

REPORT OF THE CABINET

B: LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2018 - 22

Introduction

1. This report concerns the County Council's Strategic Plan for the period 2018 - 2022. A copy of the Plan is attached as Appendix A to this report.

Background

2. The Strategic Plan is part of the Authority's Policy Framework (as defined in the Constitution) and as such the revised Plan will need to be approved by the full Council. The Strategic Plan outlines the Council's long-term vision for the organisation and the people and place of Leicestershire. It provides a simple and clear summary of the Council's direction over the next four years.
3. The Council's Strategic Plan is underpinned by other key policies and strategies including the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Council's Transformation Programme.
4. Since the Council approved the current Strategic Plan for 2014 – 18 in May 2014 there have been further annual iterations of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which have sought to set savings targets to help address the additional financial pressures placed on the Council.

The Strategic Plan – An outcomes based approach

5. In developing the new Strategic Plan, it was decided to adopt an outcomes based approach. This involved the development of an overarching single outcomes framework which will set the strategic context for outcome based commissioning strategies. It will ensure that they are designed to deliver the Council's priority outcomes.
6. The Plan and Single Outcomes Framework sets out the long-term vision for Leicestershire as a great place which offers good quality of life for residents, communities and businesses. It will enable the Council to have a joined up approach to delivery in the medium and short term. The priority outcomes will also provide a basis for discussions with partners to identify common aims and highlight opportunities for collaboration.
7. An outcomes framework has the potential to strengthen the Council's leadership role by having a clear vision for the place and its people. This will enable the Council to lead with authority and clarity of purpose both when commissioning services and when shaping future strategy with partners.

8. Outcomes-based policy and commissioning provides:
- a) A focus on the difference the Council can make to citizens, communities and businesses and not just on short-term outputs or processes.
 - b) A long-term vision, and medium and short- term actions.
 - c) Activity and spend focused on achieving real and lasting benefit for Leicestershire people.
 - d) Better integration across and between Council departments and partner organisations by directing effort towards shared outcomes.
 - e) Commissioning and decommissioning aligned to a shared outcomes/vision and to national frameworks.
 - f) The potential to measure the extent to which the Authority's money (and others in the public sector) is being spent on shared outcomes.
 - g) The potential to widen the approach to other partners and therefore increase the size and scope of the available resource.

Developing the draft Strategic Plan and Single Outcomes Framework

9. The vision and outcomes framework have been developed through extensive engagement across the Council and reviews of evidence, insight and existing policy commitments.
10. The five priority outcomes which are felt to reflect the priorities of residents, businesses and communities in Leicestershire have been identified using a range of evidence and population data as well as qualitative evidence from service users and residents surveys. A desk based review of existing partnership commitments and national statutory requirements and measures established a framework of the Council's duties. The Council's commissioning strategies have been used to aid discussions across the organisation to agree the strategic outcomes and develop the supporting outcomes. These commissioning strategies have also been subject to extensive engagement and public consultation. Input from Members, Chief Officers and senior managers from across the Council and key stakeholder organisations have further shaped the Plan.
11. This has enabled a shared vision to be developed across the Council and for departments to take a joined up approach to responding to the challenges and opportunities it faces. Affordability has been a key concern; at a time of increasing demand and reducing resources, a clear strategic direction, underpinned by evidence and a desire to work collaboratively, is essential in supporting decisions to be made regarding where to focus effort and to drive decisions about where investment of resources can be increased or reduced.

12. The draft Strategic Plan describes the organisation's approach to ensuring that strategic outcomes are reflected in front line delivery. It is deliberately aspirational and seeks to outline the end results that the Council wants to see for the people of Leicestershire. Beginning with the end goal opens up an opportunity to reconsider the best means to deliver results. Rather than describing what the Council will do and the services it delivers, the Single Outcomes Framework aims to stimulate innovation and collaboration and will allow identification of synergies across traditional service boundaries and between partners.
13. It is recognised that the Council alone cannot deliver all the change that will be needed to realise the strategic outcomes. The Council will seek to collaborate with partners to coordinate and integrate its plans with others as this will have maximum impact in addressing the most pressing problems that the county faces. Through the supporting outcomes the Council is seeking to understand its own contribution by highlighting the issues where it is the lead organisation or has significant influence to drive positive change.
14. The Strategic Plan sets the framework for the work of the Council but is not a detailed description of the services that it will provide. This information will be captured in individual departmental commissioning intentions and service plans.

Stakeholder engagement

15. The draft Single Outcomes Framework was the subject of a six week engagement exercise which took place from 26th June to 4th August 2017. The engagement was targeted at key stakeholder organisations such as the NHS, police and local councils (45 consultees) and partnerships such as the Health and Wellbeing Board (13 consultees), details are included in the engagement report at Appendix B.
16. A discussion document including consultation questions was sent to key organisational stakeholders. The discussion document was also either mailed or presented to all of the partnerships included in the stakeholder list included in Appendix B and comments invited. The questionnaire consisted of a range of open-ended questions which were used to guide the structure and content of responses with the opportunity for stakeholders to provide additional feedback should they wish. All the documents (draft Single Outcomes Framework and questionnaire) were available in different formats and languages upon request.
17. Targeted notifications were sent to all County Councillors and Leicestershire MPs and a presentation was provided to the County Council's Scrutiny Commission as part of the engagement process on 19th July 2017.

