



ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
1 NOVEMBER 2021

ENGAGEMENT ON THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PLAN

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose of the Report

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

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

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

Background

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

Plan Structure and Contents

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

Strategic Outcomes

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

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

Sub-outcomes:

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

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

Sub-outcomes:

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

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

Sub-outcomes:

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

Sub-outcomes:

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

Sub-outcomes:

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

Progress and Performance Monitoring

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

Adults and Communities

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

Actions to deliver this aim include:

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

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

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

Actions to deliver this aim include:

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

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

Actions to deliver this aim include:

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

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

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

Actions to deliver this aim include:

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

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

Actions to deliver this aim include:

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

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

Actions to deliver this aim include:

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

Consultation and Timetable for Decisions

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

Resource Implications

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

Conclusions

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

Background papers

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

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

28. None

Equality and Human Rights Implications

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

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

Other Relevant Impact Assessments

Crime and Disorder Implications

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

Environmental Implications

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

Appendices

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

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