APPENDIX

Leicestershire County Council

Strategic Plan
2022-26

Published October 2021

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1. Glossary

Term	Definition
LLEP	Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership
VCSE Sector	Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
EHE	Elective Home Education
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
GVA	Gross Value Added
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
R&D	Research and Development
SMEs	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
GDHI	Gross Disposable Household Income
PM2.5	Fine Particulate Matter
CO2e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent

2. Foreword

Cllr Nick Rushton
Leader of Leicestershire County Council

This Strategic Plan sets out our ambitions and priorities for the next four years (2022-26). It outlines what we want to achieve and how we intend to do it.

It is based on five strategic outcomes which are aspirational; they outline the end results that we want to see for Leicestershire. For each outcome, we have identified specific aims which we will focus on achieving over the next four years, with corresponding actions. Further detail can be found through the relevant strategies in our Strategy Library.

Whilst the outcomes have been set out in separate sections, it is recognised that there are significant interdependencies between them. For example, reducing our carbon footprint supports not only our aim to tackle climate change but also to ensure positive health outcomes for current and future generations. Further, improving the educational attainment of disadvantaged children ensures they are able to access opportunities to fulfil their potential and supports economic growth in the county. Links between outcomes have been highlighted throughout the Plan and some actions support multiple outcomes.

We will deliver it by building upon our previous achievements, such as being recognised by Impower as the most productive Council in England and Wales, whilst being the lowest funded County Council in the UK. However, the Council alone cannot deliver all the change that will be needed. Through continued collaboration with our partners to coordinate and integrate our plans we hope to make the maximum impact on the most pressing issues that we face and celebrate and build on the success of this great county.
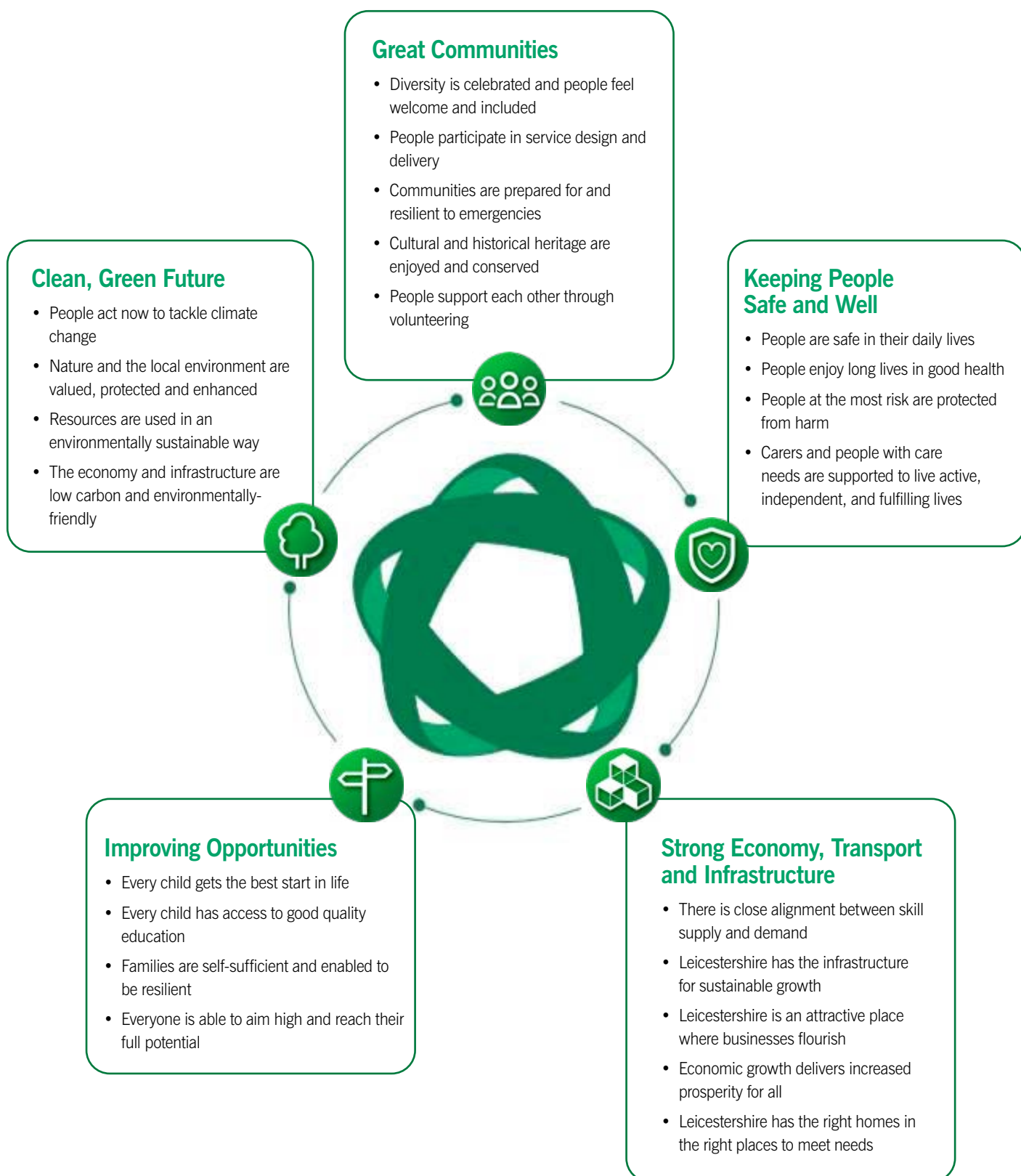
Nicholas Rushton

