



Meeting: **Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Date/Time: **Monday, 1 November 2021 at 2.00 pm**

Location: **Sparkenhoe Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield**

Contact: **Mrs L. Walton (0116 305 2583)**

Email: **lauren.walton@leics.gov.uk**

Membership

Mr. T. J. Richardson CC (Chairman)

Ms. L. Broadley CC Mr. R. Hills CC
Mr. B. Champion CC Mr. J. Miah CC
Mr. N. Chapman CC Mrs. A. Wright 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 6 September 2021.	(Pages 5 - 12)
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.
8. Engagement on the Council's Strategic Plan. Chief Executive (Pages 13 - 64)
9. Digital Developments. Director of Adults and Communities (Pages 65 - 84)
This item will be a presentation.
10. Current Demand Pressures on the Adults and Communities Department Forecast Budget 2021/22. Director of Adults and Communities (Pages 85 - 94)
11. Update on the Provision of Community Life Choices Services (Day Services). Director of Adults and Communities (Pages 95 - 102)
12. Mandatory Covid-19 Vaccination for Workers in Care Homes. Director of Adults and Communities (Pages 103 - 110)
13. Dates of Future Meetings.

Future meetings of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held at 2.00pm on the following dates in 2022:

- January 24th
- March 7th
- June 6th
- September 5th
- November 7th

14. 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 Governance and Scrutiny website <https://www.cfgs.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 Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 6 September 2021.

PRESENT

Mr. T. J. Richardson CC (in the Chair)

Mr. M. Frisby CC
Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC
Mr. R. Hills CC

Mr. J. Miah CC
Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC
Mrs. A. Wright CC

In attendance

Mrs. C. M. Radford CC – Cabinet Lead Member for Adults and Communities
Mr. T. Parton CC – Cabinet Support Member
Mr Mukesh Barot – Healthwatch Leicester and Leicestershire

16. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2021 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

17. Question Time.

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

18. 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).

19. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

20. 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.

Mrs. A. Wright CC declared a personal interest in agenda items 8 – 12 (Commissioning and Procurement of Home Care Services, Care Home Quality, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2020-21, Annual Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments Report 2020-21, and Performance Report for Quarter One 2021-22 (April – June) respectively (minutes 23 - 27 refer) as she was a health and social care solicitor working for Browne Jacobson in the area and a champion for a local social care organisation.

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

There were no declarations of the party whip.

22. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 35.

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

23. Commissioning and Procurement of Home Care Services.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided an update on progress made on the procurement of home care services following notifications to award. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were made:

- (i) In response to a question raised, the Director clarified that in accordance with normal practice and due to legal restrictions around information sharing and the need to retain commercial confidentiality it had not been possible for the outcome of the tendering exercise to be brought to the Committee before the process was complete. The Committee was reminded that it had received a report before the tender process began which set out the Council's expectations for the exercise and which the Committee had supported.
- (ii) Members questioned what the Department's contingency plans were if providers in the zones with the lowest levels of coverage were unable to take on extra work if required. It was confirmed that, in this event, approaching providers outside of these zones may need to be considered. The zones with the lowest levels of coverage were those areas where it had previously been difficult to secure providers. The new rates reflected differences in the cost for care between rural and urban areas. However, based on the information provided by the contracted providers during the tender process the Director provided assurance that there was general confidence that coverage levels across the County would be sufficient, though the situation would be monitored over time. Members were pleased to note that conditions had also been factored into the new Framework that allowed the Council to consider inviting new bids should this be required in future.
- (iii) Members were reassured that ensuring care providers had adequate levels of staffing to meet service requirements was a key priority. Conversations between the Department and providers to manage sector wide issues around the recruitment and retention of staff were ongoing. In the case of long-term recruitment issues, the Department's Inspired to Care team would also continue to offer specific support to providers. In the event that a provider failed to maintain sufficient workforce levels leading them to withdraw from the Framework, other providers would be asked to cover. However, the potential to re-open the Framework in later months to invite new bids would mitigate the risks arising from such an event.

- (iv) In response to a member's comments around ensuring a smooth transition between the current and new framework, assurance was provided that resources had been dedicated to managing this process which it was acknowledged would be significant given the large number of providers involved. The Director confirmed that the Department would be working closely with all current and exiting providers to minimise any disruption for those in receipt of care. This would include conversations with some providers that had not met all of the criteria to join the new Framework that the Council was likely to continue working with for people currently supported. For example, to enable contracts to be extended where appropriate over the transition period, or to support exiting providers wanting to continue to work with the Council to meet the requirements to join the new Framework imminently or at a later stage.
- (v) The Committee requested that a further report be provided at a future meeting to give an update following the transition from the current to the new Home Care for Leicestershire framework to ensure the implementation of the new service had progressed as planned.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update regarding the Commissioning and Procurement of Home Care Services be noted.
- (b) That a further report be provided at a future meeting following the implementation of the new Home Care for Leicestershire framework.

24. Care Home Quality.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided an overview of quality for care homes in Leicestershire and described how the local authority supported care home providers to sustain safe care, and to develop the quality of care. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:

- (i) In reference to the numbers of adult social care providers in Leicestershire prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was clarified that these related to services registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the reasons why registered care homes could be non-operational usually reflected provider position e.g. resulting from a business change.
- (ii) In response to a question raised, the Director confirmed that as part of its mobilisation work, the Department was reaching out to care home providers to confirm their position on Covid-19 vaccinations for staff to ensure readiness for when the Regulations, requiring everyone working in care homes to be fully vaccinated, came into effect.
- (iii) Concern was raised that the regulations requiring everyone working in care homes to be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 would put additional stress on care homes at an already very difficult time. It was queried how a potential reduction in staffing levels as a result of people choosing not to be vaccinated would be managed. The Director advised that Leicestershire's position was generally positive with high

levels of vaccine uptake from residents and County Council staff. However, inevitably there would be a proportion of staff who would choose not to get vaccinated and therefore be required to make choices about their future employment. Assurance was provided that the Department was doing all it could to support care home providers and working with them on their plans to mitigate the risks. A risk rating had been given to each care home to identify where specific support was needed. The regulations also affected other organisations such as the NHS that deployed staff into care homes, so the Department was also working closely with its partner organisations across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to encourage staff across the health and social care sector to get vaccinated. The last date for care home workers to get their first dose of the vaccine was 16 September, so it was expected the local picture would become clearer once this milestone had been reached.

- (iv) The Director clarified that the quality position of adult social care providers in Leicestershire as referenced in the report provided details of the current position only and so was subject to change if CQC ratings changed in future. Members requested that periodic updates be provided to keep them informed of the situation and any impact on care market sustainability as the Director considered appropriate. Members noted that during the Covid-19 pandemic, the CQC had not been able to carry out inspections of care providers in the usual way so this would have caused a number of new providers to be graded as 'unrated' for a period of time.
- (v) All new providers joining the new Home Care for Leicestershire Framework had been required to demonstrate they were registered with the CQC and specific elements had been built into the Framework to ensure that the providers signing up were in an acceptable position where quality was concerned.
- (vi) Members noted that whilst the increased cost pressures of £14m during the current financial year had reduced to £13m, greater savings still needed to be made. The Director reported that an Action Plan had been put in place to understand the reasons for and to manage the increased cost pressures. Members were pleased to hear that regular Departmental meetings were taking place to review and monitor actions and adapt the Plan as necessary to keep costs under control so far as possible. It was expected that pre-pandemic spending levels would not return for some time, but the situation was expected to become more balanced in the medium-term.
- (vii) A Member who represented electoral divisions in the Hinckley area commented that whilst the percentage of care homes in Leicestershire rated by the CQC as inadequate was positively low, unfortunately a care home in Hinckley had recently fallen into this category. The support being given to this home to avoid closure was questioned. The Director provided assurance that a triangulation of work was being undertaken between the Council, the service provider and the CQC to help improve the rating. It was noted that the provider had a responsibility to put in place a quality improvement plan to set out the ways it planned to address the issues identified by the CQC. The situation would be monitored and kept under review until the rating improved. Members noted that the Council's Quality and Contracts Team also worked closely with the CQC to address particular concerns with care homes. The risk ratings the Council attributed to the care homes were also helpful in identifying the correct level of oversight and intervention that needed to be given.

- (viii) The CQC's new strategy was expected to change the way the Council was required to give assurance of its own processes and practices in a whole range of areas including commissioning. Details of the CQC's approach to implementation were still in development making it difficult for the Department to plan with much certainty, but testing was expected to be carried out by the CQC over the course of this year prior to the Strategy becoming fully operational. It was anticipated that elements of the Strategy may also affect certain work being undertaken regionally. For example, Commissioning was an area that had been identified as requiring a much greater level of focus and a situation the Department would be monitoring over time with CQC involvement.

RESOLVED:

That the update on Care Home Quality, be welcomed, and the recommendation to undertake a review of care home fees for implementation in April 2023, be supported.

25. Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2020/21.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which sought the views of the Committee on the draft Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board (LRSAB) for 2020-21. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board be welcomed.

26. Annual Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments Report 2020-21.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided a summary of the complaints and compliments for adult social care services commissioned or provided by the Adults and Communities Department in 2020-21. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:

- (i) Detailed analysis was usually undertaken into the causes of complaints. The complaint themes used by the Council mirrored the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman classifications which covered a whole range of areas such as accuracy, information report gathering and times of carers calls. The analysis helped to determine whether the complaint was related to a one-off incident e.g. an error by an individual, or wider work or training needed to be undertaken. Conclusions from the analysis were usually coded on the Council's system to confirm whether the matter had been resolved or further work/learning was required organisationally.
- (ii) In response to a query, the Director undertook to verify the complaint figures in paragraph 16 of the report.

[Subsequent to the meeting, officers verified the complaint figures in paragraph 16 of the report to be accurate.]

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments Report for 2020-21 be noted.

27. Performance Report for Quarter One 2021-22 (April - June).

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and Director of Adults and Communities which provided an update of the Adults and Communities Department's performance during the first quarter (April to June) of 2021-22. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 12', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points arose:

- (i) The reasons for the large number of admissions to residential or nursing care during the reporting period were to be investigated. It was expected that the challenges brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic may have played a part, but there were also other factors that were likely to have contributed such as irregularities caused by workers inputting new clients into the Department's database and the fact that there were more complex cases being discharged from hospital. It was confirmed that the full outcome of the investigation that officers were due to undertake would be reported to the Committee as part of the next update on the Department's performance.
- (ii) Ensuring local libraries were family friendly was one of the Department's strategic aims and therefore a significant proportion of its resources was invested in children's book loans. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the numbers of children's book loans had been reasonably positive and either remained stable or improved where numbers in some other areas of the country had fallen. In response to a member's request, the Director undertook to include a breakdown of the e-book loan figure into adult and junior loans and a summary analysis in the next performance report to the Committee to give an indication on whether an increase in e-book loan activity had had any impact on children's reading levels. The Cabinet Lead Member commented that the children's reading scheme that usually took place in the summer school holidays had recently gone ahead in the form of e-loans and the take up had been positive.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Adults and Communities Department's performance for the period during the first quarter of 2021-22 (April to June) be noted.
- (b) That the Director of Adults and Communities be requested to include details in the next performance report to the Committee to give an indication on whether an increase in e-book loan activity has had any impact on children's reading levels.

28. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 1 November 2021 at 2.00pm.

2.00 – 3.58pm
6 September 2021

CHAIRMAN

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ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
1 NOVEMBER 2021

ENGAGEMENT ON THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the views of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the draft Strategic Plan (2022-26), a copy of which is appended to this report. A 12-week public consultation is set to commence on 1 November 2021, subject to approval being given by the Cabinet at its meeting on 26 October 2021.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Strategic Plan is complemented by the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which sets out a financial plan supporting the priorities in the Strategic Plan, as well as by the Strategic Change Portfolio which outlines how the Council will transform local services in response to national and local drivers for change whilst seeking to maintain or improve outcomes. The Plan is also underpinned by specific departmental service/business plans and strategies which provide further detail on how the Council will deliver the aims and actions in the Plan.
3. On 6 December 2017, the County Council approved the current Strategic Plan (2018-22). This Plan was based on five aspirational outcomes which described the County Council's vision for Leicestershire. On 15th May 2019, the County Council declared a climate emergency. On 8 July 2020, the County Council approved a revised version of the Plan (still to expire in 2022) to reflect the Council's declaration of a climate emergency, with recognition that it would need to be revisited as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Background

4. The Strategic Plan sets out the Council's ambitions and priorities for the next four years. It outlines what it aims to achieve and how it intends to do it.
5. The current Plan is due to expire in 2022. Work has been undertaken to review and refresh the Plan and to re-assess the Council's strategic priorities, particularly in light of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Plan Structure and Contents

6. The draft Plan (2022-26) is based on five strategic outcomes which describe the Council's vision for Leicestershire. Each outcome includes four or five sub-outcomes which will need to be achieved to deliver the outcome.
7. The outcomes are broad and aspirational, reflecting the County Council's significant and wide-ranging responsibilities and capacity to influence. Therefore, to ensure that the Plan provides a clear strategic direction for the Council, it also includes specific aims and actions to deliver each outcome over the next four years.
8. The Plan also includes a section on 'enabling services' which is intended to highlight the contributions of corporate functions to outcome delivery as well as sustaining good governance. This is followed by a section on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which highlights the Council's aims and actions to maintain a balanced budget whilst protecting frontline services and weathering the coronavirus crisis. Finally, there is a section on the Strategic Change Portfolio, summarising the aims and actions of the four key pillars of this internal transformation programme.

Strategic Outcomes

9. The outcomes, which are detailed below, are intended to broadly reflect the remits of departments and the portfolios of lead members. However, successful delivery of the Plan will rely upon departments sharing ownership of the outcomes in addition to the outcomes being reflected in all relevant Council plans and strategies. Outcome Boards, consisting of representatives from all Department Management Teams in addition to corporate services, will review and inform the development of Council strategies to ensure that they reflect the aims of their respective outcomes.

- 'Clean, Green Future' Outcome: *Reflects the need to protect and enhance the environment and tackle climate change, biodiversity loss and unsustainable resource usage.*

Sub-outcomes:

- People act now to tackle climate change
- Nature and the local environment are valued, protected and enhanced
- Resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way
- The economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environmentally-friendly.

- 'Great Communities' Outcome: *Aims to ensure Leicestershire has thriving, inclusive communities in which people support each other and take responsibility for their local area.*

Sub-outcomes:

- Diversity is celebrated and people feel welcome and included
- People participate in service design and delivery

- Communities are prepared for and resilient to emergencies
 - Cultural and historical heritage are enjoyed and conserved
 - People support each other through volunteering.
- ‘Improving Opportunities’ Outcome: *Aims for all children to get the best start for life and to have access to a good quality education. Also aims for everyone to have the opportunities they need to fulfil their potential.*

Sub-outcomes:

- Every child gets the best start for life
 - Every child has access to good quality education
 - Families are self-sufficient and enabled to be resilient
 - Everyone is able to aim high and reach their full potential.
- ‘Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure’ Outcome: *Aims to ensure that we build a productive, inclusive and sustainable economy at the cutting edge of science, technology and engineering. Also reflects the need for our infrastructure to meet the demands of a growing population and economy.*

Sub-outcomes:

- There is close alignment between skills supply and employer demand
 - Leicestershire has the infrastructure for sustainable growth
 - Leicestershire is an attractive place where businesses can flourish
 - Economic growth delivers increased prosperity for all
 - Leicestershire has the right homes in the right places to meet needs.
- ‘Keeping People Safe and Well’ Outcome: *Aims to ensure the people of Leicestershire have the opportunities and support they need to take control of their health and wellbeing. Also reflects the need to ensure people are safe and protected from harm.*

Sub-outcomes:

- People are safe in their daily lives
- People enjoy long lives in good health
- People at the most risk are protected from harm
- Carers and people with care needs are supported to live active, independent, and fulfilling lives.

Progress and Performance Monitoring

10. The Council’s progress in delivering these outcomes will be monitored by the Outcome Boards, which will provide six-monthly reports to the Corporate Management Team to highlight key achievements, challenges and priorities. The Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees will continue to receive quarterly updates on departmental performance for the areas they cover.

Adults and Communities

11. The outcome with the most direct links with the Adults and Communities Department is the 'Keeping People Safe and Well' outcome. However, the aims and actions of the Department are reflected throughout the Plan.
12. For example, the 'Improving Opportunities' outcome, sub-outcome 7.4 'Everyone is able to aim high and reach their full potential' (pages 22-23 of the Appendix), includes an aim to ensure that the percentage of disadvantaged adults (e.g. those with learning disabilities, autism and/or mental health conditions) who are in paid employment and living independently is higher in Leicestershire than the national average. Further, the 'Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure' outcome, sub-outcome 8.5 'Leicestershire has the right homes in the right places to meet needs', includes actions to meet the accommodation needs of disabled and frail people. This outcome also highlights, in sub-outcome 8.1, the ongoing recruitment and retention challenges facing the social care sector which may be exacerbated by the EU-Exit, along with actions to work with partners to address skills and labour shortages.
13. The Plan also highlights the significant contributions of the Department's Adult Learning and Community Wellbeing services. The Great Communities outcome, sub-outcome 6.4 'Cultural and historical heritage are enjoyed and conserved', includes an aim to increase the number of Leicestershire residents and visitors engaging in cultural and heritage activities.

Actions to deliver this aim include:

- Audience Development team supporting communities to obtain the wellbeing benefits associated with cultural participation and to develop their own bespoke programmes of cultural events and activities.
- Creative Learning Services supporting schools with a wide range of resources, pupil sessions and professional help to stimulate reading for pleasure and creative learning across the curriculum.
- Libraries and heritage sites providing free and accessible facilities, exhibitions and learning opportunities.
- GoLearn! (Leicestershire Adult Learning Service) offering a wide range of online adult learning courses in venues across Leicestershire.

Further, sub-outcome 6.2 'People participate in service design and delivery' highlights the Council's aim to continue to support communities to plan and deliver devolved services, such as community-managed libraries and heritage sites.

14. The Keeping People Safe and Well outcome covers the Council's duties to safeguard vulnerable people, through sub-outcome 9.2 'People at the most risk are protected from harm' (pages 34-35 of the Appendix). The Plan includes the following specific aims and actions to deliver this sub-outcome from 2022-26:
 - Aim 1: Safeguarding approaches are effective in recovery from Covid-19 and informed by learning from the pandemic.

Actions to deliver this aim include:

- Identifying and responding to hidden harm
- Supporting care homes to minimise Covid-19 outbreaks
- Risk assessing and quality assuring care providers
- Working with partners through Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Boards to review the response to and forward implications of Covid-19 regarding safeguarding.

- Aim 2: Vulnerable people are identified and protected from harm and abuse.

Actions to deliver this aim include:

- Working with communities to prevent people from becoming victims and ensure they know how to seek help and have confidence to do so.
- Combatting sexual violence and domestic abuse and protecting survivors and their families in safe and appropriate accommodation.
- Developing understanding of equality and diversity issues and the impact on access to safeguarding services.
- Reviewing and changing systems to ensure that the new Liberty Protection Safeguards Legislation and codes of practice are in place.

15. A further sub-outcome of the 'Keeping People Safe and Well' outcome which has particularly strong links to the Adults and Communities Department is sub-outcome 9.4 'Carers and people with care needs are supported to live active, independent, and fulfilling lives (pages 37-38 of the Appendix). The Plan includes the following specific aims and actions to deliver this sub-outcome over the next four years:

- Aim 1: Increase in the proportion of people who find it easy to access information and advice about adult social care services.

Actions to deliver this aim include:

- Improving access to information and advice through digital plans
- Taking a more proactive approach to providing advice and information relating to housing, including development of social prescribing and encouraging people to take responsibility for their housing needs.
- Providing good quality information, advice, and guidance for those living with dementia and their informal carers.

- Aim 2: Improvements in the experiences of those who receive adult social care.

Actions to deliver this aim include:

- Working with partners to deliver integrated services at the point of delivery.
- Supporting people in receipt of direct payments and Personal Assistants to choose the provision suitable to meeting their outcomes.
- Providing effective crisis response, reablement services, equipment, and technology to enable people to be self-reliant.

- Exploring solutions to transport issues to enable older people to remain active and independent.
 - Reviewing progress on the Living Well with Dementia Strategy 2019-22 and co-producing a new strategy and action plan with the Council's partners.
 - Developing the Social Care Investment Plan to secure suitable accommodation choices for social care service users.
 - Working with care providers to maximise peoples' opportunities for independence, health, and wellbeing.
- Aim 3: Carers are recognised, valued, and supported to undertake their caring role, whilst maintaining their own health and wellbeing.

Actions to deliver this aim include:

- Working with partners to identify carers and ensure they are signposted, if required, to relevant information and services.
- Listening to and involving carers in the development of services which enable them to continue to provide their caring role.
- Developing carer-friendly communities by raising awareness within existing community groups.
- Promoting health checks for carers to help them to maintain their own physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Working with housing and other organisations to ensure carers can access technology, equipment, or adaptations.

Consultation and Timetable for Decisions

19. Development of the Plan has so far included engagement with lead officers for supporting strategies and the current (2018-22) outcomes, Department Management Teams, Corporate Management Team and Mrs. Posnett CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Community and Staff Relations.
20. Subject to Cabinet approval at its meeting on 26 October 2021, a 12-week public consultation on the Plan will begin on 1 November 2021 and run until 21 January 2022. As part of the consultation all of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Scrutiny Commission (from 1 -17 November), key partnership boards such as the Children and Families Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Board (17 and 25 November respectively) will be provided with an opportunity to comment on the draft Plan.
21. Residents, community groups and partner organisations will also be invited to provide feedback on the draft Plan through a variety of methods including a public survey and meetings in which the Plan will be presented and reviewed.
22. Findings from the consultation will be used to inform development of the final Plan and it is intended that, in March 2022, a report will be presented to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration and then to the Cabinet presenting the outcome of the consultation and seeking agreement for the revised draft Plan to be submitted to the County Council for approval on 18 May 2022.

