In September 2020 a report revealed that over 500 new charging points per day would be needed to achieve a zero-emission car market by 2035, at a cost of £16.7bn. Many drivers are currently put off buying electric cars due to high prices and lack of charging infrastructure.

Flooding - in May 2020 the National Infrastructure Commission reported that climate change and severe weather could test the future resilience of the UK's infrastructure. In February 2020 the Council announced that more than half a million pounds had been put aside to investigate why dozens of homes have flooded across Leicestershire over the past year. The investigation will also look into ways of preventing flooding in the future and how home and land owners can do more to avoid expensive damage.

Air Quality – there is an increasing national focus on the impact of air pollution on health, including dementia, asthma, and strokes. A study has found that 1 in 3 children in Britain is growing up with air pollution damaging their health. Approximately 4.5m children, including 1.6m aged five and under, live in areas with levels of particulate matter above what the World Health Organisation considers safe, according to UNICEF UK. In 2018 it was predicted that 2.4m people would be diagnosed with a disease as a result of poor air before 2035 if current levels persist.

Waste – there is increasing pressure on councils to recycle food waste as figures reveal that 1,000 tonnes a day end up in landfill. The new waste strategy proposed by the Government places an extra burden on local authorities: existing recycling infrastructure is felt to be inadequate to meet future targets with an estimate of up to £20bn investment required nationally.

Fly-tipping – in November 2019 local authority leaders urged the government to ensure that councils had the funds to tackle fly-tipping. In January 2020 councils warned that fly-tippers were increasingly targeting rural areas after figures showed a surge in incidents where rubbish was dumped on farmland.

Communities

Arts and Culture – the creative industries bring people into towns. They are intrinsic to building atmosphere and to a sense of place and civic pride. In July 2020 government announced a £1.6bn support package for the arts and culture sector. In August, the LGA and Creative Industries Federation also produced new guidance to help councils implement creative economy strategies, however, significant funding pressures from the pandemic is limiting efforts.

Leisure - in January 2020 it was revealed that a quarter of council run leisure centres had not been refurbished in more than 20 years. District Councils in June 2020 also called for more funding for leisure centres due to lost income due to coronavirus. It was also warned social distancing could push some leisure providers to bankruptcy.

Cohesion and Equalities – in May 2019 research suggested that ethnic minorities in the UK faced rising and increasing overt racism in the aftermath of the EU referendum. It said that 7 in 10 reported having faced racial discrimination compared with 58% before the vote in 2016. Whitehall was also warned that community tensions could rise further as the concerns of Black Lives Matters protesters were impacted by emerging coronavirus inequalities and tensions.

Emergency Planning – in July 2019 the senior civil servant responsible for resilience and emergencies warned that cuts to council budgets had contributed to a lack of resources for emergency planning and events such as flooding, cyberattacks or terrorism. She said that they had a broad job to do and resources had been cut drastically to become a person or tiny team. Local Resilience Forums (LRF) will also be stretched if Brexit forces them into extensive operations over a long period of time. The government has acknowledged that the scale of the potential response would challenge LRF resources and this is before the significant extra demands of managing the pandemic were known.

Corporate Services

Council Governance - in May 2019 the Public Accounts Committee reported that local governance arrangements were being stretched and tested as councils took more risks to meet increased service demands and reduced funding, including for corporate governance activities. The committee found ineffective internal audit and weak arrangements for risk management which created problems in the more risky, complex and fast-moving environment in which authorities now operate.

The Council's 2019 Annual Governance Statement, as well as looking at internal control and assurance mechanisms, also reviewed the Council's response to and planned recovery from Covid-19. Overall no significant governance or internal control failings came to attention. Two significant governance issues were identified in relation to the impact of Covid-19 and of recovery of services on the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The pandemic has seriously prejudiced the achievement of some of the principal objectives of the Council's Strategic Plan. Without further government support the Council will have a significant financial gap. The Strategic Plan delivery will continue to be monitored and reviewed in the light of the challenging financial and service environment.

Services - Covid-19 is having a significant adverse effect on the local economy and is also affecting the services that the Council delivers. Recognising the significant uncertainty, it is estimated that without further Government support the Council will face a significant financial gap in the current financial year. These financial implications will continue beyond the current financial year adding to the financial gap identified in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The impact is across the board, covering additional expenditure, increased project and capital costs, reduced income levels and required savings that are no longer achievable. The Council is taking a number of measures to ensure the impact on the financial position is minimised where possible in the immediate crisis period and medium-term recovery.

Staff Wellbeing - regular COVID-19 senior manager briefings continue to be provided as well as health and wellbeing support across the Council, informed by a council-wide survey. Work has also been carried out relating to returning to the workplace (recovery) and PPE staff risk assessments.

Recovery - the Council has developed a Recovery Strategy outlining the strategic framework for the transition and recovery for 2021/21 service delivery in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Significant future challenges such as continued funding shortfalls and driving further health and care integration are contained in the Corporate Risk Register, above.

EU Transition - there remains a high level of uncertainty about the implications of Britain leaving the European Union (EU). The Government has confirmed it will not delay the transition period end of 31 December 2020. Preparing for a no deal EU Exit in 2019 was a resource-intensive exercise and preparations for the end of 2020 could well raise similar challenges. This will prove to be a major challenge given it now seems to coincide with a second spike of COVID-19 infections; ongoing COVID-19 recovery work and other winter health pressures; as well as risks of inclement weather (e.g. snow, flooding).

Infrastructure - the financial risks faced by the Council in delivering the infrastructure necessary to support growth in the County are significant. To address this a Growth Unit has been established within the Council responsible for ensuring that infrastructure to support growth is effectively planned over the short, medium and long term across Leicestershire. In addition, it will ensure that risks associated with the Council's financial contribution to large scale growth and infrastructure projects remain tightly managed by securing funding of developer contributions and from government and other external agencies.

Cybersecurity – in July 2020 it was reported that local government was facing an unprecedented cyber security threat according to a report from the National Cyber Security Centre. This risk has increased due to the growing digitisation of council operations and more home working. Attempted ransomware attacks are taking place more frequently. In February 2020 Redcar and Cleveland Council's operations were affected for several weeks.

Corporate Complaints – the County Council continues to actively monitor and respond to complaints and learn from analysis of complaint types. During 2019/20 there were 432 corporate complaints, an increase of 33% compared to last year's figure of 324. Which was in itself an increase of 21% from 2017/18. 183 corporate complaints were upheld - 43% of the total received. 83% of complainants received a response within 20 working days and 99% within the 65-day recommended maximum.

The top five issues complained about were SEND assessments (58), travel and transport (47), highways and footway maintenance (38), environmental services (36) and school admissions (23). Between April and July there were emerging complaint themes around waste management (policy complaints and website booking complaints) and the Covid-19 lockdown. There were also 208 adult social care complaints recorded this year under a separate process, an increase of 16% on 2018/19. There was a decrease in children's social care statutory complaints from 134 in 2018/19 to 118.

There were 44 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman complaints - a 22% increase on last year's 36. A total of 16 had findings of maladministration with injustice, 13 were closed after initial enquiries, 4 found no fault after full investigation and 3 were outside the Ombudsman's remit. The Ombudsman continues to cite SEND as the primary concern and is upholding around 90% of complaints in this area. There was a significant increase in the number of compliments recorded this year with 412 across services, up from 241 in 2018/19.

Service Reductions and Transformation

In February 2020 the Council agreed a refreshed Medium-Term Financial Strategy to 2023/24. Delivery of the Strategy requires savings of £80m to be made from 2020/21 to 2023/24. The MTFS sets out in detail £23.6m of savings and proposed reviews that will identify further savings to offset the £50m funding gap in 2023/24, which has been increased by Covid-19. A further £17m of savings will be required to ensure that High Needs SEND funding can be contained within the Government grant. Unavoidable cost pressures require investment of £59m, primarily to meet the forecast increase in demand for social care.

The County Council is operating in a challenging financial environment following ten years of austerity and spending pressures, particularly from social care. The coronavirus has had a significant impact on services and the community and there is now significant uncertainty around future funding levels.

Whereas financial plans previously showed a balanced position for 2020/21 and 2021/22, current forecasts suggest we will now have a shortfall of between £15m and £20m in each of those years. This is estimated to grow such that a gap of £50m will exist by 2023/24. This has meant that some difficult and urgent decisions have been needed. Also, short term spending controls around recruitment, procurements and new project expenditure to ensure resources are prioritised for essential service expenditure. As part of the MTFS refresh over the autumn period, there will need to be an increased drive to identify further savings initiatives. Whilst the focus will be on efficiency and productivity, inevitably there will be a need for additional service reductions, to ensure the Council can operate within the increasingly tight budget envelope.

Savings Still to Come

Savings of £23.6m have been identified with more expected over the next four years 2020 to 2024, with £16.6m in 2020/21. This is a challenging task given that savings of £210m have already been delivered over the last ten years. The main four-year savings are:

- Children and Family Services (£4m) - including savings from reducing social care placement costs.
- Adults and Communities (£8.7m) - including savings from implementation of a new Target Operating Model for the Department.
- Public Health (£1m) - including savings from reviewing early help and prevention services and the 0-19 health visiting and school nursing service.
- Environment and Transport (£1.3m) - savings include changes to Recycling and Household Waste Sites (RHWS) operations.
- Chief Executive's Department (£0.1m) – review of grants and contracts and new income.
- Corporate Resources (£4.6m) - this includes returns from the Corporate Asset Investment Fund, and savings from the Workplace Strategy.
- Corporate/Central Items (£3.8m).

Of the £23.6m identified savings, efficiency savings account for £18m, and can be grouped into four main types - better commissioning and procurement (£6m); service re-design (£8m); and financial policy changes (£4m).

It is estimated that the proposals would lead to a reduction of up to 150 posts (full time equivalents) over the four-year period. However, it is expected that the number of compulsory redundancies will be lower, given the scope to manage the position over the period through staff turnover and vacancy control. Further savings will be required to close the budget shortfall of £50m in 2023/24.

Savings Under Development

To help bridge the gap a number of initiatives are under development to generate further savings. Once business cases have been completed and consultation processes undertaken, savings will be confirmed and included in a future MTFS. However, without additional government funding over the medium term, further savings will still be required. The development and ultimate achievement of these savings will be extremely challenging and will require focus, discipline and innovation. The Council's Transformation Unit is currently working with finance colleagues to develop an approach to identify and bring forward opportunities for new savings. The MTFS also includes the High Needs Block Development Plan which is targeting cost reductions to ensure that the expenditure can be contained within the allocation through the Dedicated Schools Grant. Savings of £17m are planned over the MTFS period.

The future savings programme will be developed further over the coming months and will be reappraised in light of further information, including the Comprehensive Spending Review. Having a well-planned proactive programme of change activity is essential given the County Council's low funding position.

Risks and Risk Management

The Council has had its tenth austerity budget and also been significantly impacted by the corona-virus pandemic. The service environment continues to be extremely challenging with a number of known major risks over the next few years. There is little doubt that the Council faces an uncertain and risky time. Given the pressures and reductions it is important that the Council has effective performance monitoring and risk management arrangements in place. In relation to risk management the Council has a good risk management process to help it to identify possible risks, score these in terms of likelihood and impact and take mitigating actions. Corporate high risks currently identified include: -

If the Council does not plan, prepare and respond adequately to future developments in relation to both the COVID 19 pandemic and recovery to a “new normal” level of services it could suffer long lasting economic, environmental, societal and technological challenges and miss opportunities.

Ability to deliver savings through redesign and transformation as required in the MTFS, impact of the living wage and other cost pressures including legal challenges; The financial impact of the pandemic is significant but difficult to fully quantify including the impact of economic recession;

Increasing high cost child social care placements placing pressure on the placement budget and any additional service demands as a result of the pandemic/lockdown;

If demand for Education Health and Care Plan’s continues to rise there is a risk the high needs deficit will continue to increase; Also developing an inclusive culture across all schools to help manage SEND in schools;

Impact of the Better Care Together NHS transformation plan for LLR on council services;

Challenges caused by the Welfare Reform Act and managed migration process to Universal Credit by end of 2023;

The Council is unable to meet the investment required to deliver infrastructure in support of housing development and insufficient S106 contributions;

Uncertain and knock on consequences on public services and the local economy as a result of the UK leaving the EU transition period;

Staff sickness absence and recruitment and retention;

Supplier resilience and business continuity;

Emerging risks around delivering commitments to help mitigate climate change

If the Council does not manage its exposure to cyber risk and mitigate the threat of cyber-attack.

The Council continues to maintain a strong financial control environment and deploys its internal audit service on a range of assurance areas.

PART 3: County Performance: Benchmarking Results 2018/19

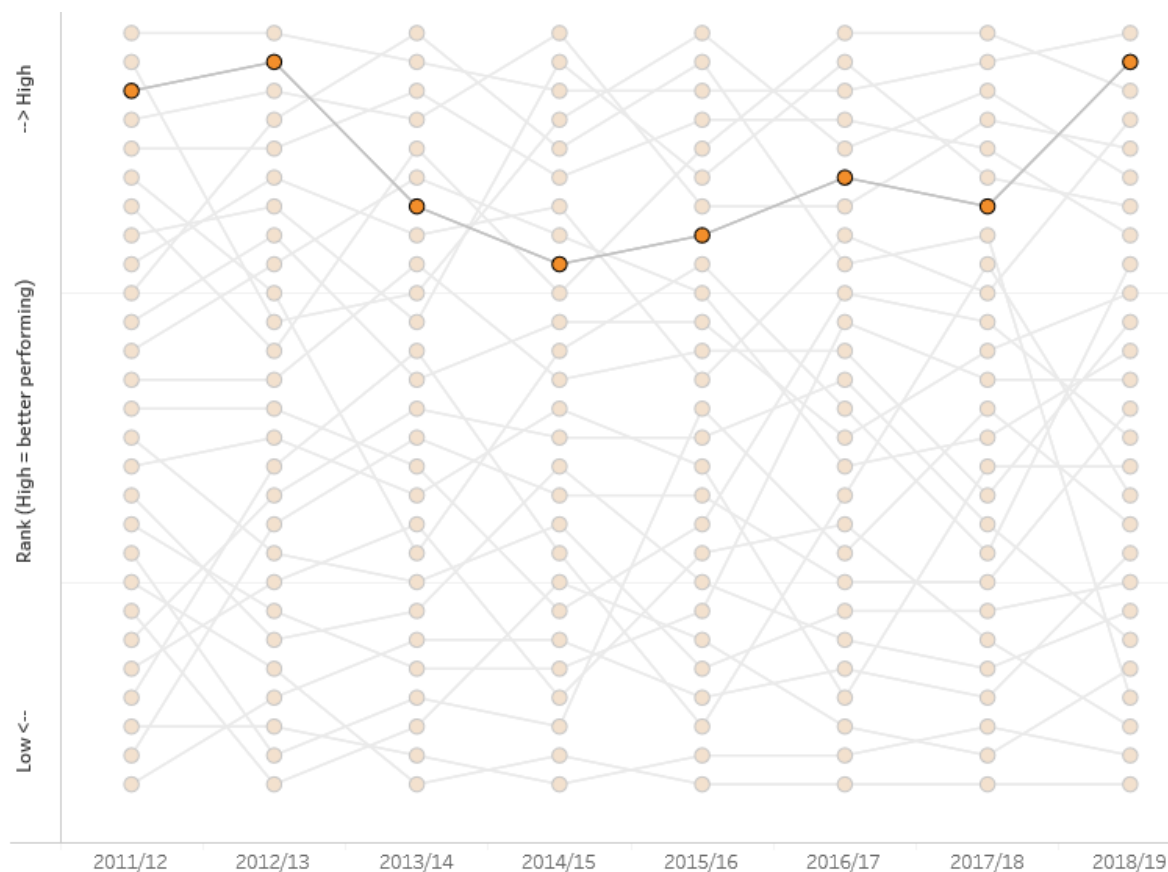
This annual report compendium uses performance indicators to compare our performance over time against targets and with other local authorities. Comparison or benchmarking helps to place Leicestershire's performance in context and also to prompt questions such as 'why are other councils performing differently to us?' or why are other councils providing cheaper or more expensive services?

The County Council compares itself with other English county areas in terms of spend per head and performance. We use a range of nationally published indicators linked to our improvement priorities, inspectorate datasets and national performance frameworks. Our sources include central government websites, the Office for National Statistics, NHS Digital and the Local Government Association.

Our comparative analysis draws on 263 performance indicators across our main priorities and areas of service delivery. Our approach looks at performance against each indicator and ranks all county areas with 1 being highest performing. We then group indicators by service or theme and create an average of these ranks as well as an overall position.

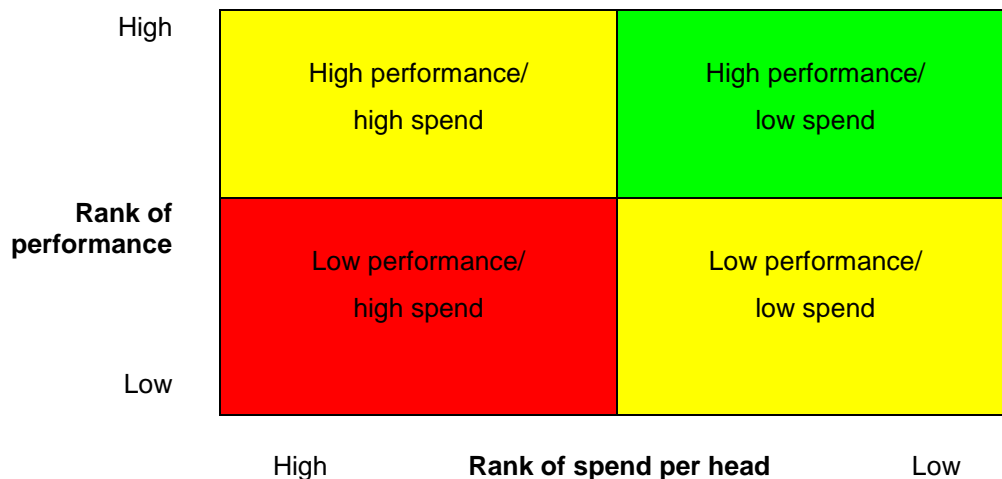
Overall Comparative Performance

The chart below shows Leicestershire's relative overall performance compared to the other counties over the past 8 years, excluding any consideration of funding/expenditure. Low comparative funding meant that Leicestershire had to move quickly to reduce some service levels which reduced the overall pure comparative performance position. However, following other counties reducing services as well as a strong focus on performance, the Council was placed 2nd in comparative terms during 2018/19.



Comparing Performance and Expenditure

The Fair Funding section of the report notes that Leicestershire is the lowest funded county in the country. It is therefore critical to review the Council's performance in the light of spend per head on different services. Our approach uses scatter charts to show the relationship between spend and performance. The vertical axes show rank of performance, with high performance to the top. The horizontal axes show rank of net expenditure per head, with low spend to the right. Therefore, authorities that are high performing and low spending would be in the top right quadrant, while those that are low performing and high spending would be to the bottom left as shown below.



Overall Performance vs Expenditure

Looking at the overall position for 2018/19, Leicestershire is ranked 2nd in performance terms compared to two tier counties and has the lowest core spending power per head. This and the theme performance discussed below are shown in charts over the following pages.

Performance by Theme

Theme

Overall Performance

Comparator

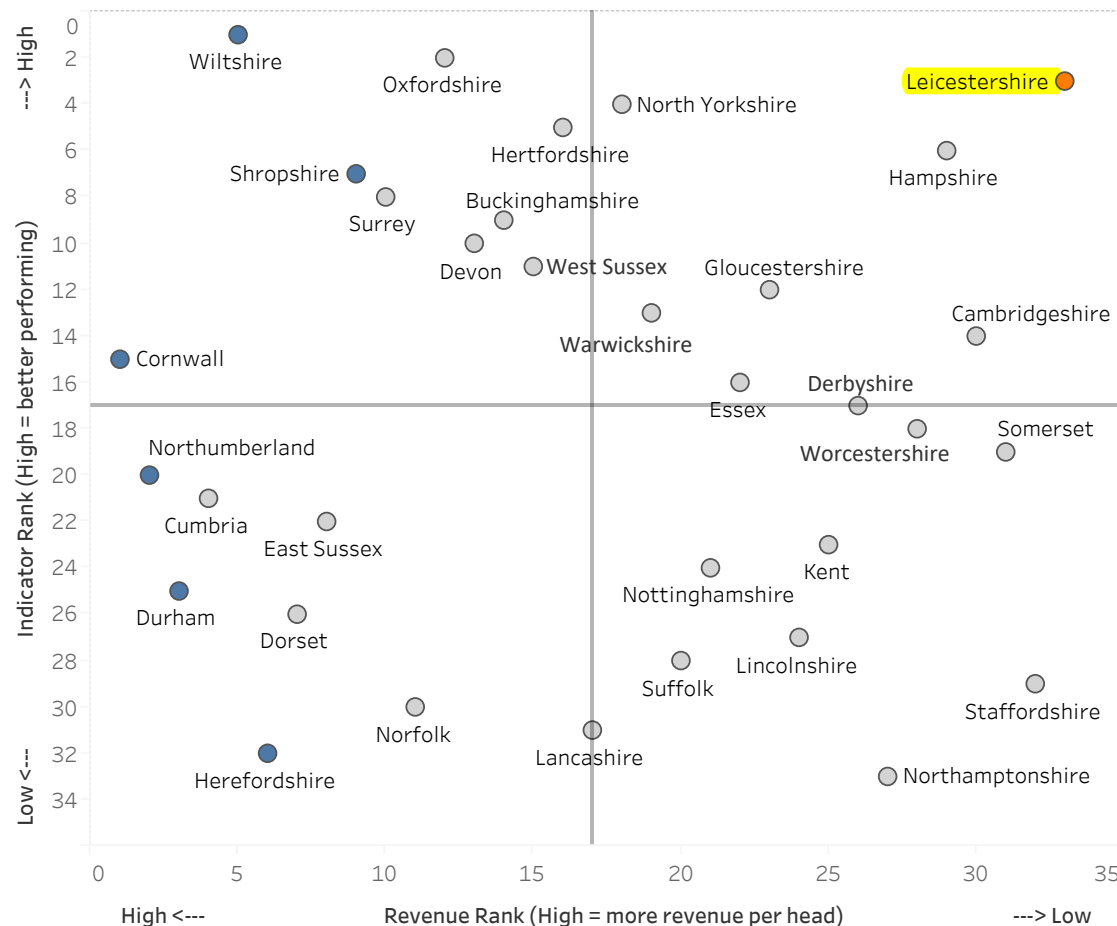
- Revenue
- Deprivation

How to Read This Chart

The chart is divided up into quadrants based upon average rank for all indicators (vertical axis) and net revenue expenditure per head (horizontal axis) for county councils. Authorities in the top right quadrant are high performing and low spending, while authorities in the bottom left are low performing and high spending. The 'Deprivation' comparator uses local authority 2019 Multiple Deprivation rank.

'Overall Performance' is the rank of average rank for all indicators, while 'LA Core Performance' only includes themes that are related to county council functions;

- Adult Social Care
- Better Care Fund
- Children's Social Care
- Corporate
- Environment & Waste
- Health - Adult
- Health - Child
- Libraries
- Safer Communities
- SEND
- Transport & Highways



Source: LAIT, ASCOF, Fingertips, various. Produced by the Business Intelligence Service, Leicestershire County Council, 2020.

Performance by Theme

Theme

Economy

Comparator

- Revenue
- Deprivation

How to Read This Chart

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Source: LAIT, ASCOF, Fingertips, various. Produced by the Business Intelligence Service, Leicestershire County Council, 2020.

Performance by Theme

Theme

Transport & Highways

Comparator

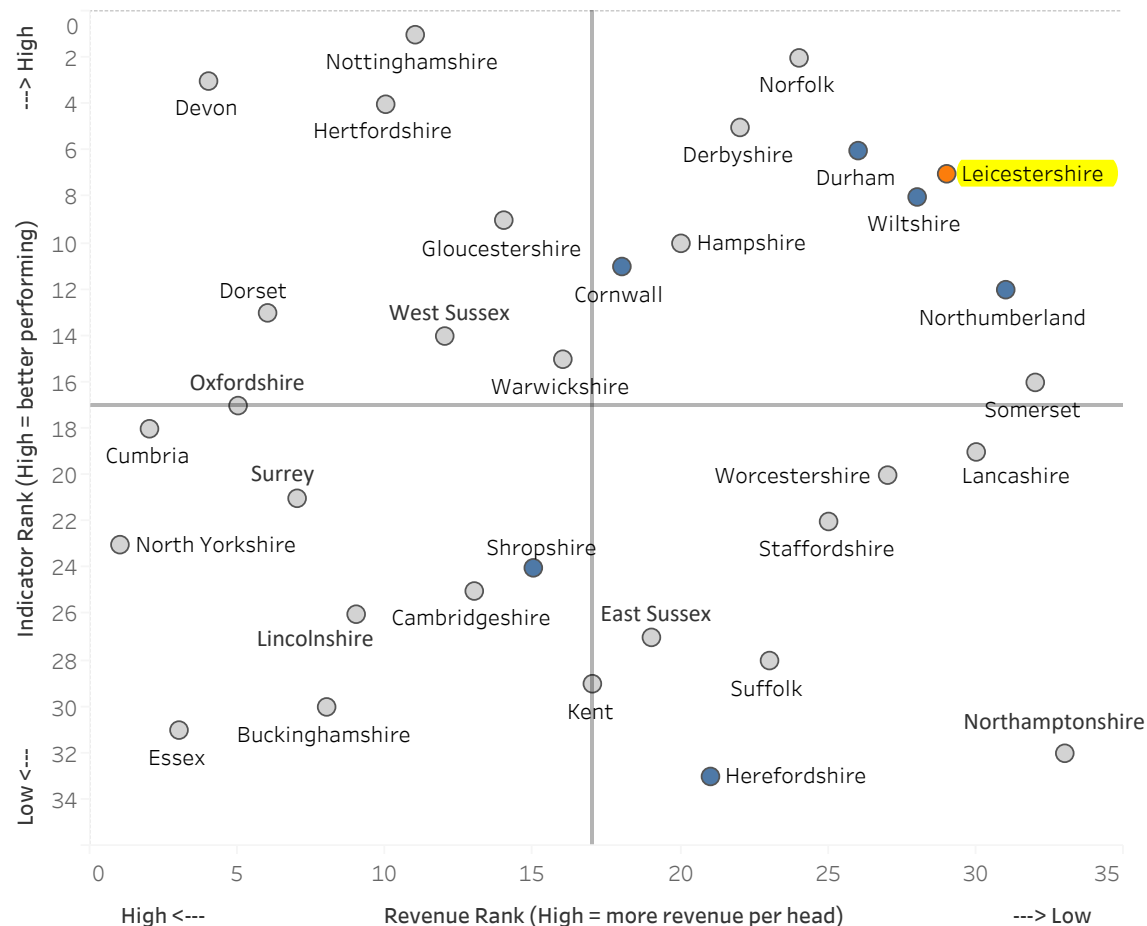
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Source: LAIT, ASCOF, Fingertips, various. Produced by the Business Intelligence Service, Leicestershire County Council, 2020.