3. Vision

The vision below summarises our ambitions for Leicestershire and puts us on the right path to secure the best possible future for local residents.

> An inclusive county in which active communities, great connections and greener living enable everyone to prosper, be happy and healthy.

We want Leicestershire to have welcoming and inclusive communities in which people take responsibility for their local areas and support each other. People are safe and well, living active, independent, and fulfilling lives. The local economy is flourishing with resilient, clean growth delivering increased prosperity for all. Everyone, regardless of their background or personal characteristics, has access to the opportunities they need to aim high and achieve their aspirations. People act now with urgency to protect and enhance the environment and meet the challenges of climate change.

4. Strategic Outcomes

Great Communities

- 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

Clean, Green Future

- 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

Keeping People Safe and Well

- 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

Improving Opportunities

- Every child gets the best start in 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

- There is close alignment between skill supply and demand
- Leicestershire has the infrastructure for sustainable growth
- Leicestershire is an attractive place where businesses flourish
- Economic growth delivers increased prosperity for all
- Leicestershire has the right homes in the right places to meet needs

5. Clean, Green Future

This outcome reflects the need to protect and enhance the environment and meet the challenges and opportunities of responding to climate change. Global warming is leading to an increase in the frequency and intensity of storms, flooding and heatwaves and changes in pests and diseases. It will affect social and environmental determinants of health including clean air, safe drinking water, supply of sufficient food and access to secure shelter. It will also damage local infrastructure and services, reduce productivity, increase the likelihood of conflict and climate migration and increase the loss of biodiversity.

There is increasing recognition of, and commitment to, the need to protect, promote and improve the environment at a local, national, and global level. The Paris Agreement of 2015 requires countries to limit global temperature rise to below 1.5 to 2°C. The interconnection between economic development, social equity and inclusion and environmental impacts has also been recognised internationally via the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The UK Government has prioritised action on climate change through the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019, requiring the government to reduce the UK's net emissions of greenhouse gases to zero by 2050. This will require transformational action.

On 15th May 2019, Leicestershire County Council declared a climate emergency, making a commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions from its own operations by 2030 and to work with others and to lobby government to achieve net zero carbon emissions for Leicestershire by 2045.

