



Meeting: **Cabinet**

Date/Time: **Tuesday, 28 April 2026 at 2.00 pm**

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

Contact: **Ms. J. Bailey (Tel. 0116 305 2583)**

Email: **jenny.bailey@leics.gov.uk**

Membership

Mr. D. Harrison CC (Chairman)

Mr. C. Abbott CC

Mr. V. Richichi CC

Mr. K. Crook CC

Mr. M. Squires CC

Mr. H. Fowler CC

Mr. A. Tilbury CC

Mr. C. Pugsley CC

Please note: this meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's web site at [Cabinet meeting webcasts](#) - notices will be on display at the meeting explaining the arrangements.

AGENDA

<u>Item</u>	<u>Report by</u>	<u>Key Decision</u>
1. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2026.		(Pages 3 - 12)
2. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.		
3. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.		
4. Leicestershire School Term Dates, Autumn 2027 to Summer 2032.	Director of Children and Family Services	(Pages 13 - 32) Yes
5. Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2026-2027.	Director of Children and Family Services	(Pages 33 - 70) Yes



<u>Item</u>		<u>Report by</u>		<u>Key Decision</u>
6.	Investing in Leicestershire Programme Rural Estate Strategy 2026-2036.	Director of Corporate Resources	(Pages 71 - 132)	Yes
7.	New Plan-Making System and a Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan with Rutland County Council and Leicester City Council.	Director of Environment and Transport	(Pages 133 - 142)	Yes
8.	Crisis and Resilience Fund 2026-2029.	Director of Public Health, Law and Governance	(Pages 143 - 150)	
9.	Dates of Council Meetings in 2027/28 and 2028/29.	Director of Public Health, Law and Governance	(Pages 151 - 152)	
10.	Items referred from Overview and Scrutiny.			
11.	Any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent.			



Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 24 March 2026.

PRESENT

Mr. D. Harrison CC (in the Chair)

Mr. C. Abbott CC

Mr. K. Crook CC

Mr. H. Fowler CC

Mr. V. Richichi CC

Mr. M. Squires CC

Mr. A. Tilbury CC

Apologies

Mr. C. Pugsley CC

In attendance

Mr. J. Miah CC and Mrs. D. Taylor CC

94. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2026 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

95. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

96. Declarations of Interest.

Mr. D. Harrison CC, Mr. V. Richichi CC, Mr. M. Squires CC and Mr. A. Tilbury CC declared an other registrable interest in Agenda Item 14 – A511 Growth Corridor – Approval to Undertake Pre-Commencement Works and Submit the Full Business Case as members elected to represent divisions in North West Leicestershire.

97. Environment and Transport 2026/27 Highways and Transportation Capital Programme and Works Programme.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which presented the Environment and Transport Department 2026/27 Highways and Transportation Capital Programme and Works Programme. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 4', is filed with these minutes.

Members noted representations which had been received from Mr. P. King CC, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. In response, the Director of Environment and Transport reported that, in relation to the A6 around Kibworth, details had been provided on the short and long term strategy to address the issues.

In relation to flooding, the County Council was working with the Environment Agency to identify actions and solutions to mitigate the impact of flooding. It was also important to continue to work with local communities previously affected by flooding.

Members recognised the importance of the transport network and commended the work being undertaken by officers to maintain Leicestershire's roads. The capital programme for this formed an important element of spending overall and it was agreed that this recognised the challenges faced by the County Council.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the 2026/27 Programmes, noting the acute financial context in which they have been developed and will be delivered, as set out in Part B of the report, be approved;
- b) That the submission of the draft Local Transport Delivery Plan (LTDP) to the Department for Transport (DfT) on 20 March 2026 for review, to meet the DfT's requirements be noted. A separate report will be presented to the Cabinet in September 2026, prior to the submission of the final LTDP;
- c) That the Director of Environment and Transport be authorised:
 - i) Following consultation with the Director of Corporate Resources and the relevant Cabinet Lead Members, to prepare and submit bids, as appropriate, to secure external funding for delivery of schemes identified in the Programmes;
 - ii) Following consultation with the Director of Corporate Resources, the Assistant Director of Law and Governance and the Cabinet Lead Member for Corporate Resources, to enter such contracts as is necessary to progress schemes in the approved Programmes to allow early contractor involvement to take place in advance of all external funding required to deliver the scheme being secured, provided that any such arrangements are appropriately limited in scope and progressed in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules, and do not commit the Council beyond the intended early-stage works prior to the relevant funding and governance approvals being in place, noting the challenges set out in Part B of the report;
 - iii) Following consultation with the Director of Corporate Resources, the Assistant Director of Law and Governance and the Cabinet Lead Member for Resources, to undertake preparatory work as considered appropriate to develop savings as set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and to consider that further savings are implemented in a timely manner.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION

To highlight the challenging financial context in which the Programmes are being developed and will be delivered.

To enable the delivery of the Programmes for the 2026/27 financial year.

To enable the delivery of large capital schemes using a collaborative approach, to work with contractors to reduce risk and increase cost certainty. Working in this way will also provide necessary assurance to partners and third-party funders contributing to the cost of delivering the Capital Programme.

To enable early work to be undertaken on the development of new savings to address the worsening financial position.

98. Delivering the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2025-2040 - Enabling Travel Choice Strategy.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which presented the outcomes of the initial consultation that had been undertaken to inform the development of the Enabling Travel Choice Strategy (ETCS), which formed part of the Council's full Local Transport Plan 2025-2040 (LTP4). Approval was also sought to undertake a further consultation on the draft ETCS document. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 5', is filed with these minutes.

Mr. Tilbury CC reiterated that the consultation had asked residents to comment on the barriers to travel, and the draft Strategy would address these concerns. Members agreed that it was important to ensure that communities were connected to the services that they needed.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the work undertaken to date on the development of the Enabling Travel Choice Strategy (ETCS) and the outcomes of the initial consultation held to inform its development be noted;
- b) That the draft ETCS document, attached as Appendix A to the report, be approved for consultation;
- c) That a twelve week consultation on the draft ETCS document be undertaken;
- d) That subject to the outcomes of the consultation, the Director of Environment and Transport, in accordance with the Council's Constitution:
 - i) Following consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Highways, Transport and Waste, the Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Public Health, Law and Governance, undertake further work to prepare a final version of the ETCS;
 - ii) Submits a further report to the Cabinet in Autumn 2026, seeking approval of the final version of the ETCS.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The ETCS is being prepared as part of the Council's full Local Transport Plan (LTP4).

The twelve week public consultation exercise will seek the views and perspective of local communities, partners and stakeholders to inform the development of the final version of the ETCS.

99. East Midlands Freeport: Change of Accountable Body and Governance Implications.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive which presented details of the transfer of the Accountable Body role for the East Midlands Freeport from the County Council to the East Midlands Combined County Authority, and outlined the key issues, governance and voting implications, along with the County Council's position. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 6', is filed with these minutes.

Mr. Fowler CC stated that the issue surrounding Leicestershire being allocated an additional vote on the EMF Board, to be exercised by one of the Leicestershire local authority representatives, was still under discussion currently. However, it was hoped that this would be resolved in the near future.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the transfer of the Accountable Body role from the County Council to the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA), along with the governance, assurance and voting implications arising from this be noted;
- b) That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Director of Corporate Resources and the Cabinet Lead Member for Resources, to take all actions and decisions required of the County Council in its capacity as a member organisation of the East Midlands Freeport, excluding any matters reserved to, or exercised by, the County Council's appointed EMF Board Director.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The transfer of the Accountable Body role is driven by national policy and ministerial directives. EMCCA is anticipated to assume responsibility as the Accountable Body for EMF, subject to approvals from the EMF Board, EMCCA Board and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). This process must uphold robust governance standards, facilitate meaningful engagement from both public and private sectors, and ensure adequate mayoral oversight of EMF's strategic direction.

Any changes to EMF's governance arrangements arising from the Accountable Body transfer and the County Council's proposal will require unanimous agreement from all EMF Board members.

100. Leicestershire School Term Dates Autumn 2027 to Summer 2032.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Children and Family Services which sought approval to consult on three potential models for Leicestershire school term and holiday dates, covering the period from autumn 2027 to summer 2032 for schools maintained by the local authority. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 7', is filed with these minutes.

Members noted representations which had been received from Mr. J. Miah CC and Ms. B. Gray CC, a copy of which is filed with these minutes. In response, Mr. Crook CC gave assurance that it was not the intention to remove the 'Leicestershire fortnight'. This was statutory consultation which had to be undertaken and provided local residents with an opportunity to have their say on the proposals being suggested.

Following discussion with the Cabinet Lead Member, it had been agreed to reconsider the models being proposed, in particular Option 2, and present a further report to the Cabinet at its meeting on 28 April. The Cabinet expressed its thanks to officers for the work undertaken on the various options, which would enable the correct decision to be made.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed term date models for Leicestershire for the academic years 2027/28 to 2031/32, in particular Option 2, be reconsidered and presented to the Cabinet on 28 April, prior to a consultation exercise being undertaken.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION

The Education Act 2002 places a statutory obligation on the County Council to determine the number of school days that schools under its control must open. The County Council is required to determine a pattern that ensures at least 380 sessions (190 days) during each school year.

A public consultation will seek feedback on potential term date models to inform a recommended model for implementation.

101. 'Belonging in Education' Strategy 2026-2029.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Children and Family Services which sought approval to consult on the 'Belonging in Education' Strategy. The Strategy would serve as the overarching strategic framework and direction for the education system in Leicestershire, to ensure that all children and young people felt a sense of belonging in education. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

Mr. Crook CC commended the draft Strategy, which had been developed through genuine co-production and had four clear priorities. He emphasised that it was essential that children and young people felt that they belonged, and the Strategy was a significant step towards improving inclusion.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the draft Belonging in Education Strategy be approved for consultation;
- b) That a further report be submitted to the Cabinet in July 2026 presenting the outcomes of the consultation and the final Strategy for approval.

(KEY DECISION)

REASON FOR DECISION

The Strategy establishes a robust strategic framework designed to align all related policies, practices and education improvement initiatives. It articulates clear aims and objectives for educational leaders and the broader Children's Partnership across Leicestershire to enhance outcomes for all children and young people. This Strategy has been developed collaboratively, particularly with schools, since the beginning of the

academic year and much of the strategic direction and themes are reflected in the recently published White Paper, 'Every Child Achieving and Thriving'. A public consultation on the Strategy will help to validate that the identified priorities reflect the appropriate focus for future improvement efforts.

102. Domestic Abuse Reduction Strategy 2026-2029 - Permission to Consult.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Children and Family Services which sought approval to undertake a public and stakeholder consultation on the Leicestershire Domestic Abuse Reduction Strategy 2026-29. This had been developed following a comprehensive SafeLives Needs Assessment and extensive engagement with survivors, professionals, voluntary sector partners and statutory agencies. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

Mr. Crook CC commended the draft Strategy, which built on existing work undertaken to support victims and encapsulated the voices of survivors. Members agreed that the consultation would enable further refinement of the draft Strategy, which would also ensure that children were seen as victims of domestic abuse.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the draft Domestic Abuse Reduction Strategy 2026-2029 (attached as Appendix A to the report) be approved for a twelve week consultation exercise;
- b) That a further report be submitted to the Cabinet in July 2026 presenting the findings of the consultation and a final Strategy for approval.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION

Conducting a consultation will ensure that the final Strategy reflects the views of survivors, professionals, partners and the public, and demonstrates transparency and accountability.

Consultation will allow further refinement of the Strategy, ensuring that the lived experiences of victims and survivors, including children recognised as victims under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, are embedded into the final proposals.

Consultation is required to ensure the Council is meeting its statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, including responsibilities relating to support for victims and survivors in safe accommodation.

Failure to consult may result in statutory non-compliance, insufficient alignment with survivor voice, reputational risk, and weak partnership assurance as well as operational and safeguarding risk.

103. Draft Leicestershire Carers Strategy 2026-2030.

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Directors of Adults and Communities and Children and Family Services which sought approval to consult on the draft Leicestershire Carers Strategy 2026-2030. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

Mr. Abbott CC commented on the Council's commitment to supporting carers and stated that the Strategy would help to further develop the offer to carers. Mr. Richichi CC reiterated the importance of engagement, and stated that further work should be undertaken with GP surgeries to raise awareness, as these were often the first point of contact for carers.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the draft Leicestershire Carers Strategy 2026-2030 be approved for consultation;
- b) That a further report be submitted to the Cabinet in September 2026 presenting the outcome of the consultation and the final Strategy for approval.

REASON FOR DECISION

A public consultation will enable the Council to reach more carers, people who use services, professional and other interested parties to inform the priorities and implementation of the Strategy. This will build upon the pre-consultation engagement that helped to form the draft Strategy. The public consultation will target seldom heard groups of people. The consultation findings and further developed Strategy will then be presented for endorsement by the Cabinet to ensure the public are aware of the commitment the Council has to supporting carers.

104. Change to the Order of Business.

The Chairman sought and obtained the consent of the Cabinet to vary the order of business from that set out on the agenda.

105. Local Government Reorganisation - Response to Consultation.

The Cabinet considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Corporate Resources which presented the County Council's response to the Government consultation on Local Government Reorganisation in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Copies of the report, and the supplementary report, marked 'Agenda Item 15', are filed with these minutes.

The Scrutiny Commission had received a presentation which provided an outline of the consultation response at its meeting on 18 March. The Commission had indicated strong support for a single Leicestershire model.

Mr. Crook CC stated that the proposed response set out a clear, credible position on local government for local communities and provided an opportunity to simplify the existing local government structure. He also commented that the proposal was sensible and deliverable, and welcomed the emphasis on realism.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the consultation response be approved, for submission to the Government by the deadline of 26 March 2026, as set out in Appendices A-C of the report;

- b) That the consultation response ratings be approved, for submission to the Government by the deadline of 26 March 2026, as set out in Appendix D of the report;
- c) That the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader and the Director of Corporate Resources, be authorised to make any necessary amendments to the consultation response before it is submitted to the Government provided that these do not change the underlying principles of the response as presented in the report;
- d) That the comments of the Scrutiny Commission be noted.

(KEY DECISION)

REASON FOR DECISION

The Government is undertaking consultation on the proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland for 7 weeks between 5 February and 26 March 2026. The County Council is a statutory consultee.

106. Items referred from Overview and Scrutiny.

There were no items referred from the Overview and Scrutiny bodies.

107. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information:

- A511 Growth Corridor – Approval to Undertake Pre-Commencement Works and Submit the Full Business Case.

108. A511 Growth Corridor - Approval to Undertake Pre-Commencement Works and Submit the Full Business Case.

The Cabinet considered an exempt report of the Director of Environment and Transport which advised of the progress of the A511 Major Road Network. As the project moved towards submission of the Full Business Case to the Department for Transport for final funding and subsequent construction, authorisation was sought to submit the Full Business Case and progress a series of pre-commencement activities that would help de-risk the construction stage of the project. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 14', is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Director of Environment and Transport and the Director of Corporate Resources, following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Lead Members, in accordance with the Council's Constitution and with any necessary officer decision records being completed, be authorised, with reference to the proposed funding

arrangements and associated risks outlined in paragraphs 25-37, to undertake a series of pre-commencement works, which could include, but are not limited to:

- i) Advance diversion of Statutory Undertakers services;
 - ii) Enabling works, including site clearance;
 - iii) Advance purchase of land and property either by agreement with landowners where possible or by implementing the Leicestershire County Council (A511 Growth Corridor) Compulsory Purchase Order 2023 prior to approval of the Full Business Case (FBC);
- b) That the Director of Environment and Transport and the Director of Corporate Resources, following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Lead Members, be authorised to submit the FBC to the Department for Transport (DfT) provided that the outcome of the Contractor's target cost price exercise demonstrates the A511 Major Road Network (MRN) scheme still represents value for money and remains within the overall funding envelope.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION

As part of scheme delivery, the project team regularly review risks and programme to identify opportunities to reduce risk of delays and cost escalations. Building on lessons learned from multiple major projects delivered by the Local Highway Authority, a number of activities have been identified that would provide mitigation for potential risks associated with delay. Where actions fall within the scope of the existing permissions and budget approval these are managed through the project governance. However, the actions proposed in this report require additional funding for 'at risk' investment ahead of the final decision of the DfT's on award of full MRN funding.

The proposed scheme will be funded from a combination of Section 106 funding and grant funding under the MRN fund administered by the DfT. The full award MRN grant is subject to approval of the full business case. The business case can only be submitted once a target price has been obtained from the contractor. Whilst this work is underway, it will not be completed until June 2026 and in order to provide more certainty of the target price the advanced works have been identified. Delivering these pre-commencement works now will ultimately help to de-risk the construction stage of the project and mitigate the risk of cost escalations occurring late in the delivery programme.

In order to fund the advanced works alongside the detailed design, surveys, planning and land acquisition, it will be necessary to draw together both existing DfT funding and available Section 106 in the current financial year (2025/26) and the next financial year ahead of the FBC. It is necessary to draw down Section 106 and use a combination of grant funding in order to ensure that the proposed use of receipted Section 106 contributions falls within the scope and purposes of the relevant planning obligations secured through the Coalville Contribution Strategy (CCS).

In accordance with the DfT funding guidance, the County Council will be required to submit the FBC once the Contractor's target price is known. Whilst approval by the Cabinet to submit the FBC will achieve a key milestone in the programme, the final decision on progressing the scheme to construction will be sought from the Cabinet in Autumn 2026.

In the event the DfT rejects the FBC, the County Council is committed to continuing to deliver the A511 MRN improvements and these would be funded by additional Section 106 payments secured through the CCS. In this scenario, as the scheme would not have the benefit of the £41.7m from the DfT, the improvements would need to be delivered over a longer timeframe and in phases as Section 106 is received. The proposed advanced works would support the delivery of improvements in this scenario, albeit the benefits of the investment might not be realised for several years.

2.00 - 2.59 pm
24 March 2026

CHAIRMAN



CABINET – 28 APRIL 2026

LEICESTERSHIRE SCHOOL TERM DATES **AUTUMN 2027 TO SUMMER 2032**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to consult on two potential models for Leicestershire school term and holiday dates covering the period from autumn 2027 to summer 2032 for schools maintained by the local authority.

Recommendations

2. The Cabinet is recommended to:
 - a) Approve a consultation to be undertaken on the two proposed term date models for Leicestershire for the academic years 2027/28 to 2031/32, attached as Appendix A to this report;
 - b) Receive a further report at its meeting on 8 September 2026 presenting the outcomes of the consultation and the recommended term date model.

(KEY DECISION)

Reasons for Recommendations

3. The Education Act 2002 places a statutory obligation on the County Council to determine the number of school days that schools under its control must open. The County Council is required to determine a pattern that ensures at least 380 sessions (190 days) during each school year.
4. A public consultation process will seek feedback on two potential term date models to inform a recommended model for implementation.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

5. It is proposed to hold a 6-week consultation on the potential term date models. Subject to the Cabinet's approval, this will commence on 5 May and run until 15 June 2026.

6. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee will receive a report as part of the consultation process at its meeting on 2 June 2026.
7. It is intended that the Cabinet will receive a further report at its meeting on 8 September 2026 summarising consultation feedback and presenting a recommended term date model for approval.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

8. Term dates are determined by school employers following public consultation, as is set out in the Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999.
9. As the local authority is the employer for community, voluntary controlled and community special schools, any changes to agreed term time dates proposed by such schools must be agreed in advance by the Director of Children and Family Services.
10. Leicestershire's term dates were last reviewed by the Cabinet in September 2021 when it was agreed that they would follow the traditional Leicestershire pattern for the period autumn 2022 to summer 2027.
11. The Cabinet at its meeting on 24 March 2026 considered a report regarding proposed consultation on three potential models for Leicestershire school term and holiday dates. The Cabinet agreed that it did not support a model that would impact on the "*Leicestershire fortnight*" and asked that the other two models should be reconsidered and presented to the Cabinet at its next meeting in April, prior to a consultation process being undertaken.

Resource Implications

12. There are no resource implications arising from this report. The cost of implementing the agreed term time pattern following approval by the Cabinet forms part of the existing Children and Family Services budget allocation.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

13. This report has been circulated to all Members of the County Council.

Officers to Contact

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PART B

Background

14. The local authority is responsible for setting school term dates for all maintained schools, which includes all community and voluntary controlled schools and community special schools, under Section 32 of the Education Act 2002.
15. There are 285 state-funded schools in Leicestershire. Of these, 24% are maintained, including 65 primary schools and 2 special schools. All other state-funded schools within the County, including all secondary schools, are academies.
16. Following the Deregulation Act 2015, academies are responsible for setting their own term dates. In practice, the majority of schools in Leicestershire tend to follow the pattern set by the County Council, although some schools have moved away from the traditional Leicestershire term date pattern.
17. Schools in England must be open to pupils for 190 days in an academic year and 195 days for teachers.
18. The County Council sets term date patterns for 190 days, providing all schools in the County, including those maintained by the Council, with the flexibility to identify five staff training days (often known as inset days) outside of the 190 days the school is open to pupils each academic year. While this approach is in contrast to neighbouring authorities who include suggested inset days in their term date patterns, it enables maintained schools to, where possible, align their inset days with other schools in their local area.
19. Home to school transport is provided on the days that schools are open to pupils.
20. The County Council has previously worked with Leicester City Council to set proposed dates for future academic years. This approach has been in place for a number of years to ensure that school term dates are aligned where possible to minimise the impact on families and school transport providers working across both areas.
21. The traditional term date pattern for Leicester and Leicestershire reflected the County's industrial heritage and included the *Leicestershire Workers' July Fortnight*, a county-wide holiday period introduced in 1965 where factories and businesses closed for the first two weeks of July to enable workers to avoid peak holiday periods. The July fortnight shutdown period is no longer widely observed as a result of the changing nature of employment and industry in the County.
22. Following the most recent term date consultation in 2021, Leicestershire maintained schools retained an early July finish to the school year, which is

around two weeks earlier than some adjoining local authorities. Previous term dates for 2022/23 to 2026/27 are included as Appendix B.

Proposed Term Date Models for Autumn 2027 to Summer 2032

23. Leicestershire County Council, in collaboration with Leicester City Council, has developed two potential term date models for the five academic years between autumn 2027 and summer 2032. All proposed models provide for 190 school days. The proposed dates have also been shared with Rutland Council.
24. Many families like Leicestershire's traditional approach, which includes a very early summer break which can mean potentially cheaper family holidays.
25. Taking into account the ongoing popularity of the existing term date model, both proposed term date models for the County Council retain the existing early July finish to the school year which is around 2 weeks earlier than neighbouring local authorities.
26. It should be noted that, while the County Council has worked closely with Leicester City Council on proposed term date patterns for autumn 2027 to summer 2032, the models developed for consultation are slightly different across both local authority areas. All proposed dates for October half-term, Christmas break, February half-term, Easter break and May half-term are aligned to those proposed by Leicester City Council, however the City Council is expected to propose a slightly later start to the summer school holidays than patterns proposed by the County Council.
27. The proposed models for consultation are detailed in Appendix A to this report:
 - **Model 1:** retains the historic term date pattern with a very early summer break and a one-week autumn half-term.
 - **Model 2:** retains the same very early summer break as Model 1, with an earlier return to school in August proposed to accommodate a two-week autumn half-term.
28. The current 6-week summer break means schools in the County see a rise in child protection referrals; it also results in a loss of learning, and some families also struggle with the cost of childcare. The existing pattern includes terms of significantly different lengths, with a longer autumn term which children can struggle to manage, impacting their attendance, and shorter spring and summer terms.
29. The consultation will ask for views as to whether Leicestershire should keep the historic pattern or move to the alternative model which would introduce a 2-week October half-term to help to address some of these concerns while retaining the same early summer break previously favoured by Leicestershire families.

30. Both options aim to ensure a similar number of days for the spring and summer terms. This means that while the Good Friday and Easter Monday bank holidays will be maintained and will be incorporated into the Easter holiday period, the two-week break may not always follow the traditional Easter pattern of the bank holidays being on the middle weekend of the two-week break. Depending on the timing of Easter, the Easter bank holidays may sometimes fall at the beginning or end of the holiday period.

Consultation

31. A public consultation will seek feedback on the two potential term date models to inform a recommended model for implementation. This will run from 5 May to 15 June 2026 and will be carried out primarily using an online survey, which will also be available in accessible print versions on request.
32. The consultation will be aligned with a consultation on term dates for Leicester City Council, although each council will be consulting on slightly different term date models. The consultations will run independently to the same time scales.
33. Consultation feedback will be jointly reviewed by officers from both the County Council and Leicester City Council following the closure of the consultation period to consider opportunities to align dates where this is practical. Recommendations will be presented to the respective decision-making bodies of both Councils, with ultimate decision-making remaining the responsibility of each local authority.
34. It is intended that the Cabinet will receive a further report at its meeting on 8 September 2026, including a recommended term date model for approval.