Performance by Theme

Theme

Adult Social Care

Comparator

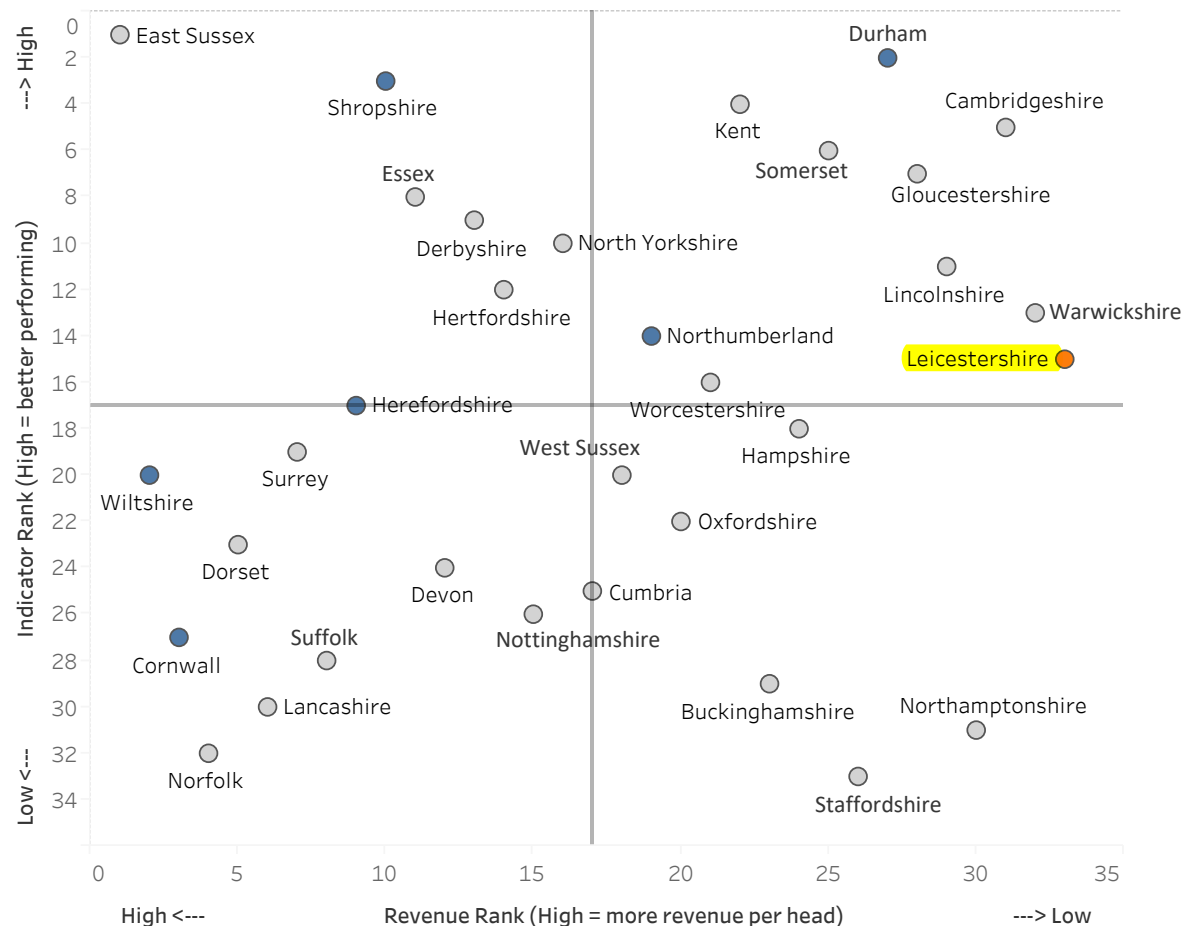
- ☒ Revenue
- ☐ Deprivation

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- Transport & Highways



Source: LAIT, ASCOF, Fingertips, various. Produced by the Business Intelligence Service, Leicestershire County Council, 2020.

Performance by Theme

Theme

Health - Child

Comparator

- ☒ Revenue
- ☐ Deprivation

How to Read This Chart

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Source: LAIT, ASCOF, Fingertips, various. Produced by the Business Intelligence Service, Leicestershire County Council, 2020.

Performance by Theme

Theme

Health - Adult

Comparator

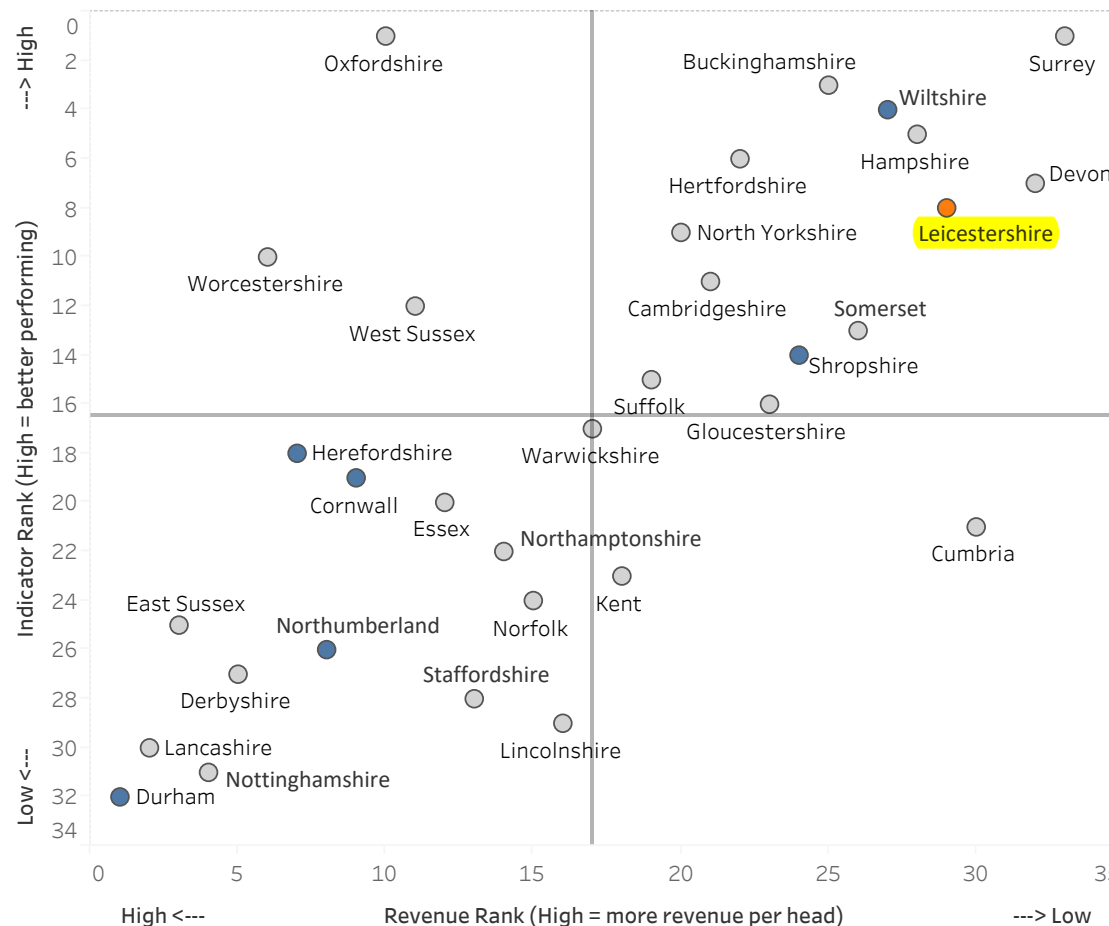
Revenue
Deprivation

How to Read This Chart

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- SEND
- Transport & Highways



Source: LAIT, ASCOF, Fingertips, various. Produced by the Business Intelligence Service, Leicestershire County Council, 2020.

Performance by Theme

Theme

Children's Social Care

Comparator

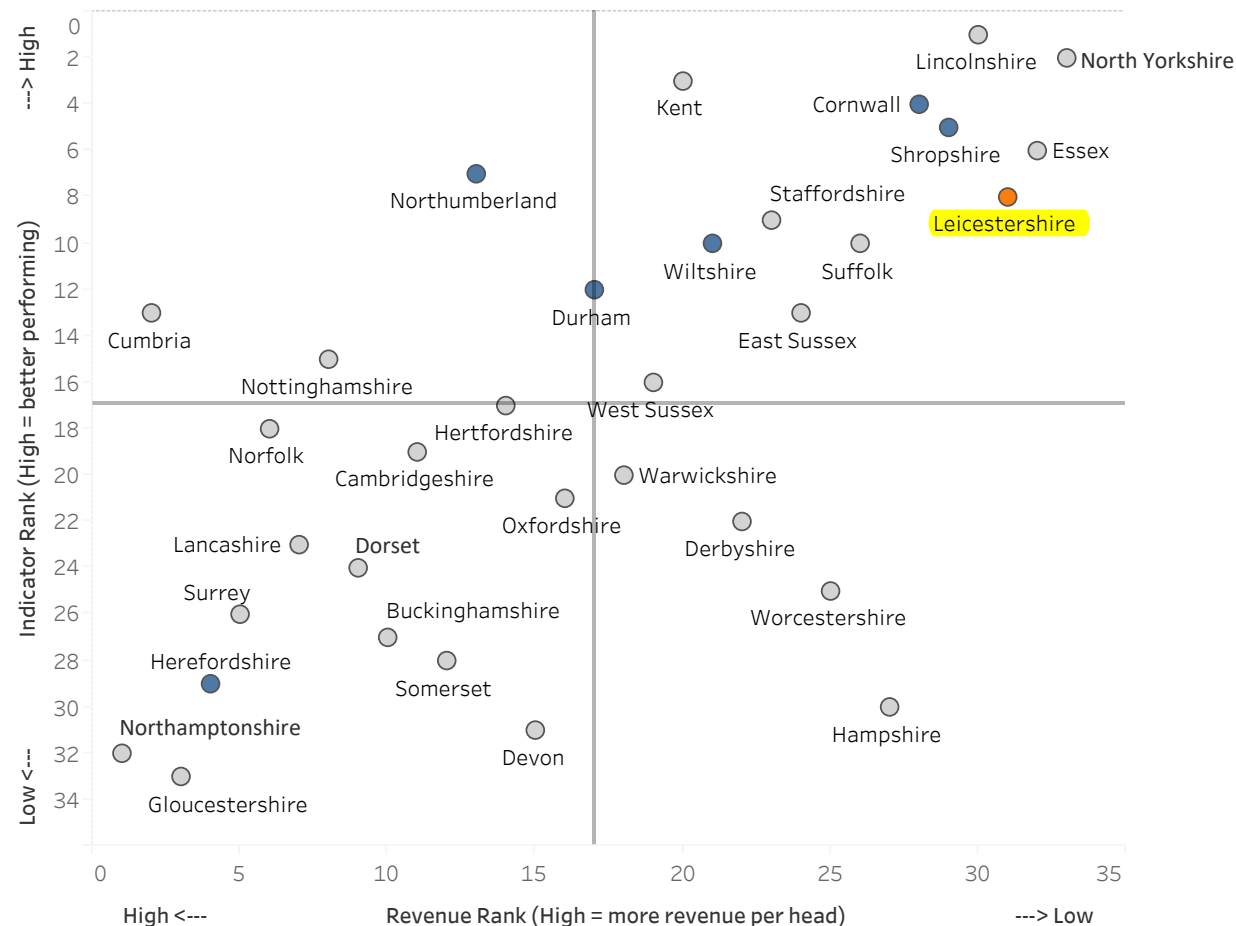
- Revenue
- Deprivation

How to Read This Chart

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- SEND
- Transport & Highways



Source: LAIT, ASCOF, Fingertips, various. Produced by the Business Intelligence Service, Leicestershire County Council, 2020.

Performance by Theme

Theme

Environment & Waste

Comparator

- Revenue
- Deprivation

How to Read This Chart

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Source: LAIT, ASCOF, Fingertips, various. Produced by the Business Intelligence Service, Leicestershire County Council, 2020.

Lower Comparative Performing Areas 2018/19

Looking across the 253 indicators for which quartile data is available, 37 (15%) fall within the lower 4th quartile, which is defined as performance that falls within the bottom 25% of county councils. These indicators are listed below.

Strong Economy

- % unemployment rate
- % growth in gross disposable household income per head (last 5 years)

Transport & Highways

- Ease of access (no car) (NHT Survey)
- Street lighting (NHT Survey)

Opportunity, Wellbeing and Health

Adult Social Care - survey based perception indicators

- Social care-related quality of life score
- % people who use services with control over their daily life
- % adults in contact with secondary mental health services in paid employment
- % of people who use services who reported that they had as much social contact as they would like
- Overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support
- % of people who use services who find it easy to find information about support
- % of people who use services who feel safe
- % of Home Care Providers rated good or outstanding

Public Health

- % of physically active and inactive adults
- Successful completion of drug treatment - opiate users
- Uptake of NHS Health Checks

Best Start in Life

- % of 5-year olds with visually obvious dental decay
- % achieving Good Level of Development at Foundation Stage – free school meals
- Low birth weight of term babies

Keeping People Safe

Safeguarding Children and Looked After Children

- % of looked after children receiving health checks
- Social Worker absence rate

Communities

Environment & Waste

- % of municipal waste landfilled

- Residual household waste per household (Kg)
- Rate of electric vehicle charging locations per 1,000 vehicles

Libraries

- Library visits (per 1,000 pop.) and issues (per 1,000 pop.)
- Other library indicators covering stock, borrowers, public computers

Corporate Enablers - none

Lower Performing Areas – Partnerships

Police and Crime

- Offences against vehicles per 1,000 population
- Residential burglary per 1,000 population

Schools and Academies

- % of early years providers rated good or outstanding
- % of offers made to applicants of first preference (primary)

Housing

- % of domestic properties (existing) with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+
- % non-decent housing (council owned)

Looking back at the previous year's benchmarking exercise, four bottom quartile indicators have shown a significant improvement in relative performance. These indicators are:

- Adult Social Care: adjusted social care-related quality of life
- Libraries: hours available for use of People's Network terminals per head
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND): % achieving Good level of Development at Foundation Stage - SEN with Statement/EHCP
- Police and Crime: other theft per 1,000 population

Leicestershire Performance Data Dashboards 2019/20

Introduction

In order to measure our progress against our priority outcomes we are tracking a number of key performance measures for each of the outcomes. These are summarised in a set of theme dashboards with ratings that show how our performance compares with other areas where known, whether we have seen any improvement in performance since the previous year, and whether we have achieved any relevant targets. As well as this annual report, we also publish theme dashboards on our website on a quarterly basis so that our overall performance and progress is transparent.

Initial analysis of 2019/20 end of year data shows that of 171 metrics 88 improved, 56 show no real change and 47 worsened. Direction of travel cannot be determined for 18 indicators, due to the absence of previous data or changes to indicator definitions.

Overview of Performance Improvement and Reduction

The paragraphs that follow review each theme dashboard, highlighting indicators that have shown improvement compared to the previous period, as well as those that have worsened.

Strong Economy

Overview

This dashboard provides a high-level overview of the Leicestershire economy. Looking at the 11 performance indicators, 6 show improvement compared to the previous period, 4 indicators show a decline in performance and 1 shows no change. The indicators displaying an improvement covered economic growth, take up of new broadband and new business creation. New broadband delivery showed little change, while indicators covering private sector funding secured to deliver infrastructure, business confidence, residents' perceptions regarding the economy and job prospects and business survival rate show a deterioration in performance.

Employment and Skills

This dashboard covers the skills of the local population, as well as employment and unemployment. Looking at the 11 performance indicators, 7 show improvement compared to the previous period, 2 show a decline and 2 show no change. The improving indicators cover the qualification levels of local people, apprenticeships, unemployment and employment rates and gross weekly pay. The % of young people not in education employment or training and the % of businesses experiencing difficulties recruiting staff show little change. The achievement of Level 2 qualifications by age 19 and out of work benefit claimants both declined in performance.

Transport

This dashboard covers transport infrastructure including road condition, journey times, bus usage and road safety. Looking at the 16 performance indicators, 5 display improvement compared to the previous period, 3 show a decline and 8 show no change. The improving indicators cover satisfaction with highway condition, satisfaction with pavements and footpaths, CO2 emissions from transport and road safety. The 3 indicators displaying lower performance cover satisfaction with traffic

levels & congestion, footpaths being signposted and easy to use and the number of bus journeys. The 8 indicators displaying similar performance cover satisfaction with cycle routes & facilities, average vehicle speeds in rush hour, business concerns about congestion, road condition and satisfaction with bus services.

Housing – Affordable and Quality Homes

This dashboard covers the supply of new housing and housing for those with care needs. Looking at the 11 indicators, 7 show an improvement compared to the previous period, 2 show a decline, 1 shows no change and 1 is still awaiting end of year data. The improving indicators cover house building, affordability, perceptions of housing meeting local needs, number of units of supported accommodation for working age adults and adults with a learning disability living at home, and local plans. The indicators with lower performance relate to temporary accommodation and the 5 year supply of new housing, while the indicator with similar performance covers extra care housing. Data is still awaited for affordable housing delivery.

Wellbeing – Health and Care

Health and Care

The first dashboard covers work with health partners to reduce admissions to hospital and residential care, facilitate discharge from hospital and reablement. A number of the indicators have associated Better Care Fund (BCF) targets. Looking at the 9 performance indicators, 3 display improvement compared to the previous period. These cover admissions of older adults to residential and nursing care, service users finding it easy to find information and reablement. Two indicators show declining performance (hospital admissions due to falls and delayed transfers of care from hospital attributable to adult social care).

The second dashboard covers adult social care services including support for carers. Five of the 16 indicators are derived from nationally mandated surveys. Looking at the indicators, 1 shows an improvement (overall satisfaction of service users with their care and support). One indicator displays a decline in performance (service users receiving support via cash payments) and 10 indicators display similar results to the previous year. Two indicators are derived from the national carers survey which did not take place during 2019/20, while 2 are new indicators.

Public Health

This dashboard covers adult health. Looking at the 23 indicators, 7 show an improvement compared to the previous period, 4 display a deterioration, 7 show no change and data is not available for 5 indicators. The indicators that have improved cover health inequalities, smoking, drug treatment and physical activity. The indicators displaying lower performance cover healthy life expectancy, mortality from preventative causes and adult obesity. The indicators with similar results cover life expectancy, mortality from CVD, cancer and respiratory disease, hospital admissions for alcohol related causes and mortality attributable to air pollution.

Best Start in Life

This dashboard covers child health and early years services. Looking at the 12 indicators, 6 show an improvement compared to the previous period, while 1 deteriorated and 3 show similar results. Data was not available for 2 indicators. The indicators that have improved cover smoking during pregnancy, breastfeeding, dental decay among 5 year olds, take up of free education by 2 year olds and child obesity. The indicator displaying lower performance is the chlamydia diagnosis rate, for which the aim is to improve detection. The 3 indicators showing little change are the % of early years providers assessed as good or outstanding, take-up of free early education by 3 and 4 year olds and under 18 conceptions.

Mental Health

This dashboard covers mental health and wellbeing. Looking at the 6 indicators, 2 improved, 3 show similar results and 1 had no data available. The indicators showing improvement related to Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services. The indicators with similar results cover the percentage of people with low happiness, high anxiety, and the suicide rate.

Opportunity

Schools and Academies

This dashboard covers school admissions and school quality. Summer 2020 external examinations were cancelled due to Covid-19, so attainment data is not available. Looking at the 4 indicators, 2 show an improvement compared to the previous period, while 2 display similar results. The 2 indicators showing improvement covered secondary admissions and special schools rated as good or outstanding. The indicators showing no change cover primary admissions and the schools assessed as good or outstanding.

Keeping People Safe

Safeguarding Children and Families

This dashboard covers Early Help services, child safeguarding and looked after children. Looking at the 19 indicators, 12 show improvement compared to the previous period, while 7 display a decline in performance. The 12 indicators showing improvement cover supporting families, timeliness of children's social care assessments, re-referrals to children's social care, children in care with 3 or more placements in year, looked after children's health and immunisations, and care leavers. The 7 indicators showing lower performance cover timeliness of review of child protection cases, repeat child protection plans, long term stability of looked after children's placements, looked after children's dental checks, out of county child placements and adoption.

Safer Communities and Vulnerable Adults

This dashboard covers youth justice, domestic abuse and adult safeguarding. The dashboard contains 12 indicators, of which 9 show lower performance compared to the previous period and 3 show no change. The indicators showing lower performance cover first time entrants to youth justice, youth re-offending, anti-social behaviour, domestic violence with injury, repeat domestic violence conferences and safeguarding adults. The 3 indicators displaying similar performance are use of custody for young

offenders, domestic abuse incidents and social care users who say that those services have made them feel safe and secure.

Police and Crime

This dashboard includes indicators for overall crime as well as specific crime types. The dashboard contains 10 indicators, of which 3 show improvement compared to the previous period, 3 display a deterioration and 4 show no change. The 3 indicators showing improvement cover residential burglary, theft and vehicle offences. The 3 indicators displaying lower performance cover public order, violence against the person and perceptions of personal safety after dark. The indicators showing similar results are overall crime, business / community burglary, criminal damage & arson and sexual offences.

Communities

Environment and Waste

This dashboard covers waste management and the County Council's environmental impact. It includes 13 indicators, of which 7 show improvement compared to the previous period and 6 indicators displayed similar results to the previous year. The 7 indicators showing improvement cover use of landfill, waste produced from Council internal sites, carbon emissions, staff business miles claimed and community renewable heat incentive deployment. The indicators displaying similar results cover household waste recycling, amount of waste per household, waste recycled from Council internal sites, production of renewable energy by the authority, staff perceptions that the Council is doing enough to reduce its environmental impact and CO2 emission per capita.

Great Communities

This dashboard covers libraries, cohesion and volunteering. Looking at the 18 indicators, 10 show improvement compared to the previous period, while 2 display a decline in performance and 3 show no change. There are 3 indicators without data to calculate a direction of travel. The 10 indicators showing improvement cover community cohesion, hate incidents, willingness to work together to improve neighbourhoods, perception of ability to influence Council decisions affecting the local area, library issues, library e-downloads, library volunteering, number of communities running their own libraries and tourism visits. The indicators with only one data point cover loneliness, volunteering to support coronavirus response and carers having as much social contact as they would like.

Corporate Enablers

This dashboard covers customer service, digital delivery and the Council workforce. Looking at the 19 indicators, 6 show improvement compared to the previous period, 7 display a decline in performance and 6 show no change. The 6 indicators showing improvement cover satisfaction with the Council, trust in the Council, use of the Council website, commendations, staff satisfaction and the percentage of the Council workforce that is from a BME background. The 7 indicators showing lower performance cover satisfaction with our Customer Service Centre, complaints, media points rating, number of apprentices employed by the Council, staff sickness absence and the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index Ranking. The 6 indicators displaying no change cover people feeling well informed about the Council, number of RIDDOR

(health & safety) incidents, percentage of our workforce that is disabled, percentage of employees graded 13 and above that are women, gender pay gap and the workforce perception of the Council's commitment to equality & diversity.

Explanation of Performance Indicator Dashboards

The performance dashboards set out year end results for a number of the performance indicators (PIs) that are used to help us monitor whether we are achieving our priority outcomes. These outcomes have been identified within our Strategic Plan. Many indicators relate to more than one theme, but in this report, each indicator has been assigned to just one theme.

Where relevant, the performance sections show 2019/20 year end outturn against performance targets (where applicable), together with comparative performance information where available and commentary. Where it is available, the dashboards indicate which quartile Leicestershire's performance falls into. The 1st quartile is defined as performance that falls within the top 25% of relevant comparators. The 4th quartile is defined as performance that falls within the bottom 25% of relevant comparators. Each dashboard uses different comparator groups, and these are explained at the bottom of each dashboard. Based on current comparative analysis, out of 135 indicators 42 are top quartile, 45 second quartile, 28 third quartile and 20 fourth quartile.

The polarity column indicates whether a high or low figure represents good performance. A red circle indicates a performance issue, whereas a green tick indicates exceptional performance. The direction of travel arrows indicate an improvement or deterioration in performance compared to the previous result. The arrows are indicative, and do not necessarily represent statistically significant change.