Resource Implications

23. All actions within the Plan are from existing service/business plans and strategies. As such, there should not be any additional resource investment required to deliver the Plan beyond that which has already been approved.
24. However, as referenced in Section 11 of the Plan ('Monitoring Outcome Delivery'), officer resources will be required to monitor delivery of the Plan and ensure that the strategic outcomes are reflected in and supported by all relevant underpinning Council plans and strategies. These tasks will be carried out by Outcome Boards, consisting of representatives from departments and corporate services. As delivery of the Plan will require continued collaboration with partner services, representatives from the Outcome Boards will interact with relevant partnership boards to monitor outcome delivery and promote integration of strategies.
25. The number of Outcome Boards has been reduced following a review of outcome delivery arrangements. Therefore, fewer officer resources will be required than have been utilised to monitor and support delivery of the current (2018-22) Plan.
26. The Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the Plan and will have a further opportunity to comment following the public consultation (prior to the March 2022 Cabinet meeting).

Conclusions

27. It is recommended that the Committee provides its views on the draft Strategic Plan (2022-26) as set out in the Appendix, including the content highlighted in this report.

Background papers

[Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan \(2018-2022\) \(Previous Plan\)](#)

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

28. None

Equality and Human Rights Implications

29. A screening assessment of the Strategic Plan concluded that a full impact assessment is not required. The Strategic Plan is a high-level document which reflects the content of existing Council plans and strategies in order to set out a clear summary of the Council's overall ambitions and delivery approach; it does not include new actions which could have Equality and Human Rights Implications.

30. The Plan will, however, have a positive impact as it promotes Equality and Human Rights, primarily by including, within the section on the 'Great Communities' outcome (see sub-section 6.1), specific aims and actions to deliver the sub-outcome: 'diversity is celebrated, and people feel welcome and included'. This sub-outcome highlights issues around community cohesion and hate crime along with specific actions which the Council will deliver over the next four years to address these issues. Equality and Human Rights are also embedded throughout the Plan.

Other Relevant Impact Assessments

Crime and Disorder Implications

31. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report. The Plan promotes community safety by including, within the section on the 'Keeping People Safe and Well' outcome (see sub-sections 9.1 and 9.2 of the appendix), specific aims and actions to deliver the sub-outcomes 'people are safe in their daily lives' and 'people at the most risk are protected from harm'.

Environmental Implications

32. The Plan raises the profile of environmental issues by including, within the section on the 'Clean, Green Future' outcome, aims and actions to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss and promote sustainable resource usage. Aims to ensure infrastructure supports the transition to net zero carbon emissions are also reflected in the section on the 'Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure' outcome (see sub-section 8.2 of the appendix).

Appendices

Appendix: Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan (2022-26) (**Revised Plan**)

Officer to Contact

Ashley Epps, Senior Policy Officer

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Strategic Plan

2022-26



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1. Glossary

Term	Definition
LLEP	Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership
VCSE Sector	Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
EHE	Elective Home Education
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
GVA	Gross Value Added
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
R&D	Research and Development
SMEs	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
GDHI	Gross Disposable Household Income
PM2.5	Fine Particulate Matter
CO2e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent

2. Foreword



Cllr Nick Rushton

Leader of Leicestershire County Council

This Strategic Plan sets out our ambitions and priorities for the next four years (2022-26). It outlines what we want to achieve and how we intend to do it.

It is based on five strategic outcomes which are aspirational; they outline the end results that we want to see for Leicestershire. For each outcome, we have identified specific aims which we will focus on achieving over the next four years, with corresponding actions. Further detail can be found through the relevant strategies in our Strategy Library.

Whilst the outcomes have been set out in separate sections, it is recognised that there are significant interdependencies between them. For example, reducing our carbon footprint supports not only our aim to tackle climate change but also to ensure positive health outcomes for current and future generations. Further, improving the educational attainment of disadvantaged children ensures they are able to access opportunities to fulfil their potential and supports economic growth in the county. Links between outcomes have been highlighted throughout the Plan and some actions support multiple outcomes.

The Plan reflects the commitments outlined in the Conservative manifesto 'Building a Greener Future for Leicestershire', which was endorsed by voters at the May 2021 elections in the biggest majority this Council has seen in its current form. We will deliver it by building upon our previous achievements, such as being recognised by Impower as the most productive Council in England and Wales, whilst being the lowest funded County Council in the UK.

However, the Council alone cannot deliver all the change that will be needed. Through continued collaboration with our partners to coordinate and integrate our plans we hope to make the maximum impact on the most pressing issues that we face and celebrate and build on the success of this great county.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas Rushton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

3. Vision

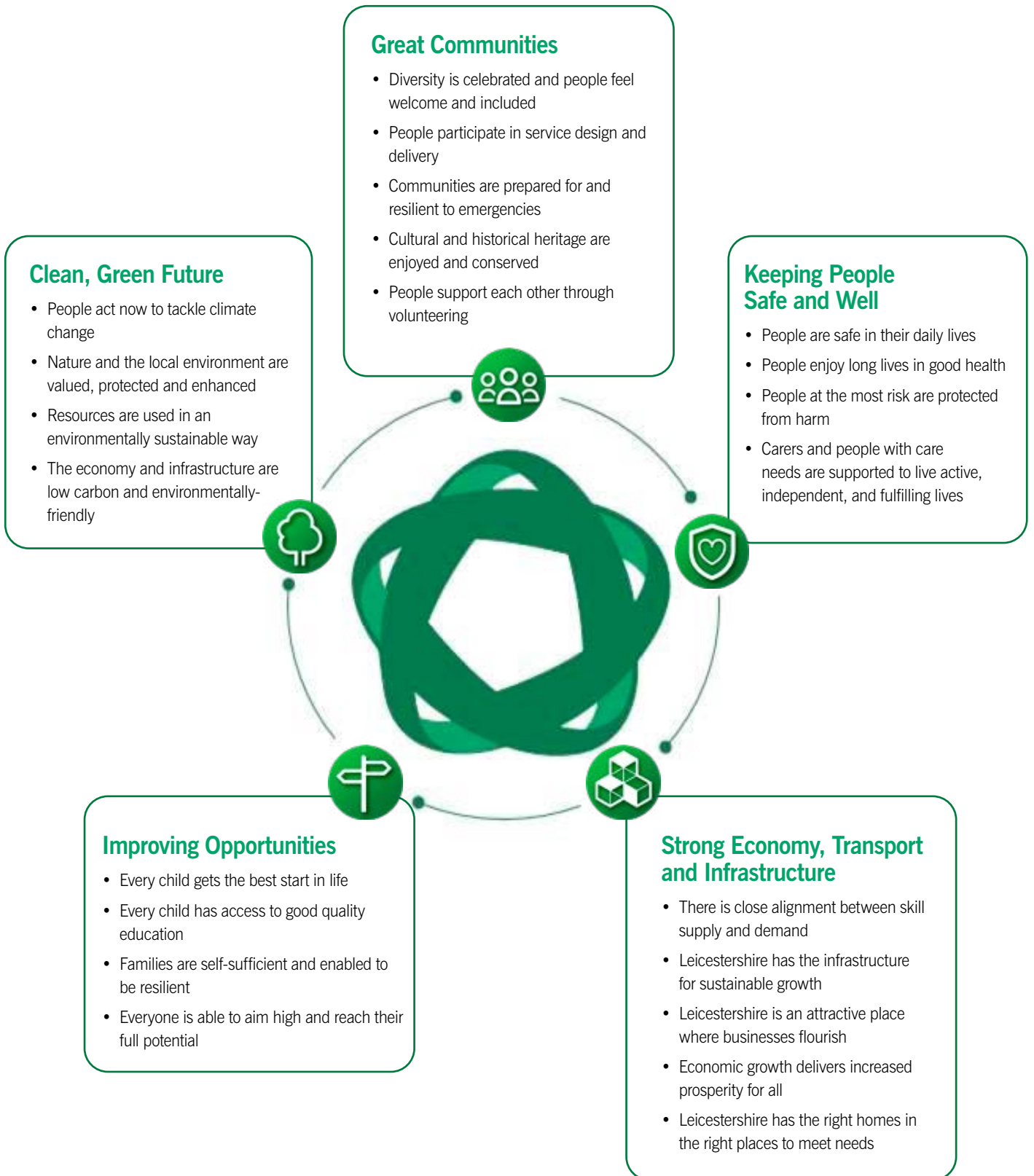
The vision below summarises our ambitions for Leicestershire and puts us on the right path to secure the best possible future for local residents.

An inclusive county in which active communities, great connections and greener living enable everyone to prosper, be happy and healthy.

We want Leicestershire to have welcoming and inclusive communities in which people take responsibility for their local areas and support each other. People are safe and well, living active, independent, and fulfilling lives. The local economy is flourishing with resilient, clean growth delivering increased prosperity for all. Everyone, regardless of their background or personal characteristics, has access to the opportunities they need to aim high and achieve their aspirations. People act now with urgency to protect and enhance the environment and meet the challenges of climate change.



4. Strategic Outcomes



5. Clean, Green Future

This outcome reflects the need to protect and enhance the environment and meet the challenges and opportunities of responding to climate change. Global warming is leading to an increase in the frequency and intensity of storms, flooding and heatwaves and changes in pests and diseases. It will affect social and environmental determinants of health including clean air, safe drinking water, supply of sufficient food and access to secure shelter. It will also damage local infrastructure and services, reduce productivity, increase the likelihood of conflict and climate migration and increase the loss of biodiversity.

There is increasing recognition of, and commitment to, the need to protect, promote and improve the environment at a local, national, and global level. The Paris Agreement of 2015 requires countries to limit global temperature rise to below 1.5 to 2°C. The interconnection between economic development, social equity and inclusion and environmental impacts has also been recognised internationally via the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The UK Government has prioritised action on climate change through the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019, requiring the government to reduce the UK's net emissions of greenhouse gases to zero by 2050. This will require transformational action.

On 15th May 2019, Leicestershire County Council declared a climate emergency, making a commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions from its own operations by 2030 and to work with others and to lobby government to achieve net zero carbon emissions for Leicestershire by 2045.

The Council has different levels of control and influence in protecting the environment and addressing climate change. It is responsible for complying with legislation relating to the environmental impacts from its activities, such as heating and powering our offices, using vehicles and generating waste; managing the environmental impacts from the activities of Leicestershire residents and businesses, such as air pollution from local transport and the reduction, recycling and disposal of household waste; and enforcing environmental legislation on businesses, such as in relation to product packaging, banned substances and energy certificates. It also has capacity to influence wider environmental action by lobbying government and working with partners within Leicestershire.

The Council commits to minimising the environmental impact of its activities and helping to protect the environment of Leicestershire. We will tackle climate change and embed environmental sustainability into everything we do. We will work with partners to deliver sustainable development by recognising and fostering the links between the environment, people, and the economy.

The priorities and commitments to deliver this outcome focus on how the Council will help to protect the environment and tackle climate change through its service delivery and interactions with residents and partners. Further detail on how the Council will reduce carbon emissions from its own operations can be found in the section on the Council's Carbon Reduction Programme.

5.1

People act now to tackle climate change and protect the environment

To achieve net zero carbon emissions in Leicestershire we need communities to be aware of the need for action on climate change and to act now to reduce environmental impacts. There is significant potential for individual action and community-led initiatives to support environmental sustainability (e.g. energy usage, sustainable transport, recycling). Our Community Survey highlights that 97% of residents feel protecting the environment is important. However, only 45% feel informed about what the Council is doing to protect the environment and tackle climate change, and 67% think the Council should be doing more.

Leicestershire has a higher rate of average waste produced per household than comparator counties, which may suggest that there is scope to reduce the amount of waste produced locally. We also have lower rates of electrical vehicle ownership than comparators and fewer electrical vehicle charging points.

There has been a 33% reduction in the rate of domestic CO2 emissions in Leicestershire since 2010. Leicestershire also ranks in the best performing 25% of comparators for the percentage of new-build houses with an Energy Performance Certificate rating of C+. However, the county ranks in the worst 25% comparators for the percentage of *existing* homes with this level of energy efficiency.

What will success look like?

- Residents actively involved in tackling climate change and protecting the environment
- Reduction in the rate of CO2 emissions per capita (average per resident)

Our Commitments

- We will use our interactions with communities to raise awareness of environmental impacts and harness community capacity to address them
- We will provide support and opportunities for learning to local communities, schools, and businesses to promote positive environmental action and collaborative working, leading to constructive behavioural change
- We will support residents to be more resource efficient in their energy and water use, such as through our Warm Homes service which provides free advice and information on managing heating costs and staying warm at home well as grants to deliver first-time gas central heating systems
- We will work with partners to expand zero and ultra-low emissions vehicles and charging, including Heavy Goods Vehicle refuelling, and promote sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling



5.2

Nature and the local environment are valued, protected and enhanced

Biodiversity describes the enormous variety of life on Earth. Biodiversity and the eco-system cleanse our atmosphere, provide us with the oxygen we breath, the clean water we drink and the food we eat as well as many of the medicines which help to keep us well. The natural capital assets (geology, soil, air, water and all living things) of Leicestershire have an annual value of £388.45 million, with agricultural habitats generating £180.91 million annually.

Intensively managed farmland is poor for wildlife whilst land which is less intensively managed with little or no applications of chemical fertiliser, pesticides and herbicides is much richer in wildlife. In Leicestershire and Rutland where more than 80% of the land is farmed, good habitats for wildlife are now few and far between and much of our wildlife is being squeezed out and continues to decline. Leicestershire and Rutland are amongst the poorest counties for sites of recognised nature conservation value. The best sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) represent only about 1%% of the land area in Leicestershire.

Natural green space includes a wide variety of land from scrub and wetland to woodland and meadow. Access to natural green space supports our health and well-being. There is a risk that future development may not sufficiently consider the value of natural capital and green space.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the percentage of county land which promotes diversity of habitat and species

Our Commitments

- We will support awareness raising and education on biodiversity and the value of natural capital to society and the economy
- We will create, protect, enhance, and manage sustainable green infrastructure and biodiversity on Council managed land and assets
- We will seek to improve the biodiversity value and condition of natural capital features on Council managed land and assets
- We will seek to demonstrate and support environmentally sustainable farming practices that support the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity and the condition of natural capital features
- We will work with partners through the LLEP to develop a Natural Capital Investment Plan, and deliver the roadmap the recent Natural Capital Review Report set out for Leicestershire, minimising the loss of habitats and the impacts of development and encouraging innovative land use

5.3

Resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way

A further environmental crisis we are facing, in addition to climate change and biodiversity loss, is unsustainable resource usage. We are using the planet's resources at a faster rate than they are being replenished and in a way which does not allow most of these resources to be reused within our economic systems. In order to address this crisis, we need to move to a circular economy model. This is a more resource efficient alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) where resources are used for as long as possible, then products and materials are recovered, regenerated, or recycled.

Leicestershire County Council is responsible for the reuse, treatment, recycling, or disposal of the collected wastes. In addition, it has the duty to provide places for the deposit of household waste from residents (Recycling & Household Waste Sites). Compared to other county areas, Leicestershire has a lower rate of household waste which is recycled and has a significantly higher percentage of waste which is landfilled.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting and reduction in the percentage landfilled

Our Commitments

- Increase in the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting and reduction in the percentage landfilled
- We will reduce the tonnage of household waste produced in Leicestershire and minimise its environmental impact by applying the waste hierarchy in the priority order of prevention, preparation for reuse, recycling, other recovery, and disposal
- We will continue to encourage appropriate use of the Recycling & Household Waste Sites service
- We will provide a trade waste recycling, treatment and disposal service for businesses in Leicestershire, where practicable and cost-effective to do so
- We will work closely with other Waste Disposal Authorities to share ideas and opportunities for joint working / collaboration and innovation

5.4

The economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environmentally friendly

Decarbonising the economy and infrastructure is the key solution to addressing the climate emergency. Nearly 70% of Leicestershire's emissions come from commercial, industrial and transport sources, with the remaining 30% coming from domestic sources (how we heat and use energy in our homes). Total commercial CO₂ emissions in Leicestershire have reduced by xx% since 2005 and industrial CO₂ emissions have reduced by xx%. However, transport emissions have only fallen by x%. The move to a low carbon, environmentally-friendly economy will require policy, technological and behavioural changes.

The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)'s survey of local businesses from March-June 2021 found that 35% of businesses had taken action to reduce carbon impact in the past 2 months and 50% planned to take action over the following 6 months.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the percentage of businesses taking action to reduce their carbon impact
- Reduction in CO₂ emissions under the Council's influence in the local area

Our Commitments

- We will ensure that our Corporate Asset Investment Fund owns efficient assets which enhance the environment and biodiversity in the county

- We will reduce the impact of the Council's procurement and delivery of goods and services on the environment, including through the reduced use of raw materials and fossil fuels, increased use of renewable energy and deployment of smarter and more efficient processes
- We will work with businesses to raise awareness of the need to act on climate change and to support carbon reduction and circular economy practices
- We will identify and promote business opportunities arising from the move towards a circular economy
- We will work with partners to identify the investment requirements for zero carbon development and develop associated training and skills routes
- We will work with partners to create new, low-carbon business units and managed workspaces for start-ups and small companies
- We will work with partners and developers to ensure developments are low or zero carbon, climate resilient and enhance biodiversity
- We will ensure effective restoration of public transport services following the pandemic and identify opportunities to make transport more efficient
- We will encourage and support active and sustainable travel options, where appropriate, by learning from best practice and encouraging the uptake and use of electric vehicles and micro-mobility as appropriate, including through provision of infrastructure
- We will reduce pollution and contamination in Leicestershire through our Trading Standards service and other areas of control and influence
- We will continue to investigate and pursue opportunities to increase carbon sequestration through nature based solutions, such as tree planting



6. Great Communities

The Great Communities outcome aims to ensure that Leicestershire has thriving, integrated and inclusive communities in which people support each other and take responsibility for their local area. We want communities to frequently tell us what is important to them and how well services are working and to work with us to improve services. Communities also need to be resilient and adaptable during emergencies to ensure a seamless return to normal life.

The communities we live in and the relationships we have are the primary source of our physical and mental health – which in turn affects the kind of life we are able to live and the part we play in society. Our communities are key assets and by investing in them we can cultivate the conditions for people to flourish.

Whilst the pandemic has presented significant challenges for communities, it has also offered many examples of positive community spirit and highlighted the willingness of people to volunteer to help others, particularly the most vulnerable. Leicestershire's thriving and diverse Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, comprising over 3,000 organisations, has continued to provide essential services. Over 1,000 Covid-19 volunteers have been recruited to support vulnerable people through activities such as providing food and medication, transport to and from appointments, information about support available and check-in/befriending contact. A further 1,250 county volunteers were recruited to support the Covid-19 vaccination programme.

We aim to encourage more people to become active citizens, taking responsibility for their local areas. We will 'help communities to help themselves' by supporting them to take advantage of and build on the assets within their local area (e.g. buildings, people, skills, and networks) to help solve local challenges. We will build upon the successful partnerships and initiatives which have developed during the pandemic to further strengthen and empower communities. We will also provide VCSE organisations with tailored information, advice, and support to build community capacity and strengthen universal services.

The council has a strong record of engaging with communities on services and strategies. This reflects our commitment to openness and transparency and supports informed decision-making on council services. We also encourage and support communities to direct development in their local areas. We aim to increase the involvement of residents in service design, such as by using a wider range of engagement methods and reaching marginalised communities.

Culture is our past, present and future. It's what we have inherited, what we are experiencing now and what we would like to see remembered. It's myths and legends, faiths and religion, buildings, villages, cities and landscapes, art, dance, music, and food, treasured and meaningful objects and possessions, values, beliefs and memories. We will preserve and make accessible our local cultural and historic heritage to enhance the wellbeing of local residents.

Resilient communities are capable of bouncing back from adverse situations. They do this by actively influencing and preparing for economic, social, and environmental change. We will work with partners to support society to avoid, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

Our specific priorities and commitments to deliver this outcome are set out in the following pages. To deliver them, we will work closely with residents, VCSE organisations and partner services.

6.1

Diversity is celebrated and people feel welcome and included

Our Community Insight Survey finds that as of Quarter 1 2021/22 the vast majority of residents (92%) agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. However, this percentage represents a decrease from 96% in Quarter 2 2020/21. The rate of hate crime has also increased since the EU referendum and during the pandemic.

What will success look like?

- Increased community cohesion
- Better reporting and reduction in hate crime
- Council services are accessible and inclusive for all

Our Commitments

- Our Equalities strategy will focus on providing accessible services, promoting community cohesion and ensuring equity in employment opportunities
- We will sign up to the Race at Work Charter, The Disability Confident Scheme and the Stonewall Workforce Equalities Index
- We will provide guidance, training and support for all staff to address equalities issues
- We will organise and promote civic events throughout the county to celebrate our diverse communities
- We will support the Inter Faith Forum to promote greater understanding and awareness of religion, faith, and belief
- We will support the Leicestershire Equality Challenge Group to provide an independent challenge to our work to ensure service accessibility
- We will work with partners through the Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board to tackle all forms of hate crime

6.2

People participate in service design and delivery

Our Community Survey suggests that 94% of residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live. The majority of residents (57%) feel well informed about the Council and 67% state that they trust the Council. However, only 33% feel that they can influence Council decisions.