The Council has different levels of control and influence in protecting the environment and addressing climate change. It is responsible for complying with legislation relating to the environmental impacts from its activities, such as heating and powering our offices, using vehicles and generating waste; managing the environmental impacts from the activities of Leicestershire residents and businesses, such as air pollution from local transport and the reduction, recycling and disposal of household waste; and enforcing environmental legislation on businesses, such as in relation to product packaging, banned substances and energy certificates. It also has capacity to influence wider environmental action by lobbying government and working with partners within Leicestershire.

The Council commits to minimising the environmental impact of its activities and helping to protect the environment of Leicestershire. We will tackle climate change and embed environmental sustainability into everything we do. We will work with partners to deliver sustainable development by recognising and fostering the links between the environment, people, and the economy.

The priorities and commitments to deliver this outcome focus on how the Council will help to protect the environment and tackle climate change through its service delivery and interactions with residents and partners. Further detail on how the Council will reduce carbon emissions from its own operations can be found in the section on the Council's Carbon Reduction Programme.

5.1 People act now to tackle climate change and protect the environment

To achieve net zero carbon emissions in Leicestershire we need communities to be aware of the need for action on climate change and to act now to reduce environmental impacts. There is significant potential for individual action and community-led initiatives to support environmental sustainability (e.g. energy usage, sustainable transport, recycling). Our Community Survey highlights that 97% of residents feel protecting the environment is important. However, only 45% feel informed about what the Council is doing to protect the environment and tackle climate change, and 67% think the Council should be doing more.

Leicestershire has a higher rate of average waste produced per household than comparator counties, which may suggest that there is scope to reduce the amount of waste produced locally. We also have lower rates of electrical vehicle ownership than comparators and fewer electrical vehicle charging points.

There has been a 33% reduction in the rate of domestic CO_2 emissions in Leicestershire since 2010. Leicestershire also ranks in the best performing 25% of comparators for the percentage of new-build houses with an Energy Performance Certificate rating of C+. However, the county ranks in the worst 25% comparators for the percentage of *existing* homes with this level of energy efficiency.

What will success look like?

- Residents actively involved in tackling climate change and protecting the environment
- Reduction in the rate of CO_2 emissions per capita (average per resident)

Our Commitments

- We will use our interactions with communities to raise awareness of environmental impacts and harness community capacity to address them
- We will provide support and opportunities for learning to local communities, schools, and businesses to promote positive environmental action and collaborative working, leading to constructive behavioural change
- We will support residents to be more resource efficient in their energy and water use, such as through our Warm Homes service which provides free advice and information on managing heating costs and staying warm at home well as grants to deliver first-time gas central heating systems
- We will work with partners to expand zero and ultra-low emissions vehicles and charging, including Heavy Goods Vehicle refuelling, and promote sustainable modes of transport including walking and cycling

5.2 Nature and the local environment are valued, protected and enhanced

Biodiversity describes the enormous variety of life on Earth. Biodiversity and the eco-system cleanse our atmosphere, provide us with the oxygen we breath, the clean water we drink and the food we eat as well as many of the medicines which help to keep us well. The natural capital assets (geology, soil, air, water and all living things) of Leicestershire have an annual value of £388.45 million, with agricultural habitats generating £180.91 million annually.

Intensively managed farmland is poor for wildlife whilst land which is less intensively managed with little or no applications of chemical fertiliser, pesticides and herbicides is much richer in wildlife. In Leicestershire and Rutland where more than 80% of the land is farmed, good habitats for wildlife are now few and far between and much of our wildlife is being squeezed out and continues to decline. Leicestershire and Rutland are amongst the poorest counties for sites of recognised nature conservation value. The best sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) represent only about 1%% of the land area in Leicestershire.