Equality Implications

35. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed to consider the impact of the proposed term date patterns on individuals with protected characteristics which is attached as Appendix C. There are no adverse equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Human Rights Implications

36. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Partnership Implications

37. The proposed school term date patterns have been developed in collaboration with Leicester City Council to align dates where possible across both areas.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 17 September 2021 “Leicestershire School Term-Time Patterns from Autumn 2022 To Summer 2027”

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s163631/Term%20Dates%20Consultation.pdf>

Report to the Cabinet on 24 March 2026 “Leicestershire School Term Dates Autumn 2027 to Summer 2032”

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=8305>

Appendices

Appendix A - Proposed school term dates for autumn 2027 to summer 2032

Appendix B - Previous school term dates for 2022/23 to 2026/27

Appendix C - Equality Impact Assessment

APPENDIX A

School Day		Lincolnshire	
School Holiday		Derbyshire	
		Nottinghamshire	
		North Northants	
		Warwickshire	

Model 1 - Leicestershire term dates 2027-28

Autumn term – 77 school days (42 school days + 35 school days)
 Spring term – 64 school days (34 school days+ 30 school days)
 Summer term - 49 school days (24 school days + 25 school days) Total 190 school days

Aug-2027							Sept-2027							Oct-2027							Nov-2027							Dec-2027							Jan-2028						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
						1			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
30	31																																		31						

Feb-2028							Mar-2028							Apr-2028							May-2028							Jun-2028							Jul-2028						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
	1	2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	2
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
28	29						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Model 1 - Leicestershire term dates 2028-29

Autumn term – 74 school days (39 school days + 35 school days)
 Spring term – 54 school days (29 school days+ 25 school days)
 Summer term - 62 school days (34 school days + 28 school days) Total 190 school days

Aug-2028							Sept-2028							Oct-2028							Nov-2028							Dec-2028							Jan-2029						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3							1			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3			1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30	31				
														30	31																										

Feb-2029							Mar-2029							Apr-2029							May-2029							Jun-2029							Jul-2029						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
			1	2	3	4				1	2	3	4							1		1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4						1	2
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28					26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
														30																				30	31						

Model 1 - Leicestershire term dates 2029-30

Autumn term – 79 school days (39 school days + 40 school days)

Spring term – 60 school days (30 school days+ 30 school days)

Summer term - 51 school days (23 school days + 28 school days)

Total 190 school days

Aug-2029							Sept-2029							Oct-2029							Nov-2029							Dec-2029							Jan-2030							
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	
		1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	2			1	2	3	4	5	6
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31				
																												31														

Feb-2030							Mar-2030							Apr-2030							May-2030							Jun-2030							Jul-2030						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
				1	2	3					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31				

Model 1 - Leicestershire term dates 2030-31

Autumn term – 79 school days (39 school days + 40 school days)

Spring term – 60 school days (30 school days + 30 school days)

Summer term - 51 school days (24 school days + 27 school days)

Total 190 school days.

Aug-2030							Sept-2030							Oct-2030							Nov-2030							Dec-2030							Jan-2031						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
			1	2	3	4						1			1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3						1				1	2	3	4	5
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31		
							30																					30	31												

Feb-2031							Mar-2031							Apr-2031							May-2031							Jun-2031							Jul-2031						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
					1	2					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4						1		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26	27	28			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31			
							31																					30													

Model 1 - Leicestershire term dates 2031-32

Autumn term – 79 school days (39 school days + 40 school days)

Spring term – 54 school days (30 school days + 24 school days)

Summer term – 57 school days (34 school days + 23 school days) Total 190 school days.

Aug-2031							Sept-2031							Oct-2031							Nov-2031							Dec-2031							Jan-2032						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	
Feb-2032							Mar-2032							Apr-2032							May-2032							Jun-2032							Jul-2032						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
						1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31	
																					31																				

Model 2 – Leicestershire term dates 2027-28

Autumn term – 77 school days (42 school days + 35 school days)

Spring term – 64 school days (34 school days+ 30 school days)

Summer term - 49 school days (24 school days + 25 school days) Total 190 school days

Aug-2027							Sept-2027							Oct-2027							Nov-2027							Dec-2027							Jan-2028						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
						1			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
30	31																																		31						

Feb-2028							Mar-2028							Apr-2028							May-2028							Jun-2028							Jul-2028						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
	1	2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	2
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
28	29						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Model 2 – Leicestershire term dates 2028-29

Autumn term – 74 school days (39 school days + 35 school days)

Spring term – 54 school days (29 school days+ 25 school days)

Summer term - 62 school days (34 school days + 28 school days) Total 190 school days

Aug-2028							Sept-2028							Oct-2028							Nov-2028							Dec-2028							Jan-2029						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
31	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3							1			1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30	31				
														30	31																										

Feb-2029							Mar-2029							Apr-2029							May-2029							Jun-2029							Jul-2029						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
			1	2	3	4				1	2	3	4							1		1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4						1	2
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28					26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
														30																				30	31						

Model 2 – Leicestershire term dates 2029-30

Autumn term – 79 school days (39 school days + 40 school days)

Spring term – 60 school days (30 school days+ 30 school days)

Summer term - 51 school days (23 school days + 28 school days)

Total 190 school days

Aug-2029							Sept-2029							Oct-2029							Nov-2029							Dec-2029							Jan-2030						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31			
																												31													
Feb-2030							Mar-2030							Apr-2030							May-2030							Jun-2030							Jul-2030						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
				1	2	3					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31				

Model 2 – Leicestershire term dates 2030-31

Autumn term – 79 school days (39 school days + 40 school days)

Spring term – 60 school days (30 school days + 30 school days)

Summer term - 51 school days (24 school days + 27 school days)

Total 190 school days.

Aug-2030							Sept-2030							Oct-2030							Nov-2030							Dec-2030							Jan-2031						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
			1	2	3	4						1	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3						1			1	2	3	4	5			
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31		
							30																					30	31												
Feb-2031							Mar-2031							Apr-2031							May-2031							Jun-2031							Jul-2031						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
					1	2					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4						1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26	27	28			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31				
							31																					30													

Model 2 – Leicestershire term dates 2031-32

Autumn term – 79 school days (39 school days + 40 school days)

Spring term – 54 school days (30 school days + 24 school days)

Summer term – 57 school days (34 school days + 23 school days) Total 190 school days.

Aug-2031							Sept-2031							Oct-2031							Nov-2031							Dec-2031							Jan-2032						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	
Feb-2032							Mar-2032							Apr-2032							May-2032							Jun-2032							Jul-2032						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
						1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4						1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31	
																					31																				

Leicestershire Term Time Dates for Community Schools 2022-2027

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	
Autumn term	Aug Sep	Schools open Tuesday 30 August until Friday 14 October 2022 (Bank Holiday Monday 29 August)	Schools open Tuesday 29 August until Friday 13 October 2023 (Bank Holiday Monday 28 August)	Schools open Tuesday 27 August until Friday 18 October 2024 (Bank Holiday Monday 26 August)	Schools open Tuesday 26 August until Friday 17 October 2025 (Bank Holiday Monday 25 August)	Schools open Monday 24 August until Friday 16 October 2026 (Bank Holiday Monday 31 August)
	Oct	Half-term: 17 – 21 Oct 2022	Half-term: 16 – 20 Oct 2023	Half-term: 21 – 25 Oct 2024	Half-term: 20 – 24 Oct 2025	Half-term: 19 – 23 Oct 2026
	Nov	Schools open Monday 24 October until Friday 16 December 2022	Schools open Monday 23 October until Friday 22 December 2023	Schools open Monday 28 October until Friday 20 December 2024	Schools open Monday 27 October until Friday 19 December 2025	Schools open Monday 26 October until Friday 18 December 2026
	Dec					
	Christmas holiday					
Spring term	Jan					
	Feb	Schools open Tuesday 3 January until Friday 17 February 2023 (Bank Holiday Monday 2 January)	Schools open Monday 8 January until Friday 16 February 2024	Schools open Monday 6 January until Friday 14 February 2025	Schools open Monday 5 January until Friday 13 February 2026	Schools open Monday 4 January until Friday 12 February 2026
	Mar	Half-term: 20 – 24 Feb 2023	Half-term: 19 – 23 Feb 2024	Half-term: 17 – 21 Feb 2025	Half-term: 16 – 20 Feb 2026	Half-term: 15 – 19 Feb 2027
	Apr	Schools open Monday 27 February until Friday 31 March 2023	Schools open Monday 26 February until Friday 22 March 2024	Schools open Monday 24 February until Friday 11 April 2025	Schools open Monday 23 February until Friday 27 March 2026	Schools open Monday 22 February until Friday 19 March 2027
Summer term	May	Easter holiday: Mon 3 – Fri 14 April 2023	Easter holiday: Mon 25 March – Fri 5 April 2024	Easter holiday: Mon 14 – Fri 25 April 2025	Easter holiday: Mon 30 Mar – Fri 10 April 2026	Easter holiday: Mon 22 Mar – Fri 2 Apr 2027
	Jun	Schools open Monday 17 April until Friday 26 May 2023 (Bank Holiday Monday 1 May)	Schools open Monday 8 April until Friday 24 May 2024 (Bank Holiday Monday 6 May)	Schools open Monday 28 April until Friday 23 May 2025 (Bank Holiday Monday 5 May)	Schools open Monday 13 April until Friday 22 May 2026 (Bank Holiday Monday 4 May)	Schools open Monday 5 April until Friday 28 May 2027 (Bank Holiday Monday 3 May)
	Jul	Half-term: 29 May – 2 June 2023	Half-term: 27 – 31 May 2024	Half-term: 26 – 30 May 2025	Half-term: 25 – 29 May 2026	Half-term: 31 May – 4 June 2027
	Aug	Schools open Monday 5 June until Wednesday 12 July 2023	Schools open Monday 3 June until Tuesday 9 July 2024	Schools open Monday 2 June until Tuesday 8 July 2025	Schools open Monday 1 June until Tuesday 7 July 2026	Schools open Monday 7 June until Tuesday 6 July 2027
	Summer holiday: Thursday 13 July – Monday 28 August 2023 (Bank Holiday Monday 28 August)	Summer holiday: Wednesday 10 July – Monday 26 August 2024 (Bank Holiday Monday 26 August)	Summer holiday: Wednesday 9 July – Monday 25 August 2025 (Bank Holiday Monday 25 August)	Summer holiday: Wednesday 8 July – Friday 21 August 2026	Summer holiday: Wednesday 7 July 2027 – End of current pattern	

NOTE: Five inset days need to set by school. The Local Authority no-longer set inset days.

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Equality Impact Assessment Form

Before completing this form, please refer to [the supporting guidance document](#)

The purpose of this form is to aid the Council in meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in the Equality Act 2010. This requires the Council to have “due regard” of the impact of its actions on the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The assessment is used to identify and record any concerns and potential risks. The following actions can then be taken to address these issues.

- Remove risks: abandon the proposed policy or practice
- Mitigate risks – amend the proposed policy or practice so that risks are reduced
- Justify policy or practice in terms of other objectives

Once the EIA has been approved by the Senior Responsible Officer, please ensure that a copy is placed on the SharePoint folder: “Equalities Board, EIAs”

1- Policy details	
Name of policy	Leicestershire County Council School Term Time Patterns (2027 to 2032)
Department and service	Children and Families Department
Who has been involved in completing the Equality Impact Assessment?	Gurjit Singh Bahra, Service Manager of School Admissions and Pupil Services Renata Chantrill, Head of Service, Education Sufficiency
Contact numbers	0116 305 6324
Date of completion	14 April 2026

2- Objectives and background of policy or practice change	
What is the proposal?	New term-time patterns from autumn 2027 to summer 2032
What change and impact is intended by the proposal?	To establish a suitable term-time pattern that meets the needs of Leicestershire residents, schools and partners.
What is the rationale for this proposal?	Current term-time patterns end summer 2027, and therefore the LA needs to propose and set following consultation a new five-year pattern.

3- Evidence gathered on equality implications - Data and engagement
--

<p>What equalities information or data has been gathered so far?</p> <p>What does it show?</p>	<p>Consultation will be launched to understand which term-time pattern Leicestershire residents and key stakeholders prefer which will inform the recommendation to Cabinet.</p> <p>The previous two consultations both were heavily in favour of the traditional Leicestershire pattern. It is therefore anticipated the historic pattern is likely to continue to be popular.</p>
<p>What engagement has been undertaken so far?</p> <p>What does it show?</p>	<p>A six-week consultation will be run to gather responses.</p> <p>Previous response rates have been high in favour of the traditional pattern.</p>

4- Benefits, concerns and mitigating action

Please specify if any individuals or community groups who identify with any of the '[protected characteristics](#)' may **potentially** be affected by the policy and describe any benefits and concerns including any barriers. Use this section to demonstrate how risks would be mitigated for each affected group. If a group will not be affected by the proposal please state so.

Group	What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?	What are the concerns identified and how will these affect those from the following groups?	How will the known concerns be mitigated?
Age	For families of compulsory school aged children it will ensure time off together.	If action is not taken there is a likelihood schools may be in breach of the School Admissions Code.	A consultation on proposed term date models will be undertaken as part of setting new dates for 2027 to 2032.

Disability	The changes will not negatively impact children with disabilities.	Children with a disability will share the same patterns as mainstream children therefore it will ensure all children are off together to ensure family time	N/A
Race	There will be no negative impact for protected characteristics.	None	N/A
Sex			
Gender Reassignment			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sexual Orientation	There will be no negative impact for protected characteristics.	None	N/A
Pregnancy and Maternity	N/A	N/A	N/A
Religion or belief	There will be no negative impact for protected characteristics.	None	N/A
Armed Forces (including veterans)	There will be no negative impact for armed forces children.	N/A	N/A
People with lived care experience	There will be no negative impact for lived care experience.	None	N/A
Other groups: e.g., rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality,	The changes will help to support most vulnerable to have time off together		



carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities	The early summer break allows Leicestershire families to benefit from potentially cheaper holidays	N/A	N/A
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5- Action Plan

Produce a framework to outline how identified risks/concerns identified in section 4 will be mitigated.

What action is planned?	Who is responsible for the action?	Timescale	Expected outcome
To launch public consultation and take views which will be reported back to Cabinet to support them in taking a decision.	The School Admissions Service	6 weeks from May to June 2026	Ensure Compliance

6- Approval Process

Departmental Equalities Group	(please post any comments from the Departmental Equalities Group here) Set out the date when the EIA was considered N/A	
Corporate Policy Team	Please set out comments from the Corporate Policy Team N/A	
Sign off by the Senior Responsible Officer for the Project.	 Gurjit Singh Bahra	 Renata Chantrill

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CABINET – 28TH APRIL 2026

YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN 2026 TO 2027

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Cabinet's approval for the submission of the Leicestershire Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2026-27 to the County Council at its meeting on 13 May 2026. The Plan is attached as Appendix A to this report.
2. The County Council has a statutory duty under section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce a Youth Justice Plan which reflects on the progress of the previous plan (2023-26) and sets the strategic priorities for the forthcoming period.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the County Council at its meeting on 13 May 2026 be recommended to approve the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2026-2027.

(KEY DECISION)

Reasons for Recommendation

4. There is a statutory requirement in section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for the County Council to produce a Youth Justice Plan which is linked to releasing the Youth Justice Grant from the Ministry of Justice.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

5. The Youth Justice Plan 2026-27 was ratified by the Youth and Justice Partnership Board on 6 March 2026 in line with the Youth Justice Board guidance on Youth Justice Plans.
6. The Scrutiny Commission will receive a report at its meeting on 22 April 2026 and its comments will be reported to the Cabinet.

7. Subject to the Cabinet’s approval, the draft Youth Justice Plan 2026-27 will be submitted to full Council on 13 May 2026.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

8. The current Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2023-26 was approved by the Cabinet in April 2023.
9. The proposals within in this report support delivery of the following outcomes in the Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan (2022-2026):
 - Clean and Green – through direct and indirect education and reparation with children linked to the environment and green spaces. An example of this is the Nature4Nurture Project which is a gardening wellbeing project which is ran across three County Council sites, County Hall being one of them.
 - Great communities – the service is supported by a pool of committed volunteers who engage with children and support re-engagement within communities by being a trusted adult. The Service has since introduced “young volunteers” who are children who volunteer with the service as an exit-strategy from support and contribute to developing the service, the recruitment of staff, and voice and influence work.
 - Improved outcomes – the service remains committed to ensuring that the children who access the service have access to the relevant support and advocacy to ensure that their needs are met and risks are managed. The service has developed a strong offer of support for victim to ensure that they are heard, supported and can engage in restorative justice approaches.
 - Safe and Well – the service remains committed to identifying and supporting children and victims where safeguarding approaches are required both inside and outside of the home.

Resource Implications

10. The Youth Justice Service is funded through the Youth Justice Grant, of which the Youth Justice Plan is a condition for release of the finances, along with a partnership pooled budget.
11. The financial position of the Youth Justice Service is managed through the Youth and Justice Partnership Board through quarterly reporting which is overseen by a Business Partner.
12. The core Youth Justice Grant is released in conjunction with oversight from the Director of Corporate Resources.
13. A full breakdown of the budget is provided in paragraph 24 of this report. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

14. None.

Officer(s) to Contact

Ms. Sharon Cooke
Director of Children and Family Services
Tel: 0116 305 5479
Email: sharon.cooke@leics.gov.uk

Ms. Carly Turner
Head of Youth Justice and Youth and Justice Service Manager
Tel: 0116 305 0030
Email: carly.turner@leics.gov.uk

PART B

Background

15. There is a statutory requirement under section 40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 for the County Council to produce a Youth Justice Plan which is linked to releasing the Youth Justice Grant from the Ministry of Justice.
16. The Youth Justice Strategic Plan has previously covered a 3-year period. In March 2026, the Ministry of Justice announced the first of a number of reforms to the youth justice sector over the coming year and it felt appropriate to understand the impact of these prior to considering a further multi-year plan. This can be considered from 2027.

Youth Justice Partnership Board

17. Guidance stipulates that the Youth and Justice Partnership Board should govern and own the process of producing the Youth Justice Plan. The Board, which meets quarterly, is the statutory body which oversees the performance of the Service as defined by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Members include officers from the Council, Probation Service, Leicestershire Police, the Integrated Care Board, and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The Board is accountable for the performance and delivery of Youth Justice provision across Leicestershire.
18. The quality of services delivered to children and victims and the strength of the Youth and Justice Partnership Board are independently scrutinised by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation.

Changes to Youth Justice

19. The new Youth Justice Strategic Plan is a one-year plan due to a number of changes expected, for example -
 - Several Youth Justice reforms are due to be announced during 2026 by the Government. In February 2026 it was announced that several statutory functions would move from the Youth Justice Board into the Ministry of Justice.
 - An announcement in March 2026 by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Jake Richards, which focused on reforms to keep children out of prison. An opportunity for partnership work with neighbouring Youth Justice Services to strengthen the offer of alternatives to custody has been presented; this is in its infancy and will be managed through the Youth and Justice Partnership Board.
 - Further tightening to crime-related legislation are expected to be announced over the coming year, details of which are awaited. Knife Crime legislation introduced on 1 April 2026 places greater responsibility on Youth Justice Services to identify/manage knife-related risks,

strengthen prevention and diversion activity, and work with partners to reduce access to weapons and prevent serious violence.

- The impact of the Local Government Review/Reorganisation is unknown.

The Youth Justice Plan 2026-27

20. The Youth and Justice Service in Leicestershire has continued to perform strongly, with a low level of First Time Entrants compared with regional and national comparators, low longer-term reoffending, and very low use of remand and custody, whilst remaining compliant with all statutory returns to the Youth Justice Board.
21. In 2026/27, the Youth and Justice Partnership will focus on five priorities: improving education, employment and training outcomes, strengthening children's health and wellbeing, improving support for victims, strengthening prevention pathways for children at risk of entering the criminal justice system, and ensuring a coordinated response for children at the highest risk of harm, exploitation and/or serious violence. Delivery against these priorities will be coordinated through the Youth and Justice Partnership Board with performance monitored through agreed partnership measures and regular reporting.
22. Statutory responsibilities have been placed upon Youth Justice Services and the Police in relation to new knife-crime legislation and the Partnership is fully compliant with these in line with the implementation date of 1 April 2026.
23. Across all priorities, the Youth and Justice Partnership Board will maintain a commitment on reducing groups of children who are disproportionately represented within the youth justice system such as looked after children, girls, Black, Asian and multi-ethnic children for example. This is achieved by sharing partnership data and appropriate challenging agencies and their approaches.

Resource Implications

24. The financial position of the core Youth Justice funding has been stable with the Service managing within its budget. The Youth and Justice Partnership Board receives a full financial report on the position of the pooled budget each quarter. The budget for 2025-26 is shown in the table below.

Agency	Staffing Costs	Payments in kind	Other delegated funds	Total
Youth Justice Board			604,659	604,659
Local Authority			1,032,461	1,032,461
Police				0
Police and Crime Commissioner	91,847		77,934	169,781
Probation	73,764		37,806	111,570
Health	70,945		47,588	118,533
Welsh Government				0
Other			75,645	75,645
Total	236,556	0	1,876,093	2,112,649

25. The strategic partnership also provides staffing in-kind as part of its contribution and this equates to a full-time seconded Probation Officer, two warranted Police Constables and access to an Adverse Childhood Experiences Team from the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Public Health supports a Youth Justice Health Lead post. The Team is further supported by a young people's substance misuse offer from Turning Point. All these specialist workers are fully embedded within the Service and support the direct delivery of interventions with children whilst retaining positive relationships with their parent organisation.
26. In terms of the 2026-27 budget, the Ministry of Justice (previously the Youth Justice Board) has yet to confirm the grant allocation, and this is expected to be announced in late April. Heads of Youth Justice have been advised that the grant will be a three-year settlement, for the first time. Confirmation has also been received of additional three-year funding for prevention work, but the amount is not yet confirmed. Partner contributions remain the same. The budget should remain relatively similar to 2025-26. A multi-year settlement does provide the opportunity to plan the service and establishment better.

Consultation

27. There is a requirement that the Plan is agreed by the statutory partners of the Youth and Justice Partnership. The Chair of the Youth and Justice Management Board is the only signatory required on the Plan. Consultation with Youth and Justice Management Board members commenced on 2 December 2025 to identify the key priorities and concluded when the Plan was ratified by the Board on 6 March 2026.
28. There is no formal requirement for children to be consulted on the Youth Justice Plan due to its strategic nature. However, the workforce, children, parents and carers have contributed to the development of this plan.
29. There is no requirement for a public consultation exercise.

Comments of the Scrutiny Commission

30. The Scrutiny Commission will consider the Youth Justice Strategic Plan at its meeting on 22 April 2026 and its comments will be reported to the Cabinet.

Equality Implications

31. Inequality is inherent within in the criminal justice system and there is substantive research to support this. To this end, an Equality Impact Assessment has been completed to support this Plan and is attached as Appendix B. The Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2026-27 sets out its intentions to address inequalities for children.

Human Rights Implications

32. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Background Papers

Report to the Scrutiny Commission on 22 April 2026 "Draft Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2026-2027" -

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=8538>

Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2022-2026

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/LCC-Strategic-Plan.pdf>

Appendices

Appendix A: Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2026-27

Appendix B: Equalities Impact Assessment

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Youth Justice Plan 2026/27

Leicestershire Youth and Justice Service

Leicestershire County Council

Foreword from the Chair of the Board

Welcome to our annual Youth Justice Strategy for 2026/27.

It is with great pride and a strong sense of shared purpose that we introduce the Leicestershire Youth Justice Strategy for 2026/27. This strategy reflects the collaborative efforts of our partners, the voices of children and families, and our commitment to building a safer, fairer community for all.

This strategy builds upon the achievements realised under the Leicestershire Youth Justice Plan 2023/26 and establishes both ongoing and new priorities for the forthcoming year. These priorities have been developed collaboratively with members of the Leicestershire Youth Justice Partnership Board, ensuring clear strategic leadership, direction, and robust governance of the plan. Key partners involved in this process include Leicestershire Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Violence Reduction Network, the Integrated Care Board, Public Health, the Youth Justice Service, Probation, Children's Social Care, and Education.

The engagement of the workforce has played an important role in the development of this plan, with valuable feedback from young people, parents and carers participating in our evaluation project helping to shape strategic priorities and focus areas for children.

In addition to enabling the Youth Justice Service to fulfil its statutory responsibilities and achieve its principal objectives, this strategy also underpins the efforts of the Leicestershire Youth and Justice Partnership Board (YJPB) towards its established strategic goals. The annual strategy is complemented by a collection of service and project plans, each providing greater detail on the specific actions we will undertake to realise the overarching ambitions set out within this strategy within the Board and across the wider partnership.

Sharon Cooke

Chair of the Leicestershire Youth Justice Partnership Board

Interim Director of Children and Family Services - Leicestershire County Council

Aims of the Youth Justice System

The youth justice system aims to prevent children from entering the criminal justice system, reduce reoffending, and ensure custody is used only when necessary. These aims reflect a clear commitment to safeguarding children's welfare and supporting safer communities by addressing the underlying factors that contribute to offending and ensuring responses remain proportionate, child-centred, and aligned with national expectations.