Fair Funding

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Finance & Value For Money</u>								
*	Core Spending Power per head of population	4th (2019/20)	↑	£736	Fair Funding	£702	High	Leicestershire has the lowest core spending power per head of 33 county councils nationally which poses a risk to service delivery going forwards. Current funding system benefits certain classes of authority more, particularly London boroughs, who make up 9 of the 10 best funded authorities.
*	Net expenditure per head of population	4th*	↑	£595	MTFS	£497	High	Increase compared to previous year.
*	Education - expenditure per head of population	4th*	↓	£324	MTFS	£347	High	Decrease compared to previous year.
*	Adult Social Care - expenditure per head of population	4th*	↑	£239	MTFS	£221	High	Increase compared to previous year.
*	Children's Social Care - expenditure per head of population	4th*	↑	£112	MTFS	£108	High	Slight increase compared to previous year.
*	Public Health - expenditure per head of population	4th*	→	£37	MTFS	£37	High	Similar to previous year.
*	Highways & Transport - expenditure per head of population	4th*	↑	£47	MTFS	£41	High	Increase compared to previous year.
*	Environment & Regulatory - expenditure per head of pop'n	4th*	↑	£40	MTFS	£34	High	Increase compared to previous year.
*	Culture - expenditure per head of population	3rd*	↑	£14	MTFS	£13	High	Slight increase compared to previous year.
*	Efficiencies and other savings achieved	-	-	£9.8m	£10.6m	£17.8m	High	Efficiencies and savings achieved during 2019/20 were slightly below target due to delays in the achievement of some planned savings.
	% agree County Council provides value for money	1st/2nd	↑	70.4%		66.1%	High	The result is similar to the previous year and is significantly better than the England average of 57% (LGA Survey). The Authority has the lowest core spending power per head of all county councils. For 2019/20 the Authority increased Council Tax by 1.99% and levied the government's 2% adult social care precept.
	% affected by spending cuts	-	↑	16.8%		21.3%	Low	The result shows a statistically significant improvement compared to the previous year. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1600 residents during 2019/20.
*	Leicestershire Traded Services operating profit	● -	↓	£0.1m	£2.7m	£1.6m	High	Continuing challenges from a 2018/19 overspend of £0.4m, pay inflation of £0.8m and the 2019/20 savings target of £0.5m coupled with challenging market conditions, and the impact of Covid-19 have all provided further challenges and resulted in a difficult trading year.
Notes: Comparators are the 33 county councils & county unitaries. * 2018/19 results								

Strong Economy

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Right Infrastructure for Sustainable Growth</u>							
*	Productivity and competitiveness (total Gross Value Added to local economy) (Leics, Leicester & Rutland)	-	↑	£26.7bn	£25.6bn	High	Continued growth in the local economy. Data shown is for 2018 and 2017.
*	Productivity and competitiveness (Gross Value Added to local economy per head) (Leics & Rutland)	2nd (2018)	↑	£24,877	£23,990	High	As above.
	Gross Disposal Household Income per head	3rd (2018)	↑	£19,617	£18,951	High	Data shown is 2018 and 2017.
	Gross Disposal Household Income per head - growth over last 5 years	3rd (2018)	↑	15.7%	14.4%	High	Data shown is growth 2014-2018.
*	% of premises with access to high speed broadband	-	→	96.5%	96.5%	High	Work continues to target the 'final 4%' which would otherwise be left behind on slow or inadequate broadband speeds.
*	% take up of new high speed broadband	2nd	↑	63.8%	61.6%	High	The figures are for Broadband Delivery UK Phase 1 (data is for December 2017 and June 2019).
*	Private sector funding secured to deliver infrastructure (Section 106)	-	↓	£9.1m	£15.7m	High	Reduction compared to 2018/19, but similar to previous years. Contributions relate mainly to residential developments, with significant stages of development being reached which triggered payments.
<u>Businesses are supported to flourish</u>							
*	Business confidence	● -	↓	-11%	9%	High	Source: LLEP Business Survey 2017 and 2020 (post-Covid sample). The figure shown is positive minus negative for how business conditions are expected to change over the next 2 years.
	% feel economy and job prospects likely to improve or remain the same over next year	● -	↓	22.2%	70.90%	High	Significant decrease observed from early 2020 due to Covid-19 impact. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of 400 residents quarterly. The result compares April-June 2020 with the equivalent quarter in 2019.
*	Number of new enterprises per 10,000 population	2nd	↑	48.5	45.3	High	The Council has encouraged business growth and survival by investing in enterprises through allocating Regional Growth Funds to businesses and setting up a business gateway that provides advice and guidance. Data shown is for 2018 and 2017.
*	3 year business survival rate	1st	↓	60.9%	65.0%	High	A range of business growth and business support initiatives continue to support business survival. Data shown is for 2018 and 2017.
Notes: Comparators are the 33 county councils & county unitaries. Data shown is for the financial year 2019/20 or earlier, and does not capture the impact of the Covid-19 on the local economy.							

Strong Economy - Employment & Skills

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
	<u>Highly skilled and employable workforce</u>						
*	% achieving a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19	3rd (2019)	↓	82.4%	84.1%	High	Leicestershire saw a small decrease in 19 year olds qualified to Level 2.
*	% of working age population with at least NVQ 2 level qualifications	1st	↑	81.2%	78.2%	High	Equivalent to 5 GCSEs at A* to C (grades 4-9) - considered labour market entry qualification. Work continues to progress improvements in skills. (Data shown is from the ONS Annual Population Survey for year to December 2019).
*	% of working age population with at least NVQ 3 level qualifications	1st	↑	64.7%	60.8%	High	Work continues to progress improvements in skills. (Data shown is from the ONS Annual Population Survey for year to December 2019).
*	% of working age population with at least NVQ 4 level qualifications	2nd	↑	40.8%	38.0%	High	As above.
*	% businesses experiencing difficulties recruiting staff in the past 12 months	-	→	27%	28%	Low	Source: LLEP Business Survey 2017 and 2020 (pre-Covid sample).
*	Number of apprenticeship starts (all employers in the county)	2nd	↑	5,250	4,890	High	The numbers has increased slightly. Data shown in for 2017/18 and 2018/19.
*	% Out-Of-Work Benefit Claimants (JSA & UC)	1st	↓	4.4%	1.6%	Low	The rate has increased significantly over the past year due to Covid-19 but remains lower than the regional (5.8%) and national positions (6.6%). (Data shown is for August 2020).
*	Unemployment rate	3rd	↑	3.1%	5.2%	Low	The rate has improved over the past year and is now lower (better) than the regional (3.7%) and national positions (3.9%). Data shown is for year to March 2020.
	Employment rate	1st	↑	80.6%	79.8%	High	The rate is higher (better) than the regional (76.8%) and national positions (76.0%). Data shown is for year to March 2020.
*	% of 16 to 17 year olds who are not in education employment or training (NEET)	2nd (2018)	→	2.0%	2.2%	Low	The NEET level in Leicestershire remains consistently low.
*	Gross weekly pay - all full time workers	2nd	↑	£583.30	£573.00	High	Data shown is for 2019.
Notes: Comparators are the 33 county councils & county unitaries. Data shown is for the financial year 2019/20 or earlier, and does not capture the impact of the Covid-19 on the local economy.							

Opportunity: School & Academy Performance							
Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
	<u>Access to good quality education</u>						
*	% of pupils offered first choice primary school	3rd	↑	92.4%	90.3%	High	The number of pupils offered their first choice primary school was higher than 2018/19.
*	% of pupils offered first choice secondary school	3rd	→	89.3%	89.5%	High	The number of pupils offered their first choice secondary school was similar to 2018/19.
*	% of schools assessed as good or outstanding	2nd	↑	87.5%	86.0%	High	The number of good or outstanding schools was above the 2017/18 levels before the suspension of school inspections due to the national lockdown.
	% of special schools assessed as good or outstanding	1st	→	100%	100%	High	All special schools are now rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted.
<u>Notes:</u> Summer 2020 external examinations were cancelled due to Covid-19, so attainment data is not available. Responsibility of schools and academies with support from Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership (LEEP). Comparators are the 33 county councils & county unitaries.							

Strong Economy - Transport

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Strategic Transport Infrastructure</u>								
*	Average vehicle speeds during the weekday morning peak (7am-10am) on locally managed 'A' roads in Leicestershire (mph)	3rd (2018)	→	31.1 (2019)	30.3	31.1 (2018)	High	The annual 'average vehicle speeds during the morning peak (7am-10am) on locally managed 'A' roads' indicator, remained static at 31mph in 2018 and 2019 and continued to exceed its 30mph target. Quartile position reflects average speed on local 'A' roads.
	Satisfaction with traffic levels & congestion (NHT satisfaction survey) (%)	3rd (2019)	↓	31.9%	42%	34.4%	High	Satisfaction with traffic levels has declined in performance again from 34% (2018) to 32% (2019). It performs below average when compared to other English County Councils.
*	% of businesses citing concerns about traffic congestion	-	-	28% (2017)	<37%	28% (2017)	Low	The results of the 2020 survey are due in December 2020.
	Satisfaction with cycle routes/lanes & facilities (NHT satisfaction) (%)	1st (2019)	→	37.6%	47.0%	38.4%	High	Satisfaction has remained relatively static since the previous year at 38%. Despite this Leicestershire was ranked in the top quartile compared to participating counties in the NHT 2019.
	Satisfaction with pavements & footpaths (NHT satisfaction) (%)	1st (2019)	↑	62.2%	68.0%	60.0%	High	Satisfaction has improved since the previous year.
<u>Sustainable Transport & Road Maintenance</u>								
*	% of principal (A class) road network where structural maintenance should be considered	✓ 1st (2018/19)	→	2%	2-4%	1%	Low	Leicestershire continues to have some of the best maintained roads in the country. The 'percentage of classified roads (A class) where structural maintenance should be considered' was 2% during 2019/20 and has met its 4% target.
*	% of non-principal (B & C class) road network where structural maintenance should be considered	✓ 1st (2018/19)	→	3%	4-6%	2%	Low	Performance has remained relatively static for this indicator. It has met its target.
	% of the unclassified road network where maintenance should be considered (visual inspection)	2nd (2018/19)	→	16%	<13%	15%	Low	The 'percentage of unclassified roads where maintenance should be considered' increased to 16% in 2019/20 from 15% in the previous year, resulting in a decline in performance. This indicator has missed its target range of 9% to 13% and has slipped into the 2nd quartile compared to other County Councils (2018/19). The decline in condition of unclassified roads has been exacerbated by the extreme hot and cold weather and the impact this has had on subsoils and surfaces in addition to reductions in spend.

Strong Economy - Transport

Strategic Plan	Description	✓	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
	% of network gritted	✓	-	→	47%	47%	47%	High	We expect to grit all our priority 1 and 2 routes (which cover 47% of the network). In 2019/20 we successfully gritted all these routes.
*	Overall satisfaction with the condition of highways (NHT satisfaction survey) (%)	✓	1st (2019)	↑	36.6%	top quartile	29.3%	High	This indicator improved in performance since the previous year and continues to perform well compared to other county councils as it remains in the top quartile.
	% of footpaths and other rights of way that are signposted and easy to use		-	↓	74.2%	75%	77%	High	This indicator declined in performance slightly from 77% (2018/19) to 74.2% (2019/20) and is now below its 75% target.
	CO2 emissions from transport within LA influence (Kt)		2nd (2018)	↑	1182.58 (2018)	-	1192.11 (2017)	Low	This indicator improved in performance since the previous year and continues to perform above average when compared to other county councils. This data is taken from the published subset and represents carbon dioxide emissions within the scope of influence of Local Authorities.
	Overall satisfaction with local bus services (%)		2nd (2019)	→	58.0%	56.0%	58.8%	High	Results from the 2019 NHT survey show that satisfaction with local bus services has remained static at 58% and performs above the average for comparable English Counties during 2019 (2nd quartile).
*	Number of bus journeys (m)		3rd (2018/19)	↓	12.6m	12.8m	13.05m	High	There has been a decline in overall passenger journeys compared to 2018/19, reflecting a national trend. Figures may have been impacted slightly by the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.
<u>Road Safety (Keeping People Safe)</u>									
*	Total casualties on our roads		1st (2018)	↑	996	1542	1207	low	There was a decline in road casualties from 1,207 in 2018/19 to 996 in 2019/20 showing an improvement in performance and has met its target. It remains in the top quartile compared to other English county councils. This data should be treated with caution due to changes in reporting by Police.
*	People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents		1st (2018)	↑	175	171	245	low	There was a decrease in the number of casualties from 245 in 2018/19 to 175 in 2019/20 showing an improvement in performance but it has just missed its target of fewer than 171. The Council remains in the top quartile compared to other English county councils. This data should be treated with caution due to changes in reporting by Police.

Notes: Comparators are the 33 county councils & county unitaries.

Housing - Affordable & Quality Homes								
Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
Right number and type of homes in the right places								
*	5 Year Supply of Deliverable Sites - housing units	-	↓	21,717	-	22,525	High	Decrease of 3.6% from the previous year.
*	Total new dwellings	1st (2019/20)	↑	3,520	4,716	3,060	High	The target is a notional annual target to meet the annual requirement for new housing identified in the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA). Quartile is new dwellings per 10k population (Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities, & Local Government).
*	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	1st (2017/18)	-	-	-	836	High	
*	% agree that local housing meets local needs	-	↑	54.2%	-	50.6%	High	The result is slightly higher than the previous year. The data is from the Community Insight Survey of c.1600 residents during 2019/20.
*	Housing affordability - ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile earnings	2nd	↑	8.22	-	8.46	Low	This has decreased (improved) slightly since the previous year. The least affordable places to purchase property in Leicestershire are Harborough and Oadby & Wigston. Data is 2019 and 2018.
*	Number of households living in temporary accommodation (per 1,000 households)	1st	↓	0.4	-	0.1	Low	The rate has increased slightly since the previous year and equates to 118 households. The rate remains low compared to other county areas.
Enough suitable housing for those with care needs								
*	Number of units of supported accommodation for working age adults (PD/LD/MH)	-	↑	320	-	296	High	Increase of 8% from the previous year.
*	Number of units of specialist accommodation / extra care housing	-	→	250	-	250	High	No change in the level of extra care housing available across the county this year.
*	% of adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family (ASCOF 1G)	1st (2018/19)	↑	82.9%	82%	81.4%	High	The proportion of people with a learning disability aged 18-64 who live in settled accommodation has improved during the past few years and at 82.9% remains high and over the target of 82%.
Development does not have a negative impact								
*	Number of Local Plans adopted within the last 5 years	-	↑	7	-	6		All Leicestershire district authorities have Local Plans adopted within the last five years.
*	Number of Local Plans adopted with conservation policies	-	↑	7	-	6		All adopted Local Plans include conservation policies.
Notes: Comparators are the 33 county councils & county unitaries.								

Wellbeing - Health & Care								
Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
Unified Prevention, Information & Urgent Response								
*	Permanent admissions of older people to residential and nursing care homes per 100,000 pop (ASCOF 2A Pt II) (BCF)	3rd (2018/19)	↑	605.7	<585	689.4	Low	There was a reduction in the number of people aged 65 or over permanently admitted to residential or nursing homes during 2019/20 compared to the previous year.
*	Permanent admissions to residential or nursing care of service users aged 18-64 per 100,000 pop (ASCOF 2A Pt I)	2nd (2018/19)	→	5.5	<8.1	5.3	Low	The number of people aged 18-64 permanently admitted to residential or nursing homes during 2019/20 was below target.
*	Non-elective admissions to hospital per 100,000 pop per month (BCF)	2nd (2017/18)	→	836.27	864.94	819.53	Low	Non-elective admissions to hospital continue to be lower than planned for although the rate per 100,000 population has increased in 2019/20. There were 69,916 against a plan of 72,313 in 2019/20.
*	Admissions from injuries due to falls per 100,000 pop per month (BCF)	-	↓	154.2	-	143.2	Low	There were 2,690 emergency admissions for injuries due to falls for residents of Leicestershire aged 65 and over in 2019/20.
*	% of people who use services who find it easy to find information about support (ASCOF 3D part 1)	4th (2018/19)	↑	61.5%	74%	59.7%	High	The proportion of service users who found it easy to find information in 2019/20 was slightly higher than the previous year.
Improved Discharge & Reablement								
*	Delayed transfers of care from hospital per 100,000 pop per month (BCF)	2nd (2017/18)	→	217.17	240.44	213.51	Low	Current reporting on DTOCs is on hold due to resources being diverted to help support the Covid pandemic. The figure of 217.17 is the average for April - Feb 19/20.
*	Delayed transfers of care attributable to adult social care only - average days per month	1st (2018/19)	↓	163	207	94	Low	Current reporting on DTOCs is on hold due to resources being diverted to help support the Covid pandemic. The figure of 163 is the average for April - Feb 19/20.
*	% of people aged 65+ still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation services (ASCOF 2B Pt I) (BCF)	2nd (2018/19)	→	88.1%	88.0%	87.5%	High	Performance in 2019/20 was similar to the previous year, and just over the BCF target.
*	% of people receiving reablement with no subsequent long-term service (ASCOF 2D)	2nd (2018/19)	↑	87.5%	82.0%	84.5%	High	ASCOF 2D measures the proportion of people who had no need for ongoing services following reablement. During 2019/20 performance was higher than the previous year and above the target.
Notes: ASCOF benchmarks are compared to all social services authorities BCF indicator targets are for 2018/19. 'ASCOF' refers to the Department of Health Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework								

Wellbeing - Health & Care

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Personalisation</u>								
*	% of people who use services who have control over their daily life (ASCOF 1B)	4th (2018/19)	→	73.4%	-	74.3%	High	The proportion of service users stating that they have control over their daily life is similar to the previous year.
	% of people using social care who receive self-directed support (national, ASCOF 1C Pt 1a)	3rd (2018/19)	→	97.2%	97.0%	96.7%	High	The proportion of people in receipt of a personal budget has increased by 0.5 percentage points on last year.
	% of carers receiving self-directed support (ASCOF 1C Pt 1b)	3rd (2018/19)	→	99.8%	99.0%	99.8%	High	The proportion of carers in receipt of a personal budget remained constant between 18/19 and 19/20.
	% of service users receiving support via cash payments (ASCOF 1C Pt 2a)	1st (2018/19)	↓	47.5%	40.0%	49.9%	High	There has been a small reduction in the proportion of service users with a direct payment
	% of carers receiving direct payments (ASCOF 1C Pt 2b)	2nd (2018/19)	→	98.4%	97.0%	98.1%	High	The proportion of carers in receipt of a direct payment was similar to and slightly above the previous year, and above the 97% target.
<u>Coronavirus Response</u>								
	Number of people shielded from coronavirus (supported with essential supplies)	-	-	5,300	-	N/A	High	Of the 14,400 people who registered for support by 31st July 2020, 5,300 noted a need for support with essential supplies.
	Number of people shielded from coronavirus (supported with basic care needs)	-	-	1,200	-	N/A	High	Of the 14,400 people who registered for support by 31st July 2020, 1,200 noted they needed support with basic care needs.
<u>Dementia</u>								
*	Dementia diagnosis rate by GPs	2nd (Eng)	→	68.9%	66.7%	72.1%	High	The indicator shows the rate of persons aged 65 and over with a recorded diagnosis of dementia compared to the number estimated to have dementia given the characteristics of the population and the age and sex specific prevalence rates. Data is for 2019.
<u>Care Quality</u>								
	Overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support (ASCOF 3A)	4th (2018/19)	↑	59.9%	-	58.5%	High	The level of satisfaction - calculated from the annual survey of service users - has increased by 1.4 percentage points between 2018/19 and 2019/20.
	Overall satisfaction of carers with their care and support (ASCOF 3B)	3rd (2018/19)	-	N/A	-	36.6%	High	The bi-annual carers survey was not due to be completed in 2019/20, and the 2020/21 survey has been postponed for a year due to the Covid pandemic.
	% of Care Homes requiring improvement or inadequate - rating	-	→	18%	-	17%	Low	This indicator is based on Care Quality Commission (CQC) data.
	% of Home Care Providers requiring improvement or inadequate - rating	-	→	11%	-	12%	Low	This indicator is based on Care Quality Commission (CQC) data. No Home Care providers were rated as inadequate.
*	Social care related quality of life (ASCOF 1A)	4th (2018/19)	→	18.5	-	18.6	High	This measure is drawn from a number of questions in the annual survey of service users including such topics as control over daily life, and how time is spent and social contact.

Wellbeing - Health & Care								
Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
*	Carers reported quality of life (ASCOF 1D)	2nd (2017/18)	-	N/A	-	7.5	High	Similar to the indicator above, this is drawn from a number of questions in the biennial survey of carers including topics such as control over daily life, social participation and safety. The survey was not carried out in 2019/20, and the 2020/21 survey has been postpone for a year due to the Covid pandemic
<u>People reach their potential</u>								
*	% of adults with a learning disability in paid employment (ASCOF 1E)	1st (2018/19)	→	11.2%	11.2%	11.3%	High	The proportion of people aged 18-64 with a learning disability known to the council who are in paid employment remains high at 11%.
*	Gap in employment rate between those in contact with secondary mental health services and the overall rate	4th (Eng)	→	77.80%	-	74.50%	Low	Data is for 2017/18 and 2018/19.
<u>Notes:</u> ASCOF benchmarks are compared to all social services authorities. 'ASCOF' refers to the Department of Health Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework.								

Wellbeing - Public Health

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
	<u>Public Health</u>						
*	Life Expectancy – Males (Leics)	1st (Eng)	→	80.7	80.8	High	Males in Leicestershire can expect to live over 1 year longer than the average for England. To reduce health inequalities we are tackling the wider determinants of health through a range of projects/activity. Latest data is for the period 2016-18.
*	Life Expectancy – Females (Leics)	1st (Eng)	→	84.2	84.1	High	Females in Leicestershire can expect to live 1 year longer than the average for England. Latest data is for the period 2016-18.
*	Healthy Life Expectancy – Males (Leics)	2nd (Eng)	↓	63.8	65.2	High	Males in Leicestershire can expect to live almost half a healthy year longer than the average for England (63.4 years). Latest data is for the period 2016-18.
*	Healthy Life Expectancy – Females (Leics)	2nd (Eng)	↓	63.9	65.7	High	Females in Leicestershire have the same healthy life expectancy as the average for England (63.9 years). Latest data is for the period 2016-18.
	Slope Index of Inequalities – Males (Leics)	1st (Eng)	↑	6.3	6.6	Low	The gap in life expectancy between the best-off and worst-off males in Leicestershire for 2016-18 is 6.3 years. Ranked 5th best out of 16 similar areas.
	Slope Index of Inequalities – Females (Leics)	2nd (Eng)	↑	5	5.5	Low	The gap in life expectancy between the best-off and worst-off females in Leicestershire for 2016-18 is 5.0 years. Ranked 9th best out of 16 similar areas.
*	Under 75 CVD Mortality (per 100,000 population)	1st (Eng)	→	61.1	62.1	Low	A variety of work contributes to reducing cardiovascular disease. Latest data is for the period 2016-18.
*	Under 75 Cancer Mortality (per 100,000 population)	1st (Eng)	→	120.7	119.8	Low	Various actions are being implemented to help people to adopt healthier lifestyles and become more aware of cancer risk factors. Latest data is for the period 2016-18.
*	Under 75 Respiratory Disease Mortality (per 100,000 population)	1st (Eng)	→	26.7	27.0	Low	Public health advice and support and wider prevention programmes for respiratory disease. Latest data is for the period 2016-18.

Wellbeing - Public Health							
Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
*	Age standardised mortality for preventative causes for age 75 and under	1st (Eng)	↓	156.2	151.8	Low	Deaths are considered preventable if, in the light of the understanding of the determinants of health at the time of death, all or most deaths from the underlying cause (subject to age limits if appropriate) could potentially be avoided by public health interventions in the broadest sense.
*	Prevalence of smoking among persons aged 18 years and over	1st (Eng)	↑	12.0%	13.2%	Low	A new stop smoking service began in 2017. In 2019, the national average result was 13.9%.
	Rate of hospital admissions for alcohol related causes (per 100,000 population - Leics)	2nd (Eng)	→	588	556	Low	Leicestershire has performed better than the England average since 2011/12. Latest data is for period 2018/19.
*	% who successfully completed drug treatment (non-opiate)	2nd (Eng)	↑	38.6%	34.7%	High	Data shows completions in 2018 with non re-presentations up to 6 months. The data presented is for Leicestershire and Rutland combined.
*	% who successfully completed drug treatment (opiate)	1st (Eng)	↑	8.2%	5.5%	High	Data shows completions in 2018 with non re-presentations up to 6 months. The data presented is for Leicestershire and Rutland combined.
	Cumulative percentage of the eligible population aged 40-74 offered an NHS Health Check who received an NHS Health Check in a five year period	3rd (Eng)	-	N/A	42.8%	High	New health check service contract with the GPs has been agreed along with efforts to encourage pharmacies and GPs to work together to improve health check uptake. Data relates to the time period 2014/15 - 2018/19. No further update since value presented in 2018/19
*	% of adults classified as overweight or obese (Leics)	3rd (Eng)	↓	64.5%	60.6%	Low	Data sourced from Active Lives Survey. Latest data is for period 2018/19.
*	% of physically active adults	2nd (Eng)	↑	68.3%	64.3%	High	Latest data, 2018/19, is derived from the Active Lives Survey. Leicestershire value is similar to the England value of 67.2%.
*	% of physically inactive adults	2nd (Eng)	↑	19.5%	23.3%	Low	Latest data, 2018/19, is derived from the Active Lives Survey. Leicestershire value is significantly better than the England value of 21.4%.
	Fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution	2nd (Eng)	→	4.9%	5.3%	Low	Latest data is for 2018. In 2018, the value for Leicestershire has been the lowest since recording in 2010.

Wellbeing - Public Health

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Coronavirus Response</u>							
	Cumulative rate (per 100,000 population) of lab confirmed Covid-19 cases (Pillar 1 & 2)	-	-	623.8		Low	Leicestershire ranked 60th highest out of 149 Upper Tier Local Authorities. National Cumulative rate (per 100,000 population) is 631.2. Data as at week 38.
	Cumulative death rate per 100,000 population for Covid- 19	-	-	77.6		Low	Cumulative death rate (per 100,000 population) based on occurrences from Covid-19 (up to 18th September 2020, but were registered to 26th September). The national cumulative death rate (per 100,000 population) is 89.4.
	Number of excess deaths	-	-	538		Low	Cumulative excess deaths from week 1 to week 38 (18th September 2020)
	% respondents feel well informed about coronavirus, including availability of support	1st/2nd	-	82.1%		High	The result is well above the England average of 49% and reflects the information campaign run by the Council.
<u>Notes:</u> Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) benchmarks are compared to all single / upper tier authorities. Direction of travel arrows are indicative, and do not necessarily represent statistically significant change.							

Wellbeing - Best Start in Life

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
*	Smoking at time of delivery (Leics & Rutland)	1st (Eng)	↑	8.5%	9.5%	Low	Significant decreasing trend was witnessed over the previous five years. The data presented is for Leicestershire and Rutland combined in 2018/19
*	Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6–8 weeks from birth (Leics)	2nd	↑	47.1%	45.0%	High	Data is for 2018/19 and the prevalence for Leicestershire is similar to England (46.2%)
*	Percentage of 5 year olds with experience of visually obvious dental decay	1st (Eng)	↑	18.2%	22.3%	Low	Compared to the last survey results in 2016/17, there has been a significant improvement in 5 year olds with dental decay in Leicestershire in 2019/20. The latest result is significantly better than the national average.
*	% of providers in early years assessed as good or outstanding	3rd	→	95.7%	95.0%	High	A high proportion of childcare providers in Leicestershire are rated as good or outstanding.
*	% take-up of free early education by 2 year olds	4th (2020)	↑	64.0%	63.0%	High	Take up of free childcare places for 2 year olds is similar to the previous year.
*	% take-up of free early education by 3 & 4 year olds	2nd (2020)	→	95.0%	96.0%	High	Take up for 3 and 4 year olds remains high.
*	% Achieving Good Level of Development (early years)	3rd (2019)	-	N/A	72.1%	High	Achievement in Leicestershire is now above the national average for the first time. Quartile position is in relation to 33 counties and reflects previous year's result.
*	% Inequality gap in achievement across early learning goals	2nd (2019)	-	N/A	28.7%	Low	Quartile position is in relation to 33 counties and reflects previous year's result.
*	Excess weight in primary school age children in Reception (Leics)	1st (Eng)	↑	19.6%	24.3%	Low	Leicestershire performs significantly better than the England average of 22.6%, 2018/19.
*	Excess weight in primary school age children in Year 6 (Leics)	1st (Eng)	↑	30.0%	32.7%	Low	Leicestershire performs significantly better than the England average of 34.3%, 2018/19.
*	Chlamydia diagnoses (per 100,000 aged 15-24) (Leics)	3rd (Eng)	↓	1561	1734	High	Slight decline in performance in chlamydia detection rate from 2016 to 2018. No further update.
*	Under 18 conception (rate per 1,000 females aged 15-17) (Leics)	1st (Eng)	→	12.2	12.3	Low	Leicestershire's teenage pregnancy rate has dropped for the 11th consecutive year - lower than East Midlands and England rates. Latest data is 2018.