Natural green space includes a wide variety of land from scrub and wetland to woodland and meadow. Access to natural green space supports our health and well-being. There is a risk that future development may not sufficiently consider the value of natural capital and green space.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the percentage of county land which promotes diversity of habitat and species

Our Commitments

- We will support awareness raising and education on biodiversity and the value of natural capital to society and the economy
- We will create, protect, enhance, and manage sustainable green infrastructure and biodiversity on Council managed land and assets
- We will seek to improve the biodiversity value and condition of natural capital features on Council managed land and assets
- We will seek to demonstrate and support environmentally sustainable farming practices that support the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity and the condition of natural capital features
- We will work with partners through the LLEP to develop a Natural Capital Investment Plan, and deliver the roadmap the recent Natural Capital Review Report set out for Leicestershire, minimising the loss of habitats and the impacts of development and encouraging innovative land use

5.3 Resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way

A further environmental crisis we are facing, in addition to climate change and biodiversity loss, is unsustainable resource usage. We are using the planet's resources at a faster rate than they are being replenished and in a way which does not allow most of these resources to be reused within our economic systems. In order to address this crisis, we need to move to a circular economy model. This is a more resource efficient alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) where resources are used for as long as possible, then products and materials are recovered, regenerated, or recycled.

Leicestershire County Council is responsible for the reuse, treatment, recycling, or disposal of the collected wastes. In addition, it has the duty to provide places for the deposit of household waste from residents (Recycling & Household Waste Sites). Compared to other county areas, Leicestershire has a lower rate of household waste which is recycled and has a significantly higher percentage of waste which is landfilled.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting and reduction in the percentage landfilled

Our Commitments

- Increase in the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting and reduction in the percentage landfilled

- We will reduce the tonnage of household waste produced in Leicestershire and minimise its environmental impact by applying the waste hierarchy in the priority order of prevention, preparation for reuse, recycling, other recovery, and disposal

- We will continue to encourage appropriate use of the Recycling & Household Waste Sites service

- We will provide a trade waste recycling, treatment and disposal service for businesses in Leicestershire, where practicable and cost-effective to do so

- We will work closely with other Waste Disposal Authorities to share ideas and opportunities for joint working / collaboration and innovation

5.4 The economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environmentally friendly

Decarbonising the economy and infrastructure is the key solution to addressing the climate emergency. Nearly 70% of Leicestershire's emissions come from commercial, industrial and transport sources, with the remaining 30% coming from domestic sources (how we heat and use energy in our homes). Total commercial CO_2 emissions in Leicestershire have reduced by xx% since 2005 and industrial CO_2 emissions have reduced by xx%. However, transport emissions have only fallen by x%. The move to a low carbon, environmentally-friendly economy will require policy, technological and behavioural changes.

The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)'s survey of local businesses from March-June 2021 found that 35% of businesses had taken action to reduce carbon impact in the past 2 months and 50% planned to take action over the following 6 months.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the percentage of businesses taking action to reduce their carbon impact
- Reduction in CO_2 emissions under the Council's influence in the local area

Our Commitments

- We will ensure that our Corporate Asset Investment Fund owns efficient assets which enhance the environment and biodiversity in the county

- We will reduce the impact of the Council's procurement and delivery of goods and services on the environment, including through the reduced use of raw materials and fossil fuels, increased use of renewable energy and deployment of smarter and more efficient processes

- We will work with businesses to raise awareness of the need to act on climate change and to support carbon reduction and circular economy practices

- We will identify and promote business opportunities arising from the move towards a circular economy

- We will work with partners to identify the investment requirements for zero carbon development and develop associated training and skills routes

- We will work with partners to create new, low-carbon business units and managed workspaces for start-ups and small companies

- We will work with partners and developers to ensure developments are low or zero carbon, climate resilient and enhance biodiversity

- We will ensure effective restoration of public transport services following the pandemic and identify opportunities to make transport more efficient

- We will encourage and support active and sustainable travel options, where appropriate, by learning from best practice and encouraging the uptake and use of electric vehicles and micro-mobility as appropriate, including through provision of infrastructure

- We will reduce pollution and contamination in Leicestershire through our Trading Standards service and other areas of control and influence

- We will continue to investigate and pursue opportunities to increase carbon sequestration through nature based solutions, such as tree planting

6. Great Communities

The Great Communities outcome aims to ensure that Leicestershire has thriving, integrated and inclusive communities in which people support each other and take responsibility for their local area. We want communities to frequently tell us what is important to them and how well services are working and to work with us to improve services. Communities also need to be resilient and adaptable during emergencies to ensure a seamless return to normal life.