Neighbourhood Plans enable residents to develop a shared vision for local neighbourhoods and to shape the development and growth of local areas. There are now 125 active Neighbourhood Planning groups and there has been an increase in the number of Plans adopted, from 34 in 2019/20 to 38 in 2020/21. There are also 35 communities managing their local library, with many of these being community hubs which support the needs of local people.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the proportion of residents willing to work together and who feel that they can influence Council decisions
- Increase in the number of Neighbourhood Plans adopted

Our Commitments

- We will engage residents, service users and partners in the planning of services, through a variety of means
- We will sign the Consultation Institute's Charter and follow the best practice principles for consultation and engagement
- We will actively encourage community participation through the planning process, for instance through consultation on planning applications
- We will support Neighbourhood Plan development and provide timely and co-ordinated consultation responses from the Council
- We will continue to support Parish and Town Councils in their role as community leaders and providers of community managed services
- We will continue to support communities to plan and deliver devolved services, such as community-managed libraries and heritage sites

6.3

Communities are prepared for and resilient to emergencies

Leicestershire County Council aims to ensure that communities are ready for emergencies and prepared to respond. This can be supported through the development of Community Response Plans, which help communities to identify the skills, knowledge and resources that can be mustered to help those within the community who have been affected. There are currently 53 Community Response Plans across Leicestershire.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the number of active Community Response Plans

Our Commitments

- We will work with the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Resilience Partnership to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies
- We will support communities to develop Community Response Plans, so they are in a position to help themselves in exceptional circumstances
- We will provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations to ensure effective business continuity management
- We will take action to support the resilience of the County to the existing and predicted changes in climate
- We will undertake the Lead Local Flood Authority statutory duties including reviewing Leicestershire's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy
- We will maintain our Resilient Highways Network, targeting works to ensure that traffic is kept moving despite disruptive events (e.g. severe weather)
- We will work with partners through the Signposting and Community Support Service to provide emergency short-term food and fuel support

6.4

Cultural and historical heritage are enjoyed and conserved

There was an 8% reduction in visits to heritage sites between 2018/19 and 2019/20. The pandemic has also had a significant impact on the county's museum and heritage sites and library services, with premises having closed during the restrictions. However, services have adapted through digital delivery including virtual museum tours, whilst libraries have seen an 89% increase in the number of e-loans from 2019/20-2020/21.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the number of Leicestershire residents and visitors engaging in cultural and heritage activities

Our Commitments

- Our libraries, heritage, country parks and adult learning programmes will promote wellbeing by providing free and accessible community facilities, exhibitions and parks and outdoor activities and offering a range of learning opportunities
- Our Audience Development Team will ensure that new audiences obtain the wellbeing benefits associated with cultural participation and support communities through the Cultural Communities Network to develop their own bespoke programmes of cultural events and activities
- Our Creative Learning Services will support schools with a wide range of resources, pupil sessions and professional help to stimulate reading for pleasure and creative learning across the curriculum
- Our Record Office will preserve and provide access to resources which can be used to research Leicestershire's history and culture
- Our Museums', Curatorial and Collections teams will maintain the County's natural history, artefacts, specimens, information and objects as well as the stories of the people who have made Leicestershire their home for thousands of years
- Through GoLearn! (Leicestershire Adult Learning Service), we will offer a wide range of online adult learning courses in venues across Leicestershire

6.5

People support each other through volunteering

As highlighted previously, there has been a surge in prospective and mobilised volunteers during the pandemic, which is reflected nationwide; 750,000 people registered to volunteer for the NHS Volunteer Responders scheme within four days of its launch in April 2020 and over 4,000 mutual aid groups formed. Locally, 1,077 volunteers were recruited to support vulnerable people at the beginning of the pandemic and a further 1,250 recruited to support vaccination. However, pre-pandemic there was a long-term downward trend in volunteer numbers and our latest Community Survey finds that 39% of resident respondents had given unpaid help in the last 12 months, suggesting that there may be scope to increase the rate of volunteering.

VCSE organisations have taken a leading role in ensuring the provision of support for vulnerable people throughout the pandemic, however they have faced significant financial pressures due to reduced income, the costs of making facilities Covid-19 secure and increases in demand.

What will success look like?

- There is a sustained increase in volunteering post-pandemic
- VCSE organisations remain financially viable and maintain service delivery

Our Commitments

- We will continue to provide communities with up-to-date information and advice to support and promote volunteering
- We will develop and maintain a volunteering offer across services such as libraries, museums and heritage, social care and environment and waste
- We will encourage Council employees to volunteer to develop their skills and experience, build links with communities and support local initiatives
- We will support volunteers to maintain their health and wellbeing
- We will support the growth and development of VCSE organisations by providing targeted grants and funding
- We will commission an ongoing programme of support for VCSE groups in areas such as governance, income generation, commissioning support, representation, and establishment



7. Improving Opportunities

This outcome aims to ensure that all children get the best start for life and have the opportunities they need to reach their potential, regardless of where they grow up, or the family circumstances they are born into. This reflects evidence that the first 1001 critical days of life (from pregnancy to age two years) have a significant influence on neurological brain development and lifelong outcomes for the child. We believe children are best supported to grow within their own families and as such the outcome also reflects the need to ensure families are resilient and self-sufficient. Further, it aims to ensure that disadvantaged adults, such as those with learning disabilities, autism and/or mental health conditions, are able to aim high and achieve their aspirations.

The impact of family and community disadvantage is felt before a child enters school and is likely to have a significant impact on their future educational attainment and life chances. Whilst the term 'disadvantage' is usually linked to a family's income, a wider definition incorporating the child's vulnerability in the context of their family or community is more useful. For example, children living in a home where there is domestic abuse, a parent has poor mental health and/or problematic usage of drugs or alcohol, are at greater risk of experiencing mental illness and engaging in harmful behaviours. We also know that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities may be disadvantaged.

A report from the Association for Young People's Health suggests that many of the risk factors for poorer outcomes amongst children and young people have been exacerbated by the pandemic, including financial hardship, poor emotional health and wellbeing and academic pressures. Young people already facing challenges in their lives (such as living in poverty, with a disability and/or in challenging family situations) seem to have been hardest hit.

Early education has the potential to drive social mobility and improve outcomes for the next generation. It is therefore essential that children arrive at school ready to learn. High quality care in the early years of a child's life supports better readiness for school, stronger cognitive skills and speech and language development. Investing in children's development in the early years leads to large payoffs for children, communities and the wider economy. It is estimated that individuals with five or more good GCSEs have average lifetime productivity gains of £100,000, compared to those with qualifications below this level.

Our services will be flexible and responsive to the needs of children and families, providing the right level of support at the right time. Wherever possible children's and families' needs will be met by universal services, however we will also invest in effective, targeted services that identify and support vulnerable families at an early stage. Supporting families requires effective collaboration between partner services. We will therefore work closely with partners, including through Leicestershire's Children and Families Partnership - a sub-group of Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board which brings together local authorities, police, health, schools, probation and the voluntary sector - to help ensure children and young people reach their full potential.

7.1

Every child gets the best start in life

The 1,001 days from pregnancy to the age of two set the foundations for an individual's cognitive, emotional and physical development. These 1,001 days are a critical time for development, and we are committed to improving how we support families during the 1,001 critical days.

Leicestershire generally performs well in child and maternal health, with a lower rate of under-18 conceptions, smoking at the time of delivery and low birth weight babies than England. It also currently has

a slightly higher percentage of children achieving a good level of development at age 5 than the national average, although performance on this measure has historically tended to be below comparators.

However, Leicestershire ranks in the worst 25% of county areas for the percentage of children achieving the expected level of development at age 2-2.5yrs. It also performs poorly in terms of the percentage of eligible 2 year olds taking up free early education in Leicestershire (an initiative focused on the most socio-economically deprived households) and the percentage of children eligible for free school meals who achieve a good level of development at age 5. There is also further work to do around maintaining breastfeeding rates after initiation across the County.

There are 2 tiers of support for children with special educational needs (SEND): 'SEN Support' and 'Education, Health and Care Plan' (EHCP). EHCPs are the higher level of support. In Leicestershire, the percentage of children with SEND who have an EHCP and achieve a good level of development by age 5 is significantly higher than national average. However, for children on SEN Support, performance is below the national average.

For the past 10 years in Leicestershire there has been a year-on-year increase in the rate of children who are looked after in our care. Locally, as of 2019, Looked After Children were working below age related expectations when they start school - 72% were below age related expectations for Personal, Social and Emotional Development and 78% were below in Communication, Language and Literacy.

What will success look like?

- Services working in more integrated and collaborative ways to support pre-school children and their families
- Increase in the proportion of young children achieving a good level of development at foundation stage

Our Commitments

Services working in more integrated and collaborative ways to support pre-school children and their families

- We will focus on strengthening collaboration between partners to improve early education, health and wellbeing outcomes for pre-school children
- We will work with partners across education, health and care to promote breastfeeding initiation and continuation
- We will develop an integrated Early Years Pathway to ensure that vulnerable children are identified and supported early
- We will develop an integrated communication strategy to promote the 1001 Critical Days Children's Manifesto
- We will join up how services for pre-school children and their families report on performance to support a coherent understanding of our progress and where we need to improve
- We will help to ensure staff across health, care and education are informed about the needs of children with SEND and available support

Increase in the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at foundation stage

- We will focus on narrowing the development gaps that affect children and families who are at the greatest disadvantage (e.g. those who live in poverty or have a poor home environment, have special educational needs and/or are in our care)

- We will support parents and families to build on their understanding of children's needs so that they are able to get their children off to a good start
- We will help families access free childcare and provide high-quality childcare and early education that is fully inclusive and accessible
- We will support all childcare providers to offer sufficient high-quality early education places
- We will protect and where possible strengthen the service provided by our Children and Family Wellbeing Centres
- We will provide greater clarity on what success looks like when children are ready for school and on how we can support schools to be ready

7.2

Every child has access to good quality education

As of 2018/19, Leicestershire had a higher proportion of primary and secondary schools rated either good or outstanding than the national average. The vast majority of children and families are offered their first preference of school placement. Leicestershire also has better overall educational attainment rates than the national average from key stages 1-4, although outcomes at A-Level are consistently below comparator levels.

Although children in our care have significantly poorer educational outcomes than their peers, Leicestershire performs well compared to other counties in this area. Additionally, educational attainment for children with SEND who have an EHCP is better in Leicestershire than the national average at all key stages except key stage 2. However, for children on SEN Support, educational attainment is consistently below comparator levels. Further, for children in receipt of free school meals, educational attainment rates at key stages 2 and 4 are consistently lower locally than the national average.

One of the key challenges in Leicestershire is a growing need for school places. Demand for EHCPs to support children with SEND has also increased significantly locally, at a rate higher than regionally or nationally. We recognise that the majority of children with SEND can and should have those needs supported in a mainstream setting at the SEN Support stage, without the need for an EHCP.

What will success look like?

- Sufficient, high quality mainstream school places and specialist SEND provision to meet growing demand
- Improved educational attainment amongst disadvantaged pupils (e.g. those in receipt of free school meals, with SEN and/or a disability)

Our Commitments

Sufficient, high quality mainstream school places and specialist SEND provision to meet growing demand

- We will work with partners to ensure that admissions arrangements promote diversity and choice and meet the needs of vulnerable groups
- We will ensure a sufficient supply of high-quality school places by monitoring capacity and extending or building new schools where required

- We will implement an ambitious sufficiency programme to develop SEND provision across the local area, including development of resources in pre-school settings and mainstream schools to promote inclusion and expansion of existing special schools
- We will maintain strong arrangements for the management of our assets, and strengthen our relationship with Academies, to ensure all school buildings (irrespective of their designation and funding arrangements) are fit for purpose

Improved educational attainment amongst disadvantaged pupils

- We will aim to help school pupils catch up with learning missed during the pandemic and continue to improve educational attainment
- We will focus on ensuring all children in our care access appropriate, stable education placements and positive educational experiences. Our Virtual School will ensure children in care and care leavers receive the best education possible and develop skills and knowledge for a successful future.
- We will work with partners through the SEND and Inclusion Board to ensure the culture of all mainstream schools and providers is inclusive and staff are well-equipped and supported to meet the learning needs of the vast majority of children, including those with SEND.
- We will work with further education colleges to develop opportunities for a more individualised learning experience for young people with SEND.
- We will focus on improving the quality of EHCPs and developing the EHCP process and Annual Reviews both within the local authority and between the local authority, clinical commissioning group and provider services
- We will ensure that when a child or young person needs move to a different educational provision or service, this is done in a timely manner with the appropriate information being made available so that needs are well understood

7.3

Families are self-sufficient and enabled to be resilient

Many families have emerging or complex needs which require support to enable their children to achieve good outcomes in life. To provide an effective response, we need to identify issues early, ensure joined-up working between services and work directly with families.

In 2019/20, Leicestershire County Council achieved its target for the number of families achieving significant and sustained progress through the Troubled Families programme, which aims to improve the lives and outcomes for England's most complex and 'troubled' families.

Disruption in family lives can lead to children missing education, with the impacts felt by children themselves, families and society. Leicestershire has low rates of children missing education. The number of elective home-educated (EHE) children has increased from approximately 150 six years ago to over 790 children which highlights the need to ensure families are well-equipped and supported to provide a suitable education.

Leicestershire has a high rate of children with SEND who have an EHCP and this has increased in recent years. As the majority of children with SEND can and should have those needs supported in a mainstream setting at the SEN Support stage without the need for an EHCP, this may suggest a need to develop the confidence and capacity of families to manage the needs of children with SEND.

What will success look like?

- Families are able to identify their own support networks and feel more able to deal with issues as they arise
- The Council continues to achieve its target for the number of families achieving significant and sustained progress

Our Commitments

- We will develop the Leicestershire Information and Support Directory and Local Offer to help families access information, guidance, and support
- We will support the delivery of Citizens Advice services and crisis and hardship support for people in need
- We will work positively with parents and carers opting for EHE, offering a range of support to ensure that statutory duties are met
- We will work across the early help partnership to ensure all agencies are able to identify families who may require additional support at the earliest possible opportunity, and will work with partners to make sure families receive the best response to their needs
- We will continue to prioritise investment in preventative services to help to avoid the need for children to become looked after. We will ensure children who are at risk of family breakdown receive timely and, if necessary, intensive support to help them to remain living with their families
- We will develop our support to young people who encounter emotional difficulties or require other targeted early help support

7.4

Everyone is able to aim high and reach their full potential

Only 2% of children aged 16-17 in Leicestershire are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), below the national average (2.7%). The sub-groups we know are most likely to be NEET are care leavers, young carers, young offenders, young parents, and young people with learning and/or other disabilities. For example, the proportion of children with SEND who have an EHCP and are NEET at ages 16-17 is 9.4%; above the national average (8.9%).

The percentage of young people aged 19 with at least a level 2 qualification is consistently higher locally than the national average, however for those from poorer backgrounds who claimed free school meals during school, performance is consistently lower locally than the national average.

Leicestershire is in the best performing 25% comparators for the percentage of care leavers who are in education, employment, or training as well as for the percentage of care leavers who are living in suitable accommodation.

It is also in the best performing 25% comparators for the proportion of people aged 18-64 with a learning disability who are in paid employment and the proportion who are living in their own home or with their family. However, it is in the worst 25% of comparators for the proportion of those in contact with secondary mental health services who are in paid employment, and below the average amongst comparators for the proportion who are living independently.

What will success look like?

- Below national average rate of vulnerable young people (e.g. unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, those with SEN and/or disability, those who are from poorer backgrounds and/or care leavers) who are NEET
- Above national average rates of disadvantaged adults (e.g. those with learning disabilities, autism and/or mental health conditions) who are in paid employment and living independently

Our Commitments

Below national average rate of vulnerable young people who are NEET

- We will challenge schools in relation to statutory individualised careers guidance for vulnerable groups
- We will monitor the progress of learners beyond age 16 to ensure good progress and identify those at risk of becoming NEET in order to target them for additional support to participate in education or training and make positive and well-informed choices
- We will identify the interests and skills of children in our care and provide them with information and advice about educational and career options
- We will raise employers' awareness of the issues affecting care leavers to help ensure they offer the right support to care leaver employees
- Through our Teenagers with Babies Action Group, we will deliver actions to reduce NEET amongst Teenage parents, such as ensuring seamless support pathways and improving access to educational opportunities
- Our Youth Offending Team will provide young offenders with dedicated Education Worker and Careers Advisors to ensure they are actively engaged in education, training or employment and will advocate for them with schools, colleges, alternative providers, and employers
- We will expand the range of alternative providers for young offenders and others for whom formal educational placements are not suitable

Above national average rates of disadvantaged adults who are in paid employment and living independently

- We will maintain a person-centred process to support navigation through transition, from child to adulthood
- We will continue to offer engaging 'first steps' learning opportunities through our Adult Learning Service as a way of increasing participation for disadvantaged learners, and to prepare them for a more formal programme of learning
- We will work with all partners to promote and extend opportunities for supported employment for disadvantaged people
- We will support people to live in the least restrictive environments possible, by developing more supported accommodation, including 'step down' temporary accommodation, and exploring the benefits of single accommodation units with on-site shared support for adults with mental ill-health

8. Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure

This outcome aims to ensure that, using our local capabilities, innovations, and skills – we build a productive, inclusive and sustainable economy at the cutting edge of science, technology and engineering. It also reflects the need for our infrastructure to meet the demands of a growing population and economy, by providing great connections and sufficient employment space and housing of a range of types and tenure.

Our economy is primed for success. We have unrivalled assets such as a world-class university with one of the UK's largest science parks, a central location with the largest distribution park in Europe and the UK's 2nd largest freight airport. Our strong and growing manufacturing sector forms the backbone of our economy. Recently, the East Midlands Airport and Gateway Industrial Cluster sites in North West Leicestershire were selected for Freeport Status. This could provide a significant boost to manufacturing and logistics industries and create up to 60,000 additional jobs.

However, our economy faces significant challenges including lower productivity than the UK. This may be in part due to a lack of training, investment and innovation. Productivity helps businesses to grow more profitable and is a key determinant of the pay and living standards of residents.

The pandemic has also had a significant impact; leading to many jobs being classified as 'vulnerable' (particularly in hospitality, tourism, retail and manufacturing) and a contraction in job vacancies and hiring. This has impacted workers in low pay and/or insecure jobs the most and increased the risk of lower-skilled workers facing unemployment and job insecurity. Young people have been particularly affected by a reduction in entry level positions and apprenticeships. The capacity and capability of many businesses has also been significantly stretched in terms of their resilience and financial health, and rural areas have experienced disruptions to harvesting and demand for agricultural produce, as well as supply chain disruptions in the food and drink sector.

Pre-Covid, the Leicester and Leicestershire economy generated £24.5 billion in GVA, with 42,000 businesses and 538,000 jobs. Testament to its resilience and growth potential, we expect this to increase, despite the impacts of the pandemic, to £30.2 billion and 568,000 jobs by 2030.

The specific priorities and commitments for this outcome, outlined in the following pages, will enable the economy to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and support long-term growth. To deliver them, we will continue to work in close partnership with public sector partners, businesses, and universities. We will focus on ensuring that people have the skills they need to access employment, as this will support a good quality of life and help businesses to grow. We will ensure that infrastructure provides excellent connectivity, enabling access to opportunities and opening up sites for development. As highlighted in the [Clean, Green Outcome](#), we also need to ensure that economic growth and infrastructure development supports the transition to net zero carbon emissions.

8.1

There is close alignment between skill supply and demand

Manufacturing and logistics are the key employment sectors in Leicester and Leicestershire, and we aim to accelerate growth in these areas. However, we also want to increase employment in business and financial services, tourism and hospitality and creative design, as well as facilitate growth in life sciences, environmental/low carbon technologies and space and aerospace. Local skills needs will also be driven by the shortfall in overseas workers, caused by Covid-19 and the fall in EU workers. This is likely to have

a significant impact on the social care sector, which has already been facing recruitment and retention difficulties for many years. There will be a need to encourage life-long learning, and to improve skills attainment across all of these priority sectors.

Leicestershire performs well in terms of the percentage of working-age population qualified to Levels 2+ and 3+, and the percentage of residents qualified to NVQ Level 4+ is similar to the national average. It also has a good supply of graduates to the local labour market and a strong and improving further education sector which provides a wide range of vocational training to meet local employer needs. However, there are insufficient numbers of local young people choosing to pursue careers in Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM), which is critical for our growth sectors.

Leicestershire has lower levels of in-work training than comparators and employers are reporting a lack of skilled workers in key sectors which is impacting business performance. The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)'s survey of local businesses in 2021 found that 21% of businesses had recruitment difficulties, 60% required improvement in basic work-based skills and over a third in digital skills.

Leicestershire has a lower unemployment rate than the national average. However, the rate has increased locally during the pandemic; the rate of Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit claimants increased from 1.6% in March 2020 to 3.3% in June 2021. Young people are likely to be disadvantaged due to missing education, reduction in apprenticeship opportunities, a more competitive labour market and lack of workplace digital skills.

What will success look like?