Notes: Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) benchmarks are compared to all single / upper tier authorities

Wellbeing - Mental Health							
Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Mental Health</u>							
*	% of people with a low satisfaction score	-	-	-	3.6%	Low	We are a key partner in the Better Care Together Mental Health workstream, with a range of interventions aimed at helping people avoid becoming ill - focus on building wellbeing and resilience. No data is available for 2018/19.
*	% of people with a low happiness score	2nd (Eng)	→	7.5%	6.9%	Low	We are a key partner in the Better Care Together Mental Health workstream, with a range of interventions aimed at helping people avoid becoming ill - focus on building wellbeing and resilience. Latest data is for period 2018/19. Leicestershire result is similar to the England average.
*	% of people with a high anxiety score	2nd (Eng)	→	18.5%	19.6%	Low	We are a key partner in the Better Care Together Mental Health workstream, with a range of interventions aimed at helping people avoid becoming ill - focus on building wellbeing and resilience. Latest data is for period 2018/19. We are similar to the England average.
	Suicide rate (per 100,000)	1st (Eng)	→	7.8	8.3	Low	Latest data is for period 2017-19. In year data suggests that this is an area of concern.
*	% of patients that received treatment in Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) within 4 weeks - (urgent)	-	↑	80.0%	76.5%	High	This indicator shows a small improvement compared to the previous year.
*	% of patients that received treatment in Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) within 13 weeks - (routine)	-	↑	96.3%	88.8%	High	This indicator shows an improvement compared to the previous year.
<u>Notes:</u> Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) benchmarks are compared to all single / upper tier authorities							

Keeping People Safe - Safeguarding Children & Families

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Supporting Families & Early Help</u>								
	Number of funded families on the Government Troubled Families Programme	-	↑	2770	2770	2632	High	LCC had worked with more than the number of funded families attached to the Supporting Leicestershire Families Programme
	Number of families achieving significant and sustained progress	-	↑	2102	-	954	High	The authority achieved it's target for Phase 2 of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Troubled Families Programme
	Number of families achieving sustained employment	-	↑	668	-	642	High	The authority achieved it's target for Phase 2 of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Troubled Families Programme
*	Number of Payment by Results (PBR) families outcomes met - SLF Phase 2 ✓	1st	↑	2770	2770	1596	High	The authority achieved it's target for Phase 2 of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government Troubled Families Programme
<u>Safeguarding Children</u>								
	Single assessments completed within 45 working days	3rd (2018/19)	↑	87.0%	85%	76.4%	High	The national framework has a target of 45 days for completion.
*	% re-referrals to children's social care within 12 months	3rd (2018/19)	↑	20.4%	22%	24.6%	Low	The result represents an improvement compared to the previous year.
*	Child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales	1st (2018/19)	↓	93.7%	100%	96.8%	High	The result is slightly lower (worse) than the previous year.
*	Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	1st (2018/19)	↓	21.5%	19%	15.2%	Low	The result is slightly higher (worse) than the previous year.
<u>Looked After Children</u>								
*	Stability of placements - children in care with 3 or more placements in year.	1st (2018/19)	↑	8.0%	9%	9.1%	Low	
*	Stability of placements - children in same placement for 2+ years or placed for adoption	3rd (2018/19)%	↓	62.3%	70%	65.7%	High	The result is slightly lower (worse) than the previous year.
*	% Looked after children receiving health checks	4th (2018/19)	↑	91.9%	90%	82.2%	High	Specialist nurse for Looked After Children progressing improvements. Data sharing with health supported via secure portal to improve timeliness and accuracy.
*	% Looked after children receiving immunisations	3rd (2018/19)	↑	90.4%	-	82.4%	High	As above.
*	% Looked after children receiving dental checks	1st (2018/19)	↓	87.6%	90%	91.8%	High	Specialist nurse for Looked After Children progressing improvements.

Keeping People Safe - Safeguarding Children & Families

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
	% Looked after children placed out of county	3rd (2018/19)	↓	34%	-	17%	Low	The result is higher (worse) than the previous year.
*	Emotional Health of looked after children - mean SDQ score	1st (2018/19)	↑	13.6	-	14.3	Low	The result is lower (better) than the previous year.
*	Care leavers aged 19, 20 and 21 in education, employment or training	1st (2018/19)	↑	64.2%	50%	60.8%	High	Children in Care service working to identify those in need of support.
*	Care leavers aged 19, 20 and 21 in suitable accommodation	2nd (2018/19)	↑	94.8%	80%	89.8%	High	The result is higher (better) than the previous year.
	Total average time in days to place with prospective adopters	2nd (2015-18)	↓	464	426	413	Low	Range of initiatives to improve fostering and adoption. Data shows 3 year average for 2017-19.
*	% children who wait less than 14 months for adoption	2nd (2018)	↓	49.0%	-	57.9%	High	Data shows 3 year average for 2017-19.
Notes: Children's Social Care data is provisional - to be confirmed by DfE in winter 2019/20. Comparators are the 33 county councils & county unitaries.								

Keeping People Safe - Safer Communities									
Strategic Plan	Description		Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Youth Justice</u>									
*	Rate of proven reoffending by young people in the youth justice system		2nd (2017/18)	↓	1.37	N/A	0.71	Low	This is a deterioration compared to the previous year's performance of 0.71. The latest data for nine months Apr-Dec 2019 shows a rate of 0.51, which suggests an improving trend.
*	Number of first time entrants to the criminal justice system aged 10 - 17		2nd (2018/19)	↓	111	N/A	100	Low	First time entrants are slightly higher than during 2018/19.
	% of young people receiving a conviction in court who are sentenced to custody		2nd (2018/19)	→	2.9%	N/A	2.8%	Low	Similar result to previous year. Data shown is for 2017/18 and 2018/19.
<u>Anti-social Behaviour</u>									
	Anti-social behaviour total (per 1,000 population)		-	↓	9.86	N/A	8.92		Significant increase in reported ASB during Covid-19 lockdown period. Data shown in 12 months to June 2020 compared to equivalent period last year.
*	% of people that agree ASB has decreased or stayed the same	●	-	↓	76.7%	N/A	87.5%	High	Significant decrease during Covid-19 lockdown period. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of 400 residents quarterly. The result compares April-June 2020 with the equivalent quarter in 2019.
<u>Vulnerable People</u>									
*	Reported domestic abuse incident rate (per 1,000 population)		-	→	10.2	N/A	10.2	-	The result is similar to the previous year.
	Domestic violence with injury rate (per 1,000 population)	●	-	↓	2.21	N/A	1.53		Significant increase during Covid-19 lockdown period is being monitored. Data shown in 12 months to June 2020 compared to equivalent period last year.
*	% of domestic violence cases reviewed at MARAC that are repeat incidents		-	↓	51%	28%-40%	43%	NA	MARAC re-referrals in the county are 51%. This is higher than the previous financial year, and is above the SafeLives recommended upper threshold of between 28% and 40%.
<u>Safeguarding Adults</u>									
*	% of people who use services who say that those services have made them feel safe and secure (ASCOF 4B)		1st (2018/19) Eng.	→	89.7%	90%	90.3%	High	The proportion of people stating that the services they receive help them to feel safe remains high, although it has seen a decline of 0.6 percentage points from 18/19.
*	Number of safeguarding adults alerts received		-	↓	4,167	-	4,827	Low	Safeguarding concerns include those cases where LCC receive reports of concern for a person's welfare, or where a safeguarding incident is reported. Alerts decreased by 14% between 18/19 and 19/20.
*	% of safeguarding adults where risk was identified		-	↓	54.3%	-	50.0%	Low	Checks are made to see if an enquiry meets safeguarding thresholds prior to it being opened and before the conclusion is known. Concluding a safeguarding enquiry as substantiated evidences that on the balance of probabilities, the abuse occurred.

Keeping People Safe - Safer Communities								
Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
	Of safeguarding enquiries where an outcome was expressed, the % fully or partially achieved	2nd (2018/19)	↓	92.3%	-	94.2%	High	Outcomes expressed and achieved are part of the 'Making Safeguarding Personal' outcome measures which were introduced to develop an outcomes focus to safeguarding work.
Notes: Comparators are the 33 county councils & county unitaries, except where (Eng.) indicates that comparison is with all English local authority areas.								

Keeping People Safe - Police & Crime

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
Crime Minimisation							
*	Total crime (per 1,000 population)	1st	→	65.0	65.3	Low	Total number of crimes was slightly lower than the previous year, following 2 years of increases. Significant decrease during Covid-19 lockdown period.
	Residential Burglary (per 1,000 population)	2nd	↑	4.1	4.8	Low	Residential burglary rates are 14% lower than the previous year. Significant decrease during Covid-19 lockdown period.
	Business and Community Burglary (per 1,000 population)	2nd	→	1.8	1.9	Low	Business and community burglary rates are similar to the previous year. Significant decrease during Covid-19 lockdown period.
	Criminal damage and arson (per 1,000 population)	1st	→	7.7	7.8	Low	Criminal damage and arson rates are similar to the previous year.
	Theft offences (per 1,000 population)	2nd	↑	7.9	8.3	Low	Theft offence rates are 5% lower than the previous year. Significant decrease during Covid-19 lockdown period.
	Vehicle offences (per 1,000 population)	4th	↑	8.0	8.5	Low	Vehicle offence rates are 6% lower than the previous year. Significant decrease during Covid-19 lockdown period.
	Public order offences (per 1,000 population)	2nd	↓	5.6	4.7	Low	Public Order Offence rates have shown a 19% increase.
	Violence against the person (per 1,000 population)	1st	↓	19.8	18.5	Low	There was a 7% increase in reported violence against the person compared to the previous year. The increase in reporting is thought to be related to an increase in confidence in reporting to the police and improved recording practices.
	Sexual offences (per 1,000 population)	1st	→	1.8	1.8	Low	Sexual offences rates are similar to the previous year. Leicestershire has a low rate compared to other similar authorities.
	% People who feel safe after dark	3rd/4th	↓	74.3%	90.0%	High	Significant decrease during Covid-19 lockdown period. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of 400 residents quarterly. The result compares April-June 2020 with the equivalent quarter in 2019.
Notes: Responsibility of Police & Crime Commissioner (published as part of overview & scrutiny role). Comparators are the 33 county councils & county unitaries.							

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Great Communities - Environment & Waste									
Strategic Plan	Description		Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Waste Management</u>									
*	Total household waste per household (kg)		3rd (2018/19)	→	1031.1	-	1031.6	Low	This indicator remained static in performance and performs below average when compared to other English county councils.
*	% of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling, composting etc.		3rd (2018/19)	→	45.5%	50%	45.3%	High	This indicator remained stable at 45% but has missed its statutory 50% target.
*	% local authority collected waste landfilled	●	4th (2018/19)	↑	32.2%	30%	33.8%	Low	Although there has been a small improvement in performance as a result of a reduction in municipal waste sent to landfill compared to 2018/19 it has narrowly missed its 30% target.
*	Waste produced from LCC non-operational / internal sites (tonnes)	✓	-	↑	358	<422	389	Low	Waste produced at LCC sites has fallen by 8% since last year and has met its target, demonstrating good performance.
*	% waste recycled from LCC non-operational / internal sites		-	→	61.0%	61.5%	60.4%	High	2019/20 remained static at 61%, which narrowly missed its 61.5% target.
	% of staff who say LCC is doing enough to reduce its environmental impact	✓	-	→	89%	79.3%	91%	High	There has been a slight decline in performance for this indicator although it has continued to meet its target.

Strategic Plan	Description		Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
	<u>Reducing Carbon Emissions & Mitigating the Impact of Climate Change</u>								
*	Total CO2 emissions from LCC operations (excluding schools) (tonnes)	✓	-	↑	10,540	15,123	11,106	Low	The Council's carbon emissions have reduced this year by 5% and are well ahead of their target.
	Carbon emissions from LCC buildings (tonnes)		-	↑	3,639	4,079	3,790	Low	Carbon emissions from our buildings have reduced by 4% resulting in improved performance that is well ahead of its target. This is mainly due to a reduction in the carbon intensity of grid electricity, as well as an increase in renewable energy (both solar and biomass) now being used to replace fossil fuel consumption.
	CO2 emissions from LCC street lighting & traffic signs (tonnes)	✓	-	↑	2,338	6,079	2,830	Low	Carbon emissions from street lighting and traffic signals have reduced by a further 17%, which is partly due to the lower carbon conversion factor, but also as a result of energy saving measures the Council has introduced. There is an on-going programme of 'trimming and dimming' across the county, including dimming down lights as traffic reduces, and delaying the switch-on and shortening of switch-off times.
	Total Business miles claimed ('000s of miles)		-	↑	5,560	4,767	5,835	Low	The number of 'Total Business miles claimed' has reduced in the last year but has missed its target.
	Amount of renewable energy generated as a % of consumption		-	→	15.6%	13.9%	16.0%	High	The slight decline in performance could be due to reduced efficiency of solar panels over time, panels needing cleaning or an overall increase in electricity consumption.
	Renewable heat incentive deployment (Domestic) per 10,000 households'		-	↑	37.36	-	33.81	High	This improved in performance since last year. This is beyond the direct control of the Council which is why a target hasn't been set.
*	CO2 Emissions per capita (in LA influence)		3rd	→	5.1 (2018)	5.2 (2018)	5.2 (2017)	Low	Data is provided by the government (BEIS) and is 2 years in arrears. Data shown is for 2018 and 2017. This is a measure of estimated carbon dioxide emissions per head of population for all sectors.

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
Great Communities								
<u>People feel welcome / diversity is celebrated</u>								
*	% of people who use services who had as much social contact as they would like (ASCOF 11 pt 1)	4th (2018/19)	→	41.6%	49.0%	42.6%	High	Source: adult social care survey. 42% of respondents stated that they had as much social contact as they would like, similar to the previous year.
*	% of carers who had as much social contact as they would like (ASCOF 11 pt 2)	3rd (2017/18)	-	N/A	35%	30.0%	High	The bi-annual carers survey was not due to be completed in 2019/20 (last survey was 2018/19).
	% feel lonely often or always	-	-	2.4%	-		Low	The results is below the England average of 6.1%. Data from the Community Insight Survey of c.1600 residents during 2019/20.
*	% agree people from different backgrounds get on well together	1st/2nd	↑	96.0%	-	93.4%	High	Significant increase compared to the previous year. We continue work to strengthen community cohesion, supporting communication with and across community groups particularly in the light of Brexit and Covid-19. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1600 residents during 2019/20.
*	Reported hate incidents (per 1,000 population)	-	↑	0.94	-	0.79	High	Reporting of hate incidents is slightly higher than the previous year and in-year data shows an increase during the Covid-19 lockdown period. The Hate and Prevent Delivery Group will oversee a multi-agency action plan, to ensure an effective response to reported hate incidents, promote confidence in communities and encourage reporting, particularly in the light of Brexit and Covid-19.
<u>Communities participate in future planning</u>								
*	% people willing to work together with others on something to improve their neighbourhood	-	↑	80.7%	-	75.7%	High	The result shows a statistically significant improvement compared to the previous year. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1600 residents during 2019/20.
*	% of respondents who had given some unpaid help in the last 12 months	1st/2nd	→	42.7%	-	41.5%	High	The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1600 residents during 2019/20. The latest result is similar to the previous year.
*	% of respondents agreeing that they can influence County Council decisions affecting their local area	-	↑	29.6%	-	25.0%	High	The result shows a statistically significant improvement compared to the previous year. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1600 residents during 2019/20.
*	% of respondents stating that they were satisfied with their local area as a place to live	1st/2nd	→	94.50%	-	93.40%	High	The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1600 residents during 2019/20. The latest result is significantly better than the England average of 87% (LGA Survey).
<u>Coronavirus Response</u>								
	Number of people volunteering to support coronavirus response via VAL (Leicester & Leicestershire)	-	-	2372	-	N/A	High	Result at end of July 2020.

Strategic Plan	Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Cultural, historical and natural heritage</u>								
*	Library total visits (beam count and website visits)	4th (2018/19)	↓	1,054.0	970k	1,063.5	High	The number of visits to libraries in 2019/20 was 1% lower than the previous year, but met the target. Closures to enable work to adapt libraries to smart libraries will have affected the number of visits.
*	Library total issues	4th (2018/19)	↑	2.0m	1.5m	1.5m	High	The data shows total library issues. The total number of books issued was 28% higher than the previous year.
*	Library children's issues	-	↑	746k	575k	580k	High	The number of children's books issued was 29% higher than the previous year and surpassed the target.
*	Library total e-downloads	4th (2018/19)	↑	413.9k	160k	238k	High	The number of E-loans increased by 74% on the previous year and surpassed the target. This is expected with it being an increasing area of service delivery in libraries.
*	Number of communities running their own library	-	↑	35	-	30	High	Five more communities were running their own library in 2019/20 in comparison to the previous year.
	Number of volunteer hours - libraries & heritage	-	↑	25.6k	23.1k	24.8k	High	Volunteer hours for both libraries and heritage sites were 3% higher in 2019/20 compared to the previous year.
	Number of tourism visits	-	↑	34.93m	-	33.77m	High	The number of tourism visits has shown an upward trend since 2012. Data shown is for 2017 and 2018.
*	Number of visits to heritage sites	-	↓	135k	146k	146k	High	The number of visitors to heritage sites in 2019/20 was 8% lower than the previous year, and all sites were closed in early March due to the Covid pandemic.
<u>Notes:</u> Comparators are the 33 county councils & county unitaries.								

Corporate Enablers									
Strategic Plan	Description		Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
	<u>Customer Services & Digital Delivery</u>								
	% think Leicestershire County Council doing a good job	✓	-	↑	62.5%	-	49.8%	High	The result shows a statistically significant improvement compared to the previous year. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1600 residents during 2019/20.
	% that trusts the County Council	✓	1st/2nd	↑	72.1%	-	60.8%	High	As above. The result is similar to the England of 71% (LGA Survey).
	% that feel well informed about the County Council		-	→	55.5%	-	54.1%	High	The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1600 residents during 2019/20.
*	Media rating (points)		-	↓	4794	4200	5266	High	The result is slightly lower than the previous year.
*	% satisfied with the overall service from the Customer Service Centre (cmatrix ratings)		-	↓	85%	80%	87%	High	Results from cmatrix tool which measures customer satisfaction - findings are being used to further improve the service.
*	Number of unique visits to the LCC website	✓	-	↑	1.83m	-	1.38m	High	Council website ranked the most accessible of all county councils in July 2020. Work is underway to exploit web analytics to better target services and the digital offer.
*	Number of complaints reported		-	↓	432	-	324	Low	The aim is to maximise the reporting of complaints in order to learn from customer issues and improve services. The result shows a 33% increase on the previous year. 43% of complaints were upheld during 2019/20.
*	Number of commendations reported		-	↑	247	-	185	High	The number of commendations is higher than last year.
*	% Complaints responded to within 20 days		-	↓	83%	-	91%	High	60% of all complaints received a response within 10 working days. Effective complaints handling training continues to be delivered to managers.

Corporate Enablers									
Strategic Plan	Description		Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2019/20	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2018/19	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Equalities and People Strategy</u>									
*	% staff satisfaction with County Council as an employer	✓	-	↑	94%	-	89%	High	The result shows a statistically significant improvement compared to the previous survey. Results shown are 2019 and 2017 Staff Surveys.
*	Working days lost to sickness (per full time equivalent employee)	●	3rd/4th	↓	10.07	7.5	9.59	Low	The result is above the local authority average of 9.2 days per employee. Work continues on the implementation of an Attendance Management Action Plan as well as a new health and support service for staff.
*	Number of RIDDOR (Health & Safety) Incidents		-	→	22	-	21	Low	The result is similar to last year.
*	Number of apprentices employed by Leicestershire County Council		-	↓	116	-	196	High	The numbers are lower following a large increase the previous year.
*	% of whole workforce from a BME background		-	↑	15.3%	14.5%	14.2%	High	Targets are designed to achieve the same level of representation in the workforce as within the local population, based upon the 2011 census.
*	% of whole workforce that is disabled		-	→	4.7%	4.7%	4.7%	High	As above.
*	% of employees graded 13 and above that are women		-	→	62.2%	64%	62.3%	High	Work continues to support female manager development through the 'spring' positive action courses.
	% mean gender pay gap		3rd (2019)	→	12%	-	12%	Low	The result is the same as last year. Data shown is for March 2018 and March 2019.
*	% of the workforce that feels that LCC is committed to equality & diversity		-	→	93%	-	91%	High	The result is statistically similar to the previous survey. Results shown are 2019 and 2017 Staff Surveys.
	Stonewall Workplace Equality Index Ranking		-	↓	83	-	62	Low	The Council is the sixth ranked local authority in the Index, in which over 503 employers participated during 2020.
<u>Notes:</u> Comparators are the 33 county councils & county unitaries.									



SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 4 NOVEMBER 2020

EAST MIDLANDS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION 'INTERIM VEHICLE (DEVCO)' AND FREEPORT PROPOSAL

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to set out the background, progress to date and expected benefits of the East Midlands Development Corporation Programme, known as "The Alchemy Project".
2. The report sets out proposals for the establishment of an Interim Vehicle (to be known to as EM Devco CLG (Company Limited by Guarantee)), to maintain momentum prior to a Statutory Development Corporation being created by Parliament, including the award of £1.5m in the form of a £0.5m annual grant (2021-2024) which will be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 15 December 2020.
3. This report also outlines the latest position with regard to the East Midlands Airport 'Freeport' proposal which could form part of the Development Corporation's emerging proposition. A formal bid by East Midlands Airport is expected to be submitted to Government as part of its competitive bidding process when the Freeport timetable is confirmed.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

4. In March 2020 the Cabinet supported the Council's continued role in the establishment of Project Alchemy and the bid for a Freeport at East Midlands Airport.

Background

5. In February 2019 the Government approved funding (circa £3m) for a 2-year programme to explore the business case for a locally led development delivery vehicle (LLUDC) for the East Midlands and asked the Midlands

Engine to lead the work. The Midlands Engine (a partnership coalition of Councils, Combined Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), and businesses in the region) was asked to consider three development locations in the East Midlands; specifically, Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station site, Toton and Chetwynd Barracks (both in Nottinghamshire), and East Midlands Airport (in Leicestershire).

6. The current geographic extent of Project Alchemy includes Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire (Nottinghamshire County Council, Leicestershire County Council, Broxtowe Borough Council, Rushcliffe Borough Council and North West Leicestershire District Council.
7. The East Midlands Development Corporation (EMDC) programme is overseen by an Oversight Board (The Alchemy Board) supported by an Executive Group. The Oversight Board is made up of Leaders from the region's upper tier local authorities and directly affected district councils alongside the private sector, business community, central government, LEPs, and university representatives. The Executive Group is a smaller group of executive officers from those organisations. Both are chaired by Sir John Peace, as chairman of the Midlands Engine.
8. The overall ambition of the EMDC is to supercharge a new era of growth for the regional economy by enabling projects which build directly on the potential of HS2, the region's status as a major trade and logistics gateway, and its historic strengths in research and development and industrial innovation; particularly research and innovation related to the emerging low carbon economy.

Defining the Development Corporation

9. The Midlands Engine considered various potential options for establishing a Development Corporation. Four key features were identified as needing to be satisfied for the Development Corporation:
 - To be locally led in order to better meet the needs of the local area. An Oversight Authority is proposed, potentially comprised of local authority members, to have oversight and control of various powers of the Development Corporation.
 - To have wide financial powers so as to be able to access a wide range of funding including private and public equity and debt finance, and grants and other investments. It is also proposed that the Development Corporation be given powers to become a community infrastructure levy charging authority.

- To have two streams of planning powers. Firstly, plan-making powers, and secondly operational and enforcement powers.
 - To be able to undertake delivery of projects and infrastructure, including the ability to determine planning applications and grant development orders, thus avoiding multiple applications where applications span more than one local authority area.
10. A number of existing forms of development delivery vehicle were considered, but it was agreed none adequately meet requirements and therefore a new form of Locally Led Urban Development Corporation is proposed. This will require new primary legislation to be passed by Parliament. It is considered that this will offer the greatest benefits to the local authorities going forward.
11. In order to make immediate progress it has been agreed that the establishment of an Interim Vehicle that provides a framework for decision making, is required. Early involvement through the Interim Vehicle will be beneficial to the Council in helping it to shape the nature of the proposed Development Corporation, in particular with a view to ensuring a locally led position is established.

Establishing the Interim Vehicle (EM Devco CLG)

12. Subject to the approval of the Cabinet in December, it is intended that the Interim Vehicle will be incorporated on or before 31st December 2020, in the form of a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG). The five local authorities with administrative responsibilities within the current scope of the programme (covering the sites at Toton, Chetwynd Barracks, East Midlands Airport and the power station at Ratcliffe on Soar), will be the owners of the company, namely:
- Broxtowe Borough Council
 - Leicestershire County Council
 - North West Leicestershire District Council
 - Nottinghamshire County Council
 - Rushcliffe Borough Council.
13. The Interim Vehicle will mirror the intended form of the statutory Development Corporation and will consist of:
- An Oversight Authority comprising member representatives from the 5 local authorities who will own the CLG;
 - An independent skills-based board including up to 11 directors, made up of a combination of independent and non-independent persons – to be appointed through an open recruitment process; and

- Local delivery vehicles/special purpose vehicles or joint venture businesses for each site.
14. The Interim Vehicle will not have any statutory powers. Powers will remain with the relevant local authority partner until the establishment of the statutory Development Corporation.
 15. In July 2020 the Secretary of State confirmed his support for the establishment of an Interim Vehicle, to continue to build momentum prior to the creation of a statutory Development Corporation.
 16. In August 2020, the Planning White Paper consultation "Planning for the Future" included positive reference to the Development Corporation work:

"As we bring forward planning reform, we also want to ensure we have in place the right delivery mechanisms, including Development Corporations. A good example that we are already progressing is development at Toton in the East Midlands, where we have announced our intention to support the establishment of a Development Corporation to maximise the area's international links and create tens of thousands of new homes and jobs. We want to see more schemes of this kind, backed by modern delivery models, around the country."

