

REPORT OF THE CABINET

B. LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S REVISED STRATEGIC PLAN 2018 - 22

Introduction

1. This report presents the outcome of consultation on the County Council's revised Strategic Plan 2018-22, which has been amended to reflect the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in May 2019 and seeks approval for the Plan. The Plan is part of the Authority's Policy Framework.

Background

2. 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 four years.
3. The Plan is underpinned by other key policies and strategies including the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the revised Environment Strategy.
4. The Strategic Plan objectives are broadly reflected in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy(MTFS). As more detailed actions are developed these will be reflected in future iterations of the MTFS. The Council agreed £16m worth of investment in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2020 – 24 to respond to its climate change commitments.

Strategic Plan - Revisions

5. The Plan has been reviewed to enable the County Council's to meet its ongoing commitment to protect and enhance the environment and to recognise the urgent need for accelerated action to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.
6. The revised Strategic Plan (Appendix A) now reflects the climate emergency declaration during the remaining years of the current Plan. The following are the main changes to the plan: -
 - a. Revised Council Vision and supporting text to reflect the Council's declaration of a climate emergency and align with the new strategic and supporting outcomes
 - b. A new separate and strengthened environment principle which acknowledges the net zero carbon target for the council's operations by 2030;
 - c. Revised strategic and supporting outcomes to embed environmental ambitions across all outcomes;

- d. Updated narrative text throughout the document: Foreword, Introduction, and the outcome descriptions to reflect the Council's commitment to environmental protection
- e. A new "Our Approach" section – entitled 'Tackling climate change and ecological decline';
- f. Updated section on "Working across the council" to reflect the new Strategic Change Portfolio;
- g. The "Measuring success" section has been amended to reflect the increased emphasis on environmental performance, with environmental indicators embedded across the relevant outcomes. Other changes have been incorporated to reflect changes in national and local reporting frameworks.

Strategic Outcomes – Revisions

- 7. The Council's vision statement, included in the Strategic Plan, is: "Working together for the benefit of everyone." It states that 'The Council is here to make a positive difference to the lives of Leicestershire people.' This vision captures what the Council wants for Leicestershire and what type of organisation it strives to be over the next 20 years.
- 8. The Authority wants Leicestershire's economic prosperity to support resilient clean growth that creates the best life chances for all. Leicestershire is a place where people are well and safe, living in a healthy environment as part of great communities where people enjoy life and work together to enhance their local area. There is a good supply of quality, sustainable homes that provide maximum independence and are affordable to own and run'.
- 9. The five strategic outcomes, which support the vision in the Plan, have been amended to embed the Council's environmental commitments. The five outcomes are as follows:
 - a) **Strong Economy**
Leicestershire's economic prosperity benefits everyone and supports resilient, clean growth
 - b) **Wellbeing and Opportunity**
The people of Leicestershire live in a healthy environment and have the opportunities and support they need to take control of their health and wellbeing.
 - c) **Keeping People Safe**
People in Leicestershire are safe and protected from harm.
 - d) **Great Communities**
Leicestershire communities are thriving and integrated places where people help and support each other and take pride in their local area.
 - e) **Affordable and Quality Homes**
Leicestershire has a choice of quality, sustainable homes that people can afford.

10. 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.
- a) **Good Value:** We make the best use of all the resources available to get the best return for Leicestershire
 - b) **Informed:** We make good decisions, based on evidence, and try new things to drive innovation in public service
 - c) **High expectations:** We have outstanding staff who aim high to make a real difference – focusing on the outcomes for people not just the delivery
 - d) **Collaborative:** We work together with partners, communities and residents to share responsibility, build our strengths and find solutions
 - e) **Open:** We listen to and empower local people; keep them informed and involve them in our plans
 - f) **Responsible:** We will fulfil our leadership role for the environment; taking action to be carbon neutral by 2030 and reverse the decline in biodiversity
 - g) **Fair:** We are committed to equality of opportunity, celebrating diversity and inclusion for all