Governance, leadership and partnership arrangements

The Youth Justice Service in Leicestershire meets all the statutory requirements of a Youth Justice Service set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The service has seconded staff from Police, Probation and Health. Financial contributions are made by all statutory partners in line with national and local agreements.

The service has access to CAMHS Adverse Childhood Experiences Team, Turning Point (substance misuse), Liaison and Diversion and Care Navigators who sit within the wider Health partnership. The Service is integrated into Children and Families Services at Leicestershire County Council and has full access to Children's Social Care and Education Services.

Alongside multi-agency teams, the service contracts with external providers to support the delivery of essential statutory functions, such as appropriate adult services (The Appropriate Adult Service) and speech and language therapy. Rutland County Council commissions the service to fulfil statutory responsibilities related to youth justice and prevention initiatives.

The activities of the Youth and Justice Service are monitored and directed by the Leicestershire Youth and Justice Partnership Board, which is chaired by the Director for Children and Families Services, who provides independent oversight and scrutiny to the Board. The Board are provided with quarterly national and local data which is scrutinised. The Service continues to perform well; having a low number of children who are First Time Entrants into the Criminal Justice System and low numbers of children remanded or sentenced to custody.

In addition to its statutory partners, Leicestershire Youth and Justice Partnership Board benefits from having representatives from Education Services, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), Turning Point, Youth Magistrate and a representative from the Voluntary Sector, along with the Youth Justice Board. The

Partnership Board meets on a quarterly basis with good attendance from all key partners who are represented at the appropriate senior level.

The Youth and Justice Service is part of Children and Family Services at Leicestershire County Council (see appendix 1). Appendix 2 outlines the service structure and its range, while appendix 3 details staff by ethnicity and gender, where disclosed.

The Head of Youth Justice role oversees both strategic and operational aspects of Youth Justice within the Local Authority. They are accountable to the Youth and Justice Management Board, as well as various Partnership Boards. As Head of Youth Justice, they fully coordinate board activities with members and the Chair. Their additional duties include managing youth work, supporting young carers, handling cases involving low or medium risk missing children, leading youth voices, overseeing grants and funded projects related to the Service, addressing anti-social behavior, and serving as a MAPPA Panel Member for all under-18s in the county. The current post-holder also serves as the regional representative for the Association of YOT Managers.

The development of Board Members and staff is overseen through a structured training plan that prioritises child-centered practice, incorporates insights from quality assurance activities, and includes targeted training initiatives to promote consistent and high-quality standards and builds a confident and skilled workforce.

Progress and Priorities – 2025/26

Over the past year four priority areas were given focus and activity was driven across the partnership.

1. Ensuring children are receiving a high-quality personalised and meaningful service.

In 2025/26, the Leicestershire Youth Justice Service organised a series of training sessions aimed at enhancing Child First practice among managers, practitioners, and volunteers. These sessions centered on the four foundational principles of child-first practice: recognising children as children, fostering pro-social identity, engaging collaboratively with children, and minimising stigma. This framework emphasises addressing the developmental needs of children ahead of their offending behaviour to achieve improved outcomes for children, victims, and communities. This represents an ongoing cultural evolution within the service and broader sector towards more trauma-informed and relationship-focused methodologies.

Within the Service, anyone under 18 is referred to as a child when speaking with professionals. Records are written directly to the child, using plain English, free of acronyms, and focused on analysis, so children can understand their journey, actions

taken, reasons, and outcomes. The Service uses communication passports to detail how a child prefers to be addressed and communicate, key information for adults, and the child's needs. Initially launched in collaboration with Youth Magistrates, communication passports are now standard at induction for every child. Practitioners introduce themselves through staff biographies, helping children learn about those supporting them. This approach is expanding to include details about projects and venues across the Service. Each child's Youth Justice record should feature either their photo or an image they select to bring that child to life. This is part of the journey around purposeful practice.

There has been a focus on improving the quality of assessments and interventions as part of child-first practice. In relation to assessments, this is ensuring that the assessment reflects the lived experiences of the child and portrays a rounded view of their life including the factors that contribute to their offending, the protective factors within their lives and a balance with the risks and vulnerabilities within their lives, within communities and towards victims. The intervention plan for the child should focus on addressing the needs identified within their assessment and prioritising the safety of victims, communities and the child.

The journey around improvement has been supported by quality assurance work, improvement cycle meetings and moderation meetings across the management team. This is overseen by the Youth and Justice Management Board. This work will continue to develop into the future with a focus on achieving consistency and adaptability across the workforce.

2. Improving health outcomes for children who are working with the Youth and Justice Service

Many children in the YJS have unmet health and wellbeing needs such as mental health and wellbeing worries, learning needs, substance misuse and neurodiversity, all of which are structural drivers of offending related behaviour. Addressing these needs is a crucial component in supporting children to live healthy lives.

Public Health at Leicestershire County Council have funded a Youth Justice Health Lead post to strengthen health outcomes for children, following detailed Health Needs Assessment. The role has focused on sourcing training and support for the workforce around health, for example around condom distribution, substance misuse training and specialist autism training. The Youth Justice Health Lead has connected the Service with the Liaison and Diversion Team, the introduction of Care Navigator information into the service upon every allocation and has been a specialist point of contact for involvement with the CAMHS ACES Team. This role is involved in engaging in panels

focused on supporting children who are assessed as posing a high risk and providing a view on health-related support and advice that could be provided.

Over the last year, progress has been made with the Nature4Nurture Project; a wellbeing project for children linked to gardening and sustainability. The project deliberately creates a quiet, reflective safe space which contributes positively to emotional regulation and mental wellness. Children have expressed feelings of pride in their efforts in nurturing the plans and the spaces, have appreciated learning to care and then giving back to the community when gifting their produce.

Work has been undertaken in collaboration with girls to develop a structured, therapeutic and empowering groupwork programme called 'EmpowerHer'. The focus of the programme is on emotional and mental health, healthy relationships, improving self-esteem and developing identity. Each session has an activity to help with empowerment and self-regulation such as cooking, mindfulness and creativity. The programme has a partnership focus with contributions during sessions from CAMHS, Everyone Active and Turning Point. The girls who have attended the group have shared that they have learnt to manage their emotions, feel calmer through learning new activities and share feeling safe in the group. A programme has also been developed for and with boys which provides a safe space where they can explore identity, emotions and understand masculinity and during this year this has run once so far, with positive feedback.

This year has focused on securing funding for speech and language therapy (SALT), and the commissioning process has commenced for a three-year programme. Joint working and strengthening relationship work has been undertaken between Youth and Justice and SEND services and developing data around Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). 80% of the children involved with Youth Justice have speech, language and communication needs. These actions will continue into 2026/27.

3. Ensuring victims are receiving high-quality and personalised service

Significant developments have happened during 2025/26 in relation to the work that the Service undertaken with Victims. This is to ensure that the Service is compliant with statutory responsibility with the Victim's Code and in line with the focus on victims by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP).

The main development has been an investment in creating a Restorative Approaches Team which includes the Volunteer Development Officer, Restorative Approaches Coordinator and a new Restorative Approaches Worker Youth Worker Post. The Team is led by a Senior Youth Worker.

The Team have created a full victim offer for child victims and a referral pathway to support services for both adult victims and child victims for ongoing support. The victim

impact statement (VIS) has been redesigned to enable the victim to express emotional impact, describe the ongoing effects for them, identify what they need to feel safer and enable their voice to be better represented in decision making. This document, and the screening tool, help identify the ongoing support needs for victims and gain consent for referrals to onward services where appropriate.

The data element of understanding the demographics of the victims engaged in the Service has taken a considerable amount of work. This has involved the reconfiguration of Core+, our case management system, and the building of tableau dashboards, which present the data extracted from Core+. Partnership work is underway with the Police to improve the process around gaining consent from the Leicestershire Police and improved demographic data for victims. Wider partnership work has commenced around the offer to victims across Leicestershire, including practice sharing opportunities.

This is an area of practice that will continue to be developed to ensure that the best services are provided to victims.

4. Developing the process and offer around out of court and diversion

During 2025/26, considerable work has been undertaken in collaboration with Leicestershire Police to avoid the unnecessary criminalisation of children, where appropriate.

A significant change was the introduction of a Leicestershire Joint Decision and Resolution Panel (JDRP), from the previous panel which was a collaboration with a neighboring Youth Justice Service. The JDRP is jointly held with the Police and attendance is secured from Children's Social Care and the Restorative Approaches Team, on behalf of victims. The JDRP is held weekly to ensure the timely hearing of children who meet the criteria. All children who are heard at the JDRP have a full YJB approved assessment completed with them and the allocated practitioner attends panel to introduce their child and provide a brief overview of their assessment findings and plan of work.

In collaboration with Leicestershire Police, the Panel can utilise Outcome 22 as part of a Deferred Caution Scheme (DCS), this means that if a child engages with intervention well, their agreed outcome is resulted as no further action (NFA). During 2025/26, a Deferred Prosecution Scheme (DPS) was introduced enabling children who had committed low level driving offences to receive intervention and for their offences to be categorised as no further where they engaged well in sessions. Prior to this development, children would have attended Court and received penalty points and a fine with no statutory involvement with Youth Justice Services. This outcome would mean that children were classified as First Time Entrants (FTE) in the criminal justice

system and research identifies that children who are FTEs are more likely to have increased contact with the CJS, have their education, employment and future opportunities impacted negatively and face increased stigma and labelling.

During this year, the Service has been involved in the Whole Area Model Pilot which is a Youth Endowment Fund project focused on developing consistency and rigor around this area of work, including measuring impact. This Project and area of focus will continue into 2026/27.

In relation to performance for 2025/26, when compared to the national average, Leicestershire Youth Justice Service (YJS) consistently performs well against the three main performance indicators, having a lower number of first-time entrants, a lower reoffending rate taking over the long term and a lower number of custodial sentences and remands. Risks, issues and performance are monitored quarterly by the Youth and Justice Partnership Board.

The YJS is compliant with all statutory returns to the Youth Justice Board (YJB).

Voice of children, parents and carers

The Service recognises that building strong relationships helps children develop resilience and reach their potential. Feedback from all interventions consistently shows that relationship building is a valued strength among children, parents, and carers. Voice work and participation work within the Service is underpinned by the Lundy Model of Participation.

During 2025/26, new processes were introduced to capture voice and feedback more consistently and a forum developed to evaluate the impact of the feedback received.

Children have commented:

“My worker helped improve things at school”

“I had someone to listen to me”

“They helped with my anger”

“Eco-map helped me know which people support me”

“Get to talk about everything”

“My Dad says I’ve grown up”

“My worker put a police marker on me so the police were aware I had a learning disability”

“Its helped me think about my actions”

“I needed help and help was there and I was supported through it all”

“Helped me find my own place”

“Helping me know what options I have for after school and getting me on a college course”

“Silver lining”

“So I didn’t get a charge and a chance for education”

“It’s Improved my mental wellbeing and my family noticed this”

“Listened and cared. Provided me with easy-to-understand education and I was able to reflect. The support my worker provided means I am prepared for the future and have a deeper understanding.”

“I felt comfortable with the team, and they helped me with everything”

“She treated me like an adult and respected my thoughts”

“Talked about relationships with parents and friends. Talked about my emotions. What makes a good healthy relationship. How my mental health impacts on me. Help with education. I identified my insecurities and how I can work towards being a better version of myself.”

Parents and carers have commented:

“Made my daughter feel confident and able to talk again”

“The support brought us closer”

“Supported our child through a time that he needed it and we appreciate that thanks”

“Just reflecting as a family and looking how to deal with difficult situations in a different manor”

“Giving us knowledge and supportive tools to prevent another situation from happening.”

“I think this is a good service to help children learn from any mistakes they might make and give them better options rather than just punishment this will help guide them in the right direction.”

“My daughter’s worker has made my daughter think about her future and want a better life for herself and helped guide her back on to the right path.”

“His worker was personable and genuinely caring about our circumstances and difficulties. She worked quickly to understand my son and used appropriate methods to engage him in often sensitive conversations.”

“Understanding his needs and getting the assessment and support he needed”

“All of my son’s workers have gone above and beyond”

“Just wanted to say a huge thank you to my son’s worker for her support. She is a real credit to the service. We really valued her sessions with my son. From the first meeting it was so easy to see just how passionate she is in supporting young people and their families. We valued her commitment and her input. We couldn’t think of a more suitable person to have worked with our child. The worker made my son and us, feel listened to and heard.”

During 2026/27, the Service will be developing the feedback and evaluation offer to include 3 and 6 monthly follow up calls where parents and carers have provided consent.

Priorities and Developments for 2026/27

This year the partnership has chosen to focus on the five key priority areas:

➤ **Improving education, employment and training outcomes for children involved in Youth and Justice.**

This year the partnership will drive robust oversight and scrutiny around educational performance of the children engaged in Youth Justice. Consideration will be given to data that is available across the partnership to help improve outcomes for children. The Board will ensure that practitioners and children have access to timely specialist support based on the needs of children. During 2026/27, a project will be undertaken considering the feasibility of developing a social enterprise focused on supporting children in to education, training and employment.

➤ **Strengthening the support for children concerning their health and wellbeing involved within the Youth and Justice Service.**

This year, the partnership will assess health needs to measure progress and set future priorities. Board Members will ensure children in diversion programs have the same access to health services as those in police custody or court. In 2026/27, the

Service will introduce a social prescribing model for youth justice participants and seek ongoing funding.

- **Improve support for victims in Youth and Justice Service through coordinated partnerships, better access to tailored resources, and regular evaluations to meet their specific needs.**

This year, the partnership will focus on driving improvement around consent rates for victims and improved data sharing to support the Board confidence that the offer for victims meets their needs. The Board will understand the voice of victims and use this insight to inform service and strategic delivery, ensuring that feedback and lived experiences directly shape support pathways.

- **Ensure children who are at risk of entering the criminal justice system have appropriate pathways to support.**

The Youth and Justice Partnership Board will ensure that there are robust pathways and offers in place for children who are at risk of contact with the youth justice system with a focus on prevention. The partnership will work with the Violence Reduction Network to embed Young Futures Prevention Panels as part of this approach. During 2026/27, the Service will develop a triage process for all children who have had contact with Leicestershire Police. There will be an increased focus on the vulnerabilities which propel children into the youth justice system, such as anti-social behaviour and the Service response to this.

- **Ensure a coordinated partnership response to children at the highest risk of harm and exploitation, and/or serious violence.**

The Partnership Board will oversee compliance with the new knife crime duties placed on Youth Justice and the partners during 2026/27. The Board will ensure that the services available to children work operate a joined up and child first approach to reducing harm both strategically and operationally. This will focus on prevention offers of support and early identification. The Partnership will be fully compliant with the new knife crime legislation when it is launched on 1st April 2026, and Board will monitor compliance and record any reasoning against any cases that depart from the guidance.

Throughout the five priorities and all other business covered by the Partnership Board, Members will focus on reducing the over-representation and disproportionality of children in the Youth Justice System by strengthening partnership data to ensure fair

and equitable responses across all agencies and challenge, where this is not happening.

Appendices

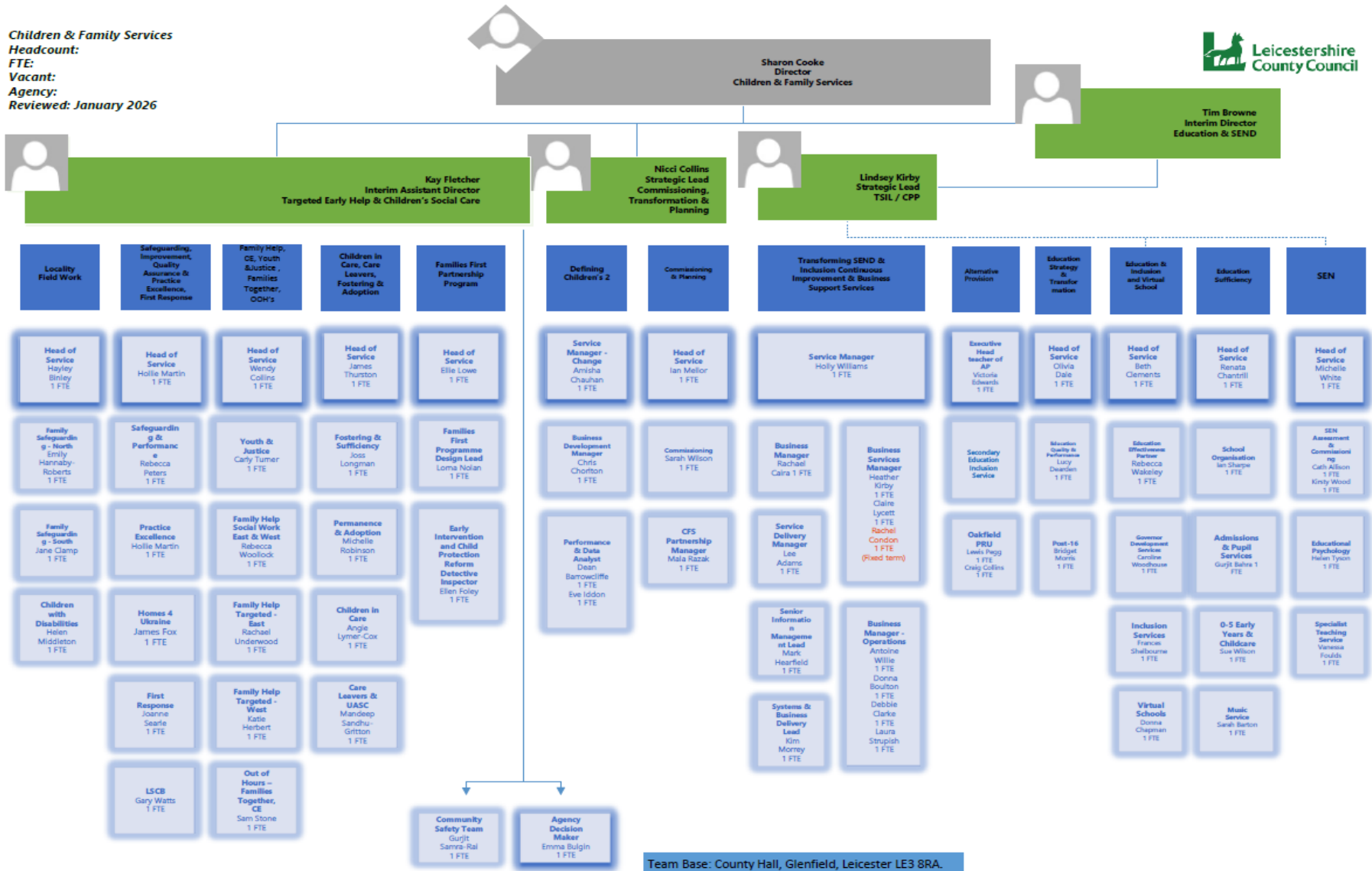
Appendix 1: Departmental Structure

Appendix 2: Youth and Justice Service Structure

Appendix 3: Breakdown of Youth and Justice Service by role and demographics

Appendix 1: Departmental Structure

Children & Family Services
 Headcount:
 FTE:
 Vacant:
 Agency:
 Reviewed: January 2026



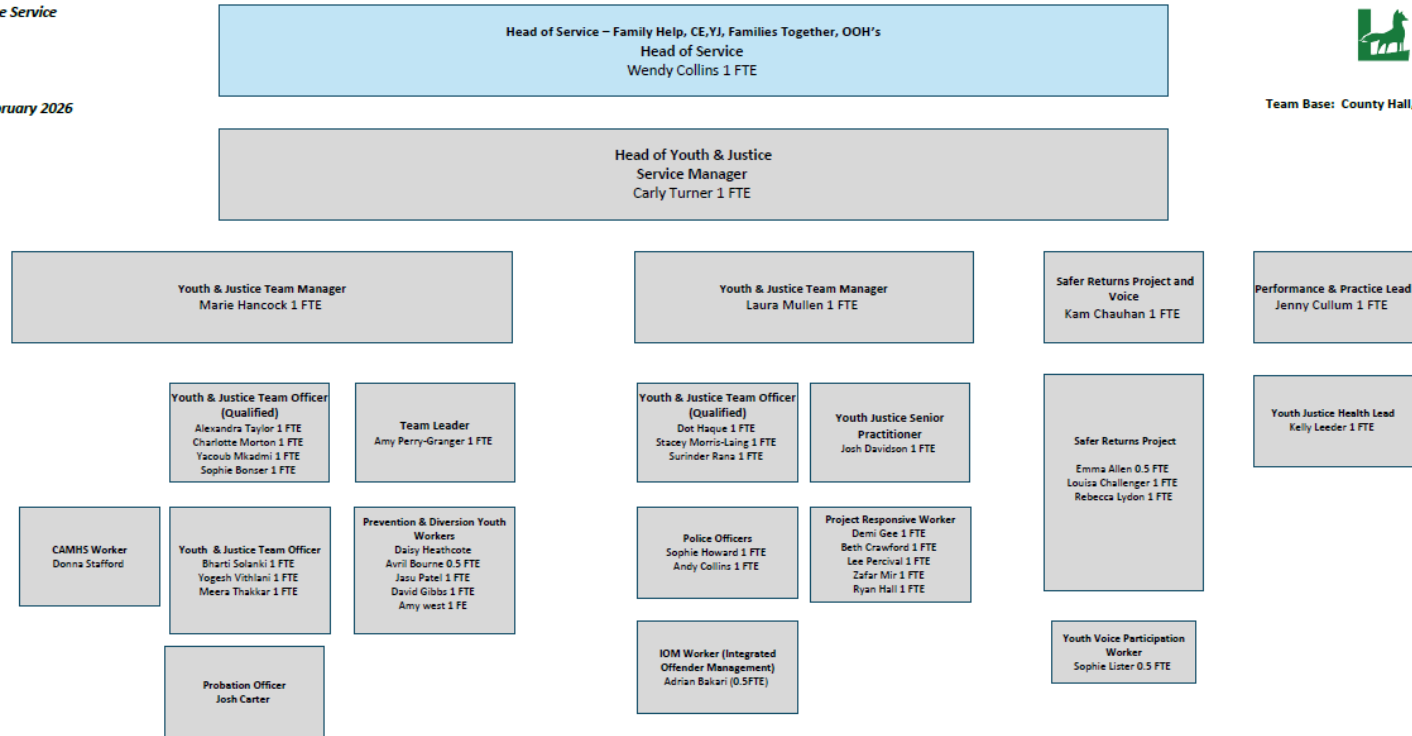
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Appendix 2: Youth and Justice Service Structure

Youth & Justice Service
Headcount:
FTE:
Vacant:
Agency:
Reviewed: February 2026
Page 2 of 2



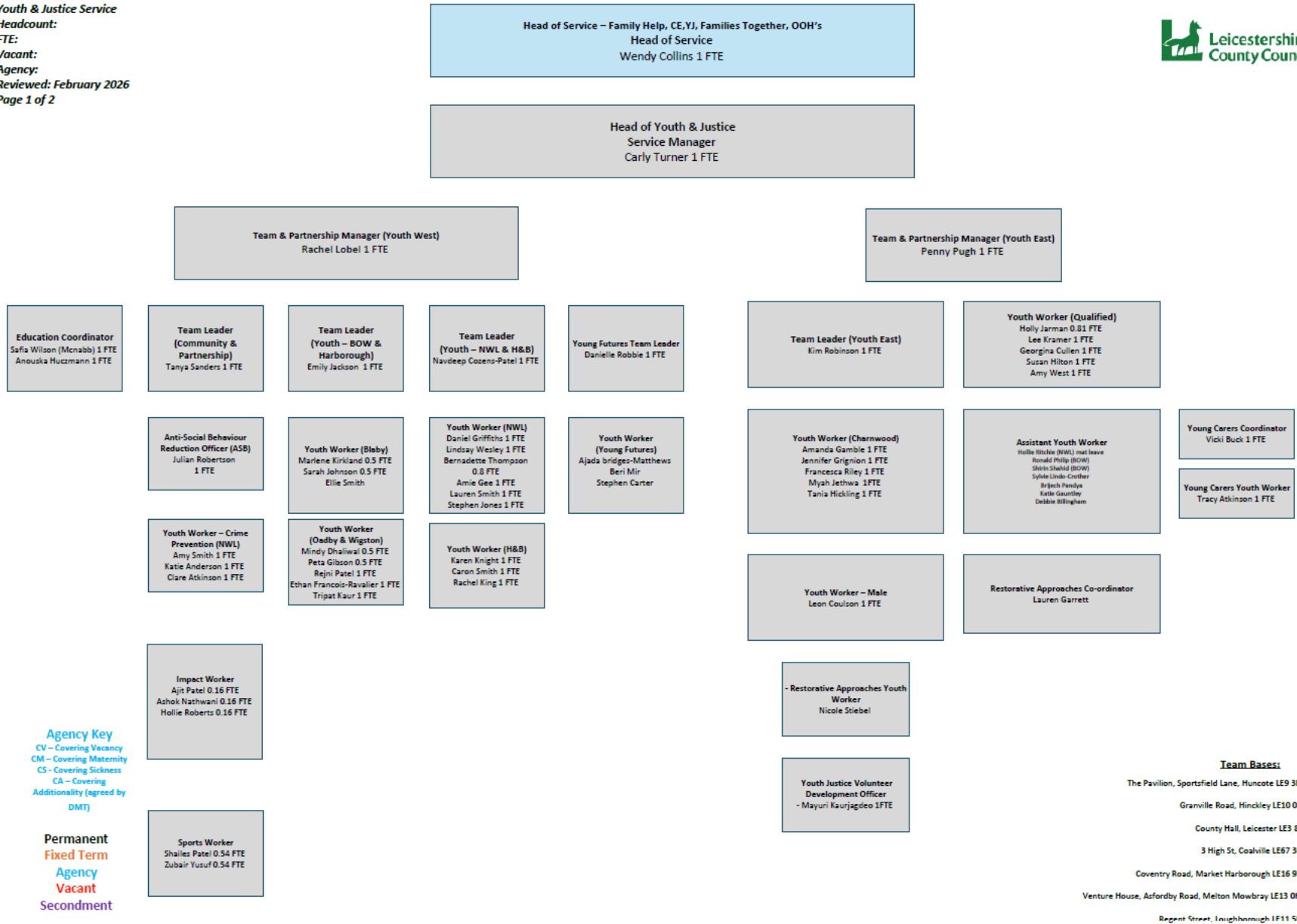
Team Base: County Hall, Glenfield LE3 8RF.