17. Once established the first key task of the Interim Vehicle will be to consider appointments and develop a business plan. It will be the responsibility of the Board to deliver the business plan which will need the approval of the Oversight Authority and which will be reviewed on an annual basis. Approval will be required of the Oversight Authority for decisions that fall outside the business plan especially those which have a budgetary implication.

Legal Implications

18. The hybrid Locally Led Urban Development Corporation will require primary legislation. Options for the interim vehicle have been considered including Limited partnerships, limited liability partnership, community benefit societies, community interest companies etc. Having taken advice on various options, the proposed way forward is via a Company Limited by Guarantee, a separate legal entity distinct from its members and regulated by the Companies Act 2006. A CLG may enter into contracts in its own name and is responsible for its own debts and liabilities subject to the liability of members limited to a nominal amount. If the company is wound up the members' guarantee will only be called upon if the company cannot otherwise satisfy its debts. Members of the company do not have the right to share in the profits of the company by way of dividend payments and the arrangement therefore is more

akin to one of stewardship of development activities rather than an owner with entitlement to receipts.

19. The County Council has the vires to join such a Company under the provisions contained in the Localism Act 2011 which confers the power on the Authority to do anything that an individual may do subject to various statutory restrictions relating to commercial enterprise.
20. A CLG will be subject to governance through a Members' Agreement and Articles of Association setting out the arrangements for the company and how it will operate. The Articles govern the constitution of the company dealing with the powers of directors, members, voting and board and member meetings. At this stage, there are a number of outstanding points to be agreed between the respective councils in relation to some of the key points in these governing documents.

Resource Implications

21. The core costs for 2019-20 and 2020-21 of the Midlands Engine Development Corporation programme so far have been funded by Government, through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The total funding was £2 million, spread equally across 2 years (2019/20 and 2020/21). The Development Corporation programme has also received additional resources through a mix of direct funding and in kind support from partner Local Authorities.
22. The County Council's proposed grant award to the Interim Vehicle is set out as follows, in line with Nottinghamshire County Council:

Financial Year	Grant award
2021-22	£0.5m
2022-23	£0.5m
2023-24	£0.5m
TOTAL	£1.5m

23. The financial contribution proposed will be matched by Nottinghamshire County Council with further contributions coming from the 3 district councils. Midlands Engine has made representations to MHCLG regarding a substantial contribution to help meet the full cost of the Interim Vehicle, but as yet no response has been received.
24. The full cost exceeds the funding being committed by the 5 local councils and without an MHCLG contribution a significant review of the intended Interim

Vehicle approach will be required. Any funding committed by this council would be conditional on a satisfactory proposal resulting from the review and the full contributions being approved by the other four Local Authorities.

25. Further to the financial grant award it is expected that the County Council's Growth Unit will support the project from existing staff resource, providing additional benefit in kind.
26. The Director of Corporate Resources and/ Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on this report.

Development Corporation: Business Case

27. Significant progress has been made in considering the strategic and economic case for the Development Corporation, with the evidence pointing to transformational benefits for the region, with 84000 jobs, £4.8bn Gross Value Added (GVA) and at least 4,500 homes to be delivered in the coming decades.
28. The EMDC will contribute substantially to inclusive, zero carbon growth and levelling up by initially realising the enormous potential of the three key sites:
 - HS2 Hub at Toton and Chetwynd - a new destination for knowledge-driven jobs and an exemplar zero carbon mixed-use community, showcasing next generation living, with a HS2 hub station offering unrivalled connectivity;
 - Ratcliffe Power Station and East Midlands Airport Area that together will provide a demonstrator for new technologies and methods of:
 - Production and energy generation and supply
 - Transport and digital connectivity
 - It is proposed that the Airport would be the UK's only Inland Freeport with the Country's largest and only 24-hour dedicated air freight hub being its main entry point to the freeport
 - A global multi-modal hub and centre for trade and logistics with substantial housing growth is proposed across the wider area
 - Creation of 'ZERO' on the Ratcliffe Power Station site, an international centre for the development of market-ready zero emission technologies.

Development Corporation: Benefits for Leicestershire

29. In addition to the broad programme benefits outlined above, there are a number of specific benefits for each of the five local authority areas. For Leicestershire the identified benefits for the East Midlands Airport site include:
- Retaining and enhancing the unique and special qualities of existing communities.
 - A world-class green and blue environmental investment programme with Research and Development in climate change and zero carbon.
 - Sensitively located and carefully thought through co-location of mixed uses, with the potential for incorporating new homes, employment opportunities and infrastructure investment within that world-class landscape.
 - Investment in major infrastructure improvements which include enhancing J24 M1; enhanced links to the A453 and A50 – including the option to dual the A453 connection to the A42, along with improvements to A42 Junction 14.
 - An enhanced transport hub at East Midlands Airport connected to the East Midlands Parkway rail station and the HS2 Hub at Toton.
 - Enhanced rail head connection from the SEGRO Logistics Park at East Midlands Gateway to the wider rail network.
 - Shared benefits from the key sites in the wider East Midlands Development Corporation programme.
30. Work is continuing on the preparation of the detailed business case. It will establish a case for change, a value for money assessment, commercial viability, financial affordability and a route to delivery. It is expected that this will be submitted to Government in March 2021.

Freeport Proposals

31. East Midlands Airport (EMA), in collaboration with the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership, private sector businesses and landowners, is developing a bid to establish a 'Freeport' at the airport. This bid is expected to be submitted to Government by the end of 2020.
32. Freeports are secure customs zones located at ports where business can be carried out inside a country's land border, but where different customs rules apply. They can reduce administrative burdens and tariff controls, provide relief from duties and import taxes, and ease tax and planning regulations.

33. The Government's ambition is that Freeports will enhance trade and investment across the UK, boost growth and high-skilled jobs, and increase innovation and productivity in port regions, particularly those situated in or near areas of deprivation. Freeports will send a strong signal that the UK is an attractive trade and investment location which is open for business.
34. On 2 August 2019 the Trade Secretary announced the creation of new Freeports, intended to boost international trade and economic growth after Brexit. On 11 February 2020 the Government launched a public consultation on Freeport policy (a response was made by the Director of Corporate Resources, via the (officer) Freeport Working Group).
35. In early October 2020, Government published its response to the consultation, which includes:
 - Government commitment to ambitious fiscal incentives associated with the Freeport, including access to employer National Insurance contributions to support investment
 - Potential new criteria to focus on Net Zero transition
 - New funds identified to support:
 - i. A Freeport Challenge Fund
 - ii. A Freeport Regulation Engagement Network
 - iii. Seed funding for capital projects
 - An expectation that bids will be supported by local authorities and LEPs
 - A commitment to rapid timeline in terms of competition and delivery.
36. East Midlands Airport and the bid consortium awaits publication of Government's formal competitive Freeport bid submission process and timetable, but this is expected to be confirmed before the end of 2020.
37. The County Council continues to be an active participant represented at the 'Freeport Working Group', chaired by D2N2 and comprising key regional public and private sector stakeholders.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

38. It is intended that detailed proposals will be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 15 December 2020. As there is no further meeting of the Scrutiny Commission before then, the Cabinet report will be circulated to the Commission to enable its members to submit further comments direct to the Cabinet at that time. The views of the Commission arising out of this meeting will also be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration.

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

39. There are no equality or human rights implications arising from these proposals.

Environmental Implications

40. Environmental Implications will be identified, managed and mitigated through the Interim Vehicle 'Biodiversity Net Gain' Workshop throughout the project, which includes representation from relevant subject matter experts at the County Council.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 24 March 2020 "Midlands Engine Development Corporation Proposals".

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=5993&Ver=4>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 4 NOVEMBER 2020

EAST MIDLANDS SHARED SERVICES PERFORMANCE UPDATE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Commission with an update on the performance of East Midlands Shared Services during the past 12 months.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. In 2010, Nottingham City Council and Leicestershire County Council formed a partnership to share their HR, Payroll and Finance IT system and jointly deliver HR administration, payroll and finance transactional services.
3. In September 2010, the County Council's Cabinet agreed to establish a Joint Committee to oversee the operation of the Shared Service comprising elected members from both Councils. At officer level, each Council has a Sponsor, which at Leicestershire County Council is the Director of Corporate Resources. These arrangements remain in place.

Background

4. East Midlands Shared Services (EMSS) was created on 1 September 2012. The Employee Service Centre is based at County Hall in Leicestershire and the Finance Service Centre at Loxley House in Nottingham.
5. Over the past 8 years the service has stabilised and then sought opportunities to optimise the service through the digitisation of processes, robust performance management and improved customer service focus.
6. Overall the service has achieved £1.8m savings since 2012, meeting the expectations of the original business case. Pay award pressures have had a significant impact on the service and further efficiencies are planned from 2021 onwards.
7. The service operates on a shared IT platform – Oracle Ebusiness. In 2018, the partner Councils procured a replacement system - Oracle Cloud and commenced an implementation programme across HR, Payroll, Finance and Procurement.

8. On the basis of the audit work undertaken during 2019/20, the Head of Internal Audit at Nottingham City Council concluded that a 'significant' level of assurance could be given that internal control systems are operating effectively within EMSS and that no significant issues had been discovered.

Strategic Priorities

9. EMSS is the business owner of the shared IT platform, Oracle. The implementation of the new system commenced in July 2018 and was due to 'go-live' in phases from April 2019. The 'Fit for the Future' programme has been the largest priority for EMSS since 2018.
10. The programme was within weeks of 'commencing the 'go-live' phases when Covid-19 impacted. The programme board determined on 23 March 2020 that there were significant risks in continuing the cutover to the new system, for which it was not possible to put in place mitigation measures. The decision was therefore taken to temporarily pause the programme and re-plan once the impact of Covid-19 was understood.
11. Following a short pause the programme re-started and the new system is due to go live in phases from November 2020 until June 2021. The Fit for the Future Programme has been supported by key members of staff within EMSS. Through the knowledge of these staff, issues have been clearly identified with the team challenging on solutions directly with Oracle and the implementer.
12. Following the lockdown on 23 March, the priority for EMSS was to enable all staff to work at home whilst maintaining critical services. There were a number of immediate challenges to overcome, these included:
 - Ensuring all vulnerable or anxious staff could self-isolate immediately.
 - Providing 124 staff with their own IT equipment at home with remote access to LCC servers and systems.
 - Providing staff without their own IT, with County Council laptops.
 - Finding a solution to the service desk telephony system that could not be operated remotely.
 - Maintaining contact with all staff.
13. As remote working became a longer term feature it became necessary to provide the 124 staff who were using their own equipment with County Council laptops; this has been achieved. However, where it improves their productivity and wellbeing, a number of EMSS staff do work in the offices at the County Council and Nottingham City Council.
14. EMSS have a Covid-19 recovery plan in place and are confident that they are actively monitoring the wellbeing of their staff.
15. EMSS Health, the collaboration between Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) and EMSS, have made good progress in developing benchmarking and processes through workshops and training to demonstrate EMSS approaches

to process mapping, customer queries and engagement. The objective is for payroll to participate in large-scale tenders for NHS payroll services next year.

16. During 2019, the Employee Service Centre (ESC) continued to increase the number of qualified staff through apprenticeships and professional training. The ESC balanced both the Fit for the Future (FFTF) programme, resourcing the project with key staff whilst maintaining its high-performance levels within business as usual.
17. EMSS Personal Budgets (PB) Payroll service, within the ESC, was a finalist in the 2019 The Rewards for the Specialist Payroll and HR Provider Award. The service offers a unique type of service to those delivered in EMSS, delivering payroll to citizens in receipt of Direct Payments that act as employers of their own staff to provide them with care/other support.
18. During 2019 the team has expanded its service provision to Nottingham City Council by 85 customers, and trades commercially with other local authorities and now offers an enhanced PB payroll service to the City Council which is also being rolled out to Leicestershire County Council next year.
19. In April 2020, the processing of a small payroll for Leicestershire Unison went live and has led to exploring different system requirements for payroll provision. The team are currently assessing requirements for a larger payroll customer (200 staff).
20. The Finance Service Centre achieved significant assurance from both the Accounts Payable (AP) and Accounts Receivable (AR) Audits, which demonstrated the level of improvements achieved despite the commitment required on the FFTF project.

Operational Performance

21. The Employee Service Centre performance has remained stable. The team continues to deliver excellent payroll accuracy rates. The payroll accuracy rates for 770k payroll transactions during 2019/20 were 99.82%, a slight increase on the 2018/19 rate of 99.76%. Contract processing accuracy, DBS check completion and recruitment processes all met their service level agreement targets of 100%.
22. The ESC worked hard alongside the Leicestershire Adult Learning Team to deliver payroll apprenticeships. The ESC team launched the technical aspects of the apprenticeship standard training for payroll and now offers this to employers commercially. It is planned that during 2021 this is an area which can expand.
23. The Finance Service successfully completed all year end tasks remotely and were able to meet all the deadlines required by partners, which included emergency supplier set ups for PPE equipment, emergency payments required for business grants and charities in addition to refunds for cancelled annual services associated with the COVID 19 situation.

24. The AP and AR functions have continued to perform well with invoices and supplier set ups being fully processed within the terms of the Service Level Agreement. Requests for Payments were processed immediately, credit balances saw an overall reduction with debt collection improving by around 15% on last year's figures, and volumes and values of unallocated cash have continued to be allocated to the correct budgets.
25. The Finance Service Centre continues to work closely with the partner departments to help to resolve complex queries relating to debt collection. The success of the team is clearly seen throughout 2019/20 with improved visibility of values and the percentage of collectable debt increased from, on average 46% in 2018/19 to 63% in 2019/20. Thus meaning that less debt was on hold or in query with the supplier or department.

Resource Implications

26. The overall EMSS budget for 2019/20 was £3.9m (including £240k from reserves) of which £1.5m relates to the Oracle system. Underspends during the year meant only £53k was used from reserves.
27. At the end of July 2020, EMSS is currently showing an underspend of £0.03m however this does not include the Covid related costs £95k which will be funded from reserves along with the pay award which has placed additional pressures on the budget.
28. The service is refreshing its Medium-Term Financial plan for presentation at the EMSS Joint Committee on 23 November 2020. The plan will contain details of the targeted savings over the next two years, alongside the projects to deliver efficiencies, e.g. the replacement of the current call handling system with an omnichannel customer contact solution using artificial intelligence technology.

Conclusions

29. During the past 12 months, EMSS performed in line with service level agreements across all services.
30. Delivering the Fit for the Future Programme has been and will remain, the key priority for EMSS.
31. The EMSS Joint Committee is fully aware of the strategic priorities for the organisation and performance is reported on a quarterly basis.

Background Papers

Shared Services with Nottingham City Council – Cabinet, 7 September 2010
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s47156/E%20-%20Shared%20Services.pdf>

East Midlands Shared Services: Procurement of Managed Hosting Service – Cabinet, 26 July 2011
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s55039/N%20east%20midlands%20shared%20services%20procurement.pdf>

East Midlands Shared Services: Consultancy Report – Cabinet, 13 September 2011
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s56198/M%20%20East%20Mids%20Shared%20Servs%20consultancy%20support.pdf>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None

Equality and Human Rights Implications

None

Other Relevant Impact Assessments

None

Appendices

None

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**CABINET – 20 NOVEMBER 2020****FINANCIAL RESILIENCE****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES****PART A****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to present an overview of the County Council's current level of financial resilience, considering the significant increase in financial pressure created by Covid-19.
2. The latest position on the County Council's earmarked funds is set out in Appendix A to this report.
3. An extract of the CIPFA Financial Resilience index, for the measures relating to the County Council is included in Appendix B.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that the Cabinet notes the update on the County Council's financial resilience.

Reasons for Recommendation

5. To support the Cabinet in making arrangements for the proper administration of the financial affairs of the County Council. This report is presented to provide an overview of the County Council's financial resilience.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

6. The Scrutiny Commission received a report on 4 November and its comments will be reported to the Cabinet.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

7. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2020/21 to 2023/24 was approved by the County Council on 19th February 2020. The Strategy incorporates a commentary on the adequacy of earmarked funds and robustness of budget estimates, including mitigating actions.

8. The Earmarked Funds Policy and Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy gained approval as part of the MTFS. The Earmarked Funds Policy has been revised to reflect the acute financial constraints resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to place greater control on earmarked reserves to rationalise and help to ensure the General Fund balance can be maintained at an appropriate level. The revised policy will be presented to the County Council in February 2021 as part of the updated MTFS 2021-25.
9. The MTFS will be reviewed and updated over the next few months. The 'Medium Term Financial Strategy – Latest Position' report to the September Cabinet meeting outlined the approach.

Resource Implications

10. The financial position faced by the County Council is extremely serious and challenging. The current MTFS anticipated a funding gap of £39m by 2023/24 but on-going service demand and the additional pressures from Covid-19 will increase that gap significantly. This is a particularly difficult situation for a low-funded authority such as Leicestershire as room for further savings is limited.
11. The financial impact of Covid-19 is particularly difficult to predict. It will fluctuate depending upon the required response to the virus and the level of Government support offered. The uncertainty is significantly higher than experienced in a normal year and is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. In future financial years government focus will change from what level support is appropriate to how do they pay for the support given.
12. The greater the uncertainty the more important it is that the County Council pays heed to not just performance of the revenue budget but also the strength of its balance sheet. A good asset base and reasonable level of liabilities is vital in ensuring issues can be dealt with in a sensible thought through manner and the Council is not forced into knee-jerk decisions.
13. The Director of Law and Governance has been consulted on the content of this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

14. None.

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PART B

Background

15. The County Council has been operating in an extremely challenging financial environment caused by the ten years of austerity and more recently significant service demand pressures, particularly from social care. Despite continued Government announcements that austerity has come to an end, it is unclear how realistic this position will be due to the detrimental financial impact of Covid-19, and hence the impact upon Local Government funding in the medium term. It was hoped that the Comprehensive Spending Review, due later this year, would provide an indication of funding over the next three to four years. However, with the worsening of the financial crisis, the Government's ability to provide a medium term view is questionable. The Government reviews on Fair Funding and the Business Rates Retention Scheme have also been postponed, perhaps indefinitely.
16. Delivery of the current MTFS requires savings of £80m to be made from 2020/21 to 2023/24. £39m of this target does not have identified savings initiatives, meaning that it represents a funding gap in 2023/24. Whilst this position is not ideal a balanced budget in the first two years and an investment in resources to close the financial gap make it a manageable position and comparatively better than many authorities.
17. The speed and severity of Covid-19 has severely disrupted the normal working of the County Council. This disruption has inevitably impacted the delivery of savings and the generation of new initiatives.
18. Given the starting point of a challenging financial position, a reduced ability to react and a growing financial problem, the Covid crisis has the potential to push even well-run organisations to breaking point.

Key Risks

19. The risks facing the County Council are well documented and reflect the circumstances of most councils. The Latest Corporate Risk Register highlights 23 risks, more than two thirds of which have the potential to create an immediate and significant financial issue for the Authority. For example, an increase in the number of children in care, the infrastructure investment required to support districts' local plans and the impact of climate change. The remaining risks are likely to require financial investment to resolve the issues, should they come to pass.
20. Whilst mitigations for individual risks are continually being developed the fact that there are so many that could have a material detrimental financial impact makes it virtually inevitable that some negative impact will be felt over the MTFS period.

21. A theme running through a significant number of risks is the interdependence with other public sector organisations. Key examples are set out below and highlight the adverse impact that would be felt by the County Council if a partner organisation struggles financially and reduces their services unilaterally.
- a. **Covid-19 response.** Working with local and national organisations across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.
 - b. **MTFS delivery.** Dependency on district councils to collect local taxes. Significant trading income received from schools and academies.
 - c. **SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) response.** Education pupils in a mainstream setting is cheaper than independent schools.
 - d. **Infrastructure investment.** Section 106 funding secured via district councils.
 - e. **Better Care Fund and Health transformation.** Significant funding passed directly to the County Council and support of common service users.
 - f. **Service Delivery.** A range of partnership arrangements exist supporting front-line and back office services.
 - g. **Other.** The interconnectedness of the public sector is not always obvious, but the impacts can be significant, the Local Government Pension Scheme being a prime example. In common with most schemes most employing organisations' funds are in deficit. If one of these organisations were to default on its obligations the other scheme employers become liable. Local Government organisations hold most of the deficit and have minimal risk due to the established regime of successor organisations. However, the Government has made it clear that it does not consider such arrangements relevant for Universities and Further Education colleges which have cumulative deficits of approximately £50 million. Whilst the risk to the County Council is low it is not negligible.
22. For completeness the key financial risks are set out below:
- a. Non-achievement of savings and income targets. When the MTFS is refreshed the 4-year requirement is likely to be higher than the current £80m. Successful delivery of savings is dependent upon a range of factors, not all of which are in the control of the County Council.
 - b. Additional service pressures including demand-led, primarily social care and SEN placements, and discretionary such as highways improvement and support for public bus services.
 - c. Changes in pay legislation, such as faster increases in the National Living Wage, or exceptional increases for key workers.
 - d. Council tax and business rate income are directly affected by the state of the economy.
 - e. Lasting impacts of Covid-19, such as on the care provider market.
 - f. Government funding changes. Although delayed there is still the potential for some positive reform, but the state of national finances makes reductions just as likely.
 - g. Legislative changes. These could be positive, for example the promised SEND reforms, but outcome of changes can also drive additional costs.

Adequacy of Financial Arrangements

23. Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires Chief Financial Officers (CFOs) to report to their authorities about the robustness of estimates and the adequacy of reserves when determining their budget and level of council tax. This is good practice and should ensure authorities have put in place adequate measures to deal with future uncertainties in advance of a crisis hitting. Adequate risk management arrangements, such as demand management, should be the primary approach, but contingencies have a vital role.
24. Contingency measures tend to take 2 forms:
 - a. Explicit contingencies in the revenue budget that can be drawn upon when overspends occur.
 - b. Flexibility, within regulations and resources, outside of the revenue budget (balance sheet) to temporarily provide funding to deal with issues.
25. The County Council uses both approaches. A range of explicit contingencies are held and reassessed every time the MTFS is refreshed, to avoid over providing and trapping resources that could be used for service provision. Holding these has allowed the County Council to prepare well, e.g. targeting savings at the right level, by minimising the impact of unforeseen events. In summary these are:
 - a. Inflation contingency – which it is known will incur but it is difficult to determine the individual service impact in advance.
 - b. Corporate growth – it is impossible to determine all growth that will be encountered over the 4-year MTFS. The Council will use historic experience to estimate the level.
 - c. Potential funding losses – these are estimated based upon prior experience and Government indications.
 - d. MTFS risks contingency – this fund is primarily to provide for the risk of non-achievement of savings and the investment required. The level varies depending upon certainty of expenditure plans and funding.
26. The balance sheet contingencies are covered by this report. By their one-off nature as balances (can only spend once) rather than a recurring revenue budget they play a vital, but less useful role. Repaying the balances increases the saving requirement sometimes significantly if external borrowing is undertaken.
27. If the overall level of contingency is set too low and does not provide enough time to fix the underlying problem a downward spiral can ensue. This is the situation witnessed in Northamptonshire where temporary measures had to be repaid, compounding the immediate financial pressure, forcing the authority to reduce services to the statutory minimum. This is clearly not good for residents, who benefit from services, or for the council's ability to return to financial strength. When cutting back to the minimum there is no flexibility to

deal with new risks and mistakes are liable to be made in the battle to find financial stability.

28. Having an adequate level of contingency is not something that can be put in place overnight. It is a hard-earned position that takes several years and a strong commitment to planning for the long term; not waiting for a crisis to adopt good financial disciplines.
29. Throughout the years of austerity numerous authorities have adopted policies that have delayed the requirement to make savings. At the heart of these policies the common theme tends to be borrowing from the future. So whilst these may be alluring in the short term there is a price to pay, a weakened balance sheet (resources spent) and a greater future savings requirement (resources repaid plus interest).
30. Delaying savings in this way had the illusion of being a good strategy until Northamptonshire became the first authority for almost 20 years to fail to meet its legal obligation to balance its budget. After Government indicated abolition rather than bail-out was its preferred approach in such circumstances most councils sought to strengthen their financial standing.
31. The impact of Covid-19 has started to highlight those that were not successful in this strengthening. Five authorities (Croydon, Peterborough, Birmingham, Oxford City and Woking) have approached the Government for permission to borrow to fund revenue expenditure. Several councils (including Leeds, Nottingham and Trafford) have opened mass voluntary redundancy schemes. Numerous authorities (including Exeter, Newcastle, Kent, Luton and Ipswich) have enacted emergency budgets.
32. The councils named above are a wide range of sizes and types but the common theme is that there has been an expectation that financial problems will be solved locally. This reinforces the importance of having a good understanding of the financial position of Local Government organisations, enabling sound rather than populist decisions to be made. However, the multifaceted nature of councils and the associated statutory reporting requirement can make determination of financial strength difficult for those outside the organisation in question to understand.
33. There is a well-established External Audit regime for Local Government, which can help to untangle some of the complexity and provide independent insight. However, by their nature audits are historic and warnings can come too late, a position compounded by authorities in trouble often delaying delivery of their accounts. This is exemplified by the recent history of auditor reporting:
 - a. Only five Public Interest Reports have been produced in the past 5 years. In the current year reports have been issued for Croydon Council and Nottingham City Council. Both reports were issues when problems were well established. Nottingham City Council's management of Robin Hood Energy in August 2020 came 16 months after the financial year-end after

the Authority had incurred losses of almost £40m. Croydon's report coincided with an admission that a section 114 notice would have been required if the guidance had not changed due to Covid-19.