- Improvement in population skills and reduction in the proportion of employers reporting skills shortages or gaps
- Increased opportunities in the labour market for young people and reduced unemployment and job insecurity

Our Commitments

Improvement in population skills and reduction in the proportion of employers reporting skills shortages

- We will work with partners through the LLEP to:
 - Capture and analyse labour market information to identify skills shortages and growth businesses
 - Support the Further Education sector to expand and improve their facilities, especially where there is a strong link to growth sectors
 - Develop Skills Plans for priority sectors to promote relevant job opportunities and help businesses meet their recruitment and skills needs
 - Create a Leicester and Leicestershire Digital Skills Partnership to address digital skills deficiencies in the workplace and wider society
 - Focus on embedding employability skills so that individuals are well-prepared for employment and attractive to employers
 - Provide flexible leadership and management skills development programmes
 - Promote enterprise skills programmes to help people think about self-employment and support start-ups and existing businesses

Increased opportunities in the labour market for young people and reduced unemployment and job insecurity

- We will provide information, advice, and guidance on the labour market to parents, teachers and young people and promote STEM careers
- We will work with partners to identify pathways into employment and support youth engagement in emerging, productive, and buoyant sectors
- We will work with partners to continue provision of youth, employment, and career services such as Careers Hub and Youth Employment Hub
- We will work with partners to support the graduate careers and retention initiatives of local universities and to incorporate graduate skills into enterprise support, innovation, and growth initiatives
- We will work with partners to produce an Apprenticeship Action Plan to address the decline in apprenticeships due to Covid-19
- Our Kickstart scheme will provide employment placements for young people aged 16-24 at risk of becoming long-term unemployed
- We will work with local authorities, businesses, and education providers to support Leicestershire people back into employment following the Covid-19 crisis through re-training/job matching and stimulating entrepreneurialism
- Our Work + scheme will provide free one-to-one support, advice and information to people looking for secure paid employment or training

8.2

Leicestershire has the infrastructure for sustainable growth

We need our infrastructure to support continuous economic growth, whilst helping to tackle the climate emergency. There is a need to develop and promote sustainable forms of transport and decarbonise road transport.

Leicestershire's population is projected to rise to 860,618 by 2043 – an increase of 23% from 2018. Leicester and Leicestershire's Strategic Growth Plan identifies the need for 96,580 more homes by 2031 and a further 90,500 dwellings from 2031-50. Just under 200,000 new homes are therefore set to be built by 2050. These will need to be supported by new roads, schools, transport, and other infrastructure – estimated to cost £600m over the next 25 years.

The Strategic Growth Plan also identifies the need for an additional 367-423 hectares of land for employment use by 2031. Since 2010, there has been a transformation of the provision of world class business locations and premises in Leicester and Leicestershire; brand new Grade A office, technology and manufacturing premises accommodate 5,000 high-technology jobs. There is a need to continuously explore how existing employment areas can be supported and where new growth should be directed.

Road networks in Leicestershire are in fair condition with a relatively low percentage of roads requiring consideration of structural maintenance, although the percentage is higher for unclassified roads. However, unreliable journey times and congestion on local roads in county towns and on parts of the strategic road network (M1 Junctions) are a frequent complaint. Further, the predominantly rural nature of the county presents viability challenges for medium and long-distance public transport, which in turn means that it can be difficult to identify opportunities to travel by sustainable modes. Where mid or long-distance bus and rail opportunities exist, they may be infrequent, with long journey times, and stops located at potentially inconvenient locations.

In terms of digital infrastructure, the pandemic has accelerated the pace of digital transformation of businesses and public services, with employers expecting digital skills to become increasingly important. Whilst this has created opportunities for enhanced business efficiency, productivity and resilience, it has also exposed the 'digital divide' in society with residents unable to afford and/or use digital devices, rural areas lacking access to high speed broadband or 4G or 5G services and independent retailers in our Towns and Rural areas struggling to sell on-line or advertise themselves by social media.

What will success look like?

- Infrastructure capacity and capability supports growth, whilst supporting net zero carbon emissions
- Sufficient employment sites and premises for growth

Our Commitments

Infrastructure capacity and capability supports growth, whilst supporting net zero carbon emissions

- Through our Corporate Asset Investment Fund, we own and manage a diverse portfolio of property and other investment assets. We will use this to support growth in the county and ensure there is a diverse range of properties and land assets available to meet the aims of economic development
- We will continue to provide safe, suitably maintained highways that support and encourage new housing development and economic growth and employ a flexible approach to reviewing, amending, and developing the network to reflect changing travel demand and traffic patterns
- We will maximise opportunities from technological innovations; utilising evidence gathered on the Major Road Network and from key radial routes to support end to end journey planning and better traffic management
- We will continue to press Government for long-term funding streams to help us maintain our highway assets and support passenger transport services
- We will work in partnership with local bus operators to promote and champion the provision of affordable, frequent, and high-quality passenger transport services and support with the recovery of the passenger transport market following the Covid-19 pandemic by identifying opportunities to provide access to essential services in the most cost effective and efficient way
- We will engage with the freight and logistics sector, to better understand the needs of the sector and ensure that schemes are developed which support the efficient movement of freight into, around, and out of Leicestershire
- We will work with partners through Midlands Connect to invest in strategic road and rail improvements to reduce congestion, improve journey times and support housing growth (e.g. Midlands Rail Hub proposal - rail infrastructure improvements to provide better rail links across the Midlands)
- We will continue engaging with HS2 Ltd to ensure that Leicester and Leicestershire's interests are protected and/or advanced throughout construction
- We will encourage and support active and sustainable travel options, where appropriate, by learning from best practice and encouraging the uptake and use of electric vehicles and micro-mobility as appropriate, including through provision of infrastructure
- We will work with partners through the LLEP to improve digital connectivity through broadband, Wi-Fi and 5G connectivity in rural blackspots and will define and implementing the Council's first digital connectivity strategy

Sufficient employment sites and premises for growth

- We will work with partners to renew existing employment sites and premises where there is demand
- We will work with partners to maintain confidence and momentum of development of strategic sites and the Freeport

8.3

Leicestershire is an attractive place where businesses flourish

The Leicestershire economy is dominated by small businesses - with 89.2% of businesses micro-sized (employing 9 or fewer people). Building on the support from our growth hub and successful partnership initiatives, we can continue the substantial progress made in the last 10 years, as evidenced by the growth in number of businesses (+18% between 2014 and 2019) and improvements in start-up and survival rates.

However, productivity rates are lower locally than the national average. Investment in research and development (R&D) is a key driver of innovation and productivity growth. Investment in R&D in Leicestershire has however been consistently below the national average; In 2016 R&D expenditure was equivalent to 1.5% GVA for Leicestershire, Rutland, and Northamptonshire – below the UK average (1.7%), and government target of 3% in the longer-term. This highlights the need to increase investment and activity in R&D and innovation and to lever existing R&D capabilities from our leading corporations.

Leicester and Leicestershire is a prime location for international businesses – with 18% of all businesses exporting overseas in 2020, and 83% of exporters selling to markets in the EU. Over the next 10 years, businesses must adapt to the new challenges and opportunities posed by Covid-19 and EU-Exit, as illustrated by the value of goods exported from the UK declining by 16% throughout 2020 – the largest drop since comparable records began.

What will success look like?

- Growth and expansion of existing innovation and R&D strengths
- Further increase in business density; particularly in growth sectors and knowledge-based businesses

Our Commitments

Growth and expansion of existing innovation and R&D strengths

- We will work with partners through the LLEP Innovation Board to drive forward accelerated innovation priorities
- We will work with partners to ensure the R&D sector has sufficient skills, capabilities and support to retain and attract new R&D programmes
- We will support R&D funding bids, innovation and knowledge transfer initiatives and increase public and private investment in R&D and innovation
- We will work with partners to increase opportunities for collaboration, knowledge exchange, pooling of resources, and applied problem solving
- We will support development of business and university networks to promote technology adoption and digital transformation
- We will work with businesses to improve the culture of innovation and awareness of the business performance benefits

Further increase in business density; particularly in growth sectors and knowledge-based businesses

- We will continue to support the key growth sectors of life sciences, space and earth observation, sports and sport science, advanced engineering, ICT, food and drink, logistics and professional and financial services – as well as the locally important sectors of agriculture, textiles, creative and cultural, construction, tourism and the visitor economy, and the voluntary and non-profit sectors
- We will work with partners to encourage and support international business expansion, including in the Freeport site
- We will develop and implement the Freeport strategy and SME support for exporting, identifying key sectors and opportunities
- We will continue to provide advice and support to businesses to assist recovery from Covid-19 and adaptation to the new EU trading relationships

8.4

Economic growth delivers increased prosperity for all

We aim for local economic growth to advance equality by creating opportunities for all, and for the benefits of increased prosperity to be distributed fairly.

Leicestershire is not deprived overall; the county is ranked 137th out of 152 upper tier authorities in England for Multiple Deprivation, where 1st is the most deprived. However, pockets of significant deprivation exist; four neighbourhoods in the county fall within the most deprived decile in England.

There is a lower number of children living in poverty locally than the average amongst county authorities and a lower percentage of children in secondary schools receiving free school meals. However, the percentage is higher than comparators for nursery and primary school children. Further, Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) is lower locally than average amongst county authorities.

Leicestershire has a low rate of households assessed as being at risk of homelessness, ranking in the best performing 25% comparators. However, financial pressures on residents are likely to increase as government Covid-19 support measures end. Local survey data suggests that over half of residents are worried about the economic wellbeing of their friends and family and significantly more are worried about their own economic well-being.

What will success look like?

- Growth in Gross Value Added (GVA) corresponds with an increase in GDHI and a reduction in the percentage of children receiving free school meals

Our Commitments

- We will focus on supporting inclusive economic growth in the disadvantaged areas and groups of Leicestershire
- Our Work + scheme will provide free one-to-one support, advice and information to people looking for secure paid employment or training

8.5

Leicestershire has the right homes in the right places to meet needs

Housing is generally an area of good performance, as Leicestershire ranks in the best performing 25% of comparators for the rates of new houses and affordable houses built. However, expensive house prices in rural areas puts housing out of reach for many and Leicestershire has a high rate of local authority owned homes which are 'non-decent' (an issue in Charnwood, Hinckley and Bosworth, North West Leicestershire and Melton). As highlighted, there is a need for 187,096 new houses by 2050, with 96,580 of those required by 2031. These will need to be low carbon developments and include affordable housing. The number of older people living in Leicestershire is also forecast to increase significantly, and many will require specialist accommodation.

What will success look like?

- Leicestershire is on track to deliver the 187,096 new dwellings required by 2050

Our Commitments

- We will work with developers, landowners, and statutory agencies to remove the barriers to development
- We will focus development in major strategic locations to reduce the amount that takes place in existing towns, villages, and rural areas. This will allow us to plan for new housing and employment with new and improved roads, public transport, schools, health services, shops, and open space
- We will explore ways to secure financial contributions through development to support essential infrastructure (e.g. highway capacity, schools etc)
- Through the Leicestershire Rural Housing Group, we will guide work to assess and meet the housing needs of people in the villages of Leicestershire
- We will work with partners and developers to help ensure all housing developments are low carbon and enhance biodiversity
- We will develop further the Social Care Investment Plan to secure suitable accommodation choices for social care service users



9. Keeping People Safe and Well

This outcome aims to ensure 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. It also aims to ensure people are safe and protected from harm.

Health and wellbeing is an asset to individuals, communities and wider society. Good mental and physical health is a basic precondition for people to take an active role in family, community, and work life. However, these benefits are undermined by health inequalities. Those living in the most disadvantaged areas often have poorer health outcomes, as do some ethnic minority groups and vulnerable people. Health inequalities have been further exposed by Covid-19 as it has taken a disproportionate toll on groups already facing the worst health outcomes.

Health inequalities are driven by factors beyond age, gender, genetics, lifestyle, social and community networks, socio-economic, cultural and environmental factors. The Council has influence and responsibility over some of these 'wider determinants of health' such as education, housing, transport, culture and clean air. It also fosters economic opportunity which is reflected in the supply and quality of jobs in the local area. Further, it empowers people to help themselves and each other, for example through volunteering and local initiatives.

We will work with partners through Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board to improve the health and wellbeing of children and adults and reduce health inequalities. This will include addressing the wider determinants of health, with a focus on breaking down intergenerational cycles of deprivation and poor health outcomes. We will ensure that everyone has access to information and advice which supports their wellbeing and enables them to think ahead and plan for their future. We will promote wellbeing by building upon peoples' strengths and community assets. We will identify people who may be at risk of needing social care support in the future and help them to gain or regain the skills to live independently. We will also enable those requiring further support to take control of their health and wellbeing and to live active, independent, and fulfilling lives through easy access to effective, personalised care.

To help keep people safe, we will work with partners through Leicestershire's Safer Communities Board to strengthen links between work-streams being undertaken to reduce crime and disorder within communities. We will also fulfil our statutory duties to safeguard vulnerable children and adults who have experienced, or may be at risk of experiencing, abuse, or neglect. This will include work with partners through the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults' Board and Safeguarding Children's Partnership to coordinate and continuously review and improve safeguarding practices.

9.1

People are safe in their daily lives

Total crime levels are relatively low in Leicestershire compared to other areas and have reduced in recent years. The number of people killed or seriously injured on the County's roads is also low and public satisfaction with road safety is high. Leicestershire also has low rates of youth offending.

However, during 2020/21 there were significant increases in: hate crime (+32%); sexual offences (+32%); drug offences (+24%) and violence with injury (+13%). There was also an increase in reported anti-social behaviour across the County during 2020/21. There has been a reduction in the percentage of residents who feel safe when outside in their local area after dark, from 88% in 2019/20 to 79% in 2020/21. A survey by the Leicestershire Police and Crime Commissioner found that respondents tended to attribute this to a lack of street lighting and the proximity of anti-social behaviour and crime.

From 2018/19 to 2020/21, there has been a year-on-year reduction in the number of referrals to child safeguarding for child sexual exploitation. However, the rate of referrals for child criminal exploitation has however increased slightly from 140 in 2019/20 to 145 in 2020/21. There is a risk that child criminal exploitation and violence related to young people may increase or become more visible during Covid-19 recovery.

What will success look like?

- Less crime and fear of crime and increase in the percentage of residents who feel safe when outside in their local area after dark
- Fewer children and young people involved in and impacted by criminal behaviour

Our Commitments

Less crime and fear of crime and increase in the percentage of residents who feel safe when outside in their local area after dark

- We will work with Police and other agencies to ensure anti-social behaviour is dealt with swiftly and effectively
- We will work with partners to raise awareness of and tackle all forms of hate crime in which people are targeted based on their personal characteristics
- We will help to reduce the prevalence of modern slavery and trafficking by ensuring our suppliers adhere to the highest standards of ethics and working with the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Modern Slavery Action Group to raise awareness, disrupt crimes and safeguard victims
- We will work closely with partners and communities through the Violence Reduction Unit to prevent serious violence
- We will work with partners to raise awareness of and tackle scammers and rogue traders who exploit vulnerable consumers
- We will enforce standards related to food and product safety

Fewer children and young people involved in and impacted by criminal behaviour

- We will deliver a robust, whole-family approach to prevent children and young people from engaging in criminal behaviour
- We will work with partners to provide safe spaces for children and young people to play, without the risk of being groomed into criminal exploitation
- We will deliver preventative street-based work with young people targeted in areas with high levels of anti-social behaviour
- We will identify and address the exploitation of children and young people and provide care and support to those affected

9.2

People at the most risk are protected from harm

There is an upward trend in demand for child safeguarding, with an increase in the rate of Section 47 enquiries (initiated to decide whether action should be taken to safeguard a child suspected to be suffering or at risk of suffering harm) and children on child protection plans. The rate of children looked after by the local authority has also increased year-on-year for the past 10 years.

Whilst the rate of reported domestic abuse-related incidents remains below the national average, it has increased in Leicestershire from 21.1 per 1,000 population in 2017/18 to 23.1 in 2019/20 and during 2020/21 there was a 20% rise in Domestic Violence with Injury and a rise in psychological abuse. Domestic abuse has also been a more prominent feature in child safeguarding cases during the last year.

What will success look like?

- Safeguarding approaches are effective in recovery from Covid-19 and informed by learning from the pandemic
- Vulnerable people are identified and protected from harm and abuse

Our Commitments

Safeguarding approaches are effective in recovery from Covid-19 and informed by learning from the pandemic

- We will focus on identifying and responding to hidden harm (e.g. self-neglect, mental ill-health and/or learning disabilities, domestic abuse)
- We will support care homes with Infection Control, vaccination, and Personal Protective Equipment support to minimise Covid-19 outbreaks
- We will risk assess and quality assure care providers to ensure services are safe and protect vulnerable children and adults
- We will work with partners to review the response to and forward implications of Covid-19 and recovery work regarding safeguarding

Vulnerable people are identified and protected from harm and abuse

- We will improve how we work with families to safeguard babies by ensuring robust procedures are in place and raising awareness of risk factors
- We will develop a communications strategy to support partners to deliver universal safety messages to children and young people
- We will work with partners to develop joint responses to risk including child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, gangs, missing from home
- We will focus on combatting sexual violence and domestic abuse by developing a Domestic Abuse Strategy, protecting all survivors and their families in safe and appropriate accommodation and improving our understanding of perpetrators and how to respond to them
- We will develop trauma-informed practices and offer direct work to support children to recover from Adverse Childhood Experiences
- We will ensure that work with young people to reduce risk and vulnerability assists prevention of adult safeguarding need
- We will work with communities to prevent people becoming victims and ensure they know how to seek help and have the confidence to do so
- We will develop understanding of equality and diversity issues and the impact on access to safeguarding services
- We will review and change systems to ensure that the new Liberty Protection Safeguards Legislation and codes of practice are in place

9.3

People enjoy long lives in good health

The health of people in Leicestershire is generally better than the England average, as it is one of the 20% least deprived counties in England. Life expectancy for both men and women is higher in Leicestershire than the England average. However, healthy life expectancy (an estimate of how many years people might live in a 'healthy' state) is only marginally higher than the national average and there are significant health inequalities in the county, as life expectancy is 6.3 years lower for men and 5.0 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Leicestershire than in the least deprived areas.

As highlighted, health outcomes are influenced by a range of social, economic and environmental factors, known as the 'wider determinants of health'. Air pollution, particularly fine particulate matter (PM2.5), is a significant health hazard. PM2.5 is the 3rd leading cause of preventable deaths in Leicestershire.

Additionally, two thirds of adults, and one third of children in year 6, are either overweight or obese. This increases their risk of having long-term conditions like type 2 diabetes and reduces expected lifespan. There has also been a rise in adults classified as physically inactive from 19.5% in 2018/19 to 21.9% in 2019/20. Whilst these figures are similar to the national average, some areas of the county have higher rates of overweight/obesity and physical inactivity than England. Physical inactivity has also been exacerbated by the pandemic, with the deconditioning of the population during lockdown restrictions.

In terms of mental health and wellbeing, Leicestershire has a high rate of people reporting a low happiness score and a high rate reporting a high anxiety score. Although there is a low rate of suicides in Leicestershire compared to other counties, the county has a high rate of excess deaths amongst those aged under 75 with a severe mental illness. These excess deaths are explained not only by suicides and accidents but also physical illnesses; studies show that that all-cause mortality in people with severe mental illness is 2 to 3.5 times higher than in the general population. There has also been a significant increase in the number of cases referred to adult social care mental health teams during the pandemic, which has also occurred across the country. Surveys and cases also suggest that ongoing Covid-19 restrictions are having an impact on mental health of children and young people.

What will success look like?

- Improved healthy life expectancy and reduced health inequalities
- Increased proportion of residents with a healthy weight
- Improved mental wellbeing and reduced prevalence of mental ill health

Our Commitments

Improved healthy life expectancy and reduced health inequalities

- We will focus on breaking down intergenerational cycles of deprivation and poor health, promoting new ways of working to tackle disadvantages
- Through Healthy Together 0-19 we will provide Health Visiting and School Nursing to support the health and wellbeing of children and young people
- We will provide information and advice to enable people to access services, facilities and resources which contribute towards wellbeing
- We will deliver a wider determinants programme of work to address the range of social, economic and environmental factors which influence health outcomes, thereby improving health and reducing health inequalities. This will include for example our work with partners to improve air quality.

- We will embed a Health Equity in All Policies approach to ensure policy decisions help to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities
- We will identify those at risk of needing social care support in the future and intervene early wherever possible to maintain wellbeing

Increased proportion of residents with a healthy weight

- We will provide weight management support and guidance to residents, so that they can achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- We will work with partners through Active Together (Leicestershire and Rutland Sport) to support people to get and stay active; ensure physical activity and sport facilities are high quality and accessible and promote the county as a premier location for sport businesses
- We will work with partners in a 'whole-system' approach to deliver the Healthy Weight Strategy; creating an environment which facilitates healthy choices and supports individuals to be physically active and maintain healthy weight

Improved mental wellbeing and reduced proportion of residents experiencing mental ill health

- We will promote positive mental health and improve awareness of risk factors for poor mental health to increase resilience
- We will learn from and sustain the excellent customer satisfaction with our cultural, wellbeing and adult learning services; promoting and facilitating access to our libraries, museums and learning centres to promote the wellbeing of residents and their communities
- We will implement Making Every Contact Count Plus to make the most of opportunities to support peoples' wellbeing
- We will work with partners to improve access to mental health services for all ages to promote recovery and independence
- We will work with partners to ensure the early detection and treatment of child mental health and wellbeing needs

9.4

Carers and people with care needs are supported to live active, independent, and fulfilling lives

Leicestershire's reablement services effectively support those with physical or mental health needs to maintain or regain their independence and avoid unnecessary admissions to hospital or residential care; In 2020/21 Leicestershire ranked in the best 25% of comparators for reablement outcomes. Additionally, Leicestershire has low rates of adults aged either 18-64 or 65+ being permanently admitted into residential or nursing care. This is important because residential care is an expensive resource for individuals and the local authority and research suggests that people tend to prefer alternative options.