Agency Key
 CV – Covering Vacancy
 CM – Covering Maternity
 CS - Covering Sickness
 CA – Covering
 Additionality (agreed by
 DMT)

Permanent
 Fixed Term
 Agency
 Vacant
 Secondment

Team Bases:
 The Pavilion, Sportsfield Lane, Huncote LE9 3BN.
 Granville Road, Hinckley LE10 0PP.
 County Hall Leicester LE3 8RA
 3 High St, Coalville LE67 3EA.
 Coventry Road, Market Harborough LE16 9BX.
 Venture House, Asfordby Road, Melton Mowbray LE13 0HN.
 Regent Street, Loughborough LE11 5BA.



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Agency Key
 CV – Covering Vacancy
 CM – Covering Maternity
 CS – Covering Sickness
 CA – Covering
 Additionality (agreed by DMT)

Permanent
Fixed Term
Agency
Vacant
Secondment

Team Bases:
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 Coventry Road, Market Harborough LE16 9BX.
 Venture House, Asfordby Road, Melton Mowbray LE13 0HN.
 Regent Street, Loughborough LE11 5RA

Appendix 3: Breakdown of Youth and Justice Service by role and demographics

Type of Contract	Strategic Manager (PT)	Strategic Manager (FT)	Operational Manager (PT)	Operational Manager (FT)	Practitioners (PT)	Practitioners (FT)	Administration (PT)	Administration (FT)	Sessional	Students/trainees	Referral Order Panel Volunteer	Other Volunteer	Total
Permanent		1		4	12.1	65					0	0	82.1
Fixed-term											0	0	0
Outsourced											0	0	0
Temporary											0	0	0
Vacant					6.51	5					0	0	11.51
Seconded Children's Services						1					0	0	1
Seconded Probation						1					0	0	1
Seconded Police						2					0	0	2
Seconded Health (Substance misuse)											0	0	0
Seconded Health (Mental health)						1					0	0	1
Seconded Health (Physical health)											0	0	0
Seconded Health (Speech/language)											0	0	0
Other/Unspecified Seconded Health						1					0	0	1
Seconded Education											0	0	0
Seconded Connexions											0	0	0
Seconded Other											0	0	0
Total	0	1	0	4	18.61	76	0	0	0	0	0	0	99.61
Disabled (self-classified)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Ethnicity	Managers Strategic		Managers Operational		Practitioners		Administrative		Sessional		Student		Referral Order Panel Volunteer		Other Volunteer		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Asian					5	12												5	12
Black				1	2	3												2	4
Mixed					1													1	0
White		1		3	11	56												11	60
Any other ethnic group																		0	0
Not known													15			29	16	44	16
Total	0	1	0	4	19	71	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	0	29	16	63	92	
Welsh Speakers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Equality Impact Assessment Form


Before completing this form, please refer to [the supporting guidance document](#)

The purpose of this form is to aid the Council in meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in the Equality Act 2010. This requires the Council to have “due regard” of the impact of its actions on the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The assessment is used to identify and record any concerns and potential risks. The following actions can then be taken to address these issues.

- Remove risks: abandon the proposed policy or practice
- Mitigate risks – amend the proposed policy or practice so that risks are reduced
- Justify policy or practice in terms of other objectives

Once the EIA has been approved by the Senior Responsible Officer, please ensure that a copy is placed on the SharePoint folder: “Equalities Board, EIAs”

1- Policy details	
Name of policy	<p>Youth Justice Plan 2026–27</p>  <p>Youth Justice Plan 2026 - 2027.docx</p>
Department and service	Children and Family Services – Youth and Justice Service
Who has been involved in completing the Equality Impact Assessment?	Strategic Manager (Youth Justice), in consultation with the Youth and Justice Partnership Board, Youth Justice Service managers, and partner agencies including Police, Health, Education and the Voluntary Sector.
Contact numbers	0116 305 0030

Date of completion	March 2026
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<p>2- Objectives and background of policy or practice change</p> <p>Use this section to describe the policy or practice change What is the purpose, expected outcomes and rationale? Include the background information and context</p>	
<p>What is the proposal?</p> <p>What change and impact is intended by the proposal?</p>	<p>The Youth Justice Plan 2026–27 sets out the strategic priorities and partnership commitments for the delivery of youth justice services in Leicestershire. The Plan moves to an annual cycle to reflect the pace of national youth justice reform and increased assurance requirements, while strengthening a Child First, preventative and trauma-informed approach.</p> <p>The Plan prioritises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention and diversion for children at risk of entering the criminal justice system • Reducing reoffending and unnecessary criminalisation • Strengthening responses to serious violence, exploitation and vulnerability • Improving access to health, wellbeing and education, including social prescribing • Enhancing the offer and voice of victims <p>A core intended impact is to reduce inequality and disproportionality by ensuring that services are responsive to the needs of children who experience multiple and intersecting disadvantages, and that partnership responses do not exacerbate existing inequalities.</p>

	<p>This plan is a renewal of the three-year plan from 2023-2026. It is a one-year plan due to a period of reform announcements that are being made by the Ministry of Justice in relation to Youth Justice, and particularly the Youth Justice Board, who currently provide our governance.</p>
<p>What is the rationale for this proposal?</p>	<p>Children known to the youth justice system are disproportionately affected by adverse childhood experiences, unmet health needs, special educational needs, exploitation, and social inequality. The Plan recognises that these vulnerabilities are not evenly distributed across the population and that some groups of children are more likely to experience criminalisation and poorer outcomes.</p> <p>The rationale is therefore to embed equality, prevention and inclusion at a strategic level, ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways into the system are minimised • Responses are proportionate and tailored • Services are accessible, culturally competent and trauma-informed • Partnership governance actively scrutinises inequality and impact <p>This approach aligns with statutory duties under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.</p>

3- Evidence gathered on equality implications - Data and engagement

What evidence about potential equality impacts is already available?

This could come from research, service analysis, questionnaires, and engagement with protected characteristics groups

What equalities information or data has been gathered so far?

What does it show?

The Youth Justice Plan draws on:

- Service performance and assurance data reported to the Youth Justice Partnership Board
- Evidence of vulnerabilities linked to youth justice involvement, including exploitation, anti-social behaviour and health needs
- Learning from prevention, diversion and victim work
- National and local expectations around Child First practice and disproportionality

The evidence highlights that children entering or known to the youth justice system often face multiple disadvantages, reinforcing the need for early intervention, coordinated support and equality-focused service design.

Inequalities and disproportionality in Youth Justice System

Evidence nationally and locally indicates that contact with the youth justice system is not evenly distributed across the child population. Some groups of children experience a higher likelihood of being stopped, reported, criminalised, prosecuted and receiving more intensive statutory intervention, and may also experience poorer outcomes (for example, higher rates of remand, custodial sentences, breach and reoffending). These differences can arise from structural inequality, cumulative disadvantage, unmet need, and the way services and decision-making thresholds operate across the partnership.

- **Race and ethnicity:** children from some ethnic minority backgrounds can be disproportionately represented at key points (police contact, out-of-court disposals, court outcomes and remand). This may also intersect with place, deprivation and perceptions of risk.
- **Disability, neurodiversity and mental health:** children with SEND, speech/language needs, learning disability, autism/ADHD and mental ill-health may face barriers to understanding

processes, communicating effectively and complying with conditions, increasing risk of escalation or breach.

- **Sex and gendered pathways:** boys and girls can have different routes into offending and different patterns of harm. Girls known to youth justice services are more likely to have experienced exploitation, trauma and domestic abuse, and may have needs that are missed within generic provision.
- **Care experience and safeguarding vulnerability:** children looked after or with care experience are over-represented in youth justice and are more likely to experience instability, exploitation, missing episodes and criminalisation linked to placement context.
- **Socio-economic disadvantage:** deprivation, exclusion from school, unmet health needs, and limited access to positive activities are associated with higher risk of entry to the youth justice system and reduced ability to access support.

The Youth Justice Plan 2026–27 responds to these inequalities by strengthening prevention and diversion, promoting Child First and trauma-informed practice, and requiring partnership scrutiny of decision-making and outcomes.

The Partnership Board will use assurance and performance reporting to monitor disproportionality (including intersections between protected characteristics and vulnerability factors), review the effectiveness of diversion and intervention pathways, and agree actions where differences cannot be explained by need or risk. This EIA will be kept under review as delivery progresses and as new intelligence or feedback from children, families and communities is gathered.

The Youth and Justice Partnership Board are provided with a comprehensive performance report which includes a full breakdown of the demographics of the children who are supported through the service. We are in the process of developing this further to show trends.

<p>What engagement has been undertaken so far?</p> <p>What does it show?</p>	<p>Engagement has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from children and families through evaluation activity • Input from victims to inform improvements to the victim offer • Multi-agency collaboration through the Youth and Justice Partnership Board • Access to children’s records based on their interaction with the service detailing their needs. <p>This engagement demonstrates the importance of listening to lived experience and ensuring that services are shaped by the voices of those most affected by the youth justice system.</p> <p>The Youth Justice Plan does not require any public consultation.</p>
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4- Benefits, concerns and mitigating action

Please specify if any individuals or community groups who identify with any of the ‘[protected characteristics](#)’ may **potentially** be affected by the policy and describe any benefits and concerns including any barriers. Use this section to demonstrate how risks would be mitigated for each affected group. If a group will not be affected by the proposal please state so.

Group	What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?	What are the concerns identified and how will these affect those from the following groups?	How will the known concerns be mitigated?
Age	The Plan is specifically designed for children and young people, prioritising prevention, diversion and developmentally appropriate responses.	Children aged 15-17 are most likely to be represented within the Service.	Ensure that children have access to early help and prevention services, such as Teen Health who are based within schools.

		<p>The Service has a statutory obligation to work with some children as they transition into young adulthood and with others who will be have a considered transition to the Young Adults Team in Probation.</p> <p>Risk of younger children being drawn into formal processes where early help may be more appropriate.</p>	<p>Close working relationships with Leicestershire Probation utilising the dedicated Senior Probation Officer SPOC and the seconded Probation Officer within Youth Justice.</p> <p>Strengthened triage, diversion pathways and prevention panels to ensure proportionate responses. Engagement with District Councils Joint Action Groups to identify children engaging in Anti-Social Behaviour and an offer of support at this early stage.</p>
Disability	<p>There is a high prevalence of children with the Youth Justice System with disabilities, specifically SEND needs. . The benefit of the plan is to ensure that the health and education needs of children are understood, addressed and support is in place for children to achieve their potential and have ambition.</p>	<p>Children with SEND or neurodiversity may experience barriers to engagement or understanding processes.</p>	<p>Partnership working with Health, Education and specialist services, and use of tailored interventions.</p> <p>Strategic representation on the Youth and Justice Partnership Board from Education Leads and Health Leads.</p>

		<p>Require improved access to health support, including mental health and neurodevelopmental needs, and a trauma-informed approach.</p>	<p>During 2026-27 a specialist Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) provision will be implemented to work across the YJS children and the partnership to improve support and understanding around communication needs.</p> <p>All children who require support from the Youth and Justice Service have a Communication Passport completed with them so that their needs are better understood.</p> <p>Currently exploring opportunities to ensure access to health services when diverted away from Court and police custody.</p>
Race	<p>Black, Asian and multi-ethnic children and adults are over-represented in the Criminal Justice System as a whole. It is likely that this group of children will face multiple disadvantages and intersectionality.</p> <p>The Plan is set to address disproportionality by race as a key</p>	<p>Risk of racial disproportionality in contact with policing and youth justice pathways. This group of children are at more risk of entering into youth justice and the prison estate.</p>	<p>Ongoing scrutiny through partnership governance structure and rigor of quarterly data.</p> <p>Development of a disproportionality action plan supported by the Race Equity Lead from the Youth Endowment Fund.</p>

	thread across priorities and within the partnership, Child First principles and prevention activity aim to reduce unnecessary criminalisation and escalation of children.		
Sex	The plan recognises the need for differing pathways and vulnerabilities for boys and girls, including exploitation and victimisation.	The over-representation of girls in YJS is a concern. Work has identified that girls are likely to have higher levels of trauma and vulnerability and are likely to have experienced victimisation.	Strategic work across LLR is underway concerning girls and women in CJS. #EmpowerHer has been developed in collaboration with girls to offer practical support and emotional wellbeing. Work has been undertaken on developing a pathway for boys to address positive relationships and talking openly about mental health and emotional wellbeing.
Gender Reassignment	The Plan recognises the need to support young people to safely explore their identity.	Whilst evidence is limited, it is understood that children who are exploring their identity can become vulnerable and may display risk taking behaviour.	All children who require support from the Youth and Justice Service have a Communication Passport completed with them so that their needs are better understood, including their identity.

			Improved data collection. Developing pathways of support.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	No direct impact identified, improvements to partner services will support all children and young people in YJS.	None identified.	Not required.
Sexual Orientation	The Plan recognises the need to support young people to safely explore their identity.	Whilst evidence is limited, it is understood that children who are exploring their identity can become vulnerable and may display risk taking behaviour.	All children who require support from the Youth and Justice Service have a Communication Passport completed with them so that their needs are better understood, including their identity. Improved data collection. Developing pathways of support.
Pregnancy and Maternity	No direct impact identified, improvements to partner services will support all children and young people in YJS.	None identified.	Not required.
Religion or Belief	The Plan recognises the need to support young people to safely explore their culture and identity.	Whilst evidence is limited, it is understood that children who are exploring their culture and identity	All children who require support from the Youth and Justice Service have a Communication Passport

		can become vulnerable to negative influences.	<p>completed with them so that their needs are better understood, including their identity.</p> <p>Improved data collection.</p> <p>Developing pathways of support.</p>
Armed Forces (including veterans)	No direct impact identified, improvements to partner services will support all children and young people in YJS.	None identified.	Not required.
People with lived care experience	The plan acknowledges that children with lived care experience can be over-represented within the Criminal Justice System.	Children who have lived care experience have a higher vulnerability to criminalisation and exploitation.	<p>Strong relationships with the Children in Care Service and Care Leavers Service.</p> <p>Data reported quarterly to the Youth and Justice Partnership Board who scrutinise data and will respond to any over-representation.</p>
Other groups: e.g., rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after	No additional direct impacts identified, improvements to partner services will support all children and young people within Youth Justice.	None identified currently.	Robust performance monitoring through the Youth and Justice Partnership Board around cohort data and any response needed.

<p>children, deprived or disadvantaged communities</p>	<p>Above addresses children with care experience and care leavers.</p>		
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<p>5- Action Plan</p>			
<p>Produce a framework to outline how identified risks/concerns identified in section 4 will be mitigated.</p>			
<p>What action is planned?</p>	<p>Who is responsible for the action?</p>	<p>Timescale</p>	<p>Expected outcome</p>
<p>Monitor equality impacts through Partnership Board reporting</p>	<p>Youth and Justice Partnership Board</p>	<p>Ongoing 2026–27</p>	<p>Improved oversight of disproportionality and equality impact and robust plans in place that show positive outcomes.</p>
<p>Embed Child First and trauma-informed practice across delivery</p>	<p>Youth Justice Service Management Team</p>	<p>Ongoing 2026–27</p>	<p>More equitable and proportionate outcomes for children</p>
<p>Strengthen prevention and diversion pathways for vulnerable groups</p>	<p>Multi-agency partners</p>	<p>Ongoing 2026–27</p>	<p>Reduced escalation and unnecessary criminalisation</p>

Improve access to health and wellbeing support including social prescribing	Health partners and Youth Justice Service	Ongoing 2026–27	Reduction in unmet health needs and inequality
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6- Approval Process	
Departmental Equalities Group	14/04/2026
Corporate Policy Team	Please set out comments from the Corporate Policy Team
Sign off by the Senior Responsible Officer for the Project.	



CABINET – 28 APRIL 2026

INVESTING IN LEICESTERSHIRE PROGRAMME
RURAL ESTATE STRATEGY 2026-2036

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to seek the Cabinet's approval of the Investing in Leicestershire Programme (liLP) Rural Estate Strategy 2026-2036 (attached as Appendix A to this report) which sets out the proposed future vision, ambitions and objectives for the use, management and development of the Council's rural estate for the next 10 years.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that:
 - a) The Investing in Leicestershire Programme Rural Estate Strategy 2026 - 2036 be approved;
 - b) That the Director of Corporate Resources, following consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member for Resources and the liLP Board, be authorised to approve plans for the Council's Rural Estate, including agreeing disposals and approval of investment proposals within current delegated authority limits and budget approvals.

(KEY DECISION)

Reasons for Recommendations

3. To enable the implementation of the Investing in Leicestershire Programme Rural Estate Strategy 2026-2036.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

4. The draft Rural Estate Strategy was considered by the Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 11 March 2026 and the Commission's comments are set out in paragraphs 51 and 52 of this report.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

5. The liLP Strategy 2025-29 (approved as part of the MTFS 2025-29) made a commitment to reviewing the management strategy of the Rural Estate in 2025-26.
6. The MTFS 2026-30 capital programme was approved by the County Council on 18 February 2026 and includes the provision of £43m (subject to business cases) for the further development of the liLP during the period up to 2029. This allocation includes funding of £1.4m for general improvements to the Rural Estate.
7. The Corporate Asset Management Plan 2022–26, approved by the Cabinet on 23 September 2022, is aligned with the Council's Strategic Plan and promotes the management of the Council's property assets, including the Rural Estate, in a way that contributes to the achievement of the five strategic outcomes.
8. The Cabinet at its meeting on 16 December 2025 approved the draft Rural Estate Strategy for consultation.

Resource Implications

9. As at the end of 2024/25, the Council's Rural Estate was valued at £95.9m.
10. Rental income growth has increased from £835,876 to £1,074,597 over the last 10 years. Growth has been achieved through rent reviews, structural improvements and new farm lettings.
11. With an estate this size there are considerable maintenance and repair requirements with a Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) programme over 15 years estimated to cost in the region of £20.7m. Spend of £432,000 has been identified as being urgent within the next 12 months. Compliance costs at a similar level will also be required (these are the direct and indirect expenses incurred in meeting government regulations, legal requirements etc.). Meanwhile, capital investment has been modest with £450,000 allocated for 2025/26 and £350,000 for 2026/27.
12. £25.9m of capital receipts has been generated over the past 10 years from the sale of development land and surplus farmsteads, plus uplifts in value from development potential.
13. The Estate will need to continue generating receipts to fund improvements and maintain market level rents.
14. The Strategy sets out proposals for managing the Rural Estate, including supplementing internal staff resources with specialist legal and consultancy advice. With increasing regulation and changes in Government farming support, maintaining the right balance between in-house and external expertise will be critical.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

15. None.

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PART B

Background

16. The Council owns the freehold of the entire Rural Estate which extends to 7,359 acres. It has a current asset value of £95.9m and represents 41%, by value, of the direct property assets within the liLP portfolio.
17. The Estate comprises 6,996 acres of farmland made up of 65 main farms, including one bare land holding, together with 45 partially equipped, secondary bare land holdings and areas of allotments, together with 275 acres of woodland or land of high ecological value.
18. The Estate has a good record of delivering financial returns well above those achieved in the wider agricultural investment market. The overall returns over the past 1, 3 and 5 years averaging 8.2%, 7.9% and 12.3% respectively which, based on market information published by leading national land agency practices, is well above the 1.8%, 5.3% and 3.7% achieved by the market. The level of performance is reflected in the fact that the Estate has produced £25.9m in capital receipts with rental income growing by 28.6% to £1.07m per annum over the past 10 years.

The Rural Estate Strategy 2026 - 2036

19. The Strategy, appended to this report, provides an overview of the Estate and considers the future vision, key ambitions and its objectives for the next 10 years.

Vision

20. “To create a Rural Estate that provides opportunities for people to establish thriving rural businesses, supports the rural economy and local communities and makes an increasing contribution to the attainment of the Council’s strategic objectives whilst delivering ongoing financial benefits”.
21. It is acknowledged that there will be both opportunities and challenges in realising this vision, as summarised below.

Opportunities

- Leverage the Council’s position as landowner to influence strategic outcomes and partnerships.
- Restructure estate clusters to create more sustainable, viable farm units.
- Improve buildings and fixed equipment to boost rental growth and reletting potential.
- Fund farm improvements through disposal of surplus assets.
- Realise development potential of land near population centres.
- Generate income from biodiversity credits and other environmental schemes.

- Modernise tenancy agreements to enable strategic objectives and flexibility.
- Support diversification, niche farming, and educational or rural enterprise uses.
- Promote young entrants through incentives and clear performance measures.
- Apply risk evaluation techniques for new ventures to ensure viability.
- Acquire additional holdings during market downturns to meet future aspirations.
- Build partnerships to access grants and external funding.

Challenges

- Embedding recognition that estate value includes strategic influence, not just financial returns.
- Helping tenants maintain profitable, resilient businesses amid market volatility.
- Managing high compliance and maintenance costs without eroding income.
- Securing capital for ongoing improvements.
- Balancing environmental land management changes with income stability.
- Overcoming constraints of long-term tenancies and associated liabilities.
- Maintaining strong landlord–tenant relationships and the Council’s reputation.
- Encouraging tenant engagement with environmental and technological improvements.
- Navigating increasing regulatory requirements and procurement limitations.
- Addressing potential reluctance of tenants to invest in holdings despite long-term benefits.
- Managing sensitivities around property disposals.
- Balance conflicting priorities, for example development of Local Plans.

Ambitions

22. The Council will seek:

- To retain a core estate of farms that have an appropriate mix of sizes and are suitably equipped to support new entrants and existing tenants to run viable and sustainable rural businesses resilient to changing market conditions.
- To realise the Estate's potential to deliver financial benefits that help support the provision of services for the people of Leicestershire.
- To increase the contribution the Estate makes to the achievement of the objectives and outcomes of the Council’s Strategic Plan, thereby improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Leicestershire.

- To strengthen existing partnerships and create new relationships with stakeholders to secure the delivery of strategic objectives and outcomes.
23. Through the adoption of these strategic ambitions and the associated objectives and action points, it is considered that the Estate can contribute towards the delivery of multiple economic, environmental and social benefits.
 24. In developing the Strategy, detailed consideration has been given to legislation and government regulation, existing Council Strategies and initiatives and local and national Planning Policy.

Key Features of the Strategy

25. The Rural Estate should be retained and maintained at its current level of investment providing a range of nursery/starter and progression holdings enabling people to enter the farming industry and build a sustainable rural business.
26. The Estate should be restructured to maximise its potential to achieve strategic ambitions. An evidence-based Management Plan will be prepared at Estate and Core Holding level and used to identify: -
 - Those holdings which deliver a market return and can support a sustainable farm enterprise in the future should be retained.
 - Those holdings which, subject to the availability of additional investment or land, have the potential to deliver a market return and could support a sustainable farm enterprise in the future, should be retained.
 - Those holdings and areas of land which possess latent development or Biodiversity Net Gain potential should be retained with a view to realising the potential to support the capital programme and managed in a manner that maximises their income earning potential in the intervening period.
 - Areas of land within the Estate capable of supporting the Council's strategic objectives or future service delivery should be identified and retained and managed in a manner that maximises that potential. Projects that provide economic or social benefits to local communities should, subject to a positive business case be progressed and brought forward for implementation.
 - Subject to no overriding estate management reason to the contrary, uneconomic and unviable holdings should be sold, retaining any land that can improve the viability of an adjoining farm and amalgamating it with that holding.
27. The Council will ensure the portfolio is self-financing and meets or exceeds the market rate of return in the medium term. A rolling 5-year Financial Strategy for the Estate will be produced annually in consultation with Corporate Finance, to present:

- A 5-year Disposals and Acquisition Programme.
 - A 5-year Capital Investment Programme detailing the on-farm investments necessary to maintain the performance of individual holdings and fund improvements required to ensure all properties meet regulatory compliance standards.
 - A Revenue Budget detailing income, expenditure and the anticipated annual income return.
28. The Financial Strategy should seek to maintain and maximise the Estate's overall financial performance.
29. To implement any proposals efficiently and effectively it is proposed that the Director of Corporate Resources, following consultation with the Lead Member for Resources and the liLP Board, be authorised to approve future Estate reorganisation plans and to both agree disposals and investment proposals within the financial limits of his existing delegated authority. As the strategy progresses, any potential costs outside of existing approvals will need to be approved by the Cabinet as part of the usual budget process.
30. The management strategy will be supported by a suite of key performance indicators that both meet current CIPFA requirements, provide a detailed market comparison, and include local indicators to monitor progress in achieving environmental improvements and strategic outcomes; the results being reported annually as part of the liLP Annual Performance Report.
31. A full review of the Strategy will be undertaken in 2031. It will be monitored throughout its life and will be reviewed in consultation with the liLP Board to ensure that it remains relevant in an ever changing rural economy and fully compliant with any statutory and regulatory changes in order to deliver its primary objectives.
32. To drive the implementation of the Strategy an annual Rural Estate Action Plan will define the activities to be delivered each year.