- b. Only one advisory notice has been issued in the past 5 years; to Northamptonshire *after* a section 114 notice (imposing immediate spending restrictions) had been issued.
34. In these unusual times even the prospect of a section 114 notice is not the warning it once was. Local authorities have legal duties to set balanced annual revenue budgets. CFOs have a duty to issue a section 114 notice if it appears that an authority might spend more in a financial year than the resources available. This notice prevents the authority from engaging in further spending for a set period. Government, supported by CIPFA, have watered down the CFOs' duty removing the requirement to issue a notice whilst in 'discussions' with Government. This can make it difficult to differentiate between an authority that is keeping its Members informed and aware of the risks being faced compared to one that is in dire trouble and avoiding the inevitable.

CIPFA Resilience Index

35. Last year CIPFA launched its Financial Resilience Index, which uses key indicators of the financial position of local authorities. The Index received a mixed reception from the Local Government sector and its impact is reduced by the historic nature of the information. That said it is a reasonable attempt at simplifying the financial appraisal of a complex sector and prompts questions to be asked in key areas that are often overlooked. The Index has not yet been updated for 2019/20 financial statements due to the delayed deadlines but is still useful in the context of this report.
36. The Index contains sixteen financial measures that can be broadly grouped into three categories:
- a. Levels of reserves, with higher values considered good.
 - b. Hard to reduce expenditure, for example social care, with lower levels good.
 - c. Certainty of income, with higher levels good.
37. This broadly mirrors the National Audit Office's 2018 report that highlighted areas of concern including "spending more concentrated on Social Care" and an increasing number of authorities "have relied on reserves to balance their books".
38. The main weakness of the Index is the use of comparisons to similar organisations to define risk levels rather than absolute measures.
39. An extract of the Index showing this Council compared to other County Councils is included in Appendix B. Overall the results are very good, showing the County Council in the lower risk range across the board. Only two indicators suggesting anything other than a low risk level:

- a. Growth Above Baseline – High Risk. The County Council's value of 6% represents £3m and is provided for in the MTFS, hence is not of concern. The measure is targeted at district councils where the highest value is 287%.
 - b. Unallocated Reserves – Medium Risk. The County Council included in the current MTFS plans to increase its General Fund. This measure had already increased by the end of 2019/20.
40. The fact that the Government's Fair Funding review has now been put on hold is extremely disappointing. The County Council's low funded position means that it has much less scope, compared to other councils, for dealing with unforeseen events. With significant control of funding held by Government, including caps on Council Tax, it is essential that the County Council makes the most of the areas that can be controlled locally.

General Fund

41. The General Fund balance is available for unforeseen risks that require short term funding. The balance on the General Fund (non-earmarked fund) at the end of 2019/20 was £23m, which represents 5.9% of the net budget (excluding schools' delegated budgets). Further increases are planned to reflect increasing uncertainty and risks over the medium term. These risks come in a variety of forms:
- Legal challenges such as judicial reviews that require a change in savings approach.
 - Legislative changes that come with a financial penalty, for example General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
 - Service provision issues that require investment, for example the capital investment to support the High Needs Block Development Plan.
 - Variability in income, particularly from asset investments.
42. To put the level of resources into context, with the exclusion of schools, the County Council spends nearly £60m a month.
43. If the General Fund is spent a reasonable plan must be in place to replenish it so that the next unforeseeable risk can be dealt with. This makes use of the General Fund very much a last resort. If replenishment needs to take place before the issue is resolved the size of the task can become unmanageable. The County Council's preferred approach when facing material overspends is to reprioritise activity, so that it continues to only spend within its means. This approach worked for the 2019/20 full year overspend and, so far, in tackling the Covid-19 issues where investment in capital schemes has been reduced.
44. As part of the MTFS refresh process now being undertaken, provision will be made within each years' expenditure requirement to ensure that the General Fund balance is maintained at an appropriate level in light of the risks highlighted above and any further risks that emerge.

Earmarked Funds

45. Earmarked funds are held for four main reasons and the various rationale are set out below:

Rational	Benefit
Insurance	
Meet the cost of future claims not covered by insurance policies.	Smooth the volatile timing of claims, avoiding in-year shocks. Allow greater risk retention, through higher excesses, reducing premiums.
Renewals	
Meet the cost of future replacement of equipment, vehicles and systems.	Spread budget impact to allow replacement to be timed based upon need and avoid leasing costs.
Projects	
Support transformational and departmental change.	Align commitments to available funding. Scope to reprioritise if unforeseen events. Ensure funding for efficiency initiatives. Save for schemes, avoiding borrowing.
Commitments	
Meet known commitments that are expected to be paid in the future.	Hold funds on behalf of partnerships. Reserve funding for specified objectives, e.g. Section 106 (developer) or grant distribution awaiting fulfilment of conditions.

46. The benefits included in the above table have a deliberate focus on financial robustness. In summary, earmarked funds held at the right level can:
- Reduce costs by allowing tolerance of risks that are unlikely to pass and the avoidance of financing costs.
 - Act as a shock absorber allowing exception costs to be managed over several years or reprioritised when circumstances change.
47. Holding funds at too high a level is not necessarily a good use of resources. It can encourage inaction in dealing with issues and create a mismatch between the raising of tax income and the benefit to tax payers.
48. Grant Thornton, the County Council's external auditor, has reviewed the level of earmarked funds held by the County Council as part of its Value for Money review of the 2019-23 MTFS and reported no issues: 'Based on the work carried out we are satisfied that the Council had proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.'
49. The latest position on the County Council's earmarked funds is set out in Appendix A. In common with previous reports a declining level of balances is forecast. Historically the balances have been replenished as new funding is

received, for example temporary social care grants, or contingencies not used. The Covid-19 crisis could change the situation if less funding is available reducing the value of balances held. Providing the County Council's financial management approach does not change fundamentally financial resource will still be directed towards earmarked funds reflecting priorities.

Cash Holdings

50. By their nature earmarked funds and the General Fund are backed by cash. There are a range of other situations that can contribute to the County Council holding cash for an extended period. The most common are set out in the table below.

Category	Typical Value	Reason
Earmarked Funds – Revenue	£25m - £50m	See section above for main examples.
Earmarked Funds – Capital	£25m - £85m	Hold cash to support Capital Programme commitments.
Earmarked Funds – Partnerships	£5m - £15m	Segregate funds that other organisations have an interest in from County Council resources.
General Fund	£15m - £40m	Contingency for unforeseen events.
Government policy – SEND	(£25m) - £0m	Grant insufficient to cover expenditure. DfE not fully committed to repay.
Statutory requirement – Minimum Revenue Provision	£0m - £50m	Build a balance to repay debt when it becomes due.
Debtors vs. Creditors	£25m - £50m	Difference in amount the council owes versus what is owed (excluding loans). Skewed to a positive cash value due to tendency for Government to forward fund.

51. A good cash position is beneficial to any organisation. In terms of financial resilience, it plays an important role allowing financial resources to be redirected quickly and at relatively low cost providing repayment is very likely and before the original purpose becomes due.
52. Recent examples of the benefit of the County Council's strong cash position include:
- Provide interest free cash-flow advances to adult social care providers during the Covid-19 crisis, without service rationing elsewhere.
 - Longer term investment in Property and Private Debt to improve yield.
 - Planned forward funding of the Capital Programme to avoid external borrowing costs.

53. The growing Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) balance, due to the annual revenue charge, is well suited to the purposes above due to the extended period before loans become due. In the case of forward funding of the capital programme the MRP regime also acts as a safeguard by requiring regular repayment.
54. The benefits of using cash in this way can be significant. For example, the £160m of forward funding in the MTFS (per September updated programme) saves between £3.5m and £4m per year of interest costs. This is likely to be offset by the opportunity cost of interest received on treasury management activities, although for the foreseeable future, with interest rates at historic low levels, the impact is likely to be minimal.

Other Assets

55. The County Council's main category of asset relates to land, buildings and infrastructure. The value is significant due to the range of assets held for service delivery. The benefit of holding assets is the avoidance of rental/lease costs. Sale of assets is of limited benefit due to the on-going service requirement and the restrictions on using receipts from asset sales for capital purposes.
56. The exception is the Corporate Asset Investment Fund (CAIF). The decision to build CAIF without incurring debt means that the sale leaves the County Council in a no worse revenue position than if CAIF had never existed. An immediate revenue pressure would be created from lost income but the net detriment from having to repay loans would not be felt.

Liabilities

57. A review of financial resilience would not be complete without considering the level of liabilities held. The dominant categories are the County Council's share of the Pension Fund deficit (£607m) and Long-Term Borrowing (£265m).
58. Pension Fund deficits are a common situation for organisations with Defined Benefit schemes. The strong financial covenant of public sector organisations allows an extended deficit recovery period, 17 years in the County Council's case. Recovery of the deficit is through a combination of additional contributions by the County Council and return on financial investments. The recovery period allows the impact of volatile investment markets to be managed with minimal impact upon the County Council's budget. The approach to deficit recovery is agreed with a firm of actuaries and is subject to oversight by the Pension Regulator.
59. The County Council's Long-Term Borrowing relates to the previous acquisition of capital assets. Despite not undertaking any new borrowing since 2009 the level of debt is £265m. The loans are all effectively fixed interest, avoiding volatility in the revenue budget. Avoiding loans for the past decade has reduced the capital financing burden on the revenue budget from 8.7% to 4.9%. This significant decline has been hugely beneficial in supporting the County

Council through austerity and allows a greater portion of funding to be directed toward service delivery. If borrowing had kept pace with growth in the County Council's revenue budget additional costs of £15m would be incurred equivalent to an entire years expenditure on ASC home care services.

60. Although ultimately costly a short term cash boost could be received if the County Council's capital financing policy switched from revenue funding to borrowing. Maintaining a good capacity to borrow acts as a contingency, for example:
 - a. The General Fund can be kept at a lower level than would be the case if the Capital Programme was fully funded by debt.
 - b. Using cash to forward fund the capital programme can be undertaken knowing there is an alternative.
61. Undertaking too much borrowing has the potential to put an organisation under significant pressure. The table below, based upon CIPFA's index, shows some of the authorities referred to earlier in the report that are reporting some of the biggest impacts of Covid-19, with this County Council as a comparator.

Council	Debt	Interest / Net Budget
Leeds	£2,700 million	13.4%
Croydon	£1,400 million	8.4%
Nottingham	£1,200 million	22.3%
Kent	£1,200 million	6.1%
Peterborough	£507 million	9.9%
Leicestershire	£265 million	3.9%
Derbyshire	£382 million	4.3%
Nottinghamshire	£599 million	4.6%

62. It is worth noting that except for Leicestershire a significant portion of the other councils' debt will have been raised in a low interest rate environment. The Covid-19 crisis has aided some authorities by keeping debt servicing cost low for an extended period.
63. If this County Council had followed others and had been ready to borrow the impact on the revenue budget would be an additional cost in the region of £40m per annum.

64. Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire have been added to the table, as local comparators. Even against these authorities the County Council's cost of servicing debt compares favourably.

Conclusion

65. The future financial position is uncertain and complex and made increasingly so due to Covid-19. The prudent approach taken by the County Council to managing its finances, including ensuring sufficient contingencies are maintained and external borrowing is kept to a minimum, have ensured the County Council is, as demonstrated by the CIPFA resilience index, comparatively well placed to deal with future financial challenges.
66. Nonetheless, the low funded position that the Council still finds itself, coupled with the ongoing delays to implementing the fair funding review, does mean that it needs to be mindful that its financial resilience will likely be adversely affected, and the steps outlined in this report are key to ensuring this is mitigated as much as possible.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

67. There are no equality or human rights implications arising from the recommendation in this report. Public authorities are required by law to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not; and
 - Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristics and those who do not.
68. Many aspects of the County Council's MTFs may affect service users who have a protected characteristic under equalities legislation. An assessment of the impact of the proposals on the protected groups must be undertaken at a formative stage prior to any final decisions being made. Such assessments will be undertaken in light of the potential impact of proposals and the timing of any proposed changes. Those assessments will be revised as the proposals are developed to ensure that decision-makers have information to understand the effect of any service change, policy or practice on people who have a protected characteristic.
69. Proposals in relation to savings arising out of a reduction in posts will be subject to the County Council's Organisational Change policy which requires an Equality Impact Assessment to be undertaken as part of the Action Plan.

Risk Assessment

70. As this report states, risks and uncertainties surrounding the financial outlook are significant. The risks are included in the Corporate Risk Register which is regularly updated and reported to the Corporate Governance Committee.

Background Papers

Report to Cabinet – 18th September 2020 - Medium Term Financial Strategy Latest Position

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s155524/MTFS%20Latest%20Position%20FINAL.pdf>

Report to County Council -19 February 2020 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2023/24 <https://bit.ly/339IJfp>

Appendices

Appendix A:	Earmarked Reserves
Appendix B:	CIPFA Resilience Index

EARMARKED FUND BALANCES

	Revised Balance 01/04/20 £000	Forecast Balance 31/03/21 £000	Forecast Balance 31/03/22 £000	Forecast Balance 31/03/23 £000	Forecast Balance 31/03/24 £000	Forecast Balance 31/03/25 £000
Renewal of Systems, Equipment and Vehicles						
Children & Family Services	1,040	690	340	0	0	0
Adults & Communities	70	70	70	70	70	70
Environment & Transport	370	260	230	160	160	160
Corporate Resources	1,200	730	420	0	0	0
Trading Accounts						
Industrial Properties	1,090	840	590	340	0	0
Insurance						
General	6,400	6,270	6,270	6,270	6,270	6,270
Schools schemes and risk management	370	350	330	330	340	340
Uninsured loss fund	5,260	5,260	5,260	5,260	5,260	5,260
Committed Balances						
Community Grants	300	300	300	300	300	300
Other						
Children & Family Services						
Supporting Leicestershire Families	1,780	480	0	0	0	0
C&FS Developments	1,170	1,020	250	250	250	250
Youth Offending	560	450	340	230	120	0
Other	1,130	740	150	100	50	0
Adults & Communities						
A&C Developments	5,000	3,500	0	0	0	0
Public Health	460	290	140	0	0	0
Environment & Transport						
Commuted Sums	2,890	2,590	2,290	1,990	1,690	1,390
LLITM	2,080	1,470	190	-170	0	170
Major Projects - advanced design	930	740	50	40	30	20
Waste Developments	550	350	70	0	0	0
Section 38 Income	490	490	430	0	0	0
Other	1,380	1,240	900	700	500	320
Chief Executive						
Economic Development-General	510	400	300	200	100	0
Chief Executive Dept Developments	450	360	230	130	50	40
Other	180	30	0	0	0	0
Corporate Resources						
Corporate Resources Developments	50	50	50	50	50	50
Leicestershire Schools Music Service	160	160	160	160	160	160
Other	350	290	290	290	290	290
Corporate:						
Transformation Fund	7,480	4,000	1,000	0	0	0
Broadband	3,390	2,390	360	170	0	0
Business Rates Retention	1,570	570	570	570	570	570
Inquiry and other costs	1,040	230	0	0	0	0
Elections	580	780	130	330	530	730
Corporate Asset Investment Fund sinking fund	0	0	1,700	3,400	5,100	6,800
Other	680	390	390	390	390	390
Government Cash Flow Funding	19,690	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Financing (phasing of capital expenditure)	79,050	34,030	2,620	2,570	2,520	2,470
Pooled Property Fund investment *	-23,960	-23,960	-23,960	-23,960	-23,960	-23,960
TOTAL	125,740	47,850	2,460	170	840	2,090
Schools and Partnerships						
Dedicated Schools Grant	-4,050	-12,220	-14,410	-11,950	-21,570	-21,570
Leicestershire & Rutland Sport	1,460	1,310	900	660	390	0
Health & Social Care Outcomes	820	820	820	820	820	820
Emergency Management	410	410	410	410	410	410
East Midlands Shared Services - other	270	270	270	270	270	270
Leicestershire Safeguarding Children Board	80	70	50	40	20	0
Leics Social Care Development Group	40	40	40	40	40	40
Total	-970	-9,300	-11,920	-9,710	-19,620	-20,030

* Pooled Property Fund investments - funded from the overall balance of earmarked funds

Main Earmarked Funds:

Renewals of Vehicles and Equipment

Departments hold earmarked funds for the future replacement of vehicles (the County Council has a fleet of around 350 vehicles) and equipment such as ICT.

Industrial Properties

These are funds generated from the industrial property portfolio. The fund is used for improvement works included within the capital programme.

Insurance

Earmarked funds to enable the Council to meet excesses not covered by insurance policies and smooth fluctuations in claims between years. The levels are informed by advice from independent advisors.

The **uninsured loss fund** is required mainly to meet potential liabilities arising from Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI) that is subject to a run-off of claims following liquidation in 1992. The fund also covers the period before the Council purchased insurance cover and any other uninsured losses.

Supporting Leicestershire Families: used to fund the Supporting Leicestershire Families service which is providing early help and intervention services for vulnerable families across Leicestershire.

Children and Family Services Developments: provides funding for a number of projects within the department such as improving management information, information access and retention and responding to changing requirements as a result of OfSTED and legislation.

Adults and Communities Developments: held to fund a number of investments in maintaining social care service levels and assisting the department in achieving its transformation.

Commuted Sums. This funding, received from housing developers, is used to cover future revenue costs arising from developer schemes, where the specifications are over and above standard developments (e.g. block paving, bollards or trees adjacent to the highway). These liabilities can arise many years after the funding is received and therefore the balance on this earmarked fund has built up over time.

Leicester and Leicestershire Integrated Transport Model (LLITM). This earmarked fund is income from charging other local authorities for using the model. Surplus income is added into the fund and will be used to finance activity to refresh the model when required.

Other. These earmarked funds will be used to manage funding of schemes where grant awards and scheme expenditure relate to/occur in different years and will also will fund plant renewal for highway services.

Transformation Fund. The fund is used to invest in transformation projects to achieve efficiency savings and also to fund severance costs. To achieve the level of savings within the MTFS the Council will need to change significantly, and this will require major investment, including in some of the core 'building blocks' of transformation such as improvements to data quality, and improvements to digital services enabling more self-service.

Broadband. This fund was established to allow the development of super-fast broadband within Leicestershire. There is a significant time lag in spending County Council funds as a result of securing grant funding from Central Government and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) that required those funds to be spent first and within a set period.

Business Rates Retention. The fund includes the County Council's element of the Leicester and Leicestershire Business Rates Pool contingency of £2m.

Inquiry and other costs. This fund is held to provide funding for inquiry and other costs associated with historical child sexual exploitation.

Pooled Property Fund(s). The Cabinet on 11 September 2015 and 11 October 2016 approved the investment of £15m and £10m respectively of the Council's earmarked funds into pooled property funds. The investments are held to achieve higher returns than if the funds were invested as cash. The investment is funded from the overall balance of earmarked funds and can be realised in the future when required. A cumulative unrealised gain of £1.0m is also included with the fund.

Corporate Asset Investment Fund sinking fund. With the ever expanding property portfolio owned through the Corporate Asset Investment Fund, targetted to reach £260m over the MTFS period, it is important to establish and build up a sinking fund to cover any major capital works needed to be undertaken on these property assests in the future.

Government Cash Flow Funding. The Government paid the first instalment of general Covid-19 grant (£15.1m) and the 2020/21 Business Rates Section 31 grant (£4.6m) in late March 2020. These amounts have been set aside in this new earmarked fund and will be used to fund expenditure in 2020/21.

Capital Financing. This fund is used to hold MTFS revenue contributions required to fund the approved capital programme in future years. The fund also includes the balance on the future developments fund which is used to support mainly future capital programme developments. This element of the fund has been fully committed but not all spend has yet been incurred. The balance will be held in the capital financing fund to fund the outstanding commitments.

Partnerships Earmarked Funds

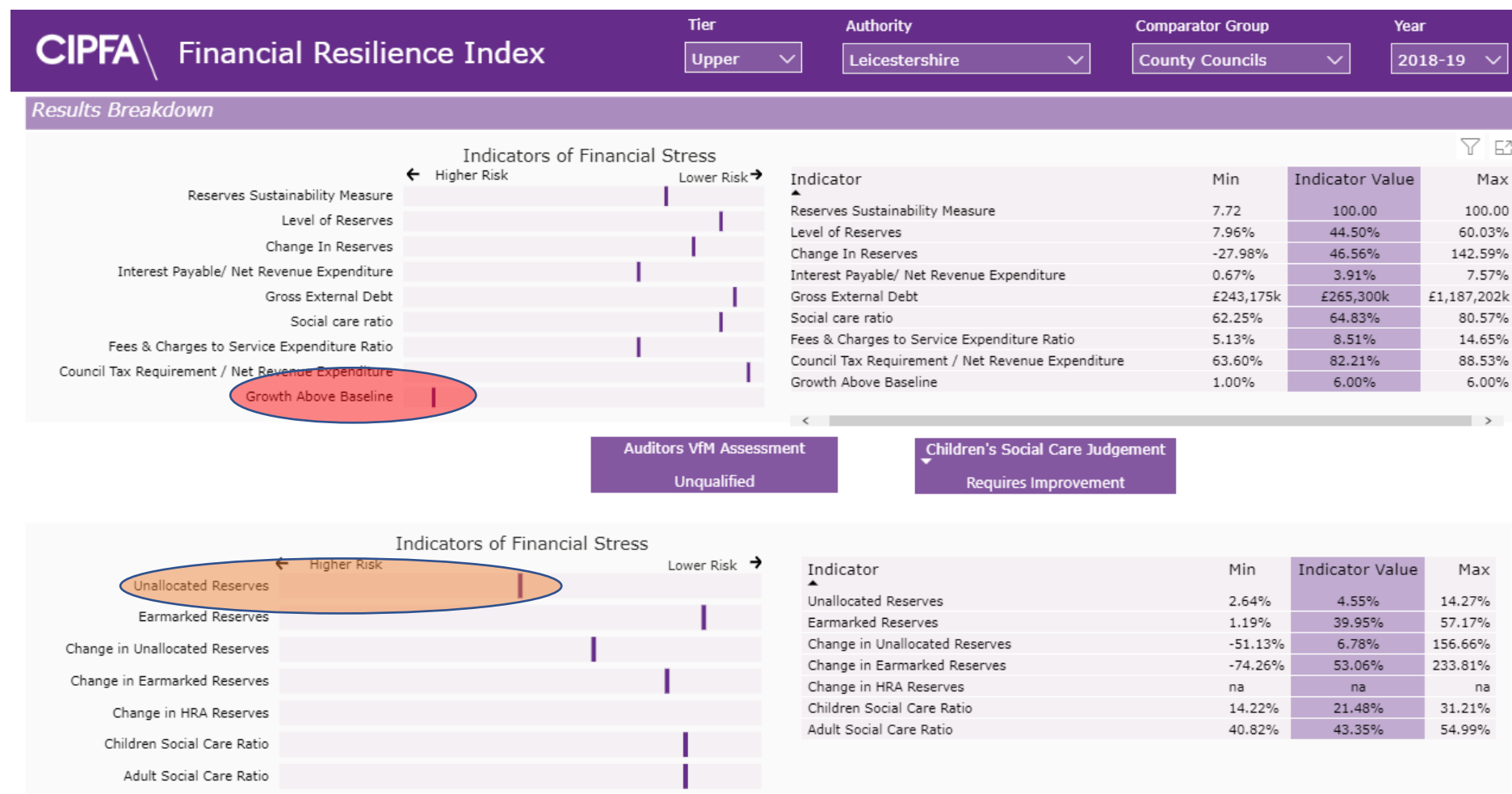
Dedicated Schools Grant. DSG is ring-fenced and can only be applied to meet expenditure properly included in the Schools Budget, as defined in the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations. This fund is earmarked to meet the revenue costs of commissioning places in new schools, early years and to support pressures on the high needs block.

Within the schools block funding, future DSG allocations for schools growth will be retained and added to the earmarked fund to support the revenue costs of commissioning new schools. The deficit on the high needs block will increase in the medium term until the savings arising from the High Needs Development Plan are delivered. In the short term the surplus on the schools block will partially offset the high needs deficit. The expectation of the Development Plan is to replenish the DSG earmarked fund so that new school funding is not impacted.

Leicestershire and Rutland Sport. The main purpose of this earmarked fund is to hold partner contributions until expenditure on the agreed activities has been incurred. A significant part of the services' funding from external agencies is uncertain in nature, so the earmarked fund also allows management of funding variations and a redundancy provision.

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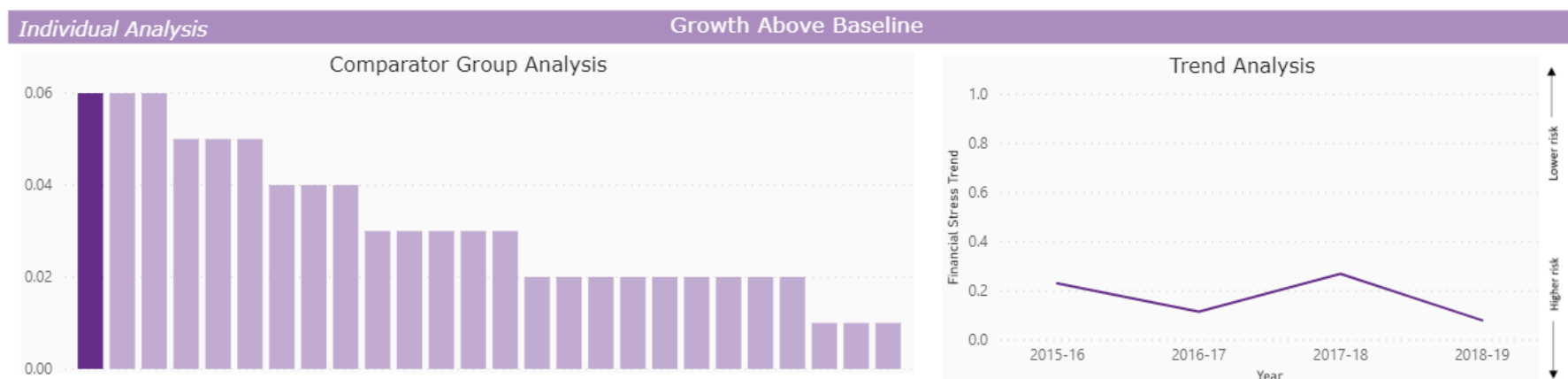
CIPFA Resilience Index



Growth Above Baseline = Ratio of the retained Business Rates income and the baseline funding level.

Represents £3 million of the County Council, although significant not a stability issues and fully provided for in the MTFS

Scheme is designed to favour District Councils and values for that class of authority can reach 287%, which explained its inclusion in the Index.