Stakeholder responses

18. Twenty responses to the discussion document were received as open text. Most of the submissions broadly responded to the questions in the

questionnaire but were not limited to addressing the questions alone. The responses represented 8 partnerships and 12 organisations. A detailed report on the consultation response is attached as Appendix A and a summary is given below.

19. The Scrutiny Commission was broadly supportive of the outcomes in the Plan but raised a number of concerns, most of which were reflected in the responses to the consultation. In particular, the Commission was concerned that the Plan was too aspirational and lacked detail in terms of how it would be delivered and how performance would be monitored. There was also concern regarding the inclusion of a priority around quality and affordable housing, as the County Council had limited influence and the Plan, as drafted, did not describe the Council's role in this area.
20. The consultation responses demonstrated support for the Vision statement and principles, although some detailed changes to the vision were suggested. Those organisations that responded felt that there was good alignment with the vision of their own organisations.
21. The responses broadly supported the outcomes-based approach. Responses concerning the alignment of the five themes with the authorities other strategies varied due to the differing statutory responsibilities of the respondents.
22. Several respondents considered that the outcomes were very high level and lacked detail and there were calls for the framework to be more focussed on what is special to Leicestershire.
23. There was a very high level of support for working in partnership and enthusiasm for continued involvement in the development of delivery mechanisms for the framework. Some respondents called for the approach to be more 'ambitious' and for the development of a shared outcomes framework for all the strategic organisations in the area with a clear indication of roles, responsibilities and levels of accountability (e.g. lead, support, influencer or advocate).
24. There were calls for additional strategic outcomes on the environment and education to be added to the framework or for them to be given more priority. The Scrutiny Commission also expressed concern that environmental issues were not adequately represented.
25. Several respondents suggested that additional emphasis should be given within the priorities to meeting the need of the most vulnerable, good emotional and mental health, crime and vulnerability, transport infrastructure as an enabler and the importance of homes being in the right place. These issues have all been addressed in the revised Plan.

Revised draft of the Strategic Plan

26. In response to the feedback from the engagement process a number of changes have been incorporated into the draft Strategic Plan.
27. In summary, these changes are:
- a) The vision has been shortened into a summary statement with explanatory text.
 - b) Additional detail has been added to the 'Achieving the Vision' section to cover partnership working and the delivery mechanisms against each theme and the Council's transition to an outcomes-based business model.
 - c) The inclusion of an outline performance framework which will allow the Council to benchmark performance against other local authority areas.
 - d) The inclusion of equality and environment into a single principle has been strengthened by reflecting the importance of these two objectives to the Council's corporate social responsibility.
 - e) A set of priorities have been established within the 'Our Approach' section which cover objectives which cut across all outcomes e.g. fair funding, prevention, commercialism etc.
 - f) The importance of market towns and rural issues, transport as an enabler and inward investment have been reflected in the Strong Economy outcome section and performance framework.
 - g) Good mental health support, physical activity, working age adults and more emphasis on educational attainment have all been included in the Wellbeing and Opportunity outcome section and performance framework.
 - h) The importance of transport infrastructure, homes being in the right place and having a positive impact on health and wellbeing have been reflected in the Quality and Affordable Homes outcome section and performance framework.
 - i) The protection of the environment is incorporated in each of the outcomes and also as a cross cutting principle to emphasise its importance in quality of life.
 - j) The importance of education and skills has been included in the Strong Economy and Wellbeing and Opportunity outcome sections and is reflected in the performance framework.

Proposed Strategic Plan 2018 - 22

28. The Council's vision statement, included in the Strategic Plan, is: "Working together for the benefit of everyone."
29. It states that 'The Council is here to make a positive difference to the lives of Leicestershire people, creating a strong economy that enables the best life chances for all. People are well and safe, living as part of great communities where they can enjoy life with maximum independence in quality homes that are affordable.'
30. The five proposed strategic outcomes, which support the vision in the Plan, are:

Strong Economy

Leicestershire's economy is growing and resilient so that people and businesses can fulfil their potential.

Wellbeing and Opportunity

The people of Leicestershire have the opportunities and support they need to take control of their health and wellbeing.

Keeping People Safe

People in Leicestershire are safe and protected from harm.

Great Communities

Leicestershire communities are thriving and integrated places where people help and support each other and take pride in their local area.

Affordable and Quality Homes

Leicestershire has a choice of quality homes that people can afford.