The communities we live in and the relationships we have are the primary source of our physical and mental health – which in turn affects the kind of life we are able to live and the part we play in society. Our communities are key assets and by investing in them we can cultivate the conditions for people to flourish.

Whilst the pandemic has presented significant challenges for communities, it has also offered many examples of positive community spirit and highlighted the willingness of people to volunteer to help others, particularly the most vulnerable. Leicestershire's thriving and diverse Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, comprising over 3,000 organisations, has continued to provide essential services. Over 1,000 Covid-19 volunteers have been recruited to support vulnerable people through activities such as providing food and medication, transport to and from appointments, information about support available and check-in/befriending contact. A further 1,250 county volunteers were recruited to support the Covid-19 vaccination programme.

We aim to encourage more people to become active citizens, taking responsibility for their local areas. We will 'help communities to help themselves' by supporting them to take advantage of and build on the assets within their local area (e.g. buildings, people, skills, and networks) to help solve local challenges. We will build upon the successful partnerships and initiatives which have developed during the pandemic to further strengthen and empower communities. We will also provide VCSE organisations with tailored information, advice, and support to build community capacity and strengthen universal services.

The council has a strong record of engaging with communities on services and strategies. This reflects our commitment to openness and transparency and supports informed decision-making on council services. We also encourage and support communities to direct development in their local areas. We aim to increase the involvement of residents in service design, such as by using a wider range of engagement methods and reaching marginalised communities.

Culture is our past, present and future. It's what we have inherited, what we are experiencing now and what we would like to see remembered. It's myths and legends, faiths and religion, buildings, villages, cities and landscapes, art, dance, music, and food, treasured and meaningful objects and possessions, values, beliefs and memories. We will preserve and make accessible our local cultural and historic heritage to enhance the wellbeing of local residents.

Resilient communities are capable of bouncing back from adverse situations. They do this by actively influencing and preparing for economic, social, and environmental change. We will work with partners to support society to avoid, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

Our specific priorities and commitments to deliver this outcome are set out in the following pages. To deliver them, we will work closely with residents, VCSE organisations and partner services.

6.1 Diversity is celebrated and people feel welcome and included

Our Community Insight Survey finds that as of Quarter 1 2021/22 the vast majority of residents (92%) agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. However, this percentage represents a decrease from 96% in Quarter 2 2020/21. The rate of hate crime has also increased since the EU referendum and during the pandemic.

What will success look like?

- Increased community cohesion
- Better reporting and reduction in hate crime
- Council services are accessible and inclusive for all

Our Commitments

- Our Equalities strategy will focus on providing accessible services, promoting community cohesion and ensuring equity in employment opportunities
- We will sign up to the Race at Work Charter, The Disability Confident Scheme and the Stonewall Workforce Equalities Index
- We will provide guidance, training and support for all staff to address equalities issues
- We will organise and promote civic events throughout the county to celebrate our diverse communities
- We will support the Inter Faith Forum to promote greater understanding and awareness of religion, faith, and belief
- We will support the Leicestershire Equality Challenge Group to provide an independent challenge to our work to ensure service accessibility
- We will work with partners through the Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board to tackle all forms of hate crime

6.2 People participate in service design and delivery

Our Community Survey suggests that 94% of residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live. The majority of residents (57%) feel well informed about the Council and 67% state that they trust the Council. However, only 33% feel that they can influence Council decisions.