Measuring and reporting progress

11. The performance section has been amended to incorporate an increased emphasis on environmental performance, with environmental indicators embedded across the relevant outcomes. Other changes arising from national and local reporting frameworks have also been included.
12. The new performance tables by theme include over 170 proposed metrics and provide a framework of key indicators to be embedded in existing data reporting arrangements. The outcome measures inevitably reflect some areas where the Council does not have direct control and elements that 'tell the story' of what life is like in Leicestershire. This will allow progress against the outcomes for the population of Leicestershire to be monitored, as well as the effectiveness of the Council's programmes and how the Council has performed as an organisation in deploying resources to achieve the required changes.
13. Regular reports on performance will be presented to the relevant County Council Scrutiny Committees to ensure that progress and delivery is on track for each theme. An integrated annual delivery report and performance compendium looking at the themes and outcomes will also be reported to Cabinet, Scrutiny Commission and full County Council each year and made publicly available. This will include benchmarking of the Council's data and performance against other comparable areas and analysing integrated data, where relevant, with partners.

Consultation with Scrutiny bodies

14. The Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee was consulted on the revised Strategic Plan on 5 March 2020. The Committee broadly welcomed the Plan reflecting the Council's commitment to take Climate Change seriously. The Committee emphasised the importance of partnership working and requested that further consideration be given to how this could be

achieved and asked that it be ensured that the performance framework relating to air quality was suitably inclusive to a variety of air quality metrics.

15. The Scrutiny Commission was consulted on the Strategic Plan on 8th April 2020. The Commission strongly supported the environmental enhancement of the Plan but raised concerns relating to the delivery of its ambitions in the short to medium term given the current and future pressures that could be expected to fall on planning authorities because of the coronavirus. It was agreed that these issues were best addressed by the Environment Strategy and its related action plan.
16. The Commissioners also highlighted the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic would have on the assumptions made when developing the Plan. They requested that this should be acknowledged and that the intention to review and update the plan during 2021/22 when the consequences of the pandemic are more stable and apparent should be emphasised.
17. A copy of the full minute from the meeting of the Scrutiny Commission is attached as Appendix B to this report.
18. The comments received from the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Commission have been reflected in the revised Strategic Plan.

Developing a new Strategic Plan

19. The current global situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic will impact on many of the assumptions made during this revision of Strategic Plan 2018 - 22. A detailed review of the Plan will begin later this year/early next year which will take account of all the circumstances and outcomes arising from the coronavirus outbreak

Equality and Human Rights Implications

20. A screening assessment of the Strategic Plan has been completed and concluded that a full impact assessment is not required. The Strategic Plan will continue to include specific priorities aimed at ensuring that the council maintains its excellent performance in equality and diversity practice and ensuring the delivery of the best outcomes for people with protected characteristics.

Consideration by the Cabinet

21. At its meeting on 28th April the Cabinet considered the Council's revised Strategic Plan 2018-22 the comments of the Scrutiny Commission and a written submission from Mr D. Bill CC (copy attached as Appendix C)

22. The Cabinet was advised by the Lead Member that the revised Strategic Plan and Environment Strategy took account of the Council's declaration of a climate emergency in May 2019 and its target of achieving carbon neutrality for the Council's own operations by 2030. He said that the Coronavirus pandemic had now required unprecedented changes to the way in which Leicestershire residents lived their lives and had had huge implications for the Council. The Council's environmental ambitions remained unchanged and the climate emergency was an immediate and pressing challenge to be addressed in the Strategic Plan, Environment Strategy and in the Authority's recovery planning.

Motion to be moved

That the revised Strategic Plan 2018 -2022 be approved, recognising that the Plan will need to be revisited as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Background papers

Report to the County Council – 19 February 2020 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/2021 – 2023/24

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=134&MIId=6038&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet on 24 November 2017 Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2018 – 22

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s133397/Leicestershire%20County%20Council%20Strategic%20Plan%202018%20-%202022.pdf>

Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2018 – 22 (approved December 2017)

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2019/6/27/LCC-Strategic-Plan-2018-22.pdf>

Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Strategic Plan 2018 – 22

Appendix B – Minute extract from the meeting of the Scrutiny Commission – 8 April 2020.

Appendix C – Comments from Mr Bill CC

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