Consultation

33. The Cabinet at its meeting in December 2025 approved the draft Rural Estate Strategy for consultation and agreed the planned approach to this.
34. The consultation comprising a combination of questionnaires, online and in person meetings took place over the period from 6 January 2026 to 13 February 2026 with the following groups:
- Farm tenants and members of the public attended hybrid in-person and online meetings on 29 January 2026.
 - Farming industry stakeholders - meetings were held with the National Farmers' Union, the National Forest, representatives of Brooksby College, Nottingham University Veterinary School and Members of Midland Counties Agricultural Valuers' Association over the period of the consultation.

35. The public was consulted via the “Have Your Say” page on the County Council’s website.
36. Stakeholder packs were prepared and included a summary of the draft Strategy and a questionnaire which focused on the questions outlined in the Cabinet Report of 16 December 2025, namely:
 - What size of Estate should be retained?
 - Is the Estate seen as having a recognisable strategic purpose?
 - Do you agree with the vision and ambitions set out in the draft Rural Estate Strategy?
 - What initiatives would you be in favour of the Estate pursuing in the future and which should it avoid?
 - What do you think the Estate should prioritise in its continued management? For example, this could include financial returns, level of investment and support for farmers, ecological and/or environmental improvements.
 - Are there any opportunities or challenges you feel the Strategy should address?
 - How can the Council best support tenants, rural businesses, and communities through its estate management?

Consultation Findings

37. The principal observations made by the consultation groups are summarised in the paragraphs below.
38. Overall, subject to there being a clear implementation plan, there was agreement that the Vision and Ambitions set out in the Strategy were capable of delivering its primary objectives.
39. There was overwhelming support across all groups for the retention of the Rural Estate and whilst most consultees supported maintaining the Estate at its current acreage a significant proportion would support increasing the size of the portfolio.
40. There was a recognition that the restructuring of the Estate, including the bringing forward of development sites would involve the sale of land and other assets held within the portfolio. However, this was accepted subject to sufficient funding being made available from the resulting capital receipts to both facilitate the purchase of an equivalent or improved replacement asset and the delivery of improved on-farm infrastructure vital to maintaining the viability of farms.
41. In addition, it was recognised that within the restructuring process farmsteads that were no longer seen as being able to support a sustainable farming business could be repurposed for commercial uses that supported the rural economy; the land being added to adjoining farms to support the viability of those units.

42. Significant weight was placed on the need to ensure that the Estate remained viable from both the landlord's and tenant's perspective enabling the Council to achieve an adequate financial return on its capital invested whilst allowing tenants the opportunity to establish and maintain viable businesses. It was also acknowledged that investments in the Estate need to be carefully considered, as they may result in an associated rental increase.
43. There was broad agreement that to best support new entrants and existing tenants the proposed restructuring of the Estate needed to provide a range of starter and progression holdings enabling tenants to establish and grow a sustainable and resilient business.
44. It was recognised that the Estate would continue to make a significant contribution to the Council's wider objectives. This was seen as particularly important in relation to the environment where it was considered that the Estate had an increasing role to play in respect of the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the outcomes within the Climate Resilience Delivery Plan.
45. Strengthening stakeholder partnerships was seen as key not only to delivering many of the wider strategic objectives but facilitating direct support to tenants through collectively leveraging in external expertise and funding opportunities to the benefit of all parties.
46. Better communications at both an individual and Estate-wide level was seen as a key to both landlord and tenants increasing their understanding of the issues facing the Rural Estate, changing economic conditions and the implications for individual farming businesses.
47. Supporting those tenants wishing to diversify their businesses by assisting in providing the advice necessary to obtain planning and other consents required in the establishment of a second enterprise.
48. It was also noted that prospective new tenants found difficulty in obtaining details of potential future lettings and accessing the application process. It was therefore agreed that efforts would be made to make this information more readily accessible.
49. It was recognised that for the Strategy to be effective and deliver on its vision and ambitions there needed to be clear management plan detailing how the Estate would developed over the period to 2036; development of the plan (incorporating future investment proposals) and the blueprint for the restructuring of the Estate being seen as key priorities required to address the perceived failings of current approach.

Comments of the Scrutiny Commission

50. The Commission at its meeting on 11 March 2026 considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources, which presented the draft Investing in

Leicestershire Programme Rural Estate Strategy for 2026 to 2036 for comment and set out the proposed approach to future management of the Programme's portfolio of farms and rural properties.

51. In resolving that the draft Strategy be noted and supported, the Commission made the following key observations:
- Tenant engagement during the consultation on the draft Strategy had been positive with many of their priorities aligning with those of the Council around sustainability and viability. Members agreed the need for ongoing communication to support both tenants and the Council's management of the estate for the long term.
 - The proposed vision of the Strategy and the aim to support new entrants into farming was supported.
 - The overall Strategy was endorsed but the need to ensure the Estate remained viable without subsidisation was stressed. A member further commented on the need to balance the benefits of retaining farmland whilst exploring opportunities for development to maximise the Council's income.
 - The strategic importance of farming to the wider economy and national food security, particularly considering global uncertainties.
 - Works to support biodiversity initiatives also helped deliver the Council's statutory biodiversity duty and its Local Nature Recovery Strategy, as well as outcomes within its Climate Resilience Delivery Plan.
 - Plans to work more collaboratively with Brooksby Agricultural College, the NFU, the National Forest and other organisations to support research and student engagement on Council owned farms and to support those interested in agroforestry were welcomed.
 - Diversification requests from tenants were permitted when they aligned with the farm's agricultural purpose. The Council recognised the need for farmers to diversify to make farms sustainable and sought to support this as far as possible.
52. The Commission noted that an annual report would be presented to the Scrutiny Commission regarding progress against a rolling five-year financial Strategy for the Estate and requested that the Director provide further detail on the criteria applied for allocating new farm tenancies, including whether priority could be given to Leicestershire residents committed to the local rural economy.

Consultation Outcomes

53. Based on the consultation responses, particularly those received at the events attended by farm tenants and internal stakeholders, the proposals relating to the following objectives have been strengthened and are highlighted within the final Strategy appended to this report:-
- Improving communications with tenants by initiating regular meetings to ensure a greater understanding of the issues faced by both parties.

- Improving awareness of letting opportunities for prospective new entrants.
- Working more closely with colleges and universities within the region to provide educational support for tenants and training opportunities for students.
- Working more closely with the internal stakeholders to establish a co-ordinated approach to engaging with external stakeholders to create increased funding opportunities and technical support for both the Council and tenants.

Equality Implications

54. No equality implications directly arising from the recommendations in this report have been identified. The Equalities Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix B.

Health Implications

55. A Health Impact Assessment has also been undertaken in advance of the Strategy being brought forward for adoption and is attached as Appendix C; the assessment showing positive outcomes throughout.

Environmental Implications

56. The Rural Estate Strategy seeks to encourage environmental improvement across the portfolio aligning with the wider liLP Strategy in relation to the acquisition, development and management of the Fund's property assets by incorporating measures that ensure that the Estate makes a positive contribution to the achievement of the Strategic Plan's Clean and Green Strategic Outcome.

Background Papers

Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan -

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/LCC-Strategic-Plan.pdf>

Report to the Cabinet on 16 December 2025 - "Investing in Leicestershire Programme Rural Estate Strategy 2025-2035"

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7882&Ver=4>

Report to the County Council on 18 February 2026 - "Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27-2029/30"

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=7862>

Appendices

Appendix A – Rural Estate Strategy 2026-36

Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix C – Health Impact Assessment

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Investing in Leicestershire Programme

Rural Estate Strategy
2026 – 2036

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1 The Vision and Ambitions for Leicestershire's Rural Estate

This Strategy details our overarching vision, ambitions, intentions and focus for the management of the Rural Estate over the next 10 years.

Vision

To create a Rural Estate that provides opportunities for people to establish thriving rural businesses, supports the rural economy and local communities and makes an increasing contribution to the attainment of the Council's strategic objectives whilst delivering ongoing benefits.

Ambitions



To retain a core estate of farms that have an appropriate mix of sizes and are suitably equipped to support new entrants and existing tenants to run viable and sustainable rural businesses resilient to changing market conditions.



To realise the estate's potential to deliver financial benefits that help support the provision of services for the people of Leicestershire.



To increase the contribution the estate makes to the achievement of the objectives and outcomes of the Council's Strategic Plan thereby improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Leicestershire.



To strengthen existing partnerships and create new relationships with stakeholders to secure the delivery of strategic objectives and outcomes.



1.1 Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of the Rural Estate Strategy is to inform decision making on the future management of the portfolio, providing an overarching vision and strategic objectives and a plan to guide the estate's future day to day management.

The strategy includes a comprehensive overview of the current Rural Estate and establishes how it can be better aligned to support the Council's corporate aims and objectives.

Furthermore, by examining the current performance of the estate the strategy will outline how it can be more effectively and efficiently managed and developed over the next 10 years. Maximising opportunities for enhancing the delivery of increased financial, environmental and social benefits in line with the IILP Strategy.

The vision, ambitions and objectives have been developed to ensure best consideration is achieved in terms of use, financial and social return.

This review of the Rural Strategy has been commissioned in accordance with the overarching IILP Portfolio Management Strategy 2024-28. In view of the prevailing economic and business climate and the need for the County Council to maximise the potential of all its property assets, it is appropriate to ensure that the vision, objectives and management strategy remain relevant and are aligned with the wider strategic aims of the County Council.

The aim is for the estate to support the rural economy and local communities, provide a gateway into the farming industry and continue to deliver financial benefits to support service delivery.



2 Estate Overview

2.1 History

County Councils have had a statutory duty to provide smallholdings (later referred to more generally as County Farms) since the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908. Various Acts and reports expanded upon this duty leading up to the Agriculture Act 1970 which set the objective that County Farms authorities needed to offer opportunities to new entrants and to work to sustain existing tenants in their farming career – this could be in conjunction with other providers including the private sector. Once established, the 1970 Act placed a responsibility on Authorities to maintain the estate and review management regularly.

It is against this background that Leicestershire County Council has owned farm properties for over 100 years. The bulk of the Rural Estate was purchased during the period 1920 – 1930 followed by some smaller opportunity purchasing in the 1960s. Latterly, since its incorporation within the Investing in Leicestershire Programme a small number of additional investments have been made.

Held under the provisions of the Agriculture Act 1970, for the period from 1980 to 2014 the estate was managed on a trading account basis separate from other corporate property requiring it to be self-funding. Since 2014, the estate has been managed as part of the Council's wider investment portfolio and is currently held within the Investing in Leicestershire Programme portfolio. Throughout the period from 1980 the estate has been regularly reviewed with major reviews undertaken in 1987, 1993, 1998 and 2010; the last interim review being undertaken in 2013.

In 2008 the Sustainable Farming and Food Delivery Group produced a guidance report titled '*The Importance of the County Farms Service to The Rural Economy*'. The report was produced in collaboration with the Tenant Farmers Association, the Country Land and Business Association, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and the National Farmers' Union. More recent reports from the CPRE, the Countryside Charity and its partners – (2019)¹ and (2022)² concluded that farms owned and managed by Local Authorities are an important, strategic national asset and assist authorities in meeting wider regional economic, countryside and environmental objectives. The reports also recognised that County Farms provide an essential route into farming for new entrants.

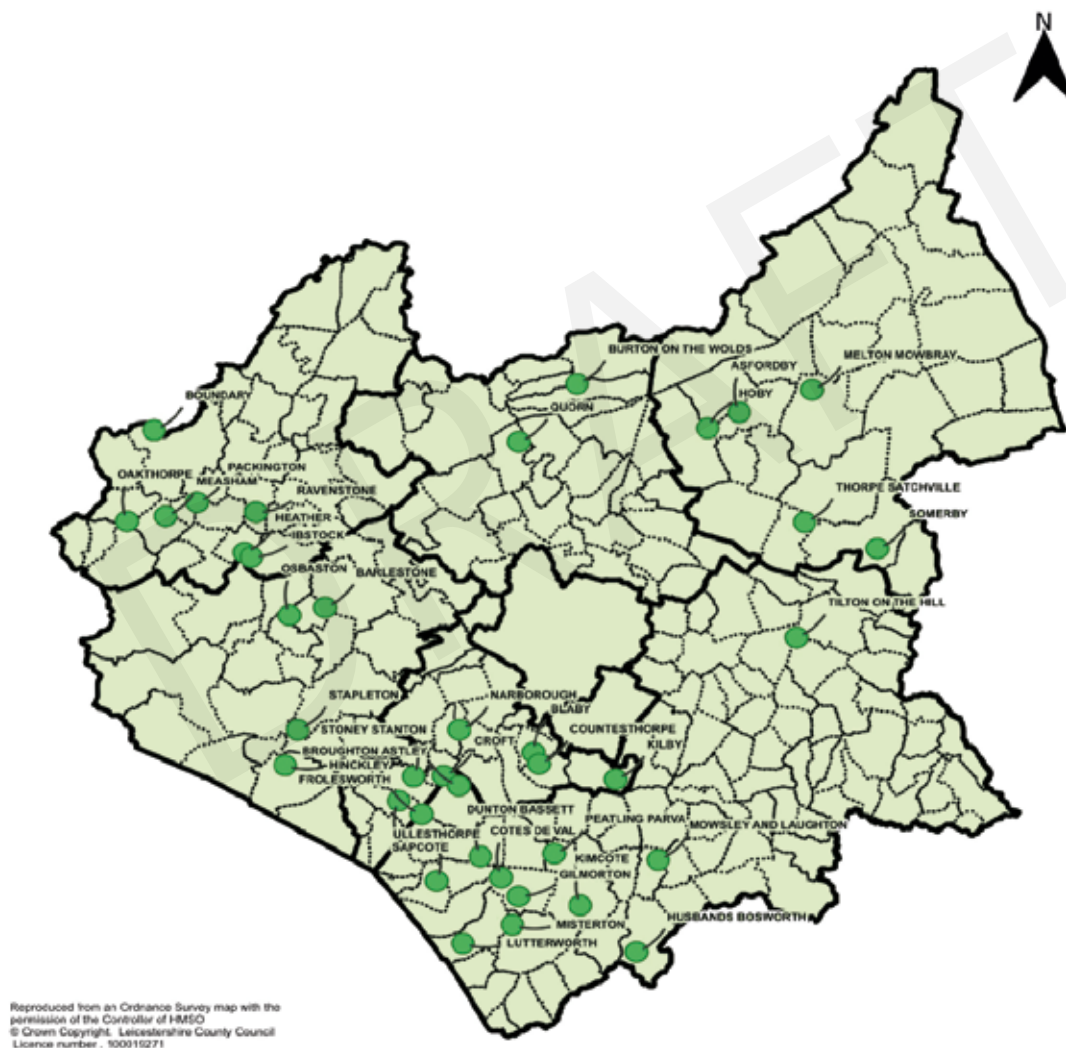
These reports coupled with the wider strategic objectives of the Council have formed the basis of the Council's policy over the last 12 years.

1 https://aces.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/CPRE-Report_Reviving-county-farms_Dec2019.pdf

2 <https://www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/reimagining-council-farms-full-report.pdf>

2.2 Structure of the Estate

The Rural Estate is spread geographically across the county, as detailed on the plan below, and comprises individual blocks of land ranging in size from a single small area of bare land to estates containing multiple fully equipped farms (i.e. farmhouse, buildings and land – a fully functioning “farm” holding). As can be seen from the plan there is a significant concentration (80%) of main farms situated in the southwest of the county in the Harborough, Blaby and Hinckley areas.



The Council owns the freehold of the entire estate which extends to 7,359 acres and has a current asset value of £95.9m. This represents 41%, by value, of the direct property assets within the Investing in Leicestershire Programme portfolio; an independent review of the IILP portfolio by Hyman Robertson in 2024 recommended maintaining the rural estate at its current level.

The estate comprises 6,996 acres of farmland made up of 65 main farms, including one bare land holding, together with 45 partially equipped, secondary, bare land holdings and areas of allotments. In addition, there is one cottage let on a residential tenancy, 11 business tenancies in respect of 2 minerals leases, sports fields and utilities infrastructure together with 275 acres of woodland or land of high ecological value including the Misterton Marshes SSSI. The table below shows the current make-up of the farmed land within the estate and compares it to the position at the time of the last review.

	2015		2025	
	Number of Holdings	Area (acres)	Number of Holdings	Area (acres)
Starter dairy farm	25	1,888	9	776
Promotion Dairy farm	16	2,034	14	1,754
Mixed Dairy farm	2	213	0	0
Non-dairy livestock farm	21	1,688	33	2,922
Small "retirement" holdings	8	73	8	193
Bare Land	8	587	1	25
Sub-Total	80	6,483	65	5,670
Land let on short term tenancies of up to 5 years		614		1,326
Cottages and Business Lettings		68		88
Woodland and ecological sites		238		275
Total		7,403		7,359
Note: the definitions of the farms detailed in the table reflect the fixed equipment available to the tenant however, although there are 23 farms designated as dairy farms, a number are currently used to support non-dairy enterprises.				

The changes in the composition of the estate over the last 10 years reflects that it has been responsive to the changing economic conditions within the farming industry, resulting in a move away from small intensive dairy farms to larger mixed livestock units.

In addition, recognising the need for tenants to maintain a thriving business the Council has supported, by the granting of the necessary Landlord's consent, those tenants wishing to support or expand their businesses by taking additional land, diversifying the farming business by the generation of income from a secondary enterprise or taking the opportunity to add value to their farm produce.

In addition to recognising the existing use and farming potential of the holdings within the overall estate some farms have been identified as having potential to deliver enhanced value through the promotion of development opportunities in respect of parts of the land or buildings. 37 areas of land have been identified with future development potential and 15 areas capable of delivering significant biodiversity net gains or supporting woodland expansion. These areas of land will form a pipeline of development sites to be promoted over the next 20 years. The realisation of this potential will form an integral part of estate strategy in future years providing a stream of capital receipts vital to the delivery of the capital programme. Critically this will allow for reinvestment in maintaining the optimal size of the estate by the purchase of additional farms thereby providing further letting and relocation opportunities, and the potential to create larger promotion units to support the business development for farm tenants.

2.2.1 Occupation

The farms and other land holdings are predominantly let, with some 'in hand' or vacant properties; with lettings being made in accordance with the legislation in place at the date of letting. The table below details the different forms of letting arrangements of the main farm holdings. It illustrates the changes in the statutory provisions and estate strategy over the years; the latter seeing "model" repairing and insuring obligations replaced by the introduction of full repairing and insuring terms.

Statutory Provision	Tenancy Type	Repairing Obligations	Number	%
Agricultural Holdings Act 1986	Lifetime	Model Clauses	6	9
Agricultural Holdings Act 1986	Retirement	Model Clauses	12	18
Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995	Farm Business Tenancy	Model Clauses	7	11
Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995	Farm Business Tenancy	Full Repairing and Insuring	40	62
Total			65	100

Over time the proportion of Agricultural Holdings Act lettings has reduced; the statutory rights to succession not applying to County Farms having been specifically excluded from the Act. This trend will continue until all lettings on the estate are Farm Business Tenancies.

2.2.2 Heritage, Conservation and the Environment

The rural estate currently includes 2 listed farmhouses, one Site of Special Scientific Interest, 2 scheduled ancient monuments and a number of properties lying within conservation areas or areas of environmental protection. More generally the rural estate, being largely devoted to livestock farming, is rich in hedgerows, supports areas of ancient ridge and furrow and has areas of natural habitat interspersed with natural and managed woodland all of which it seeks to protect and enhance.

Mindful of the Council's responsibility to conserve heritage assets and protect and enhance the environment, all tenancy agreements afford such assets the appropriate level of statutory protection. This is further reinforced by requirements on tenants to manage farms in a manner that prevents pollution, maintains permanent pasture, protects trees and makes a positive contribution towards nature conservation including the implementation of the recommendations of a conservation assessment undertaken at the start of the tenancy. Tenants are also encouraged to participate in environmental stewardship schemes with the result that prior to the passing of the Agriculture Act 2020, 2,025 acres of the estate were within Countryside Stewardship Schemes.

2.3 Benefits of the Estate

In considering the performance of the Estate, account is taken of financial and non-financial performance and the ability of each asset to deliver benefits in the future. Currently potential initiatives are identified and progressed on an opportunity basis in circumstances where their achievement does not conflict with other objectives.

2.3.1 Non-Financial Performance

The following has been achieved in recent years:

- Planning consent achieved for 3,242 homes and 1,095,000 sq. ft. of employment space together with the supporting community infrastructure including 4 primary schools and community buildings.
- Establishment of a privately run farm SEND school at Broughton Astley.
- Delivery of a traveller's site at Gilmorton.
- Delivery of allotments site at Lutterworth with extension to existing sites at Broughton Astley and Ibstock.
- Creation of 35 acres of woodland at Ravenstone and establishment of the Ernie White Memorial Woodland at Croft.
- Creation of more than 50 job opportunities in connection with the alpaca farm and children's nursery at Scamhazel Farm, Boundary.
- Provision of land for Baptist Church car park at Sutton in the Elms.
- Environmental enhancements including the improved stewardship of Misterton Marshes SSSI, a pond creation project at Mowsley and the provision of hedging plants and trees across the estate.

In the development of the management plan detailed in Part 2, this approach has been expanded to consider what strategic benefits the portfolio can deliver through the adoption of an individual plan for each estate and core holding.

2.3.2 Financial Performance

The Rural Estate has a track record of consistently outperforming the wider agricultural investment market. The overall returns for the estate over the past 1, 3 and 5 year periods averaging 8.2%, 7.9% and 12.3% respectively, well above that of the market as shown in the table below.

	2024-25	3 year	5 year
Net Income Return	0.4%	-2.3%	-0.3%
Capital Growth	7.7%	10.4%	12.8%
Total Return	8.2%	7.9%	12.3%
Market Income Return	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%
Market Capital Growth	0.5%	4.1%	2.5%
Market - Total Return	1.8%	5.3%	3.7%

These figures reflect the fact that revenue returns achieved from the day-to-day management of the estate have been constrained at below market levels over the period between 2020 and 2023, having been considerably impacted by the need to fund the decontamination of Firs Farm, Husbands Bosworth following the illegal dumping of waste.

However, it is the returns from capital account surpluses achieved through the sale of development land and surplus farmsteads amounting to £25.9m (including the value of contracted sales) over the past 10 years together with the uplift in values resulting from the generation of “hope value” that have allowed significant capital growth to be achieved year on year.

Rental income has grown from £835,876 to £1,074,597 over the past 10 years and now averages £146 per acre; the increase being achieved through the review of rents, targeted investment in structural improvements, and rental uplifts achieved at reletting as farms transfer from Agricultural Holdings Act tenancies to Farm Business Tenancies. These increases coupled with efficiencies achieved in the management of the Estate have helped to offset the increased cost of Landlord’s maintenance and repairs, including areas of statutory compliance, which have run at above inflation levels for several years. Further, throughout the period income has been maximised by drawing in available support payments and grant funding from environmental stewardship schemes.

Only modest levels of capital investment, £250,000 in 2024/25 financial year, and £450,000 in 2025/26 have been allocated for farm improvements in the MTFs capital programme, and with no grant funding currently available to the Council this has restricted the ability of the estate to maintain the viability of some core holdings and meet regulatory standards.

A future challenge for the estate is ensure that the estate continues to deliver a stream of capital receipts that enables funds to be provided to deliver the improvements necessary for farms to meet all regulatory standards, provide viable and resilient farming opportunities and the income returns necessary to support that investment by maintain rent at full market levels. In recognition of the ongoing contribution the estate makes to the capital programme and to maintain its optimal size, investments to the value of £3.335m have been made on land purchases, principally at Walton Holt Farm.