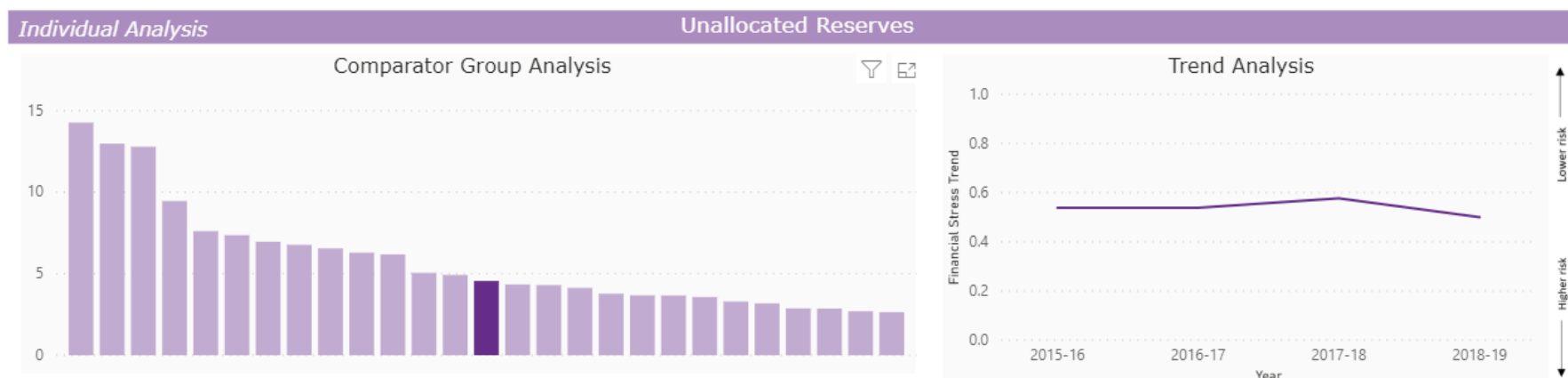


Unallocated Reserves = Ratio of unallocated reserves (the General Fund) to net revenue expenditure.

The General Fund balance was increased by £7.3m during 2019/20 and stands at £23.1m as at 31st March 2020, which represents 5.9% of the 2020/21 revenue budget, in line with the County Council's earmarked funds policy.

If Council's have the ability it is expected that they will look to increase their unallocated reserves to account for the increasing risks being faced. The potential for SEND placement expenditure to not be covered by the Department of Education is an example of a current issues would have been considered a relatively low risk a few years ago.

The comparator with other County Councils is fair for this indicator. Issues that arise can relate to organisation size, but they can also be a similar impact for all organisations. The smaller size of district councils does require them to hold proportionately higher balances. However, the Index shows several with values exceeding the annual revenue expenditure highlighting inefficient allocation of resources.



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SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 4TH NOVEMBER 2020

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

2020/21 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY MONITORING (PERIOD 6)

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the 2020/21 revenue budget and capital programme monitoring position as at the end of period 6 (the end of September).

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The 2020/21 revenue budget and the 2020/21 to 2023/24 capital programme were approved by the County Council at its budget meeting on 19th February 2020 as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
3. The four-year capital programme was reviewed in July 2020 and an updated programme approved by the Cabinet 18 September 2020.

REVENUE BUDGET

4. The financial position faced by the County Council is extremely serious and challenging. The current MTFS anticipated a funding gap of £39m by 2023/24 but the additional pressures from Covid-19 will increase that gap significantly. This is a particularly difficult situation for a low-funded authority such as Leicestershire as room for further savings is limited.
5. The report to Cabinet in September provided more background to the Council's wider financial impact of Covid-19, focussing not just on the current financial year, but also the expected impact over the MTFS period. It also discussed the additional measures that had been put in place to help mitigate the impact. This detail is not reported again here. Instead the focus is on the current year financial position.
6. Financial monitoring in the current financial year consists of three streams:

- The direct adverse implication of the Covid crisis, which is reported to Government
 - Mitigations of financial pressures
 - Budget variances that arise, which do not relate to the Covid crisis.
7. The difference between these three categories is not perfectly defined and can change, as Government 'refines' its approach to capturing information.

Uncertainties

8. Whilst covered in the September report it is worth re-emphasising that the range of uncertainties being faced is far higher than in a usual year, including:
- Time until normality returns and impact of further lockdowns
 - National Living Wage annual increases
 - DfE commitment to covering SEND costs
 - Economic influences on service demand and service contributions
 - Tax income (Referendum limits and ability to pay)
 - Commercial / Corporate Asset Investment Fund income
 - Level of pent-up demand
 - Expectations of service provision changed, such as standard of infection control
 - Potential for fundamental change in the Care Home market
9. As such the estimated outturn position now being reported is being done so with much less confidence than would usually be the case at period 6.

2020/21 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING – PERIOD 6

10. Overall a net overspend of £7.4m is forecast. This is estimated to comprise net additional costs due to Covid-19 of £12m and non Covid-19 related underspends of £4.6m. However, it is not easy to separate out the impact accurately for a lot of services.
11. The cost control and related measures that have been introduced are already starting to have an impact and will continue to do so which will hopefully see this position improve further.
12. The position is summarised below and set out in more detail in Appendix A.

	Updated Budget	Projected Outturn	Difference from Updated Budget	
	£000	£000	£000	%
Schools Budget – Schools and Early Years	0	-520	-520	
Schools Budget – High Needs	0	10,010	10,010	
Net Total	0	9,490	9,490	

Children & Family Services (Other)	82,796	85,946	3,150	3.8
Adults & Communities	150,779	156,739	5,960	4.0
Public Health	-665	-785	-120	18.0
Environment & Transport	83,406	83,476	70	0.1
Chief Executives	12,268	13,778	1,510	12.3
Corporate Resources	34,099	42,139	8,040	23.6
Capital Financing	43,100	45,900	2,800	6.5
Other Areas	6,322	7,732	1,410	22.3
Central grants/other income	-33,241	-32,241	1,000	-3.0
Covid-19 grant	0	-36,500	-36,500	n/a
Contribution to General Fund	11,000	11,000	0	0.0
Central Costs of Covid-19	0	5,500	5,500	n/a
Total	389,864	382,684	-7,180	-1.8
Funding	-389,864	-375,304	14,560	-3.7
Net Total	0	7,380	7,380	

13. This is a significant improvement on the position reported in September (P4). The key changes are set out in the table below:

	£ Millions	£ Millions
Period 4 Overspend		18
Covid-19 General Grants	-3	
Sales, Fees and Charges income losses - grant	-2	
Additional ASC support (free PPE & additional infection control grant)	-3	
Spend controls	-1	
E&T, Transport cost estimate reduced + additional capital recharges	-1	
Treasury Management (including Pooled Property & Private debt)	-2	
Commercial income and delays to CAIF schemes	1	
Total Change		-11
Period 6 Overspend		7

14. The details of major variances are provided in Appendix 2. The key projected variances that have been identified are set out below.

Children and Family Services – Schools Budget

15. The High Needs element of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is forecast to be £10m overspent at the end of 2020/21. This compares with the MTFS which included an estimate of £10.5m.
16. Nationally concern over the impact of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) reform on High Needs expenditure and the financial difficulties these places

on local authorities continues. The position in Leicestershire reflects the national picture.

17. The SEND Capital Programme is developing additional specialist places with the aim of reducing the reliance on expensive independent sector. During 2019/20 a number of these bases welcomed their first cohort of students, with more places forecast to be filled during the 2020/21 academic year. The increase in demand, however, has resulted in these places being filled with new demand and limited the ability to offer places to pupils currently within the independent sector. Due to set-up costs the full effect of the programme will not be seen until future years.
18. The estimated accumulated High Needs deficit for 2020/21 remains forecast to be £18m pending a full review of the medium-term financial projection. This will incorporate confirmed pupil destinations and costs for the 2020/21 academic year, any changes in demand and average costs as well as updating expectations in relation to costs and savings.
19. The Department is implementing a number of actions that could over the course of the MTFS reduce demand and therefore the overall deficit through the High Needs Development Plan. An external review of the deliverability of the plan and the actions within it is underway
20. Early Years Dedicated Schools Grant is forecast to be £0.5m underspent at the end of this financial year, due to demand being less than anticipated.

Children & Families – Local Authority Budget (Other)

21. The budget is forecast to be £3.2m (3.8%) overspent for the financial year.
22. Operational Placements - £3m overspend. Current projections are based on an 8% increase in Looked after Children (LAC), from the March 2020 position. Whilst the growth built into the MTFS was based on a 14% increase, there has been an increase in unit costs based on the current cohort of children and new placements coming into the system in comparison to projected unit costs made at time of the preparation of the MTFS. This has resulted in the current projected overspend position. For example, current average weekly external residential unit costs to social care is £4,000 per week compared with a £3,500 per week assumption built into the MTFS growth, an increase of 14%. This increase in average weekly cost exceeds the benefit of lower than budgeted LAC children than originally estimated.
23. Likewise, similar trends can be seen across external 16 plus and Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements; 16 plus current average weekly unit costs £1,400, compared with £1,000 built into MTFS assumptions, an increase of 40%. IFA current weekly average costs £810 compared with £790 built into MTFS assumptions, an increase of 3%.
24. Over the last 6 months, a number of children have required residential placements as a result of their very complex needs, subsequently leading to very high cost

placements, and a subsequent driver behind the increase in current weekly unit cost. Other market factors, such as the impact of Covid-19 is also a factor in the current increased unit cost, but at this stage is more difficult to quantify the exact impact of Covid-19 on placement costs. Engagement is actively being undertaken with providers to try to understand with more certainty the current impact of the different factors driving current costs.

25. Changes to case law and court directives are also have a significant adverse impact on the current budget situation. For example, regarding parent and child placements, the new standard is there must be a high standard of justification that must be shown by a local authority seeking an order for separation requires it to inform the court of all available resources that might remove the need for separation. There are a higher level and increasing number of parent-baby placements enter the system (in July, 6 new requests for parent-baby placements - potentially linked to the impact of Covid-19 as a potential factor behind this increase although difficult to validate at this stage).
26. The current position is there is no available in-house provision to meet this demand and so IFA/residential searches are required. If IFAs do not offer a placement, then the court will want to know if there are residential placement offers. An offer from a residential placement will indicate that that provision feels able to safeguard the child, keeping parent-child together and hence meeting this new court directed standard.
27. If this is a continued pattern, then depending on placement sufficiency the number of new entries potentially into residential provision, will exceed the predicted number for 2020/21, potentially 10% increase in Residential numbers compared to the projected number of residential placements built into current MTFS assumptions, hence impacting adversely on forecasted spend.
28. Children's Social Care Staffing - £1.6m overspend. The MTFS had identified growth for number of staff roles across various service areas based on current demand and need. A number of those roles had been filled with agency workers, given the current challenges around recruitment and retention within social care. Prior to Covid-19, plans had been in place for an intense recruitment drive and to reduce the need for agency workers. However, the current pandemic caused severe disruption to those plans and also required short term reactive measures which involved having to increase workforce capacity to allow for service continuity across statutory services. This subsequently meant such increased capacity had to be met from the agency market at an increased cost. In addition, whilst there have been positive recruitment drives for social workers, a number of new recruits are newly qualified and therefore in a lot of cases have needed to be supported by more qualified social workers in the short term, and unfortunately based on the current demand for qualified experienced social workers, this is also having to be met from the agency market.
29. Savings of £1.3m are forecast from vacancy management across all non-essential vacant roles.

Adults and Communities

30. A net overspend of **£6m** (4%) is forecast for the revenue budget for 2020/21.
31. There has been a significant financial impact due to Covid-19 on adult social care which includes making additional payments in the region of £27m to care providers to cover; additional costs (**£3m**), assistance with cashflow (£11m) which will need to be repaid by providers and passporting the Infection Control Fund Grant (£13m).
32. Other additional Covid-19 expenditure of **£2.6m** includes supporting shielding, PPE purchases for council services, supporting the management of Covid-19 and food packages for service users being discharged from hospital.
33. There is also an estimated loss of community income of **£3.4m** from a reduction in the number of chargeable service users due mainly to Covid-19.
34. These costs are offset by income of approximately £17m from the NHS to support service users being discharged from hospital and **£3m** underspend from staffing, overhead and other budgets mainly due to managing level of staffing vacancies across the department.
35. The level of demand from the service users for commissioned services is constantly changing with lower numbers for some services and increased costs. As the approach to Covid-19 management changes nationally, the NHS is changing the current basis arrangements for those being discharged from hospital from 1st September with only the first 6 weeks of reablement care being funded. The Government has also announced that it will provide PPE for social care providers as well as providing additional Infection Control Grant. The impact of all of these changes is being monitored and is making accurate forecasting of demand and cost for commissioned services very challenging.

Public Health

36. The department is forecasting a net underspent of £0.1m. This is mainly due to reducing numbers of health checks to a targeted provision and staffing vacancies.

Environment and Transport

37. The department is forecasting to be in line with the budget. This comprises variance which are reported below.
38. Transport is the main area of concern, with forecast overspends of £1.5m on Special Educational Needs (SEN) transport, £0.3m on Concessionary Travel, £0.2m on Public Bus Services and £0.1m on Mainstream School Transport. These forecasts mainly relate to the impact of Covid-19 on costs.
39. Waste Management is also impacted by Covid-19, with forecast overspends of £0.7m on Landfill, £0.4m on Dry Recycling and £0.3m on Recycling and Household Waste

Sites, partly offset by underspends of £0.4m on Treatment Contracts and £0.2m on staffing and administration, due to staff vacancies.

40. These overspends are offset by underspends elsewhere, particularly of £2.4m on the Highways Design and Delivery budget due to additional capital recharges (increased capital grants) and vacant posts. Due to Covid-19 recruitment has been slowed and full recruitment for services may be impacted for the whole year.

Chief Executives

41. The department is overspending by £1.5m (12.3%) which is mainly due to expenditure of £1.6m on the Covid 19 Community Grant scheme, providing support to community and third sector groups to allow them to continue to provide critical services.

Corporate Resources

42. Overall the department is forecasting a net overspend of £8.0m (23.6%).
43. There is a £4.7m forecast overspend on Commercial Services, primarily related to Covid-19. Commercial Services faced significant challenges during 2019/20 resulting in a £2.6m budget overspend. This was partially affected by Covid-19 lockdown which has affected sales since mid-March. Difficult trading conditions continue and have been seriously compounded by the lockdown forcing the scaling back or temporary closure of a number of commercial services. Options are being developed to address continuing operational losses and develop an optimum portfolio of commercially sustainable services going into 2021/22. This may result in some services discontinuing.
44. There is a forecast overspend of £2.1m on the Information and Technology budget, due to additional spending on hardware and software to support the increase in homeworking during the Covid-19 lockdown.
45. There is a forecast overspend of £1.1m on the Corporate Asset Investment Fund, due to developments, and hence rental income, being delayed by Covid-19.
46. There is an overspend of £0.6m relating to the introduction of a Working from Home Allowance, which provides for the costs of non-PC equipment required by staff to adapt to working safely at home during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Central Contingencies / Central Items

47. The inflation contingency of £16.2m is projected to be overspent by £1m. Transfers of £14m have been made to date, including £6.2m on the Adults and Communities budget which mostly relates to the Adult Social Care fee review and £5.8m for the 2020/21 pay award and an increase to the employer pension contribution rate. Other pressures still to be met from the contingency include energy, insurance, IT and other budgets.

48. Revenue Funding of Capital – additional costs of £3m. This includes an estimate of £2m to support the SEND capital programme due to additional demands on places, and £1m for forecast overspends due to Covid-19 on the capital programme.
49. Central Grants and Other Income - £1m overspend mainly due to a reduction in interest earned on cash balances. In March 2020 the Bank of England announced two emergency cuts in interest rates in response to the financial impact of the coronavirus outbreak. The base rate was cut from 0.75% to 0.25% on 11 March, and then to 0.1% on 19 March. This reduction equates to a loss of c.£1m compared with the budget in the MTFS, assuming interest rates remain at this level for the foreseeable future.

Central Costs of Covid 19 / EU exit

50. Given the significant uncertainty in the current financial year, provision of £5m has been made. This is for potential additional costs related to Covid-19 that have not yet been incurred as the Council approaches the 2nd half of the year and the impact of the second wave. For example the potential provision of school meals during school holidays for those eligible for free school meals. The provision also covers further uncertainty arising from the exit from the European Union. In particular, additional costs are anticipated due to managing the logistics around East Midlands Airport as well as additional pressures expected to hit services such as trading standards. There is also an expected impact on reduced labour markets for key services, such as adult social care, which could push prices upwards, albeit perhaps more of an impact in later years.
51. The County Council's precepts for Business Rates and Council Tax are due to be collected in full during 2020/21. However, it is anticipated that the actual amounts of both income streams that will be received by the district councils during 2020/21 will be impacted by Covid-19 from a rise in unemployment, reduced numbers of new properties and businesses unable to pay business rates. An initial estimated loss of £15m has been calculated based on an overall reduction of 5% which will impact on the income available to the County Council when setting future years' budgets. As this relates to 2020/21, it is prudent to set aside this funding in this year to offset the anticipated future impact. In addition, with underlying increases in tax bases generating roughly £10m additional core funding per year – potentially tax bases could reduce depending on the longer-term picture on unemployment and business failure. Detailed estimates have been requested from the district councils and this position will be updated as more information is known throughout the year.

Covid-19 Grants

52. The County Council has received three tranches of Covid-19 general grant from the Government, totaling £31.3m (out of a national total of £3.7bn). A further announcement of a fourth tranche of £1.0bn has been made and the County Council share is £3.2m, giving a total of £34.5m. The County Council's share in this fourth

share is only 0.34%, compared with 0.94%, 0.79% and 0.76% in the previous tranches.

53. The Government has introduced a grant scheme to provide support to local authorities regarding the impact of Covid-19 on sales, fees and charges (SFC) income. After allowing for a “deductible” amount of 5% of applicable SFC budgets, the Government will contribute 75% of the net loss. The current forecast is for this grant to total £2m, this is being reassessed in light of the reductions in commercial income
54. The County Council has continued to make claims from the Government’s furlough scheme. An estimated benefit of £3m has been included in the latest monitoring. The position will not be confirmed until the scheme ends in October due to the timing of service opening and HMRC’s retrospective auditing of the scheme.

Business Rates

55. The provisional outturn position of the 2019/20 Leicester and Leicestershire Business Rates Pool is for a levy surplus of £10.6m and the 75% Business Rates Pilot is projected to show a net gain of £14.9m, of which £7.2m relates to the County Council. The final position on both issues is subject to the completion of the external audits on each billing authority’s Business Rates returns to MHCLG.
56. Monitoring of the 2020/21 Pool is underway, and an update will be provided in the next monitoring report. Initial indications are that the Pool levy surplus will continue but is likely to be significantly reduced, due largely to the impacts of Covid-19.

Overall Revenue Summary

57. At this early stage there is a forecast net overspend of £7.4m, but there are a significant number of uncertainties in trying to fully assess the ongoing impact of the pandemic. This position will be updated as more information is known during the financial year.
58. The financial impact in future years is even more uncertain. Although it is hoped that measures to contain the virus will be greatly reduced, the financial challenge will need to be met due to:
 - a. Reduced growth in housing and business premises reducing new taxes raised
 - b. Greater level of tax defaults and reliefs
 - c. Delays to existing savings programmes
 - d. Higher service costs due to long lasting changes from the crisis, for example the care home market will potentially look very different.
 - e. Greater support requirements, for example social care, from higher unemployment.
59. The 2020/21 outturn position is planned to be closed by cost control and other measures with the balance being met from earmarked funds and contingencies.

60. Over the medium-term the gap is expected to be closed from new savings targets and expenditure controls.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

61. The updated capital programme for 2020/21 totals £152m. This follows a review of the programme undertaken in July 2020 and approved by the Cabinet in September 2020.

	Revised Capital Programme	Changes in Funding 2020/21	Updated Budget 2020/21	Forecast Spend 2020/21	Updated Budget v Forecast Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Children & Family Services*	35,177	328	35,505	33,065	-2,440
Adults and Communities	9,626	0	9,626	9,827	201
Environment & Transport	62,766	436	63,202	60,255	-2,947
Chief Executive's	890	0	890	901	11
Corporate Resources	12,381	0	12,381	8,810	-3,571
Corporate Programme	30,388	0	30,388	22,977	-7,411
Total	151,228	764	151,992	135,835	-16,157

*Excludes Schools Devolved Formula Capital

62. The latest position at period 6 reports net slippage of £16m. Details of the variances are provided in Appendix 4. The main variances are reported below:
63. Children and Family Services, £2.4m relating to slippage on the provision of additional school places programme. Works at two schools have been delayed to 2021/22 due to planning issues (Rothley Primary) and a pending decision on a new primary free school (in Fleckney).
64. Environment and Transport, overall net variance of £2.9m:
- A511 / A50 Major Road Network - £1.5m slippage due to a number of activities which were expected earlier this year, having to be delayed due to Covid-19.
 - Advanced Design - £0.6m slippage due to reprioritisation of works and when monies will be spent, this has meant that some of the works will now not be required this year but will be needed in future years.
 - Zouch Bridge - £0.3m slippage due to taking this programme into a full tender exercise to ensure competitive pricing.
 - Melton Mowbray Distributor Road – North and East Section - £0.3m acceleration due to asbestos investigations and design fees for ground improvements that had not been foreseen in this year's programme.

- Waste Transfer Station Development - £0.3m slippage due to construction not starting until 2021/22 so that detailed pre-construction works can be completed in 2020/21, therefore the spend profile has been revised in line with the commencement of the construction works.

65. Corporate Resources, overall net slippage of £3.6m:

- Snibston Future Strategy - Remedial works for the area of the site earmarked for housing and the related covenant, slippage of £2.6m. There has been a speculative interest in acquiring this site and the decision has been made to remarket the site for sale on the open market.
- Watermead Park Footbridge and Cycleway, slippage of £0.5m. Joint project with Leicester City Council requiring agreement with a third-party landowner.

66. Corporate Programme, overall net slippage of £7.4m.

- CAIF – Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Park, development of an office block plus car parking spaces. Forecast overspend of £0.4m relates to additional costs incurred by the contractor due to Covid-19 working guidelines. Completion and hand over to tenant expected in November 2020.
- Future Developments – slippage of £8m. Projects mostly not sufficiently advanced to require funding in this financial year. Over the medium term the estimated requirement on the fund is £85m compared with £50m set aside within the four year capital programme. This position will be reviewed and updated as part of the new MTFS.

Capital Receipts

67. The requirement for capital receipts for 2020/21 is £4.5m. The latest forecast of receipts is in line with the budget.

Corporate Asset Investment Fund

68. A summary of the Corporate Asset Investment Fund (CAIF) position as at quarter 2 for 2020/21 is set out in the table below. Overall the fund is forecasting to achieve a 2.6% net income return for 2020/21. If the development classification was excluded, the return would increase to 4.2%.
69. The directly managed property portfolio is so far holding up against the impact of Covid-19. In the Office class, increases in rental income, as large voids are taken up, will be partially offset as Covid-19 affects the office market, especially demand for smaller office spaces. Current projections show that the majority of industrial occupiers will emerge from Covid-19 in a stronger position than anticipated; arrears and defaults have been minimal in the first quarter of the year.

Asset Class	Opening Capital Value	Capital Incurred 2020/21	Net Income YTD	Forecast Net Income FY	Forecast Net Inc. Return FY
	£000	£000	£000	£000	%
Office	27,160	0	727	1,632	6.0%
Industrial	12,419	0	166	925	7.5%
Distribution	456	0	-3	20	4.5%
Development	58,780	15,514	-9	-68	-0.1%
Rural	22,522	0	-16	475	2.1%
Other	4,413	0	86	195	4.4%
Pooled Property	24,849	0	300	750	3.0%
Private Debt	20,276	0	300	750	3.7%
TOTAL	170,875	15,514	1,551	4,679	2.6%

70. The Council's exposure to the distribution sector is low risk due to the type of assets held. As such, performance is expected to remain in line with previous years. The rural sector is largely unaffected by Covid-19, with other economic factors taking time to impact returns. Rental growth will be slower this year due to the review cycle. The diverse range of assets held in the Other asset class offsets the potential risk from Covid-19; the Citroen Garage continues to offer solid returns.
71. Pooled property income is lower than expected due to the effects of Covid-19 on underlying businesses to make rental payments. The County Council has assumed a similar run rate for the full year forecast. Private Debt distributions have been delayed, to support the underlying businesses. The fund is invested in a product that is primarily composed of senior secured debt and is highly diversified. This offers considerable downside protection to the capital invested.
72. It should be noted that the above table excludes in year capital growth which is assessed annually as part of the asset revaluation exercise and reported in the annual CAIF performance report.