Leicestershire also has a high proportion of people with social care needs who are in receipt of a direct payment or personal budget; enabling people to access personalised care and support by choosing provision which is suitable to meeting their outcomes.

However, there is a need for improvement in the proportion of people who find it easy to access information about adult social care services and in the quality of life and overall satisfaction of those who receive care and support. In 2019/20, Leicestershire also ranked in the worst 25% comparators for the proportion of adult service users who felt safe or that they had control over their daily lives. The level of

social contact in the daily lives of carers and users of social services also remains comparatively low and an area for improvement, something which the Covid-9 crisis has made worse.

As mentioned, the number of older people, and those living with dementia and/or mobility problems, is forecast to increase significantly. Some will require housing adaptations to meet their changing needs and others will need more specialist accommodation or support.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the proportion of people who find it easy to access information and advice about adult social care services
- Improvements in the experiences of those who receive adult social care and support
- Carers are recognised, valued, and supported to undertake their caring role, whilst maintaining their own health and wellbeing

Our Commitments

Increase in the proportion of people who find it easy to access information and advice about adult social care services

- We will improve access to information and advice through our digital plans including the directory of services and First Contact Plus
- We will work closely with partners to take a more proactive approach to providing advice and information relating to housing, including development of social prescribing and empowering frontline staff to encourage people to take responsibility for their housing needs
- We will continue to provide good quality information, advice, and guidance for those living with dementia and their informal carers

Improvements in the experiences of those who receive adult social care and support

- We will implement activities identified through research with our customers to improve satisfaction with our adult social care services
- We will work with partners to deliver integrated services at the point of delivery with seamless transitions between health and social care
- We will provide effective crisis response, reablement services, equipment, and technology to enable people to be self-reliant
- We will review progress on the Living Well with Dementia Strategy 2019-22 and co-produce a new strategy and action plan with our partners
- We will continue to ensure care services and support procured by the Council provide a good supply and quality of dementia care
- We will explore solutions to transport issues, enabling older people to remain active and independent and connected to community
- We will support people in receipt of direct payments and Personal Assistants to choose the provision suitable to meeting their outcomes
- We will develop further the Social Care Investment Plan to secure suitable accommodation choices for social care service users
- We will work with providers of services to maximise peoples' opportunities for independence, health, and wellbeing

Carers are recognised, valued, and supported to undertake their caring role, whilst maintaining their own health and wellbeing

- We will work with partners to identify carers and ensure they are signposted, if required, to relevant information and services
- We will ensure accurate advice, information and guidance is available to assist carers to navigate health and social care services
- We will listen and involve carers in the development of services that enable them to continue to provide their caring role
- We will develop carer-friendly communities by awareness-raising within existing community groups
- We will promote health checks for carers to help them to maintain their own physical and mental health and wellbeing
- We will work with housing and other organisations to ensure carers can access technology, equipment, or adaptations
- We will ensure carers have access to assessments which will determine if social care services have a statutory duty to assist them

10. Enabling Services

Delivery of this Plan is dependent on a wide range of 'back-office' services such as Finance, IT, HR, Legal, Communications, Property Services, Strategy and Business Intelligence, Democratic Services and Business Support. These organisation-wide functions support frontline services by providing business support based on specialised knowledge, best practice and technology. They also support good governance, ensuring that:

- Resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities
- There is sound and inclusive decision making
- There is clear accountability for the use of those resources

Good governance is about ensuring the Council is doing the right things, in the right way and for the benefit of the communities it serves. It leads to high standards of management, strong performance, effective use of resources and positive outcomes. The diagram to the right illustrates the core principles of good governance which the Council is committed to and how they relate to each other: Principles A and B permeate implementation of principles C to G.

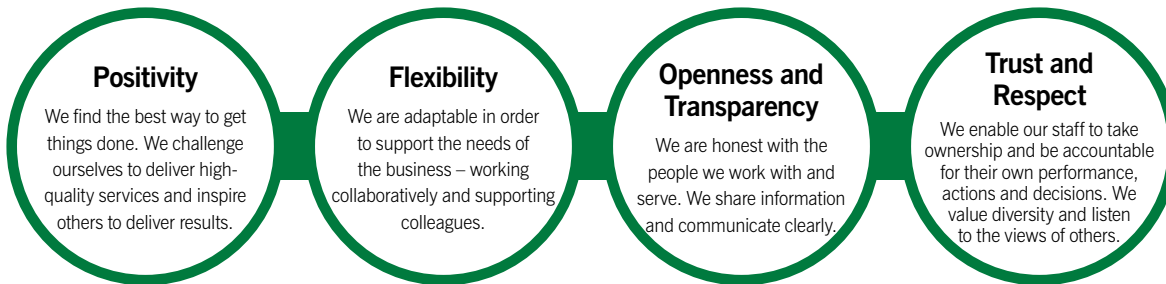
Back-office services have a key role in ensuring that the Council adheres to these principles and achieves positive outcomes for service users. For example, Strategy and Business Intelligence support principle C by assisting decision-makers in defining the Council's overall vision and outcomes. Additionally, Finance support Principle F by enforcing financial discipline, strategic resource allocation and efficient service delivery.



10.1

Leicestershire County Council Values and Behaviours

Good governance flows from shared values and culture. Our values, set out below, underpin everything we do and describe how we will deliver this Plan.



11. Monitoring Outcome Delivery

Council officers will oversee delivery of this Plan through Outcome Boards which will meet on a quarterly basis. These will ensure that the Council maintains focus on achieving the outcomes throughout service planning and delivery and that the aims of this Plan are reflected in all relevant supporting strategies.

The Council's Scrutiny Committees will receive quarterly reports on progress in delivering the outcomes in this Plan and our Annual Performance and Benchmarking Reports will provide a summary of progress each year.

Progress in delivering the outcomes will also be monitored internally by the Outcome Boards through updates on delivery of key activities supporting outcome delivery along with reviews of Leicestershire's performance on the Performance Indicators set out in Appendix A. Updates on outcome delivery and performance will be shared with our Corporate Management Team, led by the Chief Executive, to inform strategic decision-making and resource allocation.

12. Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provides information on its financial planning over a four year period. Our latest Strategy, covering 2021-25, focuses on protecting frontline services and weathering the coronavirus crisis. The MTFS, along with other plans and strategies such as the Strategic Change Portfolio, aligns with and underpins the Strategic Plan.

The Council continues to operate in an extremely challenging financial environment following a decade of austerity and spending pressures, particularly from social care. The position has also been severely affected by Covid-19 and the ongoing financial impacts of the pandemic are unclear. There is also significant uncertainty and risk around future funding levels.

What will success look like?

- A credible 4-year financial plan to deliver at least 2-years of balanced budget followed by 2-years with a financial gap that is at a manageable level
- A financial plan that reflects the council's key priorities
- Delivery of planned savings and active pipeline of new initiatives
- Sustainable level of service growth, particularly in social care
- SEND capital and revenue costs contained within designated external funding streams
- Capital programme that balances support for the Council's priorities with financial sustainability
- Balance-sheet that supports the Council's resilience to financial shocks
- Above 'normal' share of eligible funding schemes secured and sufficient developer contributions towards the cost of local infrastructure
- Progress on Fair Funding to increase Leicestershire's share of national funding

Our Commitments

- We will raise awareness inside and outside of the Council of our financial position and the challenges faced
- We will maintain transparency around our savings proposals
- We will target efficiency savings and new income generation before service reductions
- We will ensure regular updating of assumptions to support the efficient flow of resources to Council priorities
- We will promote a culture of forward planning to ensure there is time for corrective action
- We will embed financial discipline in decision making to increase value for money assurance for Council Taxpayers
- Through our Corporate Asset Investment Fund, we will continue to invest in commercial schemes which support the Council's budget

13. Strategic Change Portfolio

The Council has long held an internal approach to transformation that ensures we respond effectively to national and local drivers of change, including the need to transform local services whilst seeking to maintain or improve outcomes. The Council's Strategic Change Portfolio (SCP) brings together the collective response to these drivers of change, delivered through four primary programmes:

- Sustainable Finances
- Customer & Digital
- Carbon Reduction
- Ways of Working

Overseen by the Council's Transformation Delivery Board, and managed through Departmental Change and Programme Boards, the SCP contains key targets and deliverables for each programme as described below.

13.1

Sustainable Finances Programme

(SUB-SECTION CONTENT AWAITED. TO BE REFRESHED BASED ON MTFS REPORT AUTUMN 2021)

The savings requirements contained within the Council's annually refreshed Medium Term Financial Strategy remain a central driver for the Council's change portfolio. However, the scale of the financial and transformation challenge is increasing, with the simple changes having been made and the straightforward savings long-since delivered. What remains is complex change, often involving multiple partners and many risks.

The body of work contained within the portfolio, refreshed annually, currently represents future savings targets in excess of £48m, including £21m for SEND.

13.2

Customer & Digital Programme

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed customer expectations of how our services should be delivered and the need for more immediate access to information and support via a broader range of channels is greater than ever before. In response to the changing needs of our citizens we will focus on developing and delivering against an improved, council-wide customer and channel strategy which supports the delivery of modern and effective services in the most efficient and sustainable way. By promoting innovative, digital ways of working, we will seek to shape the Council's interaction with its customers as part of our digital revolution and to enable improved customer journeys leading to an enhanced customer experience and faster, first time resolution of customer needs.

By 2024...

- Innovation will be our business as usual
- Automation and digital will have improved services and reduced cost
- Customer journeys for staff and residents will be simple

What will success look like?

- Customers directed to the right channel, at the right time, in the most efficient way
- Our customer channels maximise citizen value whilst reducing the cost of service
- A whole system approach is taken to designing our customer journey and back office processes

Our Commitments

Customers directed to the right channel, at the right time, in the most efficient way

- We will further develop our Customer and Digital strategies to shape our delivery of services
- We will increase our customer understanding and actively involve our customers to inform our channel development
- Through engagement with groups such as the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group, we will continuously seek to understand and mitigate the impact of digitalisation and channel development on those with protected characteristics, to ensure services remain accessible to all
- We will improve our front-end communications interfaces to support the routing of customer enquiries to the right channel at the right time
- We will deliver a new target operating model for our Customer Service Centre
- We will support high-quality, consistent customer experience council-wide
- We will enhance the customer experience through improved digital services

Our customer channels maximise citizen value whilst reducing the cost of service

- We will increase the amount of automation for repetitive, low value activities and integrations
- We will increase customer adoption of improved digital solutions driving a cultural shift to “digital by choice”
- We will improve our ability to resolve queries on first contact using the optimal channel
- We will identify opportunities to reduce the cost of service provision through more effective deployment of resources and/or efficiency savings

A whole system approach is taken to designing our customer journey and back-office processes

- We will work jointly with departments to develop and deliver improved customer journeys
- We will improve our contact and system data to inform continuous improvement activity
- We will seek to exploit emerging technologies and system integration where possible to enable more streamlined end-to-end working

13.3

Carbon Reduction Programme

The Carbon Reduction Programme aims to achieve net zero carbon from the Council's own operations by 2030, with an interim target of 64% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 (compared to 2016/17 emissions)

The Council's emissions are set out in our annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report (GHG) and expressed in a standard measure of tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) in line with national guidance which follows the international Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard. Existing efforts and future opportunities to reduce our carbon emissions from internal operations were documented, resulting in the development of a draft roadmap to net-zero emissions by 2030.

The Council is in a good position in comparison to many other authorities due to the quantity and quality of data we have in relation to our emissions and our historic efforts to reduce emissions which date back as far as 2008/09. Overall, in 2019/20, the council had reduced its greenhouse gas emissions from its own operations by 67% to 11, 663 tCO₂e compared to 35, 778 tCO₂e 2008/09.

The impact of Covid-19 has been seen most significantly in business mileage and to a lesser degree in emissions from our estates, and an emerging objective is to look to retain as much of these carbon reductions as possible, primarily through close engagement with our Ways of Working Programme. Even before the impacts of Covid-19 on carbon emissions are considered, Leicestershire County Council is ahead of target in the delivery of net-zero emissions by 2030.

As highlighted, the recognition of the climate and biodiversity emergencies mean that there is increased local, national and international policy commitments to address the issues. This has led to increasing opportunities to secure external funding and investment. The most recent success has been in our bid for decarbonisation funding, securing £3.6m towards works on our key buildings, including expansion of the biomass heating system across County Hall.

However, meeting the ambitious net-zero 2030 target remains a significant challenge, particularly in light of the challenging financial position of the council and demands on staff resources. There is also the risk that national legislation or local policies change, impacting on our baseline or possible solutions to decarbonise our operations.

What will success look like?

- Net-zero carbon emissions from the Council's own operations by 2030, with an interim 64% reduction by 2025
- Leicestershire County Council is a climate active organisation – carbon reduction and adapting to climate change are included in decision making

Our Commitments

- We will complete an assessment of the cost and technology implications of achieving net zero carbon by 2030 for the council
- We will produce a Net Zero Carbon 2030 Plan for the council
- We will reduce our demand for energy, increase our use and generation of clean energy
- We will explore opportunities to remove carbon from the atmosphere through nature based solutions such as tree planting
- We will include net zero carbon criteria in our decision making
- We will create a culture for carbon reduction through communications, training, tools and guidance

13.4

Ways of Working Programme

The Covid-19 pandemic saw a huge shift in organisational culture – with many working from home for the first time. This brought about a change in mentality around how we work with each other and how we serve our customers. It led to a wholesale rethinking of how departments and teams need to operate in the future; including the need for a higher degree of flexibility and more remote working than previously thought possible.

In the latter half of 2020, the Workplace Programme Board, along with wider stakeholders came together to rescope the vision and objectives into a new programme called “Ways of Working” – building on the already great foundations and principles established through the workplace programme as well as key learnings and opportunities presented throughout the pandemic in relation to changing ways of working.

What will success look like?

- All staff are provided with the technology and training needed to do their job effectively
- The way we work embodies continuous improvement, innovation, and ambition
- Council-operated workplaces are a shared resource based on need, where staff and customers can collaborate

How are we doing this?



Our Commitments

All staff are provided with the technology and training needed to do their job effectively

- All staff will have an assigned ‘worker style’ and the IT kit they need
- All IT equipment will be centrally owned and replaced in good time to ensure technology is effective and productive
- All staff will have the ability to work remotely through specialist technology, software, and remote access – no one will be tied to a specific location
- Where appropriate, staff meetings will be ‘digital by default’ - hybrid and face-to-face meetings will be supported with investment in workplace technology and collaboration spaces

The way we work embodies continuous improvement, innovation, and ambition

- We will focus on objectives and outputs not on presenteeism for office-based staff
- Staff - in consultation with managers - will be empowered to choose the right location to deliver their work - freedom to choose with responsibility to meet service and customer needs first
- Senior leaders and managers will lead by example – champion > role model > challenge

Council-operated workplaces are a shared resource based on need, where staff and customers can collaborate

- Our workplaces will be set up to better support collaboration, productivity, wellbeing, and customer service
- We will prioritise space for activities, not individuals - flexibility will be the norm and use of fixed desks will be kept to a minimum
- We will all work in the most appropriate location for the task we are doing rather than being at a council office or workplace by default
- Staff will be encouraged to work as flexibly as possible, using a mix of workplaces (offices, working from home, remote working) to best meet service and customer needs, and support staff wellbeing.

Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1 November 2021

Digital Developments

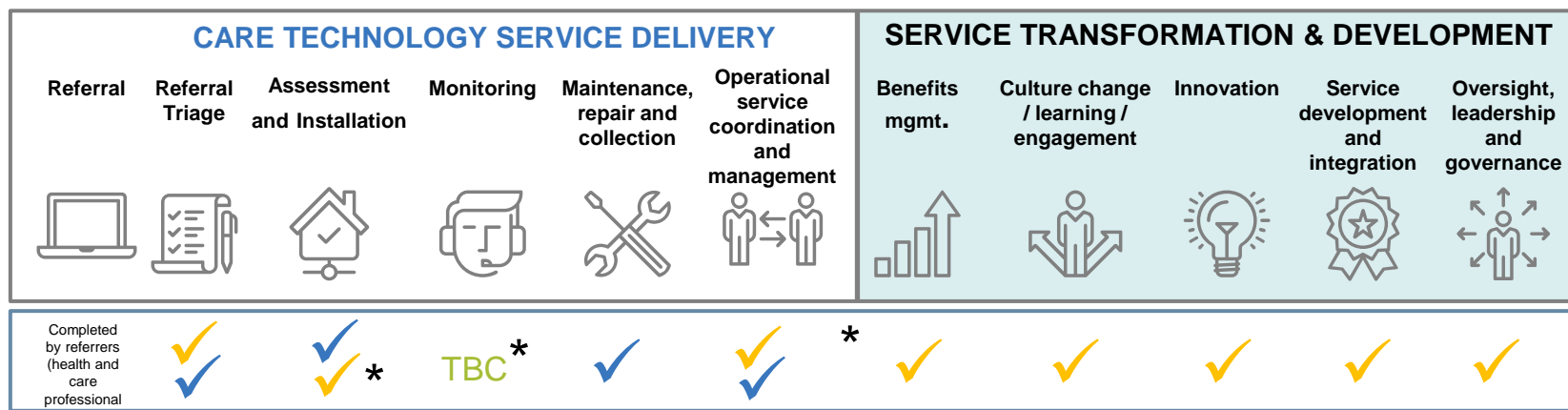
- To update the Committee on the work of the department to develop its digital strategy.
- To give an opportunity for the Committee to ask any questions about the direction of travel.

- Customer Facing
- Workforce
- Integration
- Systems
- Horizon Scanning

Focus today on **Customer facing, Integration, Horizon scanning.**

The diagram below shows the service elements and high-level Leicestershire County Council (LCC) and Hampshire County Council (HCC)/PA roles. Yellow indicates an HCC/PA delivery role. Blue indicates an LCC delivery role and an HCC/PA advisory role. This will involve knowledge transfer, learning and development and coaching to the LCC team. Where there are multiple ticks, both roles take place, as explained in detail on later slides.

Key to which service elements are delivered: **LCC delivery, HCC/PA advisory** (Blue) **HCC/PA delivery** (Yellow)



LCC delivers core operational services and is supported by HCC/PA to transform and continuously improve operations to meet best-in-class service delivery. LD assessment / installs delivered by HCC/PA on a time limited basis. [\[TBC monitoring\]](#)

HCC / PA deliver core transformational service and are responsible for overall service management

*See [here](#) for more information on the operational service management function and [here](#) for more information on monitoring options.

Operational service coordination and management is integral to embedding a transformed approach to care technology via the hybrid model

Delivery of a best practice care technology service relies on coherence between the operational service and enabling functions. For example, the culture change and engagement programme must be embedded by the service delivery team operating in an 'outcomes-focused' way on a daily basis. **Key to this is the operational service coordination and model.**

In the hybrid model there will be two roles responsible for the operational service coordination and management function:

- 1) AT Co-ordinator- existing LCC post
- 2) Operations Manager- HCC/PA role

Responsibilities	
AT Co-ordinator- existing LCC post	Operations Manager- HCC/PA role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide direction and matrix management of operational staff responsible for assessment and installation • Providing technical expertise in relation to assessment and installation • Supporting implementation of the new care technology strategy • Promoting the transformed approach to care technology to assessment and installation staff enabling this to be embedded in day to day practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide advice and oversight on all aspects of service delivery • Embedding effective quality assurance processes to promote best practice • Oversee referral triage function in year 1 and the ongoing capability development of the current LCC AT team to ensure appropriate handover of this responsibility in year 2 • Provide an operational link and insight to the service transformation and development functions

Specialist services are key to innovation in a care technology service and ensure access to a broad range of user groups

Whilst the core of a care technology service is the support of older adults and the delay, avoidance or reduction of home and residential care, this is by no means the limit of its potential. Specialist services use tailored solutions to support a wide range of user groups to improve independence and safety and avoid other costlier forms of care.

As part of the hybrid model, HCC and PA will work with LCC to implement two specialist services in each contract year, starting with LD (suggestion is to start with a supported living pathway). Below are some examples of options for specialist services. These services, or indeed others of interest to LCC can be designed in a bespoke way to meet the needs of LCC residents.

Specialist Service Options	Description
LD Supported Living (SL) pathway	Providing equipment to increase independence and reduce reliance on face to face care in LD supported living schemes
Dementia	A pathway focused on early intervention to support those with a recent dementia diagnosis who are not currently in receipt of social care services, but who are likely to begin needing them in 6-18 months' time.
Hospital discharge care technology offer	Implementation of a direct issue care technology offer to support hospital discharge and avoid readmission
Amazon Echo Alexa pathway	Using voice-controlled consumer technology with tailored functionality to support citizens with long term conditions to improve their quality of life and sustain caring relationships
Hydration pathway	Implementation of a pathway to support users at risk of becoming dehydrated, widely accepted as a serious precursor to poor health and the need for intervention
Speech and language remote appointment pilot	Use of technology such as Kraydel to facilitate remote support and appointments via home televisions
Reviews Automated Contact Service (RACS) pilot (partnership with Amazon Web Services)	Utilise an Automated Contact Service to systematically and consistently approach contacting people when a review is due (or overdue) to enable a prioritisation that allows care professionals to plan work in an informed way

Autonomy – Leicestershire ASC’s Customer Portal

Autonomy is a standalone customer portal which links into both LAS (Adult Social Care Case Management) and ContrOCC (ASC Financial management) systems.