2.4 Management of the Estate

2.4.1 Maintenance, Repair and Insurance

Repairing obligations vary across the estate according to tenancy type and the date of entry (as detailed in the previous table). The responsibility in all Agricultural Holdings Act tenancies and those Farm Business Tenancies where the original tenancy was granted before 1998 is based on “Model Clauses” where the obligations are shared between Landlord and Tenant as currently set out in the Parts I and II of the Schedule 1 to the Agriculture (Model Clauses for Fixed Equipment) (England) Regulations 2015. Those Farm Business Tenancies granted in respect of new lettings since 1998 are on full repairing and insuring terms.

Currently 62% of the main farm holdings are let on full repairing terms. Whilst in theory this reduces the level of day-to-day expenditure on maintenance and repair for the Council, it remains responsible for ensuring the farms meet regulatory compliance standards. In addition, at the termination of the tenancy it is often necessary for the Council to invest in improvements to fixed equipment and buildings necessary to provide a resilient farming enterprise.

Over the past 3 years an average of £361,700 has been spent annually on maintenance and repair across the estate. Based on 2015 figures, the overall Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) Programme for the estate over a 15-year period amounts to £20.7m. £432,000 has been identified as urgent and requiring attention within 12 months. Savings on some of the PPM have or will be achieved by the disposal of uneconomic holdings. The need remains to maintain an appropriately funded programme to meet the estate’s ongoing maintenance requirements, and the detail will be clarified as detailed condition surveys take place.

The Council insures all the buildings on the estate, recharging those tenants with full repairing and insuring terms the premium relevant to the holding they occupy, thereby reducing the risk of potential under insurance and financial loss.

2.4.2 Management

In recent years the estate has been managed by an in-house team of land agents and support staff employed within Strategic Property Services supplemented by external expertise.

The in-house team are responsible for undertaking the day-to-day management of the estate including the letting of farms and tenancy management including rent reviews and lease renewals, the management of repairs, maintenance and farm improvements, monitoring statutory compliance, farm inspections and tenant liaison together with the management of all associated budgets and debt. In addition, the team makes a significant contribution to the development and of implementation management plans, the disposals and acquisitions programme and the monitoring and reporting of performance. External support has been utilised to benefit from wider market knowledge, for example to support new tenant selections and rent reviews, or specialist knowledge, such as regulatory requirements and maintenance surveys.

To ensure the management of the estate meets best practice standards it is expected to continue to supplement staff resources with specialist legal and consultancy advice, together with the information and financial systems required to underpin delivery, were appropriate and contributing to the continued effective and efficient management of the portfolio in the future.

With continued increases in regulation and changes in Government support to farming it will be essential to ensure that the balance between in-house and external support is right. It is expected that the in-house expertise will increasingly focus on overseeing the Council's landlord responsibilities, enhancing the relationship with our tenants and promoting the estate and farming. As well as, setting the strategic direction for the estate, monitoring the delivery of the strategy and leading on special project activity, e.g. nursery farm concept.



3 Future Vision

3.1 Strategic Ambitions and Objectives

To support the delivery of the overall vision the 'Ambitions and Objectives' summarised below have been formulated.

Ambition -

To retain a core estate of farms that have an appropriate mix of sizes and are suitably equipped to support new entrants and existing tenants to run viable and sustainable rural businesses resilient to changing market conditions.



Currently, the estate comprises 65 main holdings. A number of these farms have been occupied by the same tenant for a significant length of time and devoted to a system of farming that has not required the parties to invest in significant modernisation in line with the changing economic or technological landscape. Consequently, many of these farms will require substantial investment to support and develop a new farm business beyond the current tenant.

In many cases these holdings are smaller scale, thereby requiring either an intensified farming enterprise or particular niche operation to be considered sustainable in the long term. The intention is that the strategy demonstrates the council's ongoing commitment to retaining the rural estate, whilst rationalising, enhancing and diversifying it to generate capital receipts, improve opportunities for sustainable farming and meet the wider obligations and objectives of the Council over the medium to long term.

By restructuring the estate and where appropriate, amalgamating two or more holdings and focusing investment on the best located or equipped of the existing units, a core estate would be maintained at approximately its current size of 7,359 acres but comprise a reduced number of farm units; the remaining farmsteads being sold off or repurposed for an alternative use, ensuring that the final structure of the estate provided a range of starter and progression farms suitable for new entrants to establish and grow a sustainable farming business.

As part of the evaluation of the existing farms, location, condition, compliance, and compensation liability would be key considerations in determining suitability for retention. Accordingly, the release of those farms with the highest liability for future expenditure would enhance revenue returns, reduce landlord's exposure to risk and facilitate the more effective use of resources enabling funding to be focused on maintaining the sustainability of core holdings and the businesses they support.

External investment consultants Hymans Robertson undertook a review of the whole ILLP portfolio in January 2024 and recommended that the rural estate be maintained at its current level of investment relative to other sectors within direct property portfolio in terms of value as a proportion of the whole portfolio. However, since that review the subsequent revaluation of the estate has resulted in a substantial uplift in its value thereby significantly increasing its proportion of the overall portfolio.

Furthermore, the review also recommended that properties that were consistently underperforming or unlikely to perform at target levels in future years (for reasons other than the tenant's personal performance) should be disposed of and the monies realised reinvested in property that was attractive to the market and secured long term income and capital growth. The maintenance of the critical size of the estate being supported by a 5-year disposals and acquisition programme.

Objectives	1 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	Ongoing
To complete a comprehensive review of the Estate and prepare and implement, over the lifetime of the strategy, an estate wide restructuring plan.	✓		
As part of the review select a suitable holding and establish a pilot starter unit.	✓		
To invest in farm improvements in order that each core holding has sufficient buildings and fixed equipment to support a viable rural business.	✓	✓	✓
To produce and implement a 5-year programme to manage the maintenance requirements and level of outstanding improvements related to statutory compliance.	✓		
To invest in additional rural assets that have the ability to make a positive contribution to the delivery of the estate's strategic ambitions thereby maintaining the estate at or around its current acreage.	✓	✓	✓
To establish an accurate estate wide capital and revenue budget spend forecast.	✓		

Ambition -

To realise the estate's potential to deliver financial benefits that help support the provision of services for the people of Leicestershire.



In addition to supporting the delivery of the Council's Strategic Plan, the principle aims of the Investing in Leicestershire Programme Strategy are:

- Support growth in the county and its economic area of influence and ensure: there is a more diverse range of properties and land assets available to meet the aims of economic development.
- to maximise returns from Council owned property assets
- to support the delivery of front-line services through increased income generation from existing investments, or through capital investments that will reduce operating costs
- to enhance the value and marketability of property assets enabling capital receipts to be used to support improved service delivery
- to maximise the potential to address economic and social market failure It is necessary to ensure that returns from the estate are demonstrably at least equal to that which is being achieved on the open market for equivalent assets (with the exclusion of any holdings subject to any temporary new entrant incentive scheme).

To maximise the potential to address economic and social market failure, it is necessary to ensure that returns from the estate are demonstrably at least equal to that which is being achieved on the open market for equivalent assets (with the exclusion of any holdings subject to any temporary new entrant incentive scheme).

To generate sustainable positive income returns it is necessary to provide farms which are attractive to the market, thereby attracting higher performing tenants, and furnish them with the opportunity of making an equitable return on their investment which consequently attains the market level of rental income. This can only be achieved by having well equipped and maintained holdings supported by an agreed programme of future investments.



A key component of long-term rural estate management is sustained, positive, capital growth; this is achieved through a combination of obtaining the right rental levels and the realisation of development potential through a systematic approach to management of the development pipeline.

A long-term management view will also support tenants to plan their own investments and increase the potential for suitable alternative sites to be found where re-location is required.

Reviewing the estate's assets, an appreciation of their development potential and the timescale for its realisation, are essential to ensure that the pipeline of potential developments is proactively promoted and brought forward for delivery or disposal. This continuing flow of capital receipts supports the Council's wider capital programme including the future investment in farm improvements and property.

Objectives	1 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	Ongoing
To match or exceed the financial returns achieved by the wider agricultural investment market.	✓	✓	✓
Through investment in farm improvements increase rental income and reduce outgoings to increase annual revenue balances returns over the medium term.	✓	✓	
To maintain and promote a pipeline of potential development sites to provide an ongoing stream of capital receipts ensuring that engagement with tenants is maintained throughout the process and opportunities explored for the relocation of the tenant and continuation of the farming business to minimise disruption.	✓	✓	✓



Ambition -

To increase the contribution the estate makes to the achievement of the objectives and outcomes of the Council's Strategic Plan thereby improving the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Leicestershire.



The rural estate already makes a significant contribution to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the County. The challenge is to ensure that this contribution continues to increase year on year.

The normal farming activities of the tenants supports the local economy through employing essential labour and engaging with the supply chain and local services such as feed merchants, machinery suppliers, veterinary surgeons and agricultural contractors, alongside the Council contributing through the procurement of building works contracts etc. In addition, farm diversification and the achievement of added value has the potential to make a further substantial input to these areas.

Allied to the economic benefits, the provision of community facilities through the practice of identifying and addressing existing under provision, forms part of the current process in the promotion of potential development opportunities. Ensuring that where practical land is set aside to accommodate local needs for such things as new schools, cemeteries, playing fields or additional public open space.

Furthermore, in its role of corporate landlord, sites are similarly identified within the estate with a view to their future use to support essential services including, for example, the provision of depot sites and sites for travellers and travelling show people.

However, there is a need to develop a structured approach to the identification of local needs through developing closer working relationships with local communities in order to better identify where it is possible to make a positive contribution in the future.

In addition, bringing forward land for housing and employment uses, supports economic growth across the wider economy leading to further job creation, training opportunities and greater prosperity.

Aware of the benefits of providing improved access to the countryside to improve wellbeing and its potential conflicts with normal farming operations, it is possible, particularly in respect of urban fringe farms, to design and manage schemes that provide safe walking routes which benefit the farm by segregating livestock from the general public. Where appropriate such schemes could be progressed on an estate-wide scale as has previously happened at Misterton, and through engagement with the local access forum.

The potential exists for enhancing the measurable impact of the estate towards the environmental goals of the Council, supporting the delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the outcomes of the Climate Resilience Delivery plan, through the implementation of biodiversity improvements such as planting of trees to further support flood management work and contribute towards climate adaptation actions. These initiatives will assist in contributing towards the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty to conserve and enhance the biodiversity.

Acknowledging strong market interest, work is ongoing to identify such opportunities and identify the most appropriate delivery model for such projects ensuring that in all cases target rates of return are achieved from any investment.

In the restructuring of the estate, appropriate areas of land could be identified and set aside to support these initiatives in a way that minimises the impact on farm viability (or compliments the existing farm management system) by utilising land of lesser economic value to provide enhanced income streams.

Biodiversity net gain baseline assessments of 12 potential sites have been undertaken suggesting that in excess of 400 credits could be generated across the estate. Further business case testing will determine whether a realistic return can be achieved by progressing the schemes. Acknowledging strong market interest, work is ongoing to identify such opportunities and identify the most appropriate delivery model for such projects ensuring that in all cases target rates of return are achieved from any investment.

At present, with Landlord's support and approval tenants farming approximately 19% of the land within the estate participate in the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. However, with the scheme transitioning to new support mechanisms it is anticipated that more will be able to enter the new Environmental Land Management Schemes. It is proposed that all appropriate applications will be supported and form part of the shared future management proposed for each farm.



Objectives	1 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	Ongoing
Support tenants wishing to diversify their business by establishing a secondary enterprise or by adding value to farm produce thereby increasing access to locally sourced food..	✓	✓	✓
Identify opportunities to make a positive contribution by providing improved community facilities and work with partners to secure their delivery.	✓	✓	✓
Encourage tenants to work with local communities to increase educational opportunities.	✓	✓	✓
Provide opportunities for inclusive public access across the estate in order to maximise potential health benefits through increased physical activity.	✓	✓	✓
To deliver biodiversity improvements across the estate to support the delivery of Council developments and infrastructure or achieve financial benefits through the sale of credits.	✓	✓	✓
Contribute to the achievement of the Council's environmental targets for example by planting additional trees and areas of woodland, linking with flood management, climate adaptation and biodiversity objectives where appropriate, and assist in meeting it's statutory duty to conserve and enhance Biodiversity.	✓	✓	✓
Establish policies for consenting to and enabling tenants to implement the delivery of Environmental Schemes.	✓	✓	✓

Ambition -**To strengthen existing partnerships and create new relationships with stakeholders to secure the delivery of strategic objectives and outcomes**

Strong partnerships and the building of new relationships are a key element of any successful venture; central to the success of the rural estate is the landlord/tenant relationship with both parties, whilst protecting their own interests, acting on the basis of mutual trust, collaboration and partnership.

Ensure that good communications and regular contact is maintained with tenants, through the establishment of appropriate communication channels including regular group meetings with tenants, delivering long term benefits to both parties through the exchange of information vital to the making of sound management decisions. In addition, through regular contact and understanding the challenges facing the farm business, provide support as appropriate to individual tenants to minimise the risk to mental health.

With the focus of the estate's strategy shifting it is important to build similar good working relationships with other services across the authority and wider external stakeholder community able to contribute specialist knowledge and expertise to the delivery of shared objectives. An example of which will be to ensure that biodiversity schemes make a positive contribution to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy through collaboration with the Council's Environment Team in locating schemes, drawing down funding and targeting interventions. By building and enhancing good inter-service relationships the potential exists to increase links to a wider pool of external stakeholders resulting in the ability to develop further partnerships and access additional funding.

Objectives	1 – 5 years	6 – 10 years	Ongoing
Improve communications, engagement and collaboration with tenants by the adoption of best practice management policies including the provision of advice and support in meeting changes to the regulation or external funding of farming.	✓	✓	✓
Work collaboratively with other Council services to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the achievement of shared objectives. For example assisting in meeting Local Nature Recovery Strategy outcomes.	✓	✓	✓
Foster new working relationships with other public bodies and private sector partners including agricultural colleges to lever in investment, external funding and expertise essential to the delivery of strategic outcomes	✓	✓	✓

3.2 Opportunities and Challenges

In defining the strategic ambitions and objectives necessary to deliver the vision, it is essential to have an understanding of the challenges the estate faces both now and in the years ahead.

The following bullet points illustrate the broad range of factors that have been considered in shaping the rural estate's future strategy.



Opportunities

- Leverage the Council's position as landowner to influence strategic outcomes and partnerships.
- Restructure estate clusters to create more sustainable, viable farm units.
- Improve buildings and fixed equipment to boost rental growth, sustainability and reletting potential.
- Fund farm improvements through disposal of surplus assets.
- Realise development potential of land near population centres.
- Generate income from biodiversity credits and other environmental schemes.
- Modernise tenancy agreements to enable strategic objectives and flexibility.
- Support diversification, niche farming, and educational or rural enterprise uses.
- Promote young entrants through incentives and clear performance measures.
- Apply risk evaluation techniques for new ventures to ensure viability.
- Acquire additional holdings during market downturns to meet future aspirations.
- Build partnerships to access grants and external funding, and deliver environmental benefits.



Challenges

- Embedding recognition that estate value includes strategic influence, not just financial returns.
- Helping tenants maintain profitable, resilient businesses amid market volatility.
- Managing high compliance and maintenance costs without eroding income.
- Securing capital for ongoing improvements.
- Balancing environmental land management changes with income stability.
- Overcoming constraints of long-term tenancies and associated liabilities.
- Maintaining strong landlord-tenant relationships and Council reputation.
- Encouraging tenant engagement with environmental and technological improvements.
- Navigating increasing regulatory requirements and procurement limitations.
- Addressing potential reluctance of tenants to invest in holdings despite long-term benefits.
- Managing sensitivities around property disposals.
- Balance conflicting priorities e.g. development of Local Plans

4 Strategic Context

In shaping the future vision for the estate and setting a realistic and deliverable set of key ambitions and objectives, it is necessary to gain an appreciation of the external factors that will influence the emerging strategy. These fall into three main categories:

- Legislation and Government Regulation
- Existing Council Strategies and Initiatives
- Planning Policy

4.1 Legislation and Government Regulation

The management of the rural estate is subject to a number of key areas of legislation and regulation. Each, to a greater or lesser extent, have a bearing on estate strategy going forward. Whilst a number regulate the way tenancies and day-to-day management is conducted, the Agriculture Act 2020 and the Environment Act 2021 will be central to driving forward the achievement of improvements across the estate.

The table below provides an outline of the impact the relevant Acts do or potentially could have on and the management of the estate.

The Agriculture Act 1970	Provides the powers to hold and manage the County Farms that make up the Rural Estate.
Agricultural Holdings Act 1986	Provide the framework for the grant, management and termination of agricultural tenancies.
Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995	
Climate Change Act 2008	Under the provisions of Section 2 the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 set the current national Net Zero target and requires the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. It also introduced provisions relating to carbon budgeting and established carbon trading schemes for the purpose of limiting greenhouse gas emissions or encouraging activities that reduce such emissions or remove greenhouse gas from the atmosphere.

Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974	<p>The Health and Safety at Work Act is a comprehensive piece of legislation which influence the activities of both landlord and tenant in the management of farms. Its key points broadly relate to the following six areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a safe place of work. • Provide safe equipment. • Ensure staff are properly trained. • Carry out risk assessments. • Provide proper facilities. • Appoint a competent person to oversee health and safety.
Agriculture Act 2020	<p>The Agriculture Act 2020 represents the first major reform of agricultural policy since the Agriculture Act 1947 which introduced guaranteed prices and assured markets.</p> <p>The 2020 Act provided for the phasing out of direct payment subsidies under the Basic Payment Scheme whereby farmers received an annual area-based payment over a seven year transition period commencing from 2021; the loss of which will have a detrimental impact on the profitability of many rural businesses. However, it provides for a system of more environmentally focused support through the Environmental Land Management Scheme comprising the Sustainable Farming Incentive and the Farming Investment Fund detail of which are set out at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/funding-for-farmers. Further, the Act sets out provisions to improve transparency and fairness in the agri-food supply chain, makes changes to agricultural tenancies and places a duty on the Secretary of State to report to Parliament on food security every three years. It should be noted that the gradual reduction in area payments outlined in the original transition period was significantly changed in 2024 with payments being “de-linked” from land and the level of payments reduced by 76% to a cap of £7,200 per farm in order to realign the overall transitional budget towards environmental schemes.</p>

Environment Act 2021	<p>The Environment Act 2021 is the key piece of environmental legislation. The Act comprises two thematic halves.</p> <p>The first provides a legal framework for environmental governance whereby the Government must prepare a 15 year environmental improvement plan with the impartial Office of Environmental Protection to monitor progress towards achieving targets and ensure accountability. Further, the Secretary of State must set environmental targets in relation to air quality, water, biodiversity, resource efficiency and waste reduction and species abundance.</p> <p>The second makes provision for specific improvement of the environment, including measures on waste and resource efficiency, air quality and environmental recall, water, nature and biodiversity, and conservation covenants.</p> <p>In relation to biodiversity the Act strengthens the duty on public bodies to protect and enhance biodiversity, introduces the mandatory requirement for development to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain and the preparation and publication of Local Nature Recovery Strategies as well as introducing the concept of Conservation Covenants.</p>
Agriculture (Model Clauses for Fixed Equipment) (England) Regulations 2015	Sets down the liabilities of the parties in respect of repairs and maintenance of the fixed equipment and land that make up the holding. This is the statutory default in respect of all tenancies which do not include an express provision for full repairing obligations.
Agricultural Landlord-Tenant Code of Practice for England 2024	Provides guidance on achieving best practice in the management of the landlord/tenant relationship and supports the preparation of a joint management plan to support decision making over the period of the tenancy.

Whilst, the above represent the key pieces of legislation and guidance relevant to the development of this report it is noted that farming and rural land management is one of the most heavily regulated sectors within the UK economy being subject to a raft of regulations covering every area of potential activity including the keeping of livestock, the application of manure and fertilizers, the use of pest control products and the management of trees and woodland plus may more. A full list can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rules-for-farmers-and-land-managers#protect-the-environment-if-you-keep-livestock>. There is therefore a need, in the future management of the estate, to be mindful of those regulations that have a direct bearing on the farming activities of each individual tenant and the holding they farm.

4.2 Council Strategies and Initiatives

Central to developing the vision and key ambitions that flow from it is the need for the estate to align with and maximise its potential contribution to the wider corporate aims and objectives of the Council. The figure below illustrates the major areas of Council policy where it is seen that the rural estate can have an impact on the achievement of positive outcomes.

Strategic Plan 2022-26 (Due to be updated)	The Strategic Plan is the main driver to the achievement of the Council's key aims and objectives.
Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026-30	Sets out the budget for the Council over the next four years and determines the level of resources available to support each service including the further development of ILLP direct property portfolio including the rural estate.
Corporate Asset Management Plan 2022-26	Aligned with the Strategic Plan the CAMP provides the framework for the management of the Council's property assets, including those within the ILLP portfolio - regularly reviewing the future management strategy of each in addition to setting and monitoring performance targets.
Investing in Leicestershire Programme Strategy 2026-30	In addition to contributing to the achievement of the Council's strategic outcomes the strategy supports the channelling of new investment into schemes that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise the potential to address economic and social market failure • Improve property assets for a direct strategic/policy purpose • Enhance the value and marketability of property assets enabling capital receipts to be used to support improved service delivery.
Environment Strategy 2018-30	Sets out the Council's vision, aims, objectives and targets for how it will meet its legal and statutory obligations and responsibilities in relation to the environment, how it will minimise its impact on the environment and the impact of the environment on the council, as well as how it will fulfil its leadership role to minimise the environmental impacts, improve the health and wellbeing of people and contribute to the sustainable economic development of the county.

Tree Management Strategy 2026-30	Provides a framework to establish a healthy, balanced and sustainable tree population, resilient to climate change, reduce risk from hazardous trees, set standards of tree management and raise public awareness of the value of trees in the environment. Allied to the strategy and the wider Environment Strategy is the commitment to plant 1,000,000 trees to the end of the strategy period.
Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy	<p>The Local Nature Recovery Strategy has been developed with the aim of protecting nature and allowing it to recover by preserving and improving habitats and biodiversity. The strategy sets out practical actions to boost the area's wildlife and natural spaces.</p> <p>The main points of the strategy include examining how habitat loss, shrinking species populations and the effects of climate change can be tackled, the priority habitats and species that need urgent attention, the action needed to build a healthier, more connected natural environment and the creation of space for nature to flourish whilst supporting local people and their livelihoods.</p>

4.3 Planning

Given its location at the heart of England's strategic transport network, Leicestershire is recognised as an area of economic growth attractive to major employers. With this comes a demand for quality and affordable housing to support a growing population. In considering a future strategy for the rural estate it is vital that development potential is protected in order to maximise the potential financial benefits of retaining the estate. At the same time through compliance with planning policy at both a local and national level other wider environmental and community benefits will be achieved. As part of any restructuring process an analysis of the planning opportunities and constraints would need to be undertaken on the basis of the following areas of planning policy.

4.3.1 National Planning Policy

At a national level the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2025 (and associated Planning Practice Guidance Notes) are the two most influential areas of regulation and guidance.

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides the basic structure for the planning system as we know it today.

The National Planning Policy Framework 2025 provides the planning guidance necessary for local planning authorities to make sound local plans and informed planning decisions.

4.3.2 District and Borough Local Plans

As Leicestershire has a two-tier local government structure, planning is largely devolved to the seven District and Borough Councils which make up the county; the County Council only being responsible for planning in respect of minerals and waste.

The seven councils work collaboratively with the City and County Councils on strategically important initiatives such as the Strategic Growth Plan and the Housing and Employment Needs Assessment. Whilst these are used to inform planning policy across the county each Local Planning Authority has its own Local Plan tailored to the needs of its district or borough.

With the need to comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework typically all existing and emerging local plans contain the following elements:

- **Development Strategy** including the assessment of overall housing and employment land needs and the proposed allocation of sites necessary to meet that requirement.
- **Spatial Strategy** which determines the settlement hierarchy to inform the distribution of future housing and employment needs across the local authority area. Where strategic development areas are proposed individual site-specific policies may also be included.
- **Housing outlining policies** relating to housing mix, design, self-build housing, affordable housing including rural exception sites, and housing that meet the needs of older people, people with disabilities and gypsies, travellers and travelling show people.
- **Employment with policies** relating to current economic need, protection of existing employment areas, tourism and importantly rural economic development.
- **Town Centres and Retail.**
- **Climate Change** including flood risk management, sustainable drainage, renewable and low carbon energy installations, sustainable transport and EV charging points.
- **Environment** with policies relating to landscape including areas of significance such as Charnwood Forest, green wedges and areas of separation, biodiversity and geodiversity, tree planting, heritage, sports and recreation, public access and air quality.
- **Transport** considering both the strategic and local networks.
- **Infrastructure and Community Facilities** relating to education, health and other public services together with the Section 106 Contributions Policy to support delivery.

All these relevant factors are considered in assessing the planning potential of each individual site.

4.3.3 Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan

The County Council is the relevant planning authority for minerals and waste, with responsibility for the preparation of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan and the determination of allied planning applications. In common with all local plans, it considers the needs of the market to ensure an adequate supply of minerals over the plan period, allocating appropriate additional sites required to fulfil that need and safeguarding known deposits for the future; the plan being a relevant consideration in the determination of applications by the District and Borough authorities for other forms of development.

