



ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
7 SEPTEMBER 2020

ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT STRATEGY 2020-24
DELIVERING WELLBEING AND OPPORTUNITY IN LEICESTERSHIRE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the outcomes of the consultation on 'Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire: Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020–2024'. The Strategy is attached as Appendix A.
2. The Committee is asked to comment on the revised draft Strategy ahead of the Cabinet meeting on 18 September 2020, where approval will be sought.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

3. The Adults and Communities Strategy 2020-24 sits under the County Council's Strategic Plan for 2018-22 'Working Together for the Benefit of Everyone' and aims to set out how the Department will contribute to the delivery and achievement of the Council's five strategic outcomes.
4. It will support the delivery of the County Council's statutory duties for libraries and museums under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 and for adult social care under the Care Act 2014. There is also national policy and statutory guidance as defined by the Department of Health and Social Care, policy requirements for the integration of health and social care, the national programme of change for Learning Disabilities, and requirements that come with the receipt of Education and Skills Funding Agency funding for adult education.
5. The draft Strategy provides a framework for policy on, investment in, and delivery of services by the Department, working with its partners.

Background

6. The Council's Adults and Communities Department currently has an Adult Social Care Vision and Strategy, 'Promoting Independence, Supporting Communities'; and a Communities and Wellbeing Strategy 'Providing Less, Supporting More'. These both cover the period 2016 to 2020. The Department has developed and consulted on a new integrated Strategy from 2020 to 2024, setting out the vision, ambition and purpose for its work.

Consultation

7. A formal consultation commenced on 16 December 2019 and was due to run until 22 March 2020. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, subsequent lockdown, and change of business activities, the consultation was left open until July 2020. During this time the consultation received 61 responses to the questionnaire. The consultation was targeted at strategic partners and stakeholders, providers, social care service users, carers and users of Leicestershire's libraries, heritage and Adult Learning opportunities.
8. The consultation was also supported by a range of engagement activities with identified stakeholders. These engagement activities included participation in community meetings such as Parish Council meetings, attendance at provider forums, hosting stalls at public events along with a social media and online campaign.
9. The aim of the consultation was to gather feedback on the proposals set out in the Strategy. The consultation was specifically interested in:
 - Views on the proposed principles of future delivery of services, especially the increased focus on wellbeing;
 - Support or opposition regarding the different elements of the model;
 - Views on the Department's ideas about delivering the model.
10. The key themes can be summarised as:
 - Continued support for the principles and model;
 - Acknowledgement and support for the addition of 'wellbeing' into the model;
 - Concern about over-reliance on communities/volunteers, and how communities/volunteers can be supported and sustained;
 - Overall, it is welcomed that the two functions of the Department - adult social care and communities and wellbeing - are brought together into one strategy.
 - Access to transport remains an issue to maximise the effectiveness of prevention activities;
 - Balance between price and quality;
 - Importance of effective communication;
 - The key role of information and advice;
 - Improvements required in relation to internal processes, including the timeliness of reviews and payment mechanisms for both cash direct payments and payments to providers of commissioned services;
 - Concern that the workforce is not being given the required training to keep improving;
 - Acknowledgement that Personal Assistants and direct payment holders require more support.
11. A report of the engagement and consultation responses for the draft Strategy will be published alongside the Strategy and is attached at Appendix B.
12. Overall there is a high level of support for the Strategy and the ideas put forward as potential ways in which it can be delivered. Engagement and consultation have

highlighted the need to make sure that communication is prompt and clear, and to check that people fully understand the Department's purpose and intentions.

Implications of Covid-19 for the Strategy

13. The context for the Strategy has obviously changed since it was initially drafted and consultation commenced. However, the Strategy principles, framework and priorities have not changed and in fact, the Covid-19 crisis has reinforced the approach and priorities as set out in the Strategy.

The Strategy

14. Some minor amendments have been made to the draft Strategy to reflect the impact and implications of the Covid-19 crisis and to ensure the key themes from the consultation are properly reflected and emphasised. This includes how the Department works and communicates with its partners, providers and service users; how all the Department's services support wellbeing, and the future role of communities and volunteers in achieving the outcomes. For example, a list of values has been included that are important to the public in supporting the community following the impact of the pandemic.

Resource Implications

15. The Strategy, incorporating the new operating model for adult social care, will continue to ensure that the Authority makes best possible use of its resources. It will also focus attention on driving improved customer experience through the most appropriate targeting of resources. The sustainability of services will be maintained whilst ensuring the best outcomes for people using the inherent strengths of people and communities.
16. There is a small cost associated with publication of the Strategy which will be met from the existing departmental budget.
17. The Strategy sets the direction for the development of policy, strategic priorities, demand management and resource allocation during the four-year period. It will provide the context within which budgets are drawn up and presented through the Medium Term Financial Strategy including any additional pressures resulting from the Covid-19 crisis.
18. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the contents of this report.

Timetable for Decisions

19. The consultation outcomes and final Adult and Communities Department Strategy 2020–2024 will be reported to the Cabinet on 18 September for approval.
20. Subject to approval the document will then be published.

Background Papers

- Report to Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th November 2019 on a consultation on the Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Draft Strategy 2020-24
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1040&MId=5690&Ver=4>
- Working together for the benefit of everyone: Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2018-22 <https://bit.ly/34uqIGb>
- Providing Less, Supporting More: Our vision and strategy for Communities and Wellbeing <https://bit.ly/2QlpmsC>
- Promoting Independence, Supporting Communities: Our vision and strategy for adult social care 2016 – 2020 <https://bit.ly/2Y6b5ob>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

21. None

Equality and Human Rights Implications

22. A screening Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) has been carried out which concluded that successful delivery of the Strategy will have a positive impact, but that this will rely on the implementation and delivery of policies, projects and services. The screening EHRIA will provide a framework and full EHRIs will be undertaken for delivery of activities, as required.

Environmental Implications

23. Leicestershire County Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting of 15 May 2019. As a major service delivery and commissioning department, Adults and Communities contributes to carbon emissions through its operations, and through the services of its contracted providers.
24. The Department will consider how the impact of its operations can be mitigated through the Adults and Communities Strategy. It is developing an action plan which will, for the Department:
- reduce the amount of waste produced;
 - increase the level of recycling;
 - reduce the amount of paper used;
 - reduce business mileage;
 - increasing the number of staff that have completed Environmental Awareness E-Learning;
 - implement mitigation measures identified in the corporate Climate Change Risk Register;
 - identify work required with contracted providers to reduce their environmental impact.

Partnership Working and Associated Issues

25. Delivery of the Strategy will require the Department to continue to develop and maintain effective working relationships with a range of partners including, but not limited to, colleagues across all other County Council departments, community libraries, cultural organisations, voluntary and community groups, NHS, district councils, Leicester City and Rutland Councils, blue light services, and social care service providers.

Risk Assessment

26. The main strategic risk to achieving the ambitions and objectives in the new Strategy is the availability of funding for adult social care and community and wellbeing services. The Department and wider Council's effective management of this risk will depend on the financial and wider resourcing impact of the Covid-19 crisis, the level and management of demand for social care services, support needed and transfer of responsibilities by partner organisations in particular the NHS, improvement in delivery and efficiency of internal and commissioned services, and workforce recruitment and retention.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire: Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020–2024'

Appendix B: Report of the consultation on the draft Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020–2024'

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