Recommendation

73. The Scrutiny Commission is asked to note the contents of this report.

Background Papers

Report to County Council -19 February 2020 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2023/24

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s151485/MTFS%202020-24%20-%20Cab%207-2-20%20v6.pdf>

Report to Cabinet – 18 September 2020 – Medium Term Financial Strategy Latest Position

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s155524/MTFS%20Latest%20Position%20FINAL.pdf>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Revenue Position as at Period 6

Appendix 2: Revenue Budget Major Variances

Appendix 3: Capital Programme Major Variances and Funding Changes

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REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING STATEMENT 2020/21
(AS AT PERIOD 6)

	Updated Budget	Projected Outturn	Difference from Updated Budget	
	£000	£000	£000	%
<u>Schools Budget</u>				
Schools	72,872	72,802	-70	-0.1
Early Years	34,974	34,524	-450	-1.3
DSG Funding	-107,846	-107,846	0	0.0
	0	-520	-520	
<i>Earmarked fund - start of year</i>			-3,040	
<i>Earmarked fund - end of year</i>			-3,560	
High Needs	73,256	83,266	10,010	13.7
Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)	-73,256	-73,256	0	0.0
	0	10,010	10,010	
<i>Earmarked fund - start of year</i>			7,090	
<i>Earmarked fund - end of year</i>			17,100	
<u>LA Budget</u>				
Children & Family Services (Other)	82,796	85,946	3,150	3.8
Adults & Communities	150,779	156,739	5,960	4.0
Public Health *	-665	-785	-120	n/a
Environment & Transport	83,406	83,476	70	0.1
Chief Executives	12,268	13,778	1,510	12.3
Corporate Resources	33,749	42,139	8,390	24.9
DSG (Central Dept. recharges)	-2,285	-2,285	0	0.0
MTFS risks contingency	4,000	4,000	0	0.0
Contingency for Inflation	2,234	3,234	1,000	44.8
Total Services	366,282	386,242	19,960	5.4
<u>Central Items</u>				
Financing of Capital	19,200	19,000	-200	-1.0
Revenue funding of capital	23,900	26,900	3,000	12.6
Central Expenditure	2,723	2,783	60	2.2
Central Grants and Other Income	-33,241	-32,241	1,000	-3.0
Total Central Items	12,582	16,442	3,860	30.7
Contribution to General Fund	11,000	11,000	0	0.0
Central Costs of Covid-19/ EU Exit	0	5,500	5,500	n/a
Total Spending	389,864	419,184	29,320	7.5
<u>Funding</u>				
Business Rates - Top Up	-40,346	-40,346	0	0.0
Business Rates Baseline / retained	-23,922	-24,362	-440	1.8
S31 Grants - Business Rates	-4,156	-4,156	0	0.0
Council Tax Collection Funds - net surplus	-2,090	-2,090	0	0.0
Council Tax	-319,350	-304,350	15,000	-4.7
Total Funding	-389,864	-375,304	14,560	-3.7
Covid-19 General Grants	0	-34,500	-34,500	
Sales, Fees and Charges income losses - grant	0	-2,000	-2,000	

Net Total

0	7,380	7,380
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* Public Health funded by Grant (£25.2m)
Underspending / on budget
Overspending of 2% or less
Overspending of more than 2%

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APPENDIX A

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Revenue Budget 2020/21 – forecast main variances**Children and Family Services****Dedicated Schools Grant**

A net overspend of £9.5m is forecast. The main variances are:

	£000	% of Budget
DSG High Needs Block (HNB) earmarked fund drawdown	9,550	n/a
Budget included an estimated HNB drawdown of £9.5m as the planned in year overspend.		
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	1,170	2%
The SEND Capital Programme is developing new resource bases with the aim of reducing the reliance on expensive independent sector places. During 19/20 a number of these bases welcomed their first cohort of students, with more places forecast to be filled during the 20/21 academic year. The increase in demand however has resulted in these places being filled with new demand as opposed to having the desired impact on existing numbers. Due to set-up costs the full effect of the programme won't be seen until future years. Additionally, the numbers of pupils in mainstream settings that receive top-up funding is rising rapidly.		
High Needs Block Development / Inclusion Partnerships	-470	-34%
The High Needs Recovery Plan included the further development of 4 inclusion projects by the Secondary Education Inclusion Partnerships (SEIP's) which as a result of a change to the approach to inclusion, will now not be progressed.		
Early Years / Nursery Education Funding	-450	2%
The DfE are continuing to pay nursery grant at pre-Covid 19 levels. These funds will be used to help ensure sufficient childcare providers remain sustainable. Providers are being paid in Autumn 2020 based on the number of children in Autumn 2019. The balance in the Early Years Reserve was £176,000 deficit as at 1st April 2020, so an in-year surplus of £450,000 would leave a potential balance of £274,000.		
Education of Children with Medical Needs (CMN)	-155	-6%
Following implementation of the Inclusion Service Review Action Plan, Case reviews have decreased the numbers of young people in the system who are supported back into education at an earlier stage. The projected underspend is also due to the recoupment of funding from schools for CMN placements.		
Other variances	-155	n/a
TOTAL	9,490	n/a

Local Authority Budget

The Local authority budget is forecast to overspend by £3.2m (3.9%). The main variances are:

	£000	% of Budget
Operational Placements	3,000	9%
<p>Current projections are based on a 8% LAC (Looked after Children) increase from March 20 position. Whilst MTFS growth was based on a 14% increase, there has been an increase in unit costs based on the current cohort of children and new placements coming into system in comparison to projected unit costs made at time of MTFS submission. This has resulted in the current projected overspend position.</p> <p>For example current average weekly External Residential Unit costs to social care is £4000 p/w (£3500 p/w assumption built into MTFS Growth - 14% increase). Similar trends across external 16 plus and IFA placements. 16plus current average weekly unit costs £1400 vs £1000 built into MTFS assumptions - 40% increase. IFA current weekly average costs £ 810 vs £790 built into MTFS assumptions - 3% increase. Over the last 6 months, a number of children have required a residential placements as result of their very complex needs, and subsequently led to very high cost placements. This helps further explain the reason why the average unit costs have increased above initial projected levels as per the MTFS.</p> <p>In addition, recently over the last month, we have seen a direct impact of changes to case law and practice in regards to parent and child placements, and as a result have a direct impact on the projected budget position for this financial year. For example, the new standard is there must be a high standard of justification that must be shown by a local authority seeking an order for separation requires it to inform the court of all available resources that might remove the need for separation.</p>		
Children's Social Care Staffing	1,630	7%
<p>The MTFS had identified growth for a number of staff roles across various service areas based on current demand and need. A number of those roles had been filled with agency workers, given the current challenges around recruitment and retention within social care. Prior to Covid-19, plans has been in place for an intense recruitment drive and plan to reduce the need for agency workers. However, the current pandemic caused severe disruption to those plans, and not only did short term reactive measures which involved having to increase workforce capacity to allow for service continuity across our statutory services, it subsequently also meant such increased capacity had to be met from the agency market at an increased cost. In addition, whilst we have seen positive recruitment drives for social workers, a number of new recruits are newly qualified and therefore in a lot cases have needed to be supported by more qualified social workers in the short term, and unfortunately based on the current demand for qualified experienced social workers, this is having to be met from the agency market.</p>		
Social Care Legal Costs	415	37%
<p>Overspend due to increased volume of new court proceeding being issued over the last 2 months, with this trend projected to continue for the remainder of the financial year.</p>		
Vacancy Management across all non essential vacant roles	-1,255	-13%
<p>A planned and measured vacancy management process is in place across service areas for all non critical and essential job roles. This directive is in response to the financial pressures across social care and minimises the risk of incurring any non essential spend for the remainder of this financial year. Such measures will be under continual review to ensure impact on service delivery is kept to a minimum.</p>		
Asylum Seekers Budget	-370	-26%
<p>Increased Home Office Funding rates for this financial year has resulted in a reduced financial pressure on this budget compared to what has been projected when budget was set.</p>		
Disabled Children's Service	-245	-6%
<p>Combination of turnover of staff and reduced services as result of the impact of Covid 19, especially within the homecare and short breaks service areas.</p>		
Other variances	-25	n/a
TOTAL	3,150	n/a

Adults & Communities

The Department has a net underspend of £6.0m (4%). The main variances are:

	£000	% of Budget
Homecare	3,665	0
There is a forecast variance due to the costs of Covid-19 hospital discharge patients estimated at £3.9m; provider Covid-19 support payments of £1.3m and IPCF grant costs of £2.6m. IPCF grant income and NHS Discharge Fund will net off most of this element of the overspend. Additional impact of April 20 contract inflation estimated at £430k and an increase in the number of service users (SU) (£3m) is also included in the overspend. The forecast for Home Care is based on an average SU number over the year of 2,150 at an average weekly cost per person of £240.		
Additional Other COVID costs	2,645	n/a
Additional Covid-19 expenditure includes additional provider payments, supporting shielding, PPE purchases for all council services, supporting management of Covid-19, food packages for service users being discharged from hospital and additional accommodation.		
Community income	2,655	12%
As a result of Covid-19 the decline in the chargeable number of service users (SU) has increased further to 500 SU who usually provide approx. £84/week of income, therefore the loss of income is forecast to be £2.3m at this stage. It is expected that the number of chargeable service users will increase over time as the effect of Covid-19 and social distancing diminish, however this is yet to be observed.		
Health recharges for Home Care are £600k lower than budgeted which is due to falling service user numbers with CHC (Continuing Health Care) funding likely to be due to new cases being eligible for recharge against the Covid-19 health funding. Agency income for Supported Living of £700k will not be achieved, however this should be compensated for by an equivalent saving on expenditure. The Learning Disabilities (LD) Pool income for non-residential SU is below budget by £400k as service user numbers are reducing. It is anticipated that around £1.5m of NHS Discharge Funding will cover loss of income.		
Residential Care and Nursing	1,215	2%
The net forecast overspend of £1.2m arises from several areas. Firstly, anticipated additional payment costs to providers of approximately £3m (including £1m of additional annual inflation to fees) and payment for infection protection control of £8.8m, additional service user cost of £5m due to Covid-19 and loss of Income as a result of Covid-19 due to the decline in the chargeable number of service users (£4.4m). These additional costs will be offset by anticipated additional income in the region of £11m from the NHS discharge Covid-19 fund and infection control grant of £8.8m. There are currently an average of 2,400 service users with an average gross care package cost of £825 per week.		
Communities and Wellbeing	325	6%
Overspend mainly relates to reduction of income due to Libraries, Museums and Heritage sites being closed as a result of Covid-19 £300k and £99k related to Adult Learning services. These are off set by underspends on staffing and other overheads.		
Care Pathway East- Older Adults Team	115	5%
Overspend relates to market premia, agency cost and additional staffing cost for Help with the Recovery and vacancies and business as usual (BAU) planning.		
Reablement (HART) & Crisis Response	-1,125	-24%
Underspend due to staffing vacancies and challenges recruiting during Covid-19. It is expected that additional resources will be recruited to as part of the Target Operating Model (TOM) work to encourage the transfer of volumes out of HTLAH reablement into HART and this work is currently in progress.		
Better Care Fund Contribution	-930	-5%
Additional BCF funding was agreed during the year for social care protection and other schemes.		
Supported Living	-710	-4%

Underspend following Covid-19 and a slight reduction in service users. In addition a delay in the movement of service users from Residential Care to Supported Living (through TOM project), following Covid-19, together with a slowdown in new growth of service users entering Supported Living therefore underspend of £0.7m. Covid-19 Extra Payments to providers of £400k is forecast to be made and IPCF of £67,600 payments (off set by income from Grant).

Community Life Choices (CLC) commissioned services	-520	-20%
Underspend following lockdown and the closure of CLC bases within the independent sector and service users either receiving no service or a vastly reduced service. Discussions are ongoing on a potential new CLC framework over the Covid-19 period. Forecast includes approx. £4k of Covid-19 extra payments to providers.		
Community Life Choices (CLC) / Day Services Team	-480	-18%
Underspend from closure of Community Life Choices (CLC) bases following lockdown and the vacancies that are being held pending an action plan.		
Supported Living, Residential and Short Breaks	-470	-10%
Underspend from closure of Community Life Choices (CLC) bases following lockdown and the vacancies that are being held pending an action plan.		
Aids, Adaptions and Assistive Technology	-150	-9%
Underspend on the expected spend on equipment following Covid-19 and a reduction in the commissioning of works. Demand is expected to bounce back following the end of the lockdown period.		
Care Pathway West- Older Adults Team	-135	-4%
Underspend from temporary staffing vacancies.		
Other variances (under £100k)	-140	n/a
TOTAL	5,960	n/a

Public Health

The Department is forecasting a net underspend of £0.1m. The main variances are:

	£000	% of Budget
Public Health Advice	160	15%
The overspend is due to the Homelessness Grant, received last year, being transferred to Leicester City Council.		
Sexual Health	-300	-7%
This is a demand led service that has seen a significant lack of activity due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is difficult to predict whether there will be a surge in activity once the lockdown restrictions ease due to the nature of the service.		
Other variances	20	n/a
TOTAL	-120	n/a

Environment and Transport

The Department is forecasting to budget. The main variances are:

	£000	% of Budget
Special Educational Needs Transport	1,540	11%
<p>The current estimated overspend on SEN Transport for 2020/21 is £1.3m. This forecast is largely based on the estimated potential impact contract price increases due to Covid-19 from September 2020 (£1.5m extra for the financial year). Most new transport arrangements for the 2020/21 academic year have now been put in place. The forecast is based on an assumed 20% over budget position for taxis for the period from July 2020 to March 2021.</p> <p>The overall forecast for the 2020/21 financial year has been reduced by savings made between April and July 2020, due to fewer journeys being made and the 25% retainer being paid to taxi companies.</p> <p>The forecast also includes £200k additional costs in the 2020/21 financial year to provide additional services high risk service users (high medical or behavioural need). No social distancing is assumed for other service users.</p> <p>Additional funding of £541k for Home to School and College Transport has been allocated by DfE for the first half term of the 2020/21 academic year. This grant can be used to fund additional services to allow social distancing. It is therefore assumed that £50k of this grant will be used for SEN transport. A further £50k grant income has been included in the forecast on the assumption that the grant will continue until at least the end of 2020.</p> <p>The forecast also includes additional costs of £180k in 2020/21 relating to the decision to pause implementation of post 16 PTBs until September 2021.</p> <p>In addition to the impact of COVID19, there is likely to be a general continued growth in demand and greater complexity of transport provision to meet passengers' needs as has been seen in recent years. The impact of these factors will have to be monitored during 2020/21 alongside the additional costs that are arising due to COVID19.</p>		
Landfill	750	9%
<p>Forecasting £0.7m over budget due to increased tonnage due to Covid-19 as people stay at home. This is partially offset by tonnage reductions on Treatment Contracts due to lower tonnages at Recycling and Household Waste Sites.</p>		
Dry Recycling	360	18%
<p>Forecast overspend due to increased tonnages of kerbside dry recycling materials (card, glass, paper, cans and plastic bottles) as a result of more food being consumed at home during the Covid-19 lockdown period.</p>		
Recycling & Household Waste Sites	275	8%
<p>Forecast overspend of £289k due to reduction in income from recyclable materials (including reuse income) during the Covid-19 outbreak and £58k lost income from charging at Recycling and Household Waste Sites. Overspend reduced by forecast income from furloughed staff.</p> <p>£50k underspend for RHWS haulage anticipated resulting from lower bulk haulage contract costs resulting from lower wood tonnages and fuel savings.</p>		
Concessionary Travel & Joint Arrangements	275	6%
<p>Potential overspend of £275k due to anticipated additional concessionary travel reimbursements costs to one bus operator. These estimated costs have arisen following a review of the methodology for making concessionary travel reimbursements as requested by the DfT. This review considered the way in which bus routes are split between rural and non-rural journeys. Further work still needs to be undertaken to confirm the figures.</p>		

Public Bus Services	180	8%
<p>Overspend of £180k forecast due to Covid-19 related issues. Forecast includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £260k delay of savings due to the decision to pause the Passenger Transport Policy implementation, but it is assumed that £170k of this shortfall can be funded using the Supported Bus Services Grant in 2020/21. - £318k loss of Park and Ride income during site closures and reduced income for the remainder of the financial year. - £180k lost income from employee parking schemes at Park and Ride sites during the Covid-19 lockdown period. - £150k lost bus fare revenue due to reduced passenger numbers throughout the whole of 2020/21. - £175k potential costs of commercial deregistrations. - £165k costs for additional capacity at peak times. - The above overspends are offset by assumed income of £898k from the Covid-19 Bus Services Support Grant (CBSSG) (this figure is still to be confirmed). 		
H & T Operations management	145	48%
Overspend due to under recovery on recharge to capital for agency staff.		
Mainstream School Transport	140	4%
<p>The forecast net overspend includes the estimated potential impact of contract price increases due to Covid-19 (£245k). Most new transport arrangements for the 2020/21 academic year have now been put in place. The forecast is based on an assumed 10% over budget position for taxis for the period from July 2020 to March 2021.</p> <p>The forecast also includes £330k additional costs in the 2020/21 financial year to provide additional services to replace some commercial services and some routes where children from different schools previously travelled on the same bus. No social distancing is assumed for other service users.</p> <p>Additional funding of £541k for Home to School and College Transport has been allocated by DfE for the first half term of the 2020/21 academic year. This grant can be used to fund additional services to allow social distancing. It is therefore assumed that £150k of this grant will be used for mainstream school transport. A further £150k grant income has been included in the forecast on the assumption that the grant will continue until at least the end of 2020.</p>		
Highways Design & Delivery - Staffing, Admin & Depot Overhead Costs	-2,355	-105%
Underspend due to additional recharges to capital due to additional grants received for capital schemes and vacant posts. Due to Covid-19 recruitment has been slowed and full recruitment for services maybe impacted for the whole year there is also additional spend relating to agency staff.		
Treatment Contracts	-395	-4%
Forecasting underspend due to reduced tonnage during Covid-19. This is due to lower volumes of waste at Recycling and Household Waste Sites during the site closures.		
HS2	-210	-52%
Underspend due to planned Government HS2 Phase 2b hybrid Bill process delayed beyond the originally anticipated June 2020 start (to 2021/22 at the earliest), so mandatory Parliamentary Agents and consultant support will not be required until that time.		
Ash Die back	-200	-50%
Underspend due to social distancing measures on inspections meaning less work can be completed as quickly. Also some communications work has not been completed as communications regarding Covid-19 have taken priority.		
Staffing & Admin Policy & Strategy (Environment & Waste)	-185	-15%
Forecast underspend due to multiple vacancies.		
Staffing & Admin Commissioning	-165	-15%
Underspend due to staff vacancies which is being slightly offset by reduction in income and recharges to capital.		
Other variances	-85	n/a
TOTAL	70	n/a

Chief Executive's

The Department is forecasting a net overspend of £1.5m (12.3%). The main variances are:

	£000	% of Budget
Policy & Communities	1,610	93%
The variance is due to forecast expenditure of £1.6m for Covid-19 related Community grants.		
Registrars	280	-279%
There is forecast to be a significant shortfall in income due to the Covid-19 impact on Wedding Ceremonies. Estimated furlough income of £25k is reflected in the forecast.		
Legal Services	140	6%
Additional temporary posts agreed for Covid-19 and A&C additional work plus the use of extra Locum resources to cover vacant posts.		
Trading Standards	50	3%
Agency support for Covid-19 PPE procurement support activities.		
Growth Unit	-200	-35%
The variance is due to ongoing staffing vacancies which are expected to continue for the remainder of the financial year plus an internal recharge of £55k which won't be taking place.		
Democratic and Administration	-165	-12%
The variance is due to ongoing vacancies as well as a reduction in travel, post and printing costs.		
Planning Services	-115	-26%
The forecast underspend is due to vacant posts that are proving difficult to recruit to. Planning fee income is expected to be at budgeted level.		
Civic Affairs	-95	-57%
The variance is due to reduced costs as a result of ongoing Covid-19 restrictions.		
Other variances	5	n/a
TOTAL	1,510	n/a

Corporate Resources

The Department is forecasting a net overspend of £8.0m (23.6%). The main variances are:

	£000	% of Budget
Commercial Services	4,740	n/a
A £4.7m overspend is being forecast at period 6 which is a result of the pandemic and difficult trading continuing from 2019/20. Difficult trading conditions continue and have been seriously compounded by lockdown forcing either the scaling back or temporary closure of a number of commercial services. Recovery plans are being developed to address continuing operational losses and develop an optimum portfolio of commercially sustainable services going into 21/22. This may result in some services discontinuing. The net overspend is inclusive of £1.6m furlough income.		
Information & Technology	2,060	20%
Overspend anticipated on hardware and software to support the increases in homeworking during Covid-19 lockdown.		
Corporate Asset Investment Fund	1,115	-47%
Overspend related to delays related to Airfield Farm and LUSEP, partially Covid-19 related. Both expected to achieve the expected returns by 2021/22.		
Working from Home Allowance	580	n/a
£0.6m estimate of cost of other equipment (non-PC) required by staff to adapt to working safely at home.		
County Hall	225	18%
Overspend represents both a continuation of the 2019/20 overspend (£0.15m) due to additional cleaning charges, security costs, energy costs and lower income than expected as well as the additional Covid-19 costs associated with cleaning, signage and building changes (£0.07m). This has been offset in part by a reduction in some costs such as water and electricity due to lower usage of the building.		

Insurance	125	8%
£0.1m net overspend related to rises insurance premiums partially offset by staff vacancies.		
Major Conditions Improvement Works	100	4%
£0.1m overspend related to additional works required as a result of Covid-19 throughout the corporate estate.		
Strategic Property	-220	-8%
£0.2m staffing saving arising from a delay due to Covid-19 in recruitment to vacant posts following a staffing review.		
Commissioning Support Unit	-145	-10%
£0.1m underspend in relation to staff vacancies.		
Learning and Development	-140	-10%
£0.1m projected underspend as a result of not being able to deliver courses as expected due to Covid-19 lockdown.		
Customer Service Centre	-140	-10%
£0.1m underspend in relation to staff vacancies.		
Supported Employment	-115	-19%
£0.1m underspend largely as a result of furlough income as vulnerable staff are shielding from the pandemic.		
Other variances	-145	n/a
TOTAL	8,040	n/a

Capital Budget 2020/21 – forecast main variances**Children and Family Services**

Net slippage of £2.4m is forecast compared with the updated budget. The main variances are:

	£000
Provision of Additional Places	-2,442
1). Rothley Primary School - Slippage of £1.0m as Charnwood Borough Council (CBC) has refused the planning application, citing issues with the settlement boundary, the lack of demonstration of a housing need, and being contrary to the Charnwood Local Plan amongst the various reasons for refusal. This will further impact the delivery timeline of this scheme. The County Council has given the developers until February 2021 to work with CBC to try to reach a suitable solution 2). Fleckney Primary School - Slippage of £1.5m as a Multi Academy Trust that already has a number of primary schools in the area has applied to the DfE to open a primary Free School in the area. If the DfE approve this it could affect what is needed at Fleckney. Therefore further works have been paused awaiting the DfE's decision. 3). Projected Covid-19 Related Costs £0.2m overspend - The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in the need for revised ways of working on construction sites, to enable reasonable and practical progress on schemes continues in line with guidelines issued by the government and Public Health England.	
SEND Programme	1
1). £0.2m underspend is forecasted on the various SEND Initiative schemes. 2). Projected Covid-19 Related Costs £0.2m overspend - The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in the need for revised ways of working on construction sites, to enable reasonable and practical progress on schemes continues in line with guidelines issued by the government and Public Health England.	
Other variances	1
TOTAL	-2,440

Adults & Communities

Net acceleration of £0.2m is forecast.

	£000
SCIP - Loughborough, Ashby Court - Refurbishment	170
Additional costs to complete the scheme funded from the balance of the SCIP allocation programme in 2021/22 (£1.6m).	
Other variances	31
TOTAL	201

Environment and Transport

Net slippage of £2.9m is forecast compared with the updated budget. The main variances are:

	£000
Melton Mowbray Distributor Road - North and East Section	259
Acceleration due to asbestos investigations and design fees for ground improvements that had not been foreseen in this years programme.	
RHWS - General Improvements	150
Acceleration due to a redesign what sites will need general improvements and when. It was identified that some of the works could be done this year.	
A511 / A50 Major Road Network	-1,547

Slippage is due to a number of activities which were expected earlier this year, having to be delayed due to Covid. This delayed being able to get access for surveys etc, which in turn delayed the entire planning process. This had knock on effects with getting the contractors on board for programme.	
Advanced Design	-641
Slippage due to reprioritisation of works and when monies will be spent this has meant some money is now not required this year but will be required in future years.	
Zouch Bridge Replacement	-316
Slippage due to taking this programme into a full tender to ensure competitive pricing.	
Waste Transfer Station Development	-250
Slippage due to construction not due to start until 2021/22 so that detailed pre construction works can be completed in 2020/21, therefore the spend profile has been revised in line with the commencement of the construction works.	
A46 Anstey Lane	-242
Works completed in July 2020. Slippage due to remedial works that will need completing over the next 12 months.	
Kibworth Site Redevelopment	-200
Slippage due to construction not due to start until 2021/22 so that detailed pre construction works can be completed in 2020/21, therefore the spend profile has been revised in line with the commencement of the construction works.	
Other variances	-160
TOTAL	-2,947

Chief Executives

The forecast spend is in line with the updated budget.

	£000
Leicestershire Grants	11
Budget removed this year as part of the revised programme, any spend will be accelerated from next year's allocation.	
TOTAL	11

Corporate Resources

Net slippage of £3.6m is forecast compared with the updated budget. The main variances are:

	£000
Snibston & Country Park Future Strategy - Land remedial works and covenant	-2,642
There has been a speculative interest in acquiring this site and the decision has been made to remarket the site for sale on the open market. The view is to retain a portion for Adults SCIP Project. With this in mind, the decision to slip the remedial budget has been made, until further clarity is given on the likely terms of sale.	
Watermead Park Footbridge and Cycleway	-497
Both parties to the Footbridge project (County and City Council) have agreed to slip the project to 21/22. There is the need for an agreement with a third party landowner, which has led to an agreed slippage.	
Melton, Sysonby Farm Development - site preparation and infrastructure works	-328
Homes England have now agreed to meet funding for this project with a total commitment of £4.4m. The current revised programme to complete works is now Aug 2021 with delivery of homes agreed to be in 2028, moved from 2024.	
County Hall Lift Replacement Scheme	-110
Project has slipped as it is not a strategic priority in the present environment. Project will be realigned along with other County Hall projects relating to recovery and workplace strategies.	

Other variances	6
TOTAL	-3,571

Corporate Programme

Net overspend of £1.2m is forecast compared with the updated budget. The main variances are:

	£000
CAIF - Loughborough University Science & Enterprise Park (LUSEP)	359
Forecast overspend relates to additional costs incurred by the contractor due to Covid-19 working guidelines. Completion and hand over to tenant expected in November.	
CAIF - Airfield Business Park Phase 3/4	110
Phases 3 and 4 - acceleration of costs programmed in 2021/22 to take the scheme through the planning process.	
Future Developments	-8,000
Slippage as schemes not suitably advanced to likely to require funding in the current year.	
Other variances	120
TOTAL	-7,411

Capital Programme - Changes in Funding

	Outturn	Revised	Total
Outturn Adjustments - 2019/20 and Updated Revised (Cabinet Sep 2020)	£000	£000	£000
Children & Family Services	1,692	2,275	3,967
Adults & Communities	1,866	1,419	3,285
Environment & Transport	12,256	-4,740	7,516
Chief Executives	4	-104	-100
Corporate Resources	7,142	-3,451	3,691
Corporate Programme	4,600	-2,532	2,068
	27,560	-7,133	20,427

2020/21 Budget Adjustments

<u>Children & Family Services</u>	
Strategic Capital Maintenance - as per DfT grant funding announcement	1,081
Provision of Places - removed from programme as S.106 funding will not be brought in.	-753
<u>Environment and Transport</u>	
Emergency Active Travel Fund - capital grant from DfT	285
Externally Funded Schemes - from Section 106 developer contributions	347
Transport Asset Management - minor adjustments	11
Safety Schemes - removal as not receiving funding from partners	-100
IT Renewals - scheme reduced as funding will not be brought in	-107
Sub Total	764
Overall Total	21,191