It can be accessed directly, or the individual assessments can be accessed via links from the Adult Social Care area of the LCC website.

It has been Live since 2017, starting with the Carers Assessment



Home

Leicestershire Adult Social Care online

Welcome to the Adult Social Care online portal. This portal has been designed to allow you to complete a **Carer's assessment** form to assess your needs as a carer and find out if you may be eligible for support, a **Care and Support Self assessment** form for adult social care if you have your own needs, and a **Financial assessment tool** so you can get an indication of how much you will need to pay towards any support you need for yourself, and submit your assessment to us if necessary.

You can complete these assessments for yourself or on behalf of someone else, if you have their permission.

Current Position

- The portal now contains 3 self-assessments, and an enquiry form for people interested in becoming Shared Lives carers, all accessed via 'tiles' on the portal.
- The self-assessments are:
 1. Carers Assessment
 2. Self Assessment for Care and Support
 3. Financial Assessment



Portal – next steps

The following areas are currently in development:

- Professional referrals – including equipment requests, safeguarding referrals, and requests for attendance at Continuing Health Care reviews
- Customer accounts
- Care accounts (financial information)

Integration: Shared Care Record

- Secure computer system
- Brings together certain important information about patient's who have used services provided by their:
 - GP
 - Local Hospital
 - Community Healthcare
 - Social Services
 - Mental Health Teams
- Enables clinical and care staff to view real-time health and care information across care providers and between different systems
- All records are strictly confidential
- Can only be accessed by clinical and care staff directly involved in a patient's care

What is a Shared Care Record system?

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland will be implementing the Yorkshire & Humber Care Record, which is a secure system that will bring together certain important information about individuals who have used LLR services provided by their GP, at a local hospital, community healthcare, social services or mental health teams.

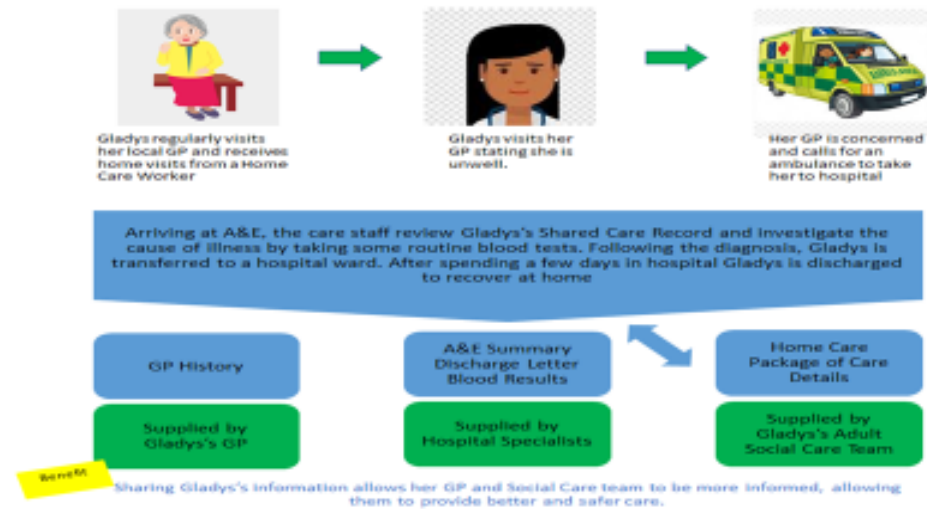
It will provide clinical and care staff directly involved in an individual's care access to the most up to date information about them. It does this by sharing appropriate information from the various health and social care systems holding that information.

Records are kept strictly confidential and can only be accessed by clinical and care staff who are directly involved in that individual's care.

When is this going to happen?

Mobilisation and Technical Infrastructure	June – July 21
1 st Wave of Information made available	June – August 21
1 st Wave operational systems (inc social care)	September 21
Further data and move to BAU	November 21
Additional data requests, settings added as BAU	January 22

How would we use it?



What are the benefits?

- Joined-up and safer care
- More time spent on giving care
- Less paperwork
- Information in one place
- Not having to repeat information to different clinical and care staff

Yorkshire & Humber Care Record

- LLR have chosen to go with the Yorkshire & Humber Care Record solution
- This has been developed using an open platform and open standards by the three Yorkshire and Humber ICS who jointly own the asset and intellectual property.
- Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust hosts all the assets for the shared care record.
- They also utilise expertise from Google, Synanetics and Deloitte to provide the total solution
- An Open philosophy is key to joining the data together



Customer
Facing/Horizon
Scanning

Using Technology To Better
Engage With Citizens And To
Further Understand How
They Are Living Within Their
Communities



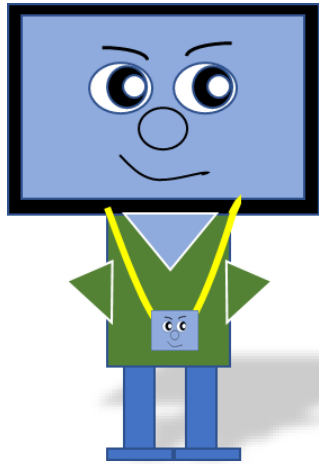
Our Submission

- The Leicestershire Adults and Communities team is keen to improve its digital footprint in its dealings with customers, general enquiries from the public, professionals and third party service providers.
- Our bid focused on improving customer service by responding to enquiries for help and support:
 - As quickly and effectively as possible whilst retaining a human touch;
 - Ensuring answers are tailored specifically to the person asking;
 - Keeping enquiries and responses, private and confidential;
 - Freeing up staff to focus on the most urgent and difficult enquiries or for those unable to access the digitally.
- Provide us with key information on what people are looking for and how best we can help them, so that we can improve the customer experience and services available.




.... Meet CAS your digital Care And Support worker

Whilst CAS is illustrated here as a typical Chatbot



We'd very much like CAS to be more human

Able to interact with everyone

- Individually chosen from a group by the customer
- Receive and give information vocally
- Translatable into different languages
- Present information in different forms e.g. video 

and be a bit more animated



Navigating around the services and support available can be a nightmare if you don't what your looking for!

..... Likewise if you know what you're looking for you don't want spend hours looking for it!

Report Abuse of an Adult	Domestic Abuse	Deprivation of Liberty	Complain about ASC	Eligibility for Care & Support	Urgent Help	Older Person's Bus Pass	Easements to the Care Act during Coronavirus	Living with Dementia	Paying for your Care & Support	Direct Payments	Care Homes Costing More than we will Pay	Working with the Council
Managing Someone else's Affairs	Advocacy	Choosing Best Place to Live	Sheltered Warden-Assisted or Retirement Housing	Personal Budgets	Mental Health Information, Advice and Support	Apply for a Disabled Person's Bus Pass	Easements to the Care Act during Coronavirus	Get Right Help if you have a Learning Disability	Paying for your Own Care (Self-Funder)	Direct Payment Cards		Our Approach
Extra Care Housing	Shared Lives Placement	Short Break in a Care Home	Advocacy	Advocacy						Disabled Facilities Grant		
Supported Living	CQC Registered Services	Covid Winter Support Grant	Care and Support Assessment	Contact Adult Social Care	Blue Badge Parking Scheme	Report Lost, Stolen or Damaged Concessionary Bus Pass	Coronavirus FAQs About Your or Your Cared for Person's Care or Support	Get Right Help if you have a Sight or Hearing Impairment	Independent Financial Advice	Financial Assessment for a Care Home	Changes to Benefits when you go into a Care Home	Infection Prevention and Control
Are you a Carer	Help for Young Carers	Support & Advice with Caring	Child or Young Person Looking after You	Help for Working Carers	Apply for a Disabled Parking Space Outside Your House				Managing Someone else's affairs			
Benefits & Financial Support for Carers	Coronavirus Guidance for Unpaid Carers	Become a Shared Lives Carer	Become a Personal Assistant	Inspired to Care		Get Help to Stay Independent	Equipment Home Adaptations & Assistive Technology	Keep Safe at Home and in the Community	Financial Assessment for Care at Home	Using your Home to pay for a Care Home	Benefits for Adults	Working with you during Coronavirus
Carers Planning for Emergencies & Future	Carers Looking after Yourself	Breaks for Carers	What is a Carers Assessment	Carers Personal Budgets	Lifelines, Telecare and Alarms	Coming Out of Hospital	Meals on Wheels	CQC Registered Services	Personal Budgets	Care Homes Costing More than we will Pay	Care Referrals	

Horizon Scanning/Customer Facing

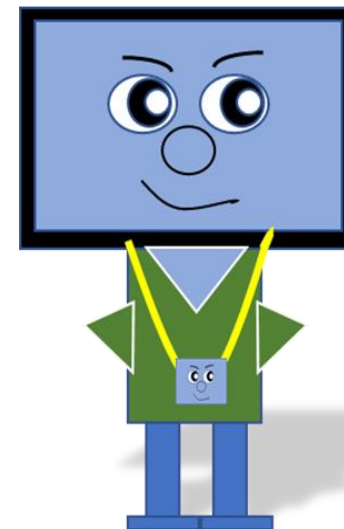
Rather than just automate searches though, we want to be able to provide a personal and appropriate response

Based on what we already know about the person and/or the information they enter when searching

So if Mrs Wells has an account or provides specific information then as well as finding appropriate information


We can tailor the content to her and even assess the level of risk and respond accordingly and she can use it again and again, making it easier to re-access her information.....

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If anything that Mrs Wells shares with us triggers an at risk alarm we can arrange for a member of staff to call her back

Living Independently at Home for Mrs Mary Wells



Get Help to Stay Independent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we can do for you • Voluntary Organisations in your area who can help • Local Support Groups near you
Equipment Home Adaptations & Assistive Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things that could assist you • Where you can get them from • Financial help available
Keep Safe at Home and in the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top tips for staying safe • Local Support Groups near you • Trusted Traders near you
Meals on Wheels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's available based on what you've told us • Will you have to pay • How to arrange
Lifelines, Telecare and Alarms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's available based on what you've told us • Will you have to pay • How to arrange

Horizon Scanning/Customer Facing



"I'm worried about being able to continue living at home"



CAS pulls together a personal response for Mrs Wells





ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
1 NOVEMBER 2021

CURRENT DEMAND PRESSURES ON THE ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES
DEPARTMENT FORECAST BUDGET 2021/22

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the current demand pressures being faced by the Adults and Communities Department and the impact of this demand on the 2021/22 forecast departmental budget outturn.

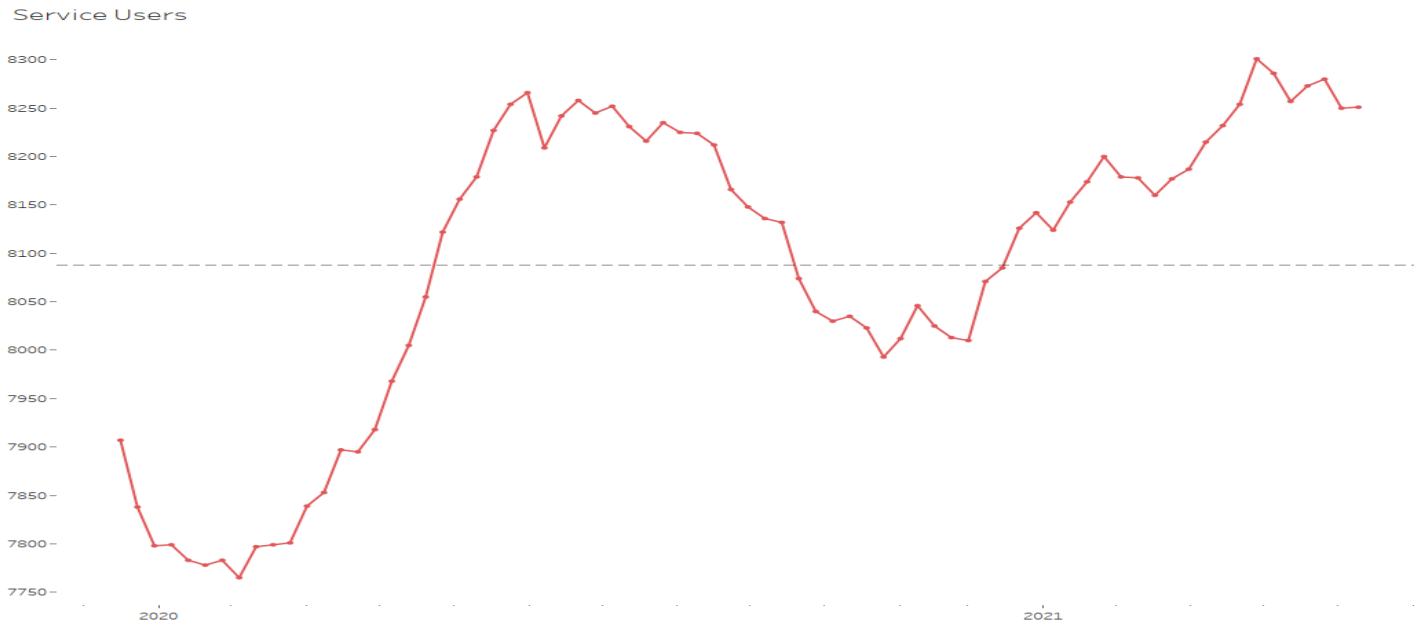
Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. This report outlines the impact of the current expenditure on Adult Social Care services on the current year financial position and identifies the potential impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as reported to this Committee in January 2021 and approved by the County Council at its budget meeting in February 2021.
3. The Council's period 4 forecast financial outturn position was reported to Cabinet in September 2021. The forecast position showed an overspend in Adults and Communities of £13.5m.

Background

4. As reported to Cabinet in September and subsequently discussed at the County Council meeting in the same month, the Department is forecasting a significant overspend against the budget due to an increased level of demand for Adult Social Care services, and an increase in the cost of care resulting from the pandemic.
5. As previously reported to the Committee, demand for care services rose significantly during the first national lockdown and in the early part of the pandemic as the NHS hospital discharge processes changed to ensure patient flow through hospitals. The changes required the NHS to fund all new and increased care on discharge, including people who would normally fund their own care.
6. During the third quarter of 2020/21 the number of people in receipt of social care services began to fall as the care fully funded by the NHS came to an end and new Discharge to Assess (D2A) criteria were introduced. It was at this time that the Council was considering the MTFS for 2021 onwards and determining the growth requirement for the 2021/22 budget.

7. During this period, the Council was in receipt of numerous Covid related funding streams through the NHS, and from central government, which were offsetting expenditure at the time. However, due to their temporary nature, these did not provide any certainty going forward. Due to the level of uncertainty of future funding and the impact of Covid on future demand, the 2021/22 budget was set using the usual demographic growth and cost inflation data available at the time.
8. However, in February 2021, the demand for social care services began to rise once again, largely in response to increased demand on acute healthcare as the hospital services became pressured. The graph below shows overall service user numbers between March 2020 and August 2021.



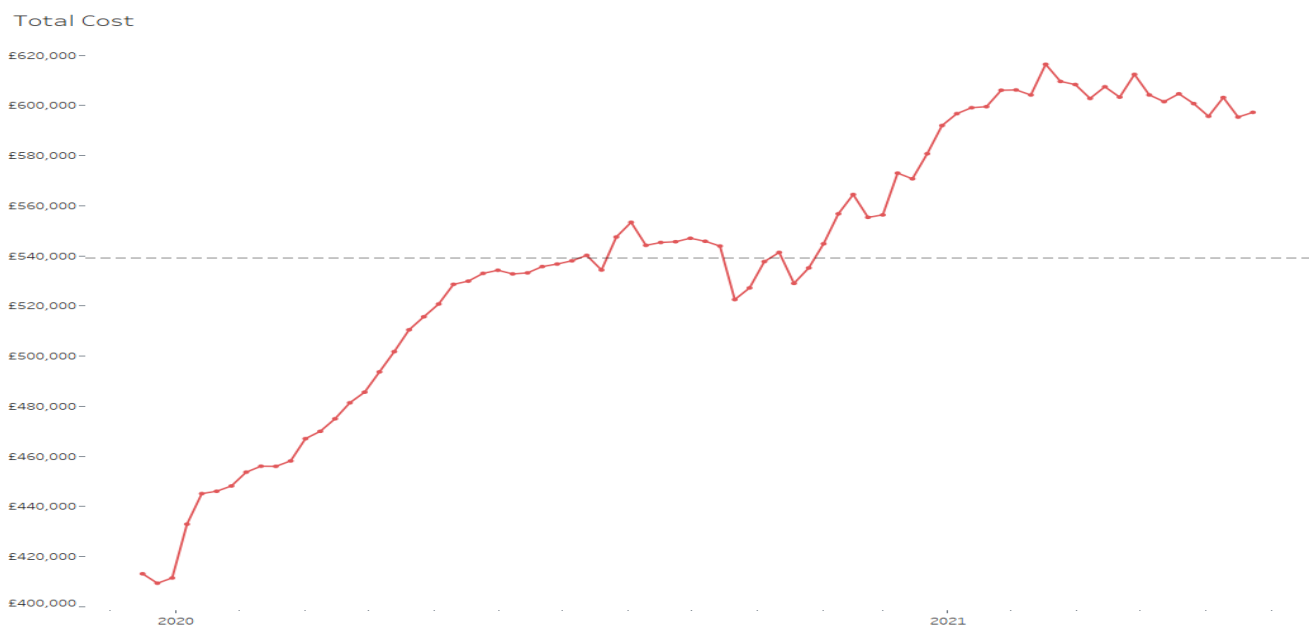
9. This second spike in demand has largely driven the significant increase in departmental expenditure. The increase in demand is being seen in two main areas of provision; homecare and temporary residential care placements.

Homecare

10. As members will be aware, home care services in Leicestershire have traditionally struggled to meet demand across the County due to factors such as rurality, transport, comparatively low wages and issues around workers' terms and conditions. In response to the start of the pandemic and throughout the period, the Council has worked with providers and families to maximise the capacity available and to bring in new capacity wherever possible.
11. Home care providers have risen to this challenge and have worked extremely hard throughout the last 18 months to deliver ever increasing levels of care, to the extent that, in July, the Council was commissioning 6,000 more hours of care per week than at the start of the pandemic.
12. This represents an increase of 32% in the number of people in receipt of home care services from 1,801 on 1 March 2020 to 2,379 currently. In addition to the overall number of people in receipt of home care, the average amount of care each person

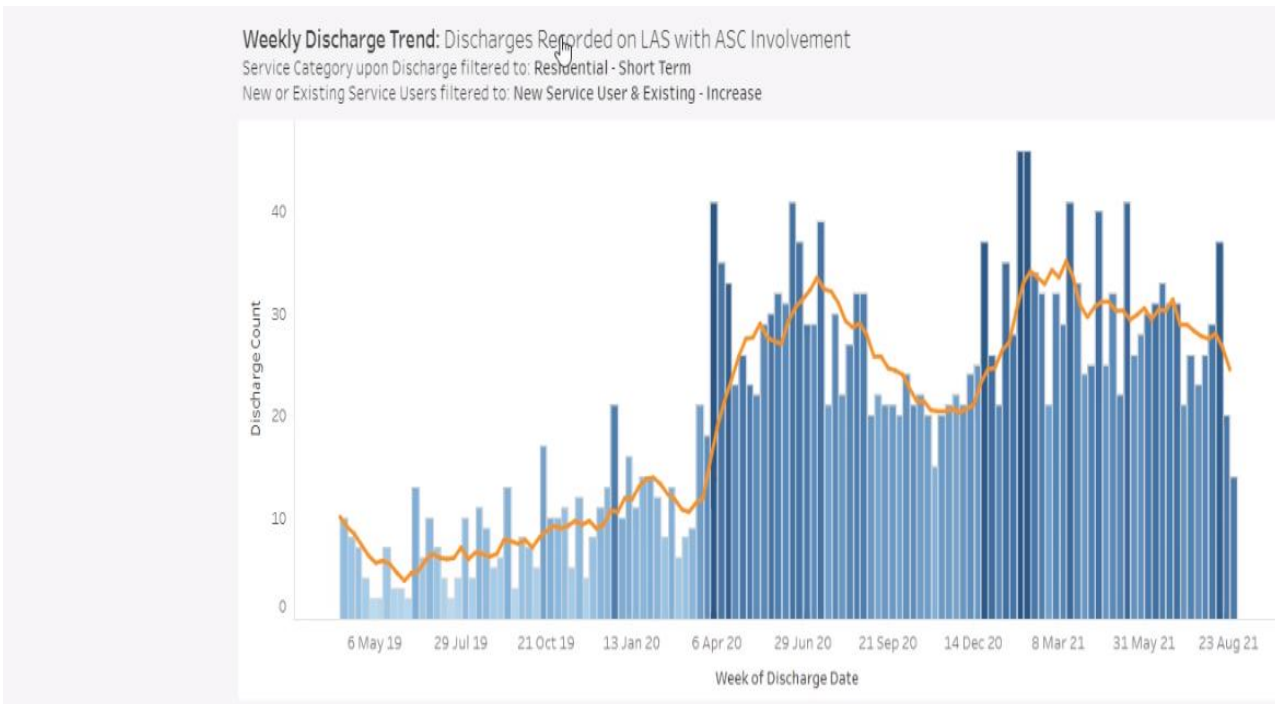
required had risen over the period from 12 hours per week to nearly 15 hours per week on average.