31. In addition, the Strategic Plan states that 'The Council wants to remain a sustainable and successful organisation leading modern, highly effective services. It will nurture strong, transparent, and trusting relationships with partners, customers and communities to improve people's lives - now and in the future.' This is the vision for how the organisation operates to deliver the outcomes.
32. The Plan also includes the following principles which will shape the Council's approach and define how it works as an organisation to achieve the vision.
 - **Good Value:** We make the best use of all the resources available to get the best return for Leicestershire.
 - **Informed:** We make good decisions, based on evidence, and try new things to drive innovation in public service.
 - **High expectations:** We have outstanding staff who aim high to make a real difference – focusing on the outcomes for people not just the delivery.
 - **Collaborative:** We work together with partners, communities and residents to share responsibility, build our strengths and find solutions.
 - **Open:** We listen to and empower local people; keep them informed and involve them in our plans.
 - **Responsible:** We contribute positively to the environment and we are committed to equality.

Delivery of the Strategic Plan and Single Outcomes Framework

33. The refresh of the County Council's Strategic Plan provides an opportunity to renew focus on the Council's strategic priority outcomes and to align investment, productivity and performance to delivering these outcomes.

34. This new approach will mean a change in the way the Council works and how each part of the Council can contribute to the delivery of the outcomes. Underpinned by evidence, this approach will help the Council to know 'what works' and replicate this across all services.
35. A focus on outcomes is not an entirely new concept for the County Council. Existing outcome-based arrangements are in place, such as those for the Enabling Growth Plan which is overseen by a corporate Enabling Growth Board. These arrangements have allowed the Council to move towards outcome-based decision making without changes to financial or organisational models. Outcome-based commissioning already exists in social care and national outcome-based indicator performance frameworks exist in adult social care and public health.
36. The County Council is already an active and influential organisation in partnerships covering the Midlands, Leicester and Leicestershire (sometimes with Rutland), and across the county. The main strategic partnerships which the Council is a member of are included in the summary diagram in the Strategic Plan under each outcome.
37. The Strategic Plan reflects the contribution that the Council makes in meeting its partnership commitments as set out in the strategies listed in the diagram e.g. the Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy is reflected across the outcome themes but mainly in the wellbeing and opportunity outcome. The partnership strategies cover areas where the Council may have some influence but little control such as the delivery of urgent care or responding to crime – these require contributions from other partners.

A refreshed Transformation Programme

38. The refresh of the County Council's Strategic Plan provides an opportunity to utilise a renewed focus on the Council's strategic priority outcomes to align its service investment, productivity and performance alongside these outcomes.
39. A new portfolio of transformation will also allow for more effective support and challenge to enable service commissioning changes within departments. To do this, medium term commissioning strategies will be developed against the five priority themes. Detailed annual delivery plans will direct the work of service areas with a supporting performance management framework in place to help understand and monitor progress and to measure the impact on the strategic outcomes.
40. A refresh of the County Council's transformation effort will therefore also be necessary - to continue the pursuit of service delivery and efficiency savings, but also to ensure the aligned investment of effort and resources towards ensuring 'a sustainable and successful organisation leading modern, highly effective services'.
41. Work is underway to determine the full scope of transformation activity which will see the organisation move from its current operating model to that

necessary under the vision. This scoping work encompasses existing and future planned activity under the organisations various strategies, including the Medium Term Financial Strategy, People Strategy, Data & Business Intelligence Strategy and emerging plans for IT and Digital, Commercial activity and Communities, amongst others.

42. Work will be guided through effective engagement and communication, working closely with customers and communities. The Council's equality and environment strategies explain the approach to the Authorities social responsibilities which are part of everything it does.
43. The Council will build on its existing performance reporting to develop a robust performance management framework supported by the datasets and tools set out within the business intelligence strategy. This will allow it to monitor progress against the outcomes for the population of Leicestershire, the effectiveness of the programmes of work and how it has performed as an organisation in deploying its resources to achieve the change it wants to see. This will include benchmarking the Council against other comparable areas and analysing integrated data, where relevant, with its partners. An outline performance framework is included in the draft Strategic Plan.

Consideration by the Scrutiny Commission

44. The Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 15th November welcomed the revised Strategic Plan which now addressed most of the concerns raised at its previous meeting. The Commission also made a number of additional comments, which are now set out in the minute extract attached as Appendix C. the Leader and officers agreed to have regard to these in the further development and implementation of the Plan.

Consideration by the Cabinet

45. The Cabinet at its meeting on 24th November noted the outcome of the consultations and approved the Strategic Plan.

(Motion to be moved:-

That the Strategic Plan for 2018 to 2022 set out in Appendix A to this report be approved.)

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 23 June 2016 “County Council Strategic Plan and Single Outcomes Framework” - <http://ow.ly/Hbm030fNq1w>

Report to the Cabinet on 19 April 2016 “Review of the County Council’s Strategic Plan – Embedding a new approach to transformation and commissioning” - <http://ow.ly/9Efy30cp11s>

County Council Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018 - <http://ow.ly/ZQG4Y>

Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Strategic Plan 2018 – 22

Appendix B - Consultation report

Appendix C – Comments of the Scrutiny Commission – 15 November 2017

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