4.3.4 Neighbourhood Plans

Introduced by the Localism Act 2011, Neighbourhood Planning gives local communities the ability, within the overarching Local Plan strategy, to determine the detailed planning strategy and Neighbourhood Plan for the area. Including such matters as the allocation of future development, and the designation of protected areas of open space.

Once adopted the Neighbourhood Plan forms an integral part of the planning policy, to which applications have to conform. Accordingly, Neighbourhood Plans have a significant influence in the consideration of a site's development potential. Currently, there are 14 neighbourhood plans within Leicestershire that cover land within the rural estate.



5 Stakeholder Engagement

A key stage in the development of the strategy was to engage with a wide range of stakeholders in order that their views could help shape the final report.

The consultation comprised a combination of questionnaires and online and in-person meetings which took place over the period from 6th January 2026 to 13th February 2026 with the following groups of stakeholders:

- The County Council's Farm Tenants
- Farming industry stakeholders
- County Council internal service departments
- In addition, the general public were consulted via the "Have Your Say" page on the County Council's website.

Stakeholder packs were prepared and included a summary of the draft Strategy and a questionnaire which focused on the questions outlined in the Cabinet Report of 16th December 2025, namely:

- What size of estate should be retained?
- Is the estate seen as having a recognisable strategic purpose?
- Do you agree with the vision and ambitions set out in the draft Rural Estate Strategy?
- What initiatives would you be in favour of the estate pursuing in the future and which should it avoid?
- What do you think the estate should prioritise in its continued management? For example, this could include financial returns, level of investment and support for farmers, ecological and/or environmental improvements.
- Are there any opportunities or challenges you feel the strategy should address?
- How can the Council best support tenants, rural businesses, and communities through its estate management?

Consultation Findings

The principal observations made by the consultation groups are summarised below:-

- Overall, subject to there being a clear implementation plan, there was agreement that the Vision and Ambitions set out in the strategy were capable of securing the change needed to ensure that the strategy would deliver its primary objectives.
- There is overwhelming support across all groups for the retention of the Rural Estate and whilst the majority of consultees supported maintaining the estate at its current acreage a significant proportion would support increasing the size of the portfolio.

- There was a recognition that the restructuring of the estate, including the bringing forward of development sites would involve the sale of land and other assets held within the portfolio. However, this was accepted subject to sufficient funding being made available from the resulting capital receipts to both facilitate the purchase of an equivalent or improved replacement asset and the delivery of improved on-farm infrastructure vital to maintaining the viability of farms.
- In addition, it was recognised that within the restructuring process farmsteads that were no longer seen as being able to support a sustainable farming business could be repurposed for commercial uses that supported the rural economy; the land being added to adjoining farms to support the viability of those units.
- Significant weight was placed on the need to ensure that the estate remained viable from both the landlord's and tenant's perspective enabling the Council to achieve an adequate financial return on its capital invested whilst allowing tenants the opportunity to establish and maintain viable businesses. This would allow the wider environmental and community benefits to be delivered.
- There was broad agreement that in order to best support new entrants and existing tenants the proposed restructuring of the estate needed to provide a range of starter and progression holdings enabling tenants to establish and grow a sustainable and resilient business.
- It was recognised that the estate would continue to make a significant contribution to the wider objectives of the Council. This was seen as particularly important in relation to the environment where it was considered that the estate had an increasing role to play in respect of the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the outcomes within the Climate Resilience Delivery Plan.
- Strengthening stakeholder partnerships was seen as key not only to delivering many of the wider strategic objectives but facilitating direct support to tenants through collectively leveraging in external expertise and funding opportunities to the benefit of all parties.
- Better communications at both an individual and estate wide level was seen as a key to both landlord and tenants increasing their understanding of the issues facing the estate, changing economic conditions and the implications for individual farming businesses.
- Supporting those tenants wishing to diversify their businesses by assisting in providing the advice necessary to obtain planning and other consents required in the establishment of a second enterprise.
- It was also noted that prospective new tenants found difficulty in obtaining details of potential future lettings and accessing the application process. It was therefore agreed that efforts would be made to make this information more readily accessible.
- It was recognised that for the strategy to be effective and deliver on its vision and ambitions there needed to be clear management plan detailing how the estate would developed over the period to 2036; development of the plan (incorporating future investment proposals) and the blueprint for the restructuring of the estate being seen as key priorities required to address the perceived failings of current strategy.

6 Delivery and Implementation

The Rural Estate will be retained and maintained at its current size with the estate providing a range of starter and progression holdings enabling people to enter the farming industry and build a sustainable and resilient rural business.

- The estate will be restructured to maximise its potential to deliver the strategic ambitions. An evidence based '**Management Plan**' will be prepared at Estate and Core Holding level and used to identify the following:
- Those holdings which deliver a market return and can support a sustainable farm enterprise in the future, should be retained.
- Those holdings which, subject to the availability of additional investment or land, have the potential to deliver a market return and could support a sustainable farm enterprise in the future, should be retained.
- Those holdings and areas of land which possess latent development or BNG potential should be retained with a view to realising the potential to support the capital programme and managed in a manner that maximises their income earning potential in the intervening period.
- Areas of land within the estate capable of supporting the Council's strategic objectives or future service delivery should be identified and retained and managed in a manner that maximises that potential. In particular, projects that provide economic or social benefits to local communities should, subject to a positive business case be progressed and brought forward for implementation.
- Subject to no overriding estate management reason to the contrary, uneconomic and unviable holdings should be sold, retaining any land that is capable of improving the viability of an adjoining farm and amalgamating it with that holding.

To ensure the portfolio is self-financing and meets or exceeds the market rate of return in the medium term, a rolling 5-year **Financial Strategy** for the estate will be produced annually in consultation with Finance colleagues, to present:

- a 5-year disposals and acquisition programme which will be key to maintaining the critical size of the estate with acquisitions focused on only purchasing properties capable of supporting a sustainable farming business or improving the viability of an existing core holding, securing long term income and capital growth whilst delivering ongoing community benefits.
- a 5-year Capital Investment Programme detailing the on-farm investments necessary to maintain the performance of individual holdings.
- a Revenue Budget detailing income, expenditure and the anticipated annual income return.

The Financial Strategy should take advantage of the opportunities available from varying market sector conditions, in order to maintain and maximise the overall financial performance of the estate

The Management Strategy will be supported by a suite of key performance indicators that meet both current CIPFA requirements, provide a detailed market comparison and include local indicators to monitor progress in achieving strategic outcomes; the results being reported annually.

The estate will be proactively managed to high professional standards both at a strategic and operational level by a well-resourced in-house team and out-sourced support, supported by appropriate legal, financial and consultancy advice.

A risk register should be maintained at both portfolio and core holdings level and reviewed annually.

The Rural Estate strategy will be reviewed at no greater than 5-yearly intervals and refocused to reflect changes in the Council's wider policy agenda and deliver appropriate benefits.



Glossary

Agricultural Holdings Act 1986	Tenancies prior to 1st September 1995 are governed by the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986 (often referred to as AHA tenancies or '86 Act tenancies). More prescriptive than the '95 Act, AHA tenancies have a statutory default position for length and security of tenure, rent review process, treatment of improvements, repairs and arbitration for disputes.
Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995	This act sets out the statutory basis for the Farm Business Tenancy. The '95 Act is much less rigid in setting out the parameters of the FBT, allowing a significant flexibility for the parties to determine the contents of the tenancy contract between them and only providing a statutory backstop for security of tenure, dispute resolution and initiation of the agreement.
Bare land	This is a land holding of any scale without buildings provided by the landlord. This can be pasture or arable land.
Estate	There are 37 estates located across the county which comprise several farms or other lettable units and may also include vacant or in-hand land. The estate may not comprise contiguous land holdings but are usually defined by the parish they are situated within.
Farm Business Tenancy	Governed by the Agricultural Tenancies Act 1995, all tenancies (in the context of County Farms) established since 1st September 1995 are Farm Business Tenancies. There is relative freedom of contract, enabling adaptation of terms to suit the circumstances.
Fixed Equipment	Fixed equipment includes such items as milking parlours, feeding systems, slurry storage and containment, rather than plant and machinery (such as tractors).
Farmstead	This is the area of farm buildings, associated yards, etc. which may or may not include any farmhouses or cottages connected with the farm.
In hand	Refers to land holdings which are held by the County Council and not available to rent, for example, woodland areas, access roads, non-farmable areas, etc. rather than vacant property (see below).
Main Holding	These are the farms which are considered to be core property of the relevant land holding on which they are situated, mostly fully equipped with house, buildings and sufficient land to operate an independent farming business from.
Non-dairy livestock farm	Farm holdings which do not have a milking parlour and/or sufficient slurry storage to operate a compliant dairy enterprise and therefore are used for a mixture of arable, beef, sheep, poultry, etc.

Small “retirement” holdings/Other equipped farm	The Council has a small number of farms with house and/or buildings and small areas of land which do not fall into the above categories, which have limited capacity for establishment of an independent farming business but are retained for estate management purposes, offering a base for a part time farming business or other rural enterprise.
Promotion dairy farm	Usually, a larger farm with capacity for a larger milking herd, including larger (or more efficient) milking parlour, larger slurry storage capacity, forage storage, etc. In the past, these farms have not generally been offered to tenants from outside the Council estate to facilitate a degree of progression through the estate.
SMART objectives	These are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound goals.
Starter dairy farm	Generally smaller farms with limited fixed equipment in the form of milking parlour capacity and/or slurry storage. The intention is that a new farming business can establish a dairy enterprise with a smaller amount of initial investment before growing their business to a scale to be able to move to a promotion dairy farm.
Resilience and Sustainability	This is the ability of a farm holding to support the establishment of a farming business which can meet all its financial and regulatory obligations, by generating sufficient surplus income after costs to enable structured investment in equipment, livestock and compliance for the duration of the tenancy agreement. A resilient and sustainable holding should therefore be adaptable to alternative uses, require reduced levels of maintenance and capital investment and be prepared for future stresses in the agricultural economy. A farming business will be adaptable to changes, able to withstand future challenges and financially robust over time without continuous need for expansion, debt financing, etc.
Vacant	Refers to land holdings which are unoccupied but ordinarily would be available to rent; this may be a vacant farmstead or vacant land for which no rent (or other fees) is being received.
Viable	Similar to “sustainable”, however viable is considered to be the ability of a farming business to meet all its financial obligations, including a level of reinvestment. Often viability is defined as a factor of scale, with larger farming businesses better able to spread their costs over a larger base; it does not usually consider how different farmers may be able to utilise the assets available to better ends, or how the business may adapt to future challenges, adding value or enhancing margins. A viable business is not necessarily adaptable and may be reliant on debt financing (providing it is able to meet its obligations).

DRAFT

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Equality Impact Assessment Form

Before completing this form, please refer to [the supporting guidance document](#)

The purpose of this form is to aid the Council in meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in the Equality Act 2010. This requires the Council to have “due regard” of the impact of its actions on the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The assessment is used to identify and record any concerns and potential risks. The following actions can then be taken to address these issues.

- Remove risks: abandon the proposed policy or practice
- Mitigate risks – amend the proposed policy or practice so that risks are reduced
- Justify policy or practice in terms of other objectives

Once the EIA has been approved by the Senior Responsible Officer, please ensure that a copy is placed on the SharePoint folder: “Equalities Board, EIAs”

1- Policy details	
Name of policy	Rural Estate Strategy
Department and service	Corporate Resources - Strategic Property
Who has been involved in completing the Equality Impact Assessment?	Karen Frearson
Contact numbers	0116 305 2074
Date of completion	16.04.26.

2- Objectives and background of policy or practice change

Use this section to describe the policy or practice change
What is the purpose, expected outcomes and rationale?
Include the background information and context

What is the proposal?	To update the management strategy of the County Council's Rural Estate to ensure it continues to meet its primary objectives of a) providing opportunities for suitably qualified young people to establish and grow a farming business, b) provide financial benefits for the County Council necessary to support service provision, and, c) contribute to the wider objectives of the County Council.
What change and impact is intended by the proposal?	
What is the rationale for this proposal?	To detail our overarching vision, ambitions, intentions and focus for the management of the Rural Estate over the next 10 years.

3- Evidence gathered on equality implications - Data and engagement

What equalities information or data has been gathered so far?	Demographic data was collected during the consultation process on gender and age in relation to a survey carried out on the draft Rural Strategy.
What does it show?	Only 53% of respondents provided information on their gender and only 49% on age. Of the people who stated their gender 60% were male and 40% were female. In terms of age the respondents varied from age 25 to 78, with the average age being 51.
What engagement has been undertaken so far?	Engagement has taken place with residents, tenants and industry stakeholders.

4- Benefits, concerns and mitigating action

Please specify if any individuals or community groups who identify with any of the '[protected characteristics](#)' may *potentially* be affected by the policy and describe any benefits and concerns including any barriers. Use this section to demonstrate how risks would be mitigated for each affected group. If a group will not be affected by the proposal please state so.

Group	What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?	What are the concerns identified and how will these affect those from the following groups?	How will the known concerns be mitigated?
Age	The strategy aims to promote opportunities for new entrants into farming to take on the tenancy of one of the council's farms. The new entrants may be younger in age.	There are no concerns – current tenants span a wide age group.	There are no concerns. But to support new entrants the strategy includes the development of a nursery farm proposal. The strategy includes increasing regular contact and update with all tenants.
Disability	Information not collected		
Race	Information not collected		

Sex	Information not collected		
Gender Reassignment	Information not collected		
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Information not collected		
Sexual Orientation	Information not collected		
Pregnancy and Maternity	Information not collected		

Religion or Belief	Information not collected		
Armed Forces (including veterans)	Information not collected		
People with lived care experience	Information not collected		
Carers	Information not collected		
Other groups: e.g., rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived or disadvantaged communities	Information not collected		

5- Action Plan			
Produce a framework to outline how identified risks/concerns identified in section 4 will be mitigated.			
What action is planned?	Who is responsible for the action?	Timescale	Expected outcome
<p>To review the overall estate and identify farms which might be suitable as starter/nursery farms. With the aim of encouraging new entrants and younger people into the agriculture sector.</p> <p>To attempt where possible to ensure that LCC's tenanted farms provide new entrants with farms which can be un as a viable and successful business.</p> <p>Closer links with Brooksby College to provide students with opportunities to complete work experience and/or placements.</p>	Rural estate team	2026 - 2028	To provide opportunities for younger people to enter the farming industry via an LCC tenanted farm

6- Approval Process	
Departmental Equalities Group	EIA considered and approved by the Chair of the Departmental Equalities Group – Jayne Glasgow
Corporate Policy Team	EIA considered and approved by Leon Charikar, Policy Manager
Sign off by the Senior Responsible Officer for the Project.	Lucy Littlefair Assistant Director, People, Property & Business Services

APPENDIX C

INVESTING IN LEICESTERSHIRE PROGRAMME
RURAL ESTATE STRATEGY 2026-2036

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Department: Corporate Resources

Proposal name: Rural Estate Strategy

Summary of Proposal: To review update the management strategy of the County Council's Rural Estate to ensure it continues to meet its primary objectives of a) providing opportunities for suitably qualified young people to establish and grow a farming business, b) provide financial benefits for the County Council necessary to support service provision, and, c) contribute to the wider objectives of the County Council.

Have any other impact assessments been completed for this project?: Yes

Please specify which assessments have been completed: Equalities Impact Assessment

If you can, please provide any relevant documents:

Community:

Impact: Positive

Positives: The strategy will include provisions that enable land to be utilised to deliver community infrastructure including sites for community buildings, open space etc

Likelihood: Certain/has evidence will occur

Certain/have evidence an impact will occur: Based on previous track record over the past 10 years

Description: Maintained/ enhanced services to maintain sustainability of rural communities

Recommendation: Maintain awareness of community needs in areas where farm holdings are located

Employment, Income and Poverty:

Impact: Positive

Positives: 1.) The letting of smaller farm units maintains/provides employment opportunities in rural areas. The individual businesses support local supply chains and agriculturally based

businesses including agricultural contractors , feed merchants, vets, building contractors, machinery suppliers, professional services etc .

2.) The strategy includes bring forward land for residential and employment uses thereby creating economic growth and job opportunities; the pipeline of development sites being considered at regular intervals by the Corporate Property Steering Group attended by senior members of the Public Health Team.

Likelihood: Certain/has evidence will occur

Certain/have evidence an impact will occur: 1.) All are part of a normal farming business.
2.) The potential exists to deliver new homes and employment space over the next 10 years as evidenced in the pipeline of development sites and each district planning authority's SHELAA

Description: 1.) Will maintain the existing rural framework
2.) Will provide quality and affordable new homes and create job both during and post construction on occupation

Recommendation: 1.) Ensure that new entrants are able to maintain sustainable farming businesses.
2.) Maintain a pipeline of potential development sites.
3.) Continue dialogue with Public Health

Transport:

Impact: N/A

Physical Activity:

Impact: Positive

Positives: The strategy includes provision for giving greater permissive access to the countryside encouraging walking, cycling etc

Likelihood: Certain/has evidence will occur

Certain/have evidence an impact will occur: Schemes that have already been established will be maintained or expanded and opportunities for new schemes explored and delivered where feasible

Description: Provide opportunities for increased physical activity

Recommendation: Explore opportunities that do not negatively impact the main farming operation

Housing:

Impact: Positive

Positives: The strategy includes provisions for the bringing forward of residential development sites which will deliver both quality market and affordable homes; the affordable homes including homes for social rent, affordable rent and shared ownership.

Likelihood: Certain/has evidence will occur

Certain/have evidence an impact will occur: Continuation of existing policy with a significant number of sites currently being promoted.

Description: Increase the stock of quality residential dwellings for sale or rent.

Recommendation: Maintain a pipeline of potential development sites ensuring that all developments meet local plan policies in respect of Health and Health Impact Assessments as a minimum.

Diet and Nutrition:

Impact: Positive

Positives: The strategy will support sustainable farming practices and support farmers wishing to market produce directly to the general public. In addition, the implementation of the strategy will reflect the outcomes of the Air Quality and Health Partnership

Likelihood: Certain/has evidence will occur

Certain/have evidence an impact will occur: The strategy seeks to expand the current opportunities available to tenants

Description: Maintain/ increase the supply of quality locally produced food

Recommendation: Support tenants in establishing diversified and enterprises providing added value including leveraging external funding. Continue to contribute to the work of the Air Quality and Health Partnership and maintain dialogue with Public Health regarding potential links with work in connection with the healthy weight strategy and whole system approach to food.

Education and Skills:

Impact: Positive

Positives: 1.) Limited opportunities arise for training and apprenticeships within the farm business however by maintaining support to the supply chain many opportunities exist.
2.) Educational visits to farms will continue to be actively encouraged
3.) Through the establishment of nursery units provide tenants with the ability to seek financial advice and mentoring in the early years of their farming career to increase business awareness and improve mental wellbeing.

Likelihood: Certain/has evidence will occur

Certain/have evidence an impact will occur: 1.) & 2.) A continuation and expansion of existing practice.
3.) Create partnerships with local colleges to provide additional support in the mentoring of new entrants

Description: 1.) Training and apprenticeships will be maintained across the wider rural economy
2.) Increased awareness and understanding of farming and food production across the wider population especially school children.
3.) Reduce the potential for tenants being impacted by poor mental health.

Recommendation: 1.) Ensure viable farming businesses are maintained across the estate
2.) Support tenants wishing to provide opportunities for educational visits to farms.
3.) To proactively encourage new entrants to take advantage of the support and mentoring made available to them in the early years of their farming careers and deliver support appropriate to their individual needs.

Pollution and Noise:

Impact: Positive

Positives: The strategy provides for the construction and maintenance of the necessary fixed equipment to control pollution in accordance with statutory regulations

Likelihood: Certain/has evidence will occur

Certain/have evidence an impact will occur: Through the use of funds provided as part of the MTFS capital programme the estates fixed equipment will be improved on an ongoing basis to ensure it meets regulatory standards

Description: Pollution will be minimised across the estate

Recommendation: Ensure sufficient capital funding is available to meet statutory compliance standards.

Maintain an ongoing dialogue with the Air Quality and Health Partnership as support, as appropriate, its work in addressing pollution.

Crime Reduction and Community Safety:

Impact: N/A

Alcohol, Tobacco, Drug use and Gambling:

Impact: N/A

Environmental Resilience:**Impact:** Positive**Positives:** The strategy will seek to deliver environmental improvements across the estate contributing as appropriate to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Leicestershire Tree Strategy.

Further, sites with the potential to deliver biodiversity improvements will be identified and delivered to support the development schemes across the whole Council portfolio in addition to providing financial benefits.

Farmers on the estate will be required to meet at least the minimum standards in respect of environmental regulations whilst being encouraged to farm sustainably and progress environmental improvements schemes in their management of the holding.

Likelihood: Certain/has evidence will occur**Certain/have evidence an impact will occur:** The Estate has an existing track record in respect of all the potential positive outcomes which it will seek to continue and enhance**Description:** Ensure environmental protection by adherence to statutory regulation. Increase the areas of the estate subject to biodiversity improvements, sustainable farming methods and environmental stewardship**Recommendation:** Monitor statutory compliance by tenants across the estate and maintain progress in in delivering environmental improvements through proactive management of the portfolio.**Access to Public Services:****Impact:** Positive**Positives:** The strategy seeks to provide financial benefits that will support the delivery of services for the people of Leicestershire.**Likelihood:** Certain/has evidence will occur**Certain/have evidence an impact will occur:** The estate provides and will continue to deliver revenue surpluses that support day to day service delivery and funding from property disposals to fund capital projects to improve service delivery**Description:** The continued delivery of services to residents**Recommendation:** Ensure the estate strategy facilitates the continued delivery of financial benefits

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**CABINET - 28 APRIL 2026****THE NEW PLAN-MAKING SYSTEM AND A JOINT MINERALS AND WASTE LOCAL PLAN WITH RUTLAND COUNTY COUNCIL AND LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT****PART A****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Cabinet regarding the new plan-making system for England and its implications for Leicestershire County Council as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority; and to seek approval in principle for Leicestershire County Council to work with Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council to prepare a joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan (M&WLP) across the three authority areas. The production of a joint M&WLP would be subject to the formal agreement of each authority and the submission of a further report to the Cabinet on the proposed governance, resourcing and timetable arrangements.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that
 - a) Approval is given in principle for the County Council to participate with Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council to prepare a joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan for the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland local authority areas, subject to:
 - i) Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council, via their respective governance processes, also giving formal approval;
 - ii) all three authorities agreeing appropriate governance and decision-making, resourcing, and cost-sharing arrangements for the joint plan-making;
 - b) That subject to agreement of a) above, a further report be submitted to the Cabinet in autumn 2026 regarding the Plan timetable, publication of the Intention to Commence and governance arrangements for joint plan-making.

(KEY DECISION)

Reasons for Recommendation

3. Leicestershire County Council has a statutory function to prepare an M&WLP for the County and keep it up to date. The Government has introduced a new plan-making system which requires the County Council to start preparing a new M&WLP before the end of 2026.
4. As minerals and waste are strategic issues, preparing a joint plan across the larger area of LLR is a sensible geography to plan for. It will also mitigate the uncertainty associated with the currently unknown boundaries of a future authority under local government reorganisation (LGR) and allow for sharing of resources across the authorities participating in the joint plan. Approval in principle is sought to ensure that the Cabinet is supportive in advance of committing resources to a joint plan-making approach.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

5. Key dates as required by the Government for the preparation of a new M&WLP are set out below (these dates are fixed, irrespective of whether a joint plan approach is taken):
 - a) The County Council must publish its Intention to Commence a new M&WLP before 31 December 2026.
 - b) The County Council must publish a Gateway 1 self-assessment by 30 April 2027. This marks the start of a 30-month period in which the new plan must be prepared, examined and adopted.
 - c) Based on the above dates and timeline, the adoption of a new M&WLP would be due to take place in Autumn 2029.
6. The County Council is also required to publish a local plan timetable either in advance of, or at the same time as, the publication of the Intention to Commence (notification of the start of the formal process). Subject to the Cabinet's approval and the agreement of Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council, the County Council will prepare a timetable which will set out the necessary steps and associated timings over the plan-making period.
7. Subject to all three authorities wishing to proceed with a joint plan, it is intended that a report seeking authorisation to publish the timetable and Intention to Commence is brought to the Cabinet in autumn 2026. This report will also set out governance arrangements for joint plan-making across the participating authorities.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

8. A package of regulations to implement the new plan-making system was laid before Parliament on 4 March 2026. The package includes the new Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, which

commenced on 25 March 2026 and replaces the 2012 plan-making regulations. More details of all the new regulations are set out in Part B of this report.

9. This is the first report to the Cabinet relating to the new plan-making system and its implications for the County Council as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority. However, there is an interrelationship with the emerging requirement for Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs) and working across LLR: the Cabinet at its meeting on 16 December 2025 agreed *inter alia* that the County Council should take a longer-term approach to strategic spatial and transport planning through the preparation of an SDS.
10. The current Leicestershire M&WLP up to 2031 was adopted by the Council at its meeting in September 2019.