13. This increase was largely due to a greater proportion of people being discharged from hospital requiring adult social care support, and the level of acuity of people on discharge was much higher than was previously the case. In March 2021, there was a 30% increase (average of 90 discharges per week pre-pandemic to a peak of 119 per week in March 2021) in the number of people discharged to social care compared to March 2020.
14. The overall impact on the home care budget of this increased activity was an additional £11.3m of expenditure as shown in the graph below. In addition to the impact on the budget, the availability of home care is also being affected, such that home care providers are struggling now to continue to be able to meet incoming needs or even to maintain current provision.

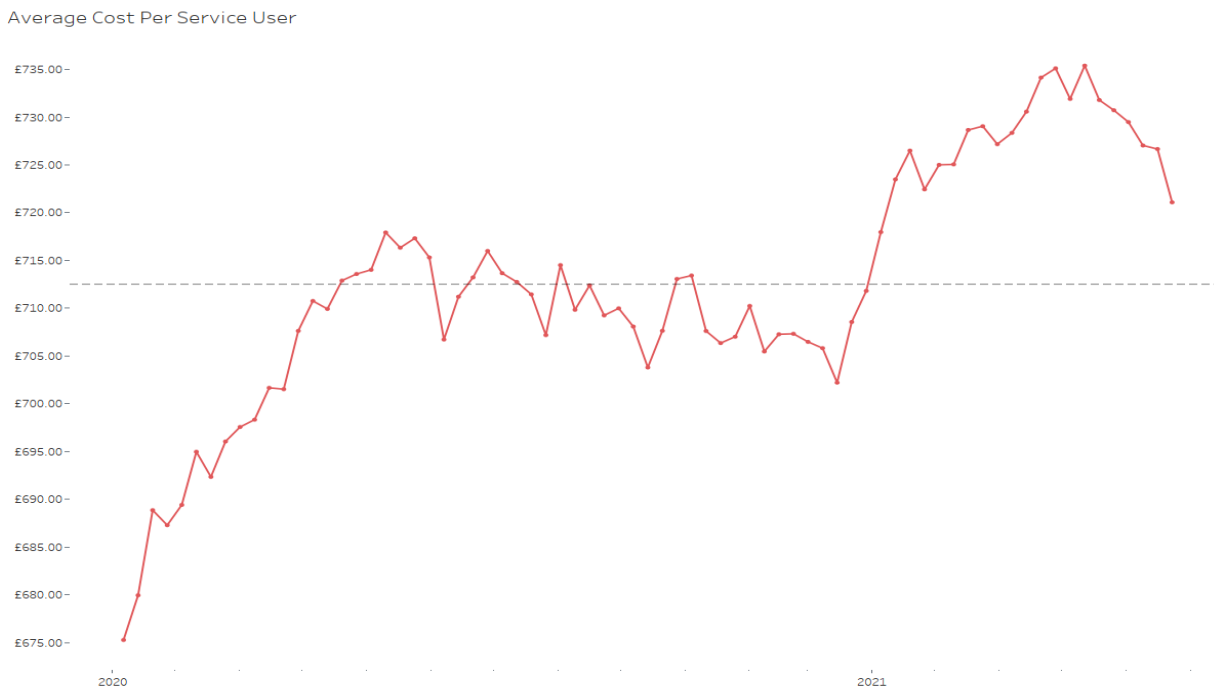


Residential care

15. As previously reported to the Committee, there has been an overall reduction in the number of permanent admissions to residential care homes throughout the period of the pandemic. However, this reduction in permanent placements has been offset by an 82% increase in the number of temporary admissions, resulting in an increase in people placed from 284 pre-pandemic to over 700 at the peak of activity and over 500 currently.
16. The reason for this steep increase in admissions to short term care is twofold; firstly, the need to discharge people from hospital in short time frames in line with the current D2A policy means that often home care provision cannot be found to support people to return home, and secondly, the level of need of people on discharge is such that a large number of people still require 24 hour care on discharge from hospital. The chart overleaf shows the change in level of discharge to short term residential care pre- pandemic and post-pandemic.



17. In addition to the increase in number of people being admitted to short term care, the cost of care has also risen sharply over the period. The effect of this is that although the standard usual cost of care is set at £615 per week for older adult residential care, the actual cost of care to the Authority is now averaging £721 per week as seen in the chart below.



Supported Living

18. In line with the Council’s Ambitions and Strategy for the Adults and Communities Department 2020-2024 ‘Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire’ the Department has aspired to help people to be as independent as possible and to that end has supported people to move into supported living as an alternative to

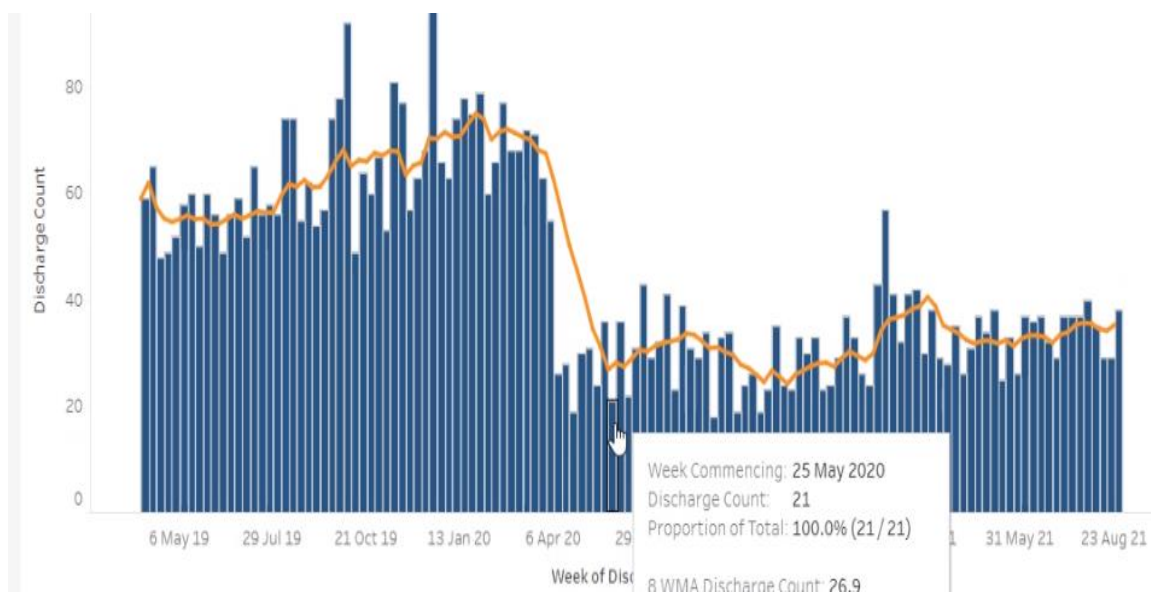
residential care where this has been assessed as being appropriate for the individuals concerned. For the majority of people, supported living is also more cost effective than 24-hour residential care for people with disabilities or mental ill health. However, for some people with particularly complex needs, supported living services can themselves be very costly to the Authority.

19. Since the beginning of the calendar year a higher number of supported living placements have been made of people who had hitherto been cared for fully by the NHS in inpatient settings, sometimes for many years. The national Transforming Care policy requires that the NHS and local authorities work together to ensure that people with complex needs do not reside in NHS and other health settings if they are not in receipt of active assessment and treatment. These 'Transforming Care' placements require a high level of very intensive support which may cost the Council several thousand pounds per week. Whilst these costs are shared with local NHS commissioners, the additional burden on the Council is forecast to be in the region of £2.5m this year.

Mitigations

20. To mitigate the impact of the increased demand pressures on the Department, a number of actions are being taken to address both the increase in activity and the increased costs.
21. In respect of hospital discharges, the Department has been working closely with NHS colleagues to manage flow across the health and care system and to understand the causal factors leading to higher levels of demand on social care services. Several interventions are taking place including the re-establishment of social care staff within hospitals, increasing therapy services on discharge to temporary care homes, increased immediate response services for people being discharged home and improved triage of care requirements. Initial indications suggest that decision-making at the point of discharge is improving, and the prescription of care requirements are being reduced. However, the proportion of people discharged from hospital that require follow up care has not yet returned to pre pandemic levels as shown in the chart below.

Hospital discharges with no ongoing package



22. The Council's reablement offer is being strengthened with additional capacity such that a greater proportion of people discharged from hospital can be offered reablement to promote their independence and free up care hours for others. To date, some vacant posts have been recruited to; however, capacity remains a concern in some areas of the County. In addition, the lack of overall capacity in the home care market results in difficulties in moving the service users assessed as being in need on to long term care once their reablement episode is completed, which then impacts on the Home Care and Reablement Team's (HART) capacity to take on new referrals.
23. All care packages for people already in receipt of home care are being reviewed to ascertain if the level of care and support commissioned is still required, and to consider whether the use of equipment or assistive technology may alleviate the need for personal care and/or support. Reviews are focussing on support plans where a higher level of support is being commissioned, such as where two carers are commissioned for each visit, to the very low support packages where perhaps a person could be independent without support or with alternative support. There has already been a reduction in the average amount of care per user from a high of nearly 15 hours a week to current levels of 12.5 hours per week, but a further reduction where consistent with care needs would enable the freeing up of more care.
24. Brokerage arrangements are under review to ensure the Council has a robust process and system for making placements which meet individual needs, at a reasonable cost to the Authority. Prior to the pandemic, only 23% of residential care placements required an additional payment by the Council either to top up fees or to support additional needs of service users; however, currently 42% of placements have an additional payment. This may be due to higher support needs of individuals or to provider cost increases from increased cost of supply or through providers seeking to make up funding from lower overall occupancy.
25. Additional management decisions and spending controls have been adopted to oversee all decisions on spending above normal rates. This has shown that there may have been a relaxation of control through the Covid period whereby a higher level of service may have been commissioned than would otherwise have been the case.
26. An operational plan is in place to monitor progress against all actions and targets have been established to bring the Department back into line with either pre-Covid baselines or an expected level of activity and expenditure following the pandemic. The Plan is monitored weekly to ensure both operational delivery and strategic fit within the Authority and the wider health and care system. However, it is unlikely that the increase in demand and cost will be fully resolved in this financial year.

Comparison to other areas

27. Not all Local Authorities (LA) are experiencing the same pressures as Leicestershire; although many have seen an increase in demand, not all have seen a similar level of increase in expenditure. In other cases, demand does not appear to have increased in the same way, although some local authorities who have not previously declared an overspend are now beginning to do so or are signalling a pressure into the next

financial year. The paragraphs below identify some of the potential reasons Leicestershire appears to have a more acute problem than other authorities.

28. Leicestershire had a different starting point to other LAs. The Council has been the lowest spending LA nationally on older adults for the last three years. Therefore, there was little to cushion any increase in demand or cost, and little 'fat' within the budget. Average growth in older adults nationally has been running at 3-4% per annum but in Leicestershire growth has been much lower over the period, with actual expenditure on Older Adults social care falling in 19/20. The table below shows the difference in spend between Leicestershire and comparator authorities on overall expenditure on adult social care and on the amount spent on older adults. This reflects both lower expenditure per person and lower overall numbers of people receiving funded care.

Council	Net budget 21/22	Gross Spend on Adult Social Care 19/20 per 000 population	Spend on long term care for people aged 65+ per head of population (total spend divided by total population aged 65+)
North Yorkshire	£180m	£48k	£663
Nottinghamshire	£219m	£43k	£604
Derbyshire	£262m	£48k	£775
Lincolnshire	£206m	£30k	£587
Worcestershire	£162m	£41k	£611
Leicestershire	£151m	£37k	£485

29. Growth and funding during the last 18 months have varied significantly across Councils and across Integrated Care Systems (ICS). The amount of Covid and NHS income allocated to Adult Social Care by LAs and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) is variable, making comparison difficult. There is, however, significant difference in how LAs and CCGs have funded and commissioned care, for example in some areas all pathway 2 (rehabilitation) referrals are funded by NHS, and in other areas all initial Home First response is the responsibility of community health services. In some Councils additional Covid funding has been allocated to support 2021/22 budgets whilst not in others. For the 2020/21 MTFs, Leicestershire only added 'normal' levels of growth as the trend data at the time was unclear and changing. This means the current budget may have been understated compared to some other authorities.
30. There are also differences in the market provision and commissioning practices across local authority areas which may result in differential response to demand and market costs. Some LAs have a much greater in-house provision, giving them more control of cost and management of demand. Other areas have a greater number of dedicated or commissioned NHS and social care rehabilitation and reablement beds for their populations.
31. Long Covid and lack of elective care provision has led to a higher level of need for social care provision, both to support people in the community and to respond to

latent demand now being progressed through the NHS. County and rural areas have a higher proportion of the population that is older and living with long term conditions. As noted in paragraph 7 above, this level of increased need was not accounted for within the Council's growth projections during the 2020/21 MTFS planning.

32. The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) system has been under considerable pressure (reported by NHSE as one of the three highest nationally). The pressure to maintain access to urgent and emergency care, whilst also addressing the backlog of elective treatment, creates intense pressure on the hospitals' back door and discharge requirements, leading to a higher demand from social care services.
33. The introduction of D2A has not been consistent across systems; not all areas interpreted and adopted the D2A guidance in the same way. People discharged from local beds appear to be more acutely unwell than in other areas leading to higher prescription of care and higher needs on discharge. The proportion of people being discharged from hospital on pathways 1-3 is higher in LLR than in other areas, resulting in a much higher proportion of people requiring funded care packages, and a very high number of people requiring bedded care.
34. There is a capacity shortfall of community NHS services and less than that in other ICS areas which places a burden on Adult Social Care services. Local NHS community nursing services are significantly below national average and there is a similar discrepancy regarding community therapy services. Therefore, there is insufficient NHS Home First capacity to provide follow up care for people prior to a full assessment of needs taking place, resulting in people requiring higher packages of care to be commissioned.
35. Capacity of Adult Social Care Home First provision through Community Response Services and HART is insufficient to deal with all hospital discharge and community referrals. Recruitment of home care workers has proved very difficult (and more difficult than elsewhere) due to local employment markets and pay rates.
36. Throughout the pandemic, reablement services were bypassed on discharge and currently, whilst some progress has been made in increasing the number of people accessing the service, numbers continue to fall below expected levels of reablement prior to maintenance care being commissioned. Reablement outcomes are improving but the number of people accessing reablement is lower than pre-pandemic levels.
37. Remote working has led to a more risk averse assessment and support planning practice together with a lack of management oversight of commissioning practices and costs of care. Pressure on social care staff to make placements and source packages has led to an increase in care provision and higher costs of care.
38. The suspension of financial assessment through the first six months of 2020 together with significant capacity issues within Adult Social Care Finance has led to a backlog in financial assessments and a loss of income to the Council, but also has not provided a natural control on incoming demand to the Authority. Leicestershire has a higher number of self-funding residents than other areas. Due to the D2A practice

and funding arrangements, many more self-funders are in receipt of 'free' care prescribed by NHS colleagues and are then transferring to LA responsibility prior to agreements on self-funded packages.

Resource Implications

39. The overall forecast net overspend against departmental budgets at period 4 was £13.5m. This figure included gross overspends on home care of £11.8m, on residential care of £6.3m and on supported living of £4m. These areas of overspend were offset by underspends in other areas, such as staffing and additional income through grants and NHS contributions. However, it should be noted that the majority of the overspends are on recurrent expenditure whereas many of the underspends are non-recurrent in nature, for example, NHS Discharge income £6.5m.
40. The overall position at period 4 had improved from the initial forecast position which showed a potential overspend of over £15m at period 3, and period 5 reporting shows again a small decrease in overspend to £9.8m. This further reduction is predominantly due to increased income from client contributions and increased forecast NHS income. Expenditure at period 5 remains high although appears to be stabilising.
41. In addition to the income from the NHS to support individual discharge arrangements as a part of national funding guidance, NHS colleagues locally have recognised both the pressure on Adult Social Care budgets through increased demand and also the impact of not maintaining user flow through health and care services, and have therefore agreed to transfer an additional £5m of funding into the Council in this financial year as a one off sum to support the financial position of the Council.
42. The impact of the increased level of demand in the current year will place a significant pressure on the medium-term financial planning of the Authority through both increased growth projections and increased cost of care.
43. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the contents of this report.

Conclusions

44. Adult Social Care services in Leicestershire are facing unprecedented demand. Home care services are being stretched as increasing numbers of people are seeking care and support. Many more people than usual are being placed in temporary residential care either because home care services are not available or because home care providers cannot meet their level of needs on discharge from hospital.
45. Local NHS services are also under increasing strain as more people are attending for urgent and emergency care and treatment, whilst the NHS seeks to recover from the pandemic and treat those people who have been waiting for essential treatment to take place.
46. The financial impact of the increased need and demand is that the Department is forecasting a significant overspend against budget in this financial year which will

have a significant impact on future years' growth requirements in the Council's medium-term financial plan.

47. The Committee is asked to note the current position and comment on the Department's efforts to manage the current situation.

Background papers

- Report to Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 18 January 2021 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22-2024/25 – <http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1040&MId=6460&Ver=4>
- Report to County Council -17 February 2021 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 to 2024/25 <http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=6476&Ver=4>
- Report to the Cabinet: 17 September 2021 - Medium Term Financial Strategy – Latest Position - <http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=6446&Ver=4>
- Delivering Wellbeing and opportunity in Leicestershire – Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020-24

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

48. None.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

49. Any changes to care and support arrangements which may arise in connection with managing the overall demand for social care services will be undertaken in partnership with people who use social care services and will include a full assessment and/or review of individual care requirements. The Council will continue to meet its statutory requirements in respect to people who appear to have, or who are assessed as having need for care and support.

Partnership Working and Associated Issues

50. The Council will work in partnership with those people who are in receipt of social care services and with statutory partners to ensure that people's care and support needs continue to be met.

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ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
1 NOVEMBER 2021

UPDATE ON THE PROVISION OF COMMUNITY LIFE CHOICES
SERVICES (DAY SERVICES)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the procurement of commissioned Community Life Choices (CLC) services and consultation feedback received to date on the proposed changes to the provision of in-house CLC services.
2. The Committee is asked to note the update and consider and comment on the initial responses received to date on the consultation, the full outcome of which is due to be presented to Cabinet on 14 December 2021.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

3. On 7 June 2021, the Committee received a report which outlined proposals for the future provision of in-house CLC services and procurement for commissioned CLC services. The Committee confirmed its support on the proposed way forward and requested to be kept informed of future developments.
4. On 22 June 2021, the Cabinet subsequently agreed that a procurement exercise to establish a new CLC provider Framework, with a view to the new service being implemented by the end of November 2021; and agreed that the Director of Adults and Communities be authorised to commence a consultation exercise on proposals to reduce the Council's in-house CLC services and help existing service users move to appropriate alternative services.
5. The consultation proposal has changed from that outlined in the report to Cabinet on 22 June 2021 in relation to consulting with people affected by the proposal, on the advice of legal and communication team colleagues, to an open formal engagement process for a period of eight weeks.
6. A further report is to be submitted to the Cabinet on 14 December 2021 regarding the outcome of the consultation and a proposed way forward for the future delivery of in-house CLC services.

Background

7. The County Council operates a commissioning framework for the provision of day services known as CLC, which allows service users choice of provision from a

selection of pre-approved providers. This contract is due to end on 30 November 2021.

8. In addition to the Framework, there are currently 10 building-based day services provided in-house who currently employ 43 full time equivalent staff across locations in Ashby, Blaby, Coalville, Hinckley, Loughborough (2), Market Harborough, Melton Mowbray, South Wigston and Wigston. The Council provides a mix of CLC services which are either within a group or one-to-one setting delivered either from building based or community services as half or full day sessions depending on the customer's assessed need.
9. The County Council's market share within the CLC provider market has steadily reduced over several years. The Covid-19 pandemic has also meant that capacity to deliver in-house services has been dramatically reduced over the past 18 months, leading to a requirement to consider how best to use the resources available to the Council to deliver the right outcomes for service users. Thus, resulting in proposals to better utilise alternative provision within the provider market where there is greater capacity.
10. To that end the Council has proposed to re-focus its in-house services on crisis care, short term reablement and enablement, support for carers through the delivery of a responsive seven day a week service and ceasing the provision of long-term maintenance CLC support.
11. Through the re-procurement of the CLC Framework, work is underway to test the external market to establish whether capacity can be developed to meet the needs of people who attend in-house CLC services.
12. Since the start of the pandemic, officers from in-house CLC services have been actively reviewing services users' needs and existing packages and have worked with service users and their families. Where there has been a need or request, appropriate alternative provision has been sourced from within the current provider market.
13. Following Cabinet approval to consult on the proposed changes to the service there has been a 27% reduction in the number of service users (SUs) accessing in-house CLC provision due to reasons outlined above. The pre-consultation and mid-consultation service usage is outlined in the tables below:

Pre-consultation service usage	Number of SUs
The Trees, Hinckley	7
Bridgeview, Melton	13
Coalville Community Resource Centre (CCRC), Coalville	15
Hood Court, Ashby	3
Roman Way, Market Harborough	17
Timber Street, Wigston	8
Carlton Drive/Blaby Base, Wigston	20

Charnwood CLC/Victoria, Loughborough	29
Total	112

Mid-consultation service usage	Number of SUs
The Trees, Hinckley	3
Bridgeview, Melton	9
CCRC, Coalville	9
Hood Court, Ashby	2
Roman Way, Market Harborough	11
Timber Street, Wigston	12
Carlton Drive/Blaby Base, Wigston	12
Charnwood CLC/Victoria, Loughborough	24
Total	82

Pre-consultation Engagement

14. In advance of the launch of the formal consultation, communication with people who are directly impacted by these proposals had taken place including with the service staff. Information and reports were shared and opportunities for people to make contact to discuss the proposal was made available.
15. People directly impacted by the proposal were contacted to establish what support was required in maximising participation and engagement during the consultation so that their views can be captured.

Consultation

16. The eight-week formal consultation was launched on 31 August 2021 and is due to end 26 October 2021. The consultation comprises of a document narrating the details of the proposal, alongside a questionnaire. These are available via the Council's website at www.leicestershire.gov.uk/in-house-community-life-choices, or by post on request. An Easy Read version has also been produced. A dedicated mailbox (email) and phone line is set up to ensure that enquiries can be directed and responded to accordingly.
17. The launch of the consultation was communicated directly with service users and/or relatives/carers affected by the proposal, and paper copies including an Easy Read version of the consultation documents were distributed.
18. Service users and/or relatives/carers of those people who currently use in-house CLC services have been invited to discuss the proposal and/or support required by telephone or face-to-face meetings. This has been made possible by holding meetings in a building deemed to be Covid safe by the Council's Health and Safety Team, ensuring appropriate personal protective equipment and social distancing measures were adopted.

19. Face to face meetings and direct support continues to be provided to those people impacted by the proposal to complete consultation surveys. Where appropriate, advocacy and translation services have also been engaged in maximising engagement and ensuring that people fully understand the proposal and are able to contribute their views and have their say in the consultation.
20. Virtual team meetings are being held with service staff and offers for one-to-one meetings and wellbeing support is being provided.
21. The consultation has also been promoted to:
 - Employees of Direct Services;
 - Elected Members;
 - Trade Unions;
 - Leicester City Council;
 - Rutland Council;
 - Local Clinical Commissioning Groups;
 - Blaby District Council;
 - Charnwood Borough Council;
 - Oadby and Wigston Borough Council;
 - North West Leicestershire District Council;
 - Harborough District Council;
 - Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council;
 - Melton Borough Council;
 - Healthwatch;
 - Voluntary Action Leicester;
 - General public via a media release and social media posts on the Council's Facebook and Twitter platforms;
 - Learning Disability Partnership Board.
22. As of 15 October 2021, the Council has received 255 responses to the consultation.

Emerging themes and headlines

23. Of those respondents, 58 (23%) are either direct in-house CLC service users or a relative/carer of an in-house CLC service user.
24. The overwhelming majority of respondents strongly disagreed with the proposal for the Council's in-house CLC services to stop providing long term day services packages – 91% of the current users/relatives/carers of in-house CLC services and 83% of the total respondents.
25. Based on the additional comments made, the main reasoning for this response is the lack of alternative provision in the provider market:
 - *“I totally disagree because you can't provide places for people like the man I care for who needs 1-1 care, you've been looking for weeks.”*
 - *“The lack of alternatives for the service user support. There is a shortness in the Melton area of support that is able to meet their needs.”*

- *“This provides an important service to both service users and families. There is no other service in this area that provides this kind of service to people with very complex needs.”*
- *“We have tried other services in the past but unfortunately they didn't meet my daughter's needs.”*
- *“(anonymous) has tried attending independent services and they cannot cope with him.”*
- *“Private sector is not suitable for me needs.”*
- *“Services delivered in house are for people with complex care and support needs and these facilities are unavailable in the private sector. Also, staff in the independent sector are not use to dealing with crisis care and/or have the skill set required like the in-house provision.”*
- *“are there the width and breadth of services that the clients of our sector require. For example, as far as I am aware in the independent sector the amount of hoists is pitiful, as there seems to be a lack of will, knowledge and training.”*

26. Over half of the respondents strongly disagreed with the Council's proposals to support existing service users to transition from in-house CLC services to new alternative provision if the Council stopped providing long term days services at in-house CLC locations – 51% of the current users/relatives/carers of in-house CLC services and 52% of the total respondents.

27. Over half of the respondents strongly disagreed that the market (via an open framework) could provide an improved level of diversity, choice and control in the range of CLC services available to service users – 53% of the current users/relatives/carers of in-house CLC services and 50% of the total respondents.

28. The main reasoning for this was yet again the lack of capacity to deal with more complex needs of individuals:

- *“Again, no placements available for more complex needs.”*
- *“Other services may be unable to provide the level of care or expertise that CLC services currently provide. Most of the people that use the services have complex needs.”*
- *“Because many people with the conditions will not be acceptable to private providers as they do not have the means to accommodate them as mentioned previously. The providers that you mention do not exist at present. The facilities needed, do not coincide with the facilities being offered.”*
- *“Our daughter has tried various alternatives in the past, but they failed to meet her needs and put more strain and stress on our family.”*
- *“We have no knowledge of the availability of provision in the sector. Lack of information.”*
- *“Don't know what's out there, there isn't really anything in this area.”*
- *“The market lacks capacity in general and does not have the appropriate facilities to accommodate such a range of services. It is likely that support packages will breakdown and mean that the council would need to provide more services around the person.”*

29. The early emerging themes of the feedback are heavily focussed on the provider market; namely around gaps in service provision for those with more complex needs and the lack of information and engagement with the sector about what is available in specific local areas where the council has existing in-house CLC service provision.

Update on Procurement of the New CLC framework

30. The CLC Framework closed to bidders on 27 September 2021 and the Council received a total of 37 tender responses. Of the 37 tender responses received, 16 providers have included an application to deliver services for people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities. The tender responses are being evaluated and it is anticipated that award letters will be sent out to successful bidders who will form part of the new CLC Framework at the end of October 2021.

Conclusions

31. The outcome of the consultation will be reported to the Cabinet on 14 December 2021 and a proposed way forward agreed.
32. The Committee is asked to note the update and consider and comment on the initial responses received to the consultation, which can be included within the report on the outcome of the formal consultation and other engagement activities due to be presented to the Cabinet on 14 December 2021.
33. A supplementary report will be provided to the Committee in due course which will include an update on the responses received to the consultation and the outcome of the procurement.

Resource Implications

34. The current budget for in-house CLC service provision for 2021/22 is £3m. Further analysis is ongoing as part of the consultation process to quantify future costs and potential savings; balancing the cost of in-house provision against a transfer of expenditure to externally provided services.
35. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the contents of this report.

Background papers

- Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2018-22
<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2021/2/1/LCC-Strategic-Plan-2018-22.pdf>
- Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire – Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020-24
<https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/resource/files/field/pdf/2020/9/30/Vision-and-Strategy-for-Adults-and-Communities-Department-2020-2024.pdf>
- Report to Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 6 September 2016 - Community Life Choices Framework 2017-20 and Consultation on Future Delivery
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1040&MId=4521&Ver=4>
- Report to the Cabinet 11 October 2016 – Community Life Choices Framework 2017-20 - Outcome of Consultation on Future Delivery
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=4606&Ver=4>
- Report to Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 1 November 2016 - Community Life Choices Framework 2017-20 – Outcome of Consultation on

Future Delivery

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1040&MId=4936&Ver=4>

- Report to Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee –7 June 2021 – Procurement of Community Life Choices Services
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1040&MId=6462>
- Report to the Cabinet: 22 June 2021 – Procurement of Community Life Choices Services
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MID=6444>

Equality and Human Rights Implications

36. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) screening document has been completed in relation to the consultation. The EHRIA has yet to be commented on by the Departmental Equalities Group, however a verbal update will be provided to the Committee at the meeting. It concluded that the recommendations should have a neutral impact on the services.
37. The EHRIA will be reviewed and updated following the consultation and presented alongside the Cabinet report on a proposed way forward.

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ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
1 NOVEMBER 2021

MANDATORY COVID-19 VACCINATION FOR WORKERS IN CARE HOMES

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide an update on mandatory Covid-19 vaccinations for people working in care homes, including anyone entering as part of their employment, and how the Council is supporting care home providers with this new requirement. It covers the measures that the Council has put in place to ensure that, for its own workers, only those who are fully vaccinated will be deployed into care homes.
2. The report also describes the recently closed national consultation on proposals to extend mandatory vaccination for Covid-19 and seasonal flu to frontline health and wider social care staff in England.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

3. The provision of adult social care in Leicestershire is underpinned by the Council's Strategic Plan and the Adults and Communities Department Strategy 2020-24, the latter of which was approved by Cabinet at its meeting of 18 September 2020. The Strategy sets out the aim to ensure that the services delivered meet the eligible needs of the citizens of Leicestershire to maximise their opportunities and wellbeing.
4. Reports to the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 2 November 2020, 8 March 2021 and 6 September 2021 have provided in-depth descriptions of the challenges faced by care homes as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, and set out the support offered to them by the County Council to continue to provide safe and effective care.
5. Leicestershire County Council's responsibilities under the Care Act 2014 include market oversight, involving proactive work to manage risks to service interruption, ensuring that people continue to receive the care and support they need.

Background

Mandatory vaccination requirement

6. The requirement for those working in a Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered care home environment to be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 unless they have an exemption, was confirmed by the Government on 22 July 2021, with a 16 week lead-in period for unvaccinated workers to have their first and second doses before the full implementation date of 11 November 2021. This also applies to all professionals and trades people who enter these settings.
7. Care home managers across external and internal services are working hard to prepare staff and services to ensure that they are compliant with the new law.

Take-up rates

8. The Covid-19 vaccination programme in Leicestershire began in December 2020. The County Council worked with the local NHS in the planning and prioritisation of vaccinations across Leicestershire to ensure consistency. Much of the vaccination programme has been co-ordinated at a Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland level. The local roll-out followed the national priority cohorts, with care home workers and residents being in the first prioritised grouping.
9. In Leicestershire, as of 15 October 2021:
 - 94% of workers have received dose 1 and 86.4% have received dose 2 in care homes for older adults;
 - 89% of workers have received dose 1 and 81.4% have received dose 2 in care homes for working age adults.
10. As the table below shows, for dose 1, Leicestershire's take up of the vaccines amongst older adult care home staff is in line with the rate for the East Midlands and England. For working age adult homes' staff, it is lower. For dose 2, Leicestershire's rate for older adult home workers is slightly below the region and England. For working age adults, the local dose 2 take up is the same as the regional level, and lower than that of England.

	<u>Older Adult Care Home Staff</u>		<u>Working Age Adult Care Homes Staff</u>	
	Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 1	Dose 2
<u>Leics</u>	<u>94.0%</u>	<u>86.4%</u>	<u>89.0%</u>	<u>81.4%</u>
<u>East Mids</u>	<u>93.6%</u>	<u>87.9%</u>	<u>92.6%</u>	<u>81.4%</u>
<u>England</u>	<u>94.3%</u>	<u>88.0%</u>	<u>92.1%</u>	<u>84.6%</u>

Source: <https://tableau.leics.gov.uk/#/workbooks/9263/views>

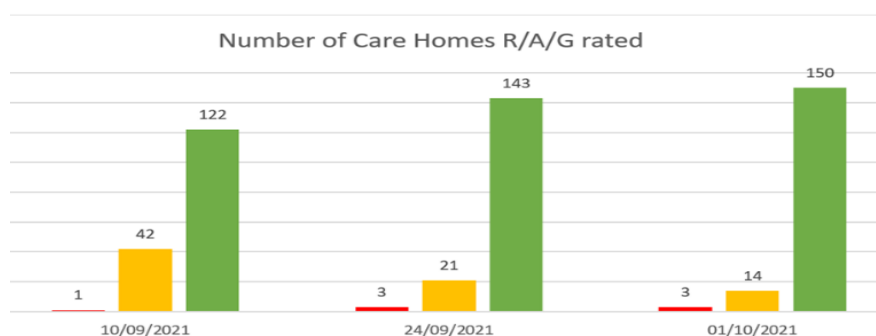
11. Every encouragement and support continues to be given to providers and staff across internal and external services to increase vaccine take-up. Some of the

methods employed include virtual Q&A sessions with experts; publicity materials and FAQ documents; communications for Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic communities; provision of vaccination sessions at times and locations which are convenient; adjustments for people who are needle-phobic; a dedicated social care provider and staff vaccination enquiry web page, enquiry form, enquiry email address, and booking phone line; weekly updates; targeted work for areas of particular hesitancy such as pregnancy; a 'healthy conversations toolkit' for managers; and a care home manager resource pack.

12. External providers have sought their own professional advice on the human resources and legal considerations for their workforce, whilst internally staff roles affected by the legislation have been identified and managers are working with HR Advisors where support is required. Internal policies and procedures have been drafted in line with government guidance and internal legal advice and is continually being reviewed as and when more is known.

Risk appraisal

13. The Council has undertaken detailed work across all 167 operational independent care homes in Leicestershire to allocate a 'red-amber-green' risk rating to each, principally focussed on the likelihood and impact of a reduced number of staff being able to work in the setting.
14. Providers have been asked to identify how many staff in each role, such as manager, care staff, and nurses, who have not been vaccinated, to determine the risk to the provider if the staff continue to decline the vaccination. This has informed the prioritisation of support to providers by adult social care and public health officers to address barriers to vaccination on an individual care home basis. For example, in two higher-risk homes, it has been identified that the vaccine hesitant staff are younger, and therefore tailored approaches to consider barriers to vaccination for younger workers have been implemented.
15. The risk ratings have been reviewed weekly. As of 5 October 2021, there are three 'red', 14 'amber' and 150 'green' care homes in Leicestershire; as shown in the table below, overall, the number of higher-risk (red and amber) homes has decreased in recent weeks, reflecting providers' efforts in encouraging take-up of the vaccine.



16. A 'menu' of interventions has been developed which has been used by the Council's officers with care home workers to enable the most appropriate and tailored package of measures to encourage take-up. This has included:
- Detailed discussions with GPs, including on culturally relevant matters;
 - Staff focus groups using behavioural science methods to determine barriers to vaccination;
 - Manager training in the use of the 'healthy conversations toolkit';
 - Hands-on support with recruitment and retention;
 - Business continuity planning and critique;
 - Signposting to specialist resources including (but not limited to) a supportive framework within the Council's internal policy and a bespoke procedure for managers to follow.
17. Multi-disciplinary teams have met to review the highest risk, 'red' homes, and to consider the support needs of people living there ahead of 11 November. It is not possible to list these individual care homes to avoid compromising confidentiality.

Professionals entering care homes from other settings

18. The regulations require that workers entering care homes from other settings – including but not limited to GPs, hairdressers, community nurses and plumbers – must also be fully vaccinated from 11 November. The Council has supported providers with this element of the requirement through communications which care homes can use to inform contractors entering the home of the requirement and their obligations. In addition, liaison with Health bodies has taken place to ensure that only fully vaccinated staff can be deployed to care homes and can evidence their vaccination status.
19. The obligation includes relevant Council staff who in the course of their work must enter care homes, including social workers, best interest assessors, and adult social care contract officers. The Council has identified all roles in scope of the regulations and has worked with staff affected by the legislation to progress the requirement for care home workers to become fully vaccinated by the 11 November deadline. For a very small number of employees, exemption on medical grounds has been identified. The Council's vaccination policy has been revised to take the changes into account and will continue to be revised as necessary.

Medical exemption from vaccination

20. National guidance was recently published on temporary medical exemption for Covid-19 vaccination of people working or deployed in care homes. From mid-September, people working or volunteering in care homes who have one of a limited number of medical reasons for being unable to have a Covid-19 vaccine (including prior vaccination abroad) have been able to self-certify that they meet the medical exemption criteria.

21. Care home workers who are exempt must sign a form and give it to their employer as proof of their temporary exemption status. The temporary self-certification process was introduced for a short period prior to the launch of the new NHS Covid Pass system, which subsequently went live on 1 October 2021.
22. Now that the NHS Covid Pass system is active, care home workers will need to apply for a formal medical exemption through that process. The temporary self-certification expires 12 weeks after the NHS Covid Pass system was launched, i.e. 23 December 2021.
23. All exemptions will be confirmed by the worker's GP, specialist clinician or midwife. The NHS Covid Pass is then used to prove the individual's status.

Response to provider instability and failure

24. Covid-19 has been very challenging for the care home market, and although the requirement for workers to be fully vaccinated is positive for the safety of residents and other workers, it brings with it a short-term risk of instability as a result of insufficient staffing, if key workers remain unvaccinated and cannot work beyond 11 November, and if recruitment is unsuccessful. There are also medium-term risks of financial instability or failure if a care home has to operate on reduced capacity in an effort to manage its operation within the available staffing.
25. As described earlier in this report, the Council has worked extensively with the sector to understand and assist managers in managing risks relating to the new requirement. However, some short-term and medium-term risks remain.
26. During the pandemic, the Council has learnt about potential indicators of unstable care home provision. As a result of this, the support offered to homes has developed in the last 18 months and the escalation points of concerns for a home's ability to manage the situation, to enable a multi-disciplinary approach.
27. Providers are supported with recruitment through the Council's Inspired to Care team. Although they do not act as a short-notice recruitment agency, they can support a provider with long-term recruitment to enable them to have a full staff team which reduces financial pressure on a home as well as providing continuity of care for people living there.
28. In case of provider failure there is a mutual aid agreement where all Health and Social Care partners become involved to ensure people are cared for safely. This includes Health partners where clinical support may be needed, the CQC and internal direct services in case of additional hands-on support being required.
29. The Council uses a variety of options to respond to provider failure depending on the size, vulnerability, and risks of a home. The Council continues to use its provider instability and failure protocol and checklist. The checklist provides a framework to enable the Council to manage issues in care homes and has been successful in addressing quality concerns in care homes within Leicestershire.

Consultation on mandatory vaccination of health and wider social care staff

30. The National Government has recently run a consultation on extending mandatory vaccination to frontline health and wider social care staff in England. Staff may be obliged to have Covid-19 and 'flu vaccinations under the proposals. If introduced, requirements would apply to those with face-to-face contact with patients and clients through the delivery of services as part of a CQC regulated activity. It would mean that only those workers who are fully vaccinated or who have a medical exemption could be deployed to deliver those services. The consultation closed on 22 October 2021.
31. The Council has responded to the consultation to indicate that whilst the additional protection from infection for people who use adult social care services is to be welcomed, the impact on the workforce is likely to be severe. Home care and other adult social care providers have, for many years, found recruitment challenging, a position which has worsened significantly in recent months with the reduction in workers from overseas, and competing industries such as hospitality and retail opening up again following the height of the pandemic. Even a small number of vaccine-hesitant workers may compromise the ability of social care providers to deliver services and will have resulting negative impacts on hospital discharge and the ability of people to be supported in their own homes.

Engagement with Providers

32. Council officers are in regular contact with care home providers to give bespoke support and address queries. Regular care home provider meetings are held to engage with providers and give a two-way flow of information to support care homes to remain stable during the pandemic period, including vaccinations and the mandatory obligation. These have been well-received by providers since their initiation in March 2020 and will continue for as long as they are required. These Covid-19-specific meetings run in parallel with new locality-based forums which will begin to increase the focus back to strategic, contract management and business-as-usual matters.

Risks

33. Risks are highlighted throughout this report, including the measures which the Authority has been undertaking or is considering to mitigate them.
34. Central to the Council's approach to risk is the need to ensure the safety of people using its services and those of the adult social care providers which it commissions.

Resource Implications

35. Internal staff resource implications of the mandated vaccinations are given earlier in the report.

36. The Council used £154k of the national Workforce Capacity Fund to support providers with the costs of worker Covid-19 vaccination, which have included staff time away from their core duties, travel, administration, and manager time in addressing employees' queries.
37. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the contents of this report.

Conclusions

38. The care home market has been substantially impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, and the mandatory vaccination requirement for employees and visiting workers has presented a considerable challenge. However, Leicestershire is well placed to meet the regulations, with the majority of the workforce now having completed a course of an approved Covid-19 vaccine, and with approximately 10% of care homes receiving support with workforce risk ahead of the 11 November deadline.
39. The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report, including the national consultation on extending the requirement for vaccination to the wider health and social care workforce, and to cover Covid-19 and seasonal 'flu vaccination.

Background Papers

- Report to the Cabinet: 18 September 2020: Adults and Communities Department Strategy 2020-24 – Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=5997&Ver=4>
- Report to Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 2 November 2020 – Care Home Sustainability
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1040&MId=6171&Ver=4>)
- Report to Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 8 March 2021 – Care Home Sustainability -
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1040&MId=6461&Ver=4>
- Report to Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 6 September 2021 – Care Home Quality
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1040&MId=6463&Ver=4>
- Vaccination of people working or deployed in care homes: operational guidance
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaccination-of-people-working-or-deployed-in-care-homes-operational-guidance>
- National consultation on making vaccination a condition of deployment in the health and wider social care sector
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/making-vaccination-a-condition-of-deployment-in-the-health-and-wider-social-care-sector>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

40. A copy of this report will be circulated to all members.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

41. There are no Equality and Human Rights implications arising directly from this report, which does not propose specific service changes.
42. The Department of Health and Social Care has undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment of the requirement to make vaccination a condition of deployment in care homes. It has identified that negative impacts (such as the possibility of a worker losing their job) are likely for some protected characteristics because they have higher vaccine hesitancy rates:
 - sex, particularly for women;
 - Black, Asian, and Multi-Ethnic groups;
 - age, particularly younger people;
 - religion, where people do not wish to be vaccinated because of their beliefs;
 - pregnancy and maternity.
43. The County Council has a range of interventions and promotional activity in place to support providers with the expectation, including measures tailored to specific groups or hesitancy reasons. The Council wishes to build vaccine confidence in the external workforce such that workers of all backgrounds can continue to provide support for people with adult social care needs in Leicestershire.

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