Resource Implications

11. Since adoption of the current plan, it has not been necessary to resource the Planning Team for active plan-making. As such, additional staff capacity (and experience) will be required to prepare a new M&WLP.
12. The new plan-making system places a requirement to deliver a plan within a fixed 30-month timeframe – a substantially shorter period than the legacy plan-making system which does not have fixed timescales. Officers intend to commission an external review of staffing capacity requirements, and appropriate team structure, to deliver the new joint M&WLP with Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council.
13. Additional resource requirements relating to *inter alia* external consultancy support for evidence base work and a new plan-making IT system will also be required.
14. Funding of £150,000 has been set aside in reserves to support one-off costs towards the development of the new M&WLP. However, this is not expected to be sufficient to cover the County Council's cost even under a cost sharing arrangement. Pursuing a joint plan-making approach to the preparation of the new M&WLP is more cost effective, although further work is required to assess the financial implications and agree cost sharing arrangements with Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council. Any additional funding requirements, and any formal cost-sharing arrangement with partner authorities, will be subject to the Council's usual approval and budget processes.
15. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on this report.

Legal Implications

16. Leicestershire County Council has statutory responsibility as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority to prepare and keep under review an M&WLP. Legislation allows for joint plan-making with other authorities. If the Cabinet approves the principle of a joint plan, further formal governance arrangements to address decision making, officer support, consultation responsibilities and

cost-sharing will be required between the participating authorities before commencement.

17. The Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer has been consulted on this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

18. This report will be circulated to all members.

Officers to Contact

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PART B

Background

19. Mineral resources are important to current growth aspirations, both locally and nationally. Indeed, Leicestershire's mineral resources are nationally important in some cases. Minerals are essential to support sustainable economic growth, associated infrastructure and quality of life.
20. Sustainable management of waste is important to ensure that the environment and human health are protected whilst ensuring that waste is managed sustainably and in accordance with the waste hierarchy and the principles of a circular economy.
21. The current Leicestershire M&WLP, adopted in September 2019, includes a spatial vision, spatial strategy, strategic objectives, and core policies which set out the key principles to guide the future winning and working of minerals and the form of waste management development in Leicestershire. The plan period is to the end of 2031.
22. Under the legacy plan-making system, plans were required to be reviewed every five years and then updated as necessary. An early review of the current Leicestershire M&WLP in 2022 concluded that it did not need updating at that time. The next review was due to take place during 2027, but has been superseded by the requirement to prepare a new M&WLP in the new plan-making system. Pending adoption of a replacement plan, the existing adopted Leicestershire M&WLP remains in force.
23. The new plan-making system was introduced through the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 with the aim of making local plans faster to prepare and adopt, simpler, and more digital. It introduced a 30-month preparation timeline and replaced the Duty-to-Cooperate (DtC) with a more flexible, non-statutory requirement for authorities to maintain effective cooperation on cross-boundary issues.
24. In late November 2025, the Government published guidance on the new local plan-making system which included some specific deadlines by which authorities must start preparing plans in the new system. This means that the County Council must:
 - a) Give notice of its intention to commence a new M&WLP by 31 December 2026;
 - b) Publish a Gateway 1 self-assessment by 30 April 2027, which will be the start of the 30-month period.
25. The Government has indicated in its guidance that if an authority fails to progress with its plan-making, it will consider intervening to accelerate progress.

26. More recently, the Government published the package of regulations which bring the new plan-making system outlined in the LURA 2023 into force, including:
- a) The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026.
 - b) The Requirement to Assist with certain plan-making (Prescribed Public Bodies) (England) Regulations 2026.
 - c) The Town and Country Planning (Costs of Independent Examinations for Local Planning Etc.) (Standard Daily Amount) (England) Regulations 2026.
 - d) The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Commencement No. 11 and Savings and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026.
 - e) The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Local Planning) (Modification and Consequential Amendments) (England) Regulations 2026.
27. The above legislation introduces the details of the new plan-making system which includes 11 'tasks' that are required to be completed in sequence:
- i. **Timetable** – The local plan timetable will help the community know when they can get involved in the plan and must be kept up to date through the process. The timetable must be published before, or on the same day as, the Intention to Commence.
 - ii. **Give notice of plan-making** – Referred to as the Intention to Commence, this must be published a minimum of four months before formal plan preparation begins.
 - iii. **Run scoping consultation** – To engage with the public, statutory bodies and other stakeholders. This will invite feedback on matters including how an authority is to engage with third parties throughout the plan-making process and what the plan should contain.
 - iv. **Gateway 1** – Authorities must publish a self-assessment summary of what they have done to get ready. It is intended to help ensure readiness to prepare and adopt a plan within 30 months and to increase transparency for external stakeholders and communities.
 - v. **Publish summary of scoping consultation** – This includes a summary of the main issues raised in any responses received and how the authority has had regard to those responses.
 - vi. **Run consultation on proposed plan content and evidence and publish summary** – A consultation is required on the draft vision and any proposed aims and objectives; the proposed spatial strategy; a summary of the evidence the authority intends to gather, and details of evidence already gathered; and any other elements, which could include draft policies. Once the consultation is finished, a summary of the main issues

raised in any responses and how the authority has had regard to them must be published before moving on to Gateway 2.

- vii. **Gateway 2** – This involves seeking observations and advice from the Planning Inspectorate, who will appoint a gateway assessor to look at the documentation. The purpose of Gateway 2 is to support early resolution of potential soundness issues and progress towards meeting the ‘prescribed requirements’ (the things an authority needs to do to pass through Gateway 3). The observations and advice must be published.
 - viii. **Run consultation on proposed local plan and publish summary** – A consultation on the local plan must take place after Gateway 2. This will include inviting representations on the proposed local plan; a map of proposed local plan policies, site allocations and designations; and details of the evidence gathered. Also, where a SDS is in place, consultation on the conformity of the local plan with the SDS must take place. After the consultation, authorities must analyse and have regard to the feedback received and finalise any appropriate changes in readiness for Gateway 3.
 - ix. **Gateway 3** – Once an authority is satisfied that it is ready to pass through Gateway 3, the Planning Inspectorate will appoint a gateway assessor to provide observations and advice and decide whether the plan is ready to be submitted for examination. The assessor will advise whether an authority can submit its plan and supporting documents to the Planning Inspectorate for examination.
 - x. **Examination** – The examination will assess whether the plan is sound – meaning it meets the tests of soundness set out in national planning policy. After the examination has taken place, the Inspector will provide the authority with their recommendations and reasons.
 - xi. **Adoption** – If the plan is found sound, it may be adopted in accordance with the statutory requirements and constitutional arrangements of the participating authority or authorities.
28. The Government is also undertaking a fundamental overhaul of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to align with the new plan-making system and the final NPPF is expected to be published in summer 2026.

Options and Proposal

29. As a legislative requirement, Leicestershire County Council has a statutory duty to start the preparation of a new M&WLP before the end of 2026 and to complete the process within specific timescales, reaching the point of adoption during 2029. The options open to the County Council are:
- a) It prepares an M&WLP for its own administrative area only; or
 - b) It pursues a joint M&WLP with other authorities, namely Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council (subject to their agreement).

30. The joint plan is the preferred approach, primarily as it is a sensible geography to plan for. Minerals and waste are strategic matters, with some waste facilities serving sub-regional and regional catchment areas and large quarries in Leicestershire serving national markets (particularly those that are rail connected). The movement of minerals and waste regularly crosses local authority boundaries and needs to be planned for at larger spatial scales. This has historically been recognised through their separation from other planning matters in two-tier areas and why it falls as a function to County Councils. Due to the planned LGR, the two-tier system of local government will cease to exist in a few years' time, but the Government recognises that both minerals and waste comprise strategic infrastructure needed to deliver growth and can be planned for through the emerging SDSs. A joint M&WLP with Leicester City and Rutland County Councils would align with the expected geography of the emerging SDSs and other more advanced strategic policy such as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
31. Another key issue to consider is the timing of plan preparation alongside LGR. Whilst the County Council will initiate preparation of a new M&WLP, LGR may affect the authority or authorities responsible for progressing the plan through to adoption. The boundaries and governance arrangements of any successor authority or authorities remain uncertain. Preparing a plan across the LLR authorities would help mitigate risks arising from delay to, or uncertainty in, future boundary and governance arrangements.
32. The preparation of a joint M&WLP across multiple authorities will achieve some cost reductions through efficiencies of scale delivered through sharing of resources and systems, whilst ensuring greater integration of evidenced based strategic decisions. However, such costs are still to be quantified and cost sharing arrangements agreed. Recognising the financial pressures all authorities are under, joint plan-making would be a positive approach.
33. Notwithstanding the benefits identified above, joint plan-making will not be without its challenges; the most significant of which will be around the 30-month timescale. Organising the governance and approval process that will be necessary for many of the 'tasks' associated with the new system across multiple authorities will be complex and time consuming. Doing this within the new 30-month plan-making period will be difficult. Navigating all this whilst LGR takes place will exacerbate these difficulties. This underlines the need for clear and timely inter-authority governance arrangements before formal commencement of the joint plan.
34. Whilst it is important to recognise the challenges associated with the timescales, it is not a reason to pursue a plan for a less-than-optimal area. The benefits of planning strategically at scale, mitigating the difficulties associated with uncertain authority boundaries, and the sharing of resources mean that pursuing a joint plan is the recommended approach.

Consultation

35. No consultation has taken place to date. Consultation on the emerging plan will take place at the various stages, as set out in legislation and summarised in the list of 'tasks' identified at paragraph 27 of this report.
36. County Council officers have had informal discussions with officers from Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council. Officers at both authorities have indicated a strong preference for pursuing a joint M&WLP across the LLR geography, subject to their own internal governance and member approval processes. Indeed, the three authorities already collaborate extensively across this geography and have well established frameworks including for emergency and resilience planning, local nature recovery, road safety and strategic planning matters.

Equality Implications

37. No immediate equality impacts have been identified arising from the recommendation to pursue joint plan-making in principle. The Council has had regard to its duties under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Equality impacts will be kept under review and an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken at appropriate stages of the plan-making process.

Human Rights Implications

38. No immediate direct human rights implications have been identified arising from the recommendation in this report. Human rights considerations will continue to be taken into account as the plan-making process progresses, including where policies or site allocations may affect individuals or property interests.

Other Implications and Impact Assessments

39. Health – A decision on the principle of a joint plan-making approach is not anticipated to have any direct health implications. However, health factors will be considered through the plan-making process, including undertaking a Health Impact Assessment to evaluate the potential effects of the plan.
40. Environmental – From a joint plan-making perspective, planning across the wider LLR geography will enable alignment with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. When formal plan-making commences, environmental assessment requirements will apply and will be taken into account throughout the process. On the current legal basis, the plan is expected to require Strategic Environmental Assessment, unless subsequent legislative change requires an alternative environmental assessment regime to apply.
41. Partnership working – The nature of pursuing a joint plan approach demonstrates partnership working with Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council. In addition, the new plan-making system requires cooperation between plan-making authorities, and this will take place with the district/borough councils (whilst in existence) and other minerals and waste

planning authorities with which there are significant movements of minerals and/or waste.

42. Risk assessment – Risks to delivery from staffing resource/capacity and delivery of a plan within the statutory timeframe are identified at paragraphs 11-14 and 32 of this report. Work is ongoing to mitigate these risks.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 16 December 2025: Strategic Spatial and Transport Planning

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s193694/Final+Strategic+Spatial+and+Transport+Planning+Report+-+Cabinet+161225.pdf>

Report to the Cabinet on 16 December 2022: Review of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s172908/LMWLP%20report%20of%20review%2016dec22%20FINAL.pdf>



CABINET – 28 APRIL 2026

CRISIS AND RESILIENCE FUND 2026-2029

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, LAW AND GOVERNANCE

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet about a new government grant, the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF), and to set out how it will be used to support residents in Leicestershire from April 2026. The Cabinet is asked to note the delivery plan outlined in this report.
2. The CRF will run from April 2026 to March 2029. Previous schemes such as the Household Support Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments ended in March 2026. The CRF introduces a three-year programme with an emphasis on long-term financial resilience.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that -
 - a) The delivery plan and funding allocations outlined in Part B of this report for the Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) in Leicestershire is noted;
 - b) The Director of Public Health, Law and Governance, following consultation with the Director of Corporate Resources, be authorised
 - i. to approve receipt of any future funding from the government for this grant;
 - ii. to approve the CRF delivery plans, funding allocations, and monitoring and evaluation returns for submission to the Department for Work and Pensions throughout the term of the CRF.

Reasons for Recommendation

4. The delivery plan will enable Leicestershire residents to receive financial support when in crisis and to receive ongoing financial resilience support from key partners. This meets the government guidance for the Fund.
5. The delegations to the Director will enable future funding to be received promptly leading to maximum impact with residents and for the delivery plans and monitoring and evaluation returns to be submitted in accordance with the DWP's prescribed deadlines.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

6. Reports and presentations will be given to key partners such as the Health and Wellbeing Board. The delivery plan will be presented to the Board's Staying Healthy Partnership on 10 September 2026.
7. The DWP has mandated that the CRF must commence in April 2026. Leicestershire's service went live on 13 April 2026.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

8. The CRF aligns with the national framework for discretionary welfare support, which gives local authorities flexibility to provide short term assistance to residents facing immediate financial hardship due to a crisis situation. The framework emphasises locally designed schemes that help to prevent crisis, support household resilience, and complement the wider welfare system.
9. The CRF directly supports the priorities set out in Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan (2022–2026) by helping residents to remain safe, well, and financially stable. By providing early, targeted support to people experiencing financial hardship, the CRF will help prevent avoidable crisis, promote independence, and reduce demand on statutory services. The Fund contributes to the Council's commitment to supporting vulnerable people, improving health and wellbeing, and enabling residents to live independently within their communities, while ensuring public resources are used effectively and responsibly.

Resource Implications

10. The County Council will receive £16.9m over three years, fully funded by the Government and ringfenced for this purpose. A further allocation of £222,102 for one year was announced on Monday 16 March 2026 to support households who are off-grid and using oil heating systems.
11. The introduction of the CRF sees the closure of the Government's Household Support Fund. Due to new grant conditions and a lower annual allocation the interventions have had to be designed from first principles and as such this should not be seen as a successor scheme.

12. Implementation of the delivery plan will require recruiting a front door team to sit within Public Health to administer the crisis application process. The financial resilience element will involve contracting with external organisations. Therefore, there are initial resource implications on existing central teams, for example the Commissioning Support Unit, whilst implementing contracts and putting new systems into place.
13. Expenditure, including administrative support, is expected to be managed within the grant funding provided, so there are no implications for the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
14. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

15. This report will be circulated to all members.

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PART B

Background

16. The CRF is a new Government grant running from April 2026 to March 2029.
17. Previous support for vulnerable households was provided by the Government via the Household Support Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments scheme which ended on 31 March 2026. The CRF is a single, longer-term scheme being introduced from April 2026.
18. The Fund supports residents facing financial crisis; while also helping them become more financially resilient so they are less likely to need repeat crisis support.
19. The Government set out guidance for local authorities to adhere to when delivering the CRF scheme. This includes the scheme being person-centred with needs based assessments rather than providing universal fixed amount support for specific cohorts of residents as has previously occurred. The approach must be Trauma Informed (a practice to reduce the negative impact of trauma experiences and supporting mental and physical health outcomes) and timely at the point of crisis. It must prioritise cash first payments and be accessible to all. The Fund must be available to residents all year.
20. From April 2026, the Council will deliver the Fund across four required areas:
 - a) Crisis Payments**
Fast, short-term support for residents facing immediate financial crisis (e.g. food, fuel, emergency living costs). Support will be cash first wherever possible, with vouchers used where more appropriate.
 - b) Housing Payments**
Targeted help for residents who need support with housing-related costs, replacing the existing Discretionary Housing Payment system. The government has specified that this will be delivered by district councils in Years 1 and 2 and by the new unitary authority (arising from the planned local government reorganisation) in Year 3.
 - c) Resilience Support**
Practical help to prevent future crises, including debt advice, benefit maximisation, budgeting support and help with reducing essential living costs.
 - d) Community Coordination**
Investment in joined-up local support so residents experience a clear, simple route to help and do not have to repeat their story.

Delivery Plan

21. A single front door service was introduced from 13 April 2026, providing a clear and consistent route for residents to access crisis support. The service will be available both online and by telephone, ensuring accessibility for residents with different levels of digital confidence. The design reflects the Council's intention to offer timely assistance at the point of crisis, while maintaining appropriate checks and governance.
22. Residents seeking support will complete an application either independently online or over the telephone with the support of Council staff, which will be assessed on the basis of household circumstances and evidence of a qualifying financial crisis. Applications will then be considered individually by trained Crisis and Resilience Advisors, who will undertake a supportive conversation with the resident to understand their situation, assess eligibility, and identify immediate needs. Referral by a professional will not be required, ensuring that everyone is able to access the scheme independently.
23. Where criteria are met, households may receive a crisis payment to help meet essential living costs such as food, energy, water, hygiene products, digital connectivity, or other essential items. Awards will be discretionary, evidence based, and proportionate, with maximum award levels set to ensure support is targeted and sustainable over the life of the Fund. Payments may be made through bank transfer or vouchers, depending on the nature of the need and individual circumstances.
24. The scheme is designed not only to address immediate hardship due to crisis but also to prevent escalation and repeat crisis. As part of the assessment process, residents will be supported to access appropriate longer-term advice and support, including financial resilience services and wider local provision. This balanced approach ensures that crisis support is delivered alongside early intervention and prevention.
25. Initially the scheme will use the Public Health First Contact Plus service to refer individuals to the help and support they require. This will be for financial resilience but also their health and wellbeing.
26. Following a competitive procurement exercise, the Financial Resilience Service will be delivered by contracted community based organisation(s). The Fund is designed to enhance existing community provision, rather than replace it. This approach is essential given the Fund's three-year timeframe and ensures sustainability is embedded within the service design, supporting longer term resilience beyond the life of the Fund.
27. The financial resilience outcome will provide Leicestershire-based organisations additional funding to strengthen their offer to residents. This gives residents greater opportunity to access support for services such as income or benefit maximisation, income smoothing, debt management or access to tools like affordable credit.

Funding Allocations

28. Leicestershire County Council will receive £16.9m over three years for the Crisis and Resilience scheme. Additionally, for Year 1, the Government has made a further allocation of £222,102 to support residents who use heating oil.
29. In Years 1 and 2 the district councils will hold responsibility for Housing Payments. In Year 3 the housing responsibility will move to the new unitary authority, due to the local government reorganisation.

Year	LCC Allocation	LCC additional allocations	District housing payments
Year 1 – 2026/27	£5,396,226	£222,102	£590,143
Year 2 – 2027/28	£5,393,240	TBC	£590,143
Year 3 – 2028/29	£6,124,920	TBC	N/A

30. The Council's objective over the three-year period is to educate and build financial resilience in order that council spending is not continually overwhelmed by crisis. Initially, a larger proportion of funds will be channelled into crisis support. The profile of expenditure will change over the period of the Fund with the balance shifting more towards resilience in the second and third year.
30. Over the three-year period, the scheme will be subject to continuous improvement informed by evidence, data and engagement, ensuring it remains responsive to the needs of Leicestershire's most vulnerable residents. The Government requires a delivery plan to be submitted by 1 July 2026, followed by six-monthly monitoring reports, and formal monitoring arrangements will be in place to meet these requirements. In addition, ongoing and proactive monitoring will be undertaken throughout the year to assess access, eligibility and outcomes, providing assurance that the scheme is operating fairly and that support is reaching residents most in need.
31. Subject to this monitoring, expenditure levels will be kept under close and regular review to ensure the Fund remains sustainable throughout the year and over the lifetime of the programme. Where necessary, the level or structure of individual awards may be adjusted in response to demand and spend profiles, ensuring the scheme remains open, equitable and within the allocated budget, while continuing to prioritise support for those residents most in need.

Potential Risks

32. The CRF will be administered in line with the Council's existing counter fraud, prevention and assurance arrangements to ensure the Fund is used

appropriately. Proportionate eligibility and verification checks will be applied, reflecting both the level of risk and the urgency of need.

33. Any suspected fraud will be referred through established investigation routes, and where fraud is confirmed, recovery action will be taken where appropriate. As with other discretionary schemes, the Council would be liable for any losses arising from fraud within the scheme.
34. The Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer and the Council's internal audit team have been consulted and will work with the CRF team to mitigate this risk.

Implications/Impact Assessments

35. The implications/impact assessments for this Fund are:
 - Legal Implications - the CRF will be delivered under the Council's relevant powers to provide discretionary support to residents and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Government grant. Compliance with grant conditions (including eligibility rules, monitoring/returns, audit requirements and ringfencing) will be maintained to mitigate the risk of repayment/clawback. Any commissioning/procurement required to deliver the financial resilience element will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the applicable public procurement legislation and associated transparency requirements. Where funding is provided to external organisations, the Council will consider the application of the UK subsidy control regime and will ensure that any financial assistance is structured and documented in a way that is compliant with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and relevant statutory guidance, as applicable.
 - Human Rights Implications - the proposals have been considered in the context of the Human Rights Act 1998 and relevant Convention rights. The CRF is intended to support residents' dignity and wellbeing by providing proportionate, short-term assistance to address immediate hardship and reduce the risk of crisis.
 - Health Implications - the CRF is expected to have a positive impact on health and wellbeing by addressing some of the social and economic factors that contribute to poor health outcomes, including financial stress and insecure access to essential goods and services. By supporting residents at an early stage, the CRF can help reduce the likelihood of adverse impacts on mental and physical health and mitigate pressures on health and care services.
 - Crime and Disorder Implications - the provision of timely financial support through the CRF may contribute to reducing the risk of crime and disorder by helping to prevent crisis situations that can lead to increased vulnerability, exploitation, or antisocial behaviour. No

adverse crime and disorder implications have been identified as a result of the proposals.

- Environmental Implications - no significant negative environmental impacts have been identified.
- Partnership Working and Associated Issues - delivery of the Crisis and Resilience Fund will involve partnership working with voluntary, community, and other local organisations that support residents experiencing hardship. Partnerships play a key role in referral pathways and delivery support; however, delivery of the CRF remains the County Council's responsibility.
- Risk Assessment - Key risks associated with the CRF include demand exceeding available resources, inconsistent decision making, and the potential for misuse of funds. These risks are mitigated through clear eligibility criteria, governance arrangements, monitoring, and audit controls. The scheme has been designed to operate within an agreed budget and policy framework, supporting delivery of the Council's strategic objectives while managing risk appropriately.

Equality Implications

36. The CRF has been designed to support residents experiencing financial hardship, including those who may be disproportionately affected due to one or more protected characteristics. Due regard has been given to the potential impact on all nine protected characteristics, with the scheme operating on the basis of need, fairness, and accessibility.
37. A draft Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and, due to the time frame of this fund going live, is awaiting consideration by the Department's Equality Committee.

Human Rights Implications

38. The proposals have no adverse human rights implications. The Fund is intended to provide targeted support to residents experiencing financial hardship and includes safeguards, transparency and an appeals process to ensure fair and proportionate decision making.

Background Papers

Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/LCC-Strategic-Plan.pdf>

CRF webpage URL and policy document <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/find-help-with-cost-of-living/crisis-and-resilience-fund>



CABINET - 28 APRIL 2026

DATES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS IN 2027/28 AND 2028/29

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, LAW, AND GOVERNANCE

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to ask the Cabinet to recommend that the County Council at its meeting on 13 May 2026 agrees dates for Council meetings for the next two municipal years.

Recommendation

2. That the County Council be recommended to hold meetings on the following dates during the next two municipal years:-

Wednesday 17 February 2027 (to consider the budget)

Wednesday 12 May 2027 (Annual Meeting)

Wednesday 7 July 2027

Wednesday 29 September 2027

Wednesday 1 December 2027

Wednesday 16 February 2028 (to consider the budget)

Wednesday 17 May 2028 (Annual Meeting)

Wednesday 5 July 2028

Wednesday 27 September 2028

Wednesday 6 December 2028

Reason for Recommendation

3. To comply with the Local Government Act 1972 and the County Council's Standing Orders.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

4. Subject to agreement by the Cabinet, the County Council will be asked to agree the dates on 13 May 2026.

Background

5. Standing Order 1(2) requires that in addition to the Annual Meeting of the Council and any meetings convened by the Chairman or members of the

Council, meetings of the Council for the transaction of general business shall be held on such days as may be determined by the Council on the recommendation of the Cabinet. Dates for the 2027/28 municipal year have been included in order to provide members with advance notice of future meetings, although it is recognised that Local Government Reorganisation may have an effect on this timetable.

Equality Implications

6. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

Human Rights Implications

7. There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

8. None.

Officer to Contact

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Background Papers

Report to the County Council on 14 May 2025 "Dates of Council Meetings 2025/26 and 2026/27" - <https://cexmodgov01/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=7392>