Neighbourhood Plans enable residents to develop a shared vision for local neighbourhoods and to shape the development and growth of local areas. There are now 125 active Neighbourhood Planning groups and there has been an increase in the number of Plans adopted, from 34 in 2019/20 to 38 in 2020/21. There are also 35 communities managing their local library, with many of these being community hubs which support the needs of local people.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the proportion of residents willing to work together and who feel that they can influence Council decisions
- Increase in the number of Neighbourhood Plans adopted

Our Commitments

- We will engage residents, service users and partners in the planning of services, through a variety of means

- We will sign the Consultation Institute's Charter and follow the best practice principles for consultation and engagement

- We will actively encourage community participation through the planning process, for instance through consultation on planning applications

- We will support Neighbourhood Plan development and provide timely and co-ordinated consultation responses from the Council

- We will continue to support Parish and Town Councils in their role as community leaders and providers of community managed services

- We will continue to support communities to plan and deliver devolved services, such as community-managed libraries and heritage sites

6.3 Communities are prepared for and resilient to emergencies

Leicestershire County Council aims to ensure that communities are ready for emergencies and prepared to respond. This can be supported through the development of Community Response Plans, which help communities to identify the skills, knowledge and resources that can be mustered to help those within the community who have been affected. There are currently 53 Community Response Plans across Leicestershire.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the number of active Community Response Plans

Our Commitments

- We will work with the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Resilience Partnership to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies

- We will support communities to develop Community Response Plans, so they are in a position to help themselves in exceptional circumstances

- We will provide advice and assistance to businesses and voluntary organisations to ensure effective business continuity management

- We will take action to support the resilience of the County to the existing and predicted changes in climate

- We will undertake the Lead Local Flood Authority statutory duties including reviewing Leicestershire's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

- We will maintain our Resilient Highways Network, targeting works to ensure that traffic is kept moving despite disruptive events (e.g. severe weather)

- We will work with partners through the Signposting and Community Support Service to provide emergency short-term food and fuel support

6.4 Cultural and historical heritage are enjoyed and conserved

There was an 8% reduction in visits to heritage sites between 2018/19 and 2019/20. The pandemic has also had a significant impact on the county's museum and heritage sites and library services, with premises having closed during the restrictions. However, services have adapted through digital delivery including virtual museum tours, whilst libraries have seen an 89% increase in the number of e-loans from 2019/20-2020/21.

What will success look like?

- Increase in the number of Leicestershire residents and visitors engaging in cultural and heritage activities

Our Commitments

- Our libraries, heritage, country parks and adult learning programmes will promote wellbeing by providing free and accessible community facilities, exhibitions and parks and outdoor activities and offering a range of learning opportunities
- Our Audience Development Team will ensure that new audiences obtain the wellbeing benefits associated with cultural participation and support communities through the Cultural Communities Network to develop their own bespoke programmes of cultural events and activities
- Our Creative Learning Services will support schools with a wide range of resources, pupil sessions and professional help to stimulate reading for pleasure and creative learning across the curriculum
- Our Record Office will preserve and provide access to resources which can be used to research Leicestershire's history and culture
- Our Museums', Curatorial and Collections teams will maintain the County's natural history, artefacts, specimens, information and objects as well as the stories of the people who have made Leicestershire their home for thousands of years
- Through GoLearn! (Leicestershire Adult Learning Service), we will offer a wide range of online adult learning courses in venues across Leicestershire

6.5 People support each other through volunteering

As highlighted previously, there has been a surge in prospective and mobilised volunteers during the pandemic, which is reflected nationwide; 750,000 people registered to volunteer for the NHS Volunteer Responders scheme within four days of its launch in April 2020 and over 4,000 mutual aid groups formed. Locally, 1,077 volunteers were recruited to support vulnerable people at the beginning of the pandemic and a further 1,250 recruited to support vaccination. However, pre-pandemic there was a long-term downward trend in volunteer numbers and our latest Community Survey finds that 39% of resident respondents had given unpaid help in the last 12 months, suggesting that there may be scope to increase the rate of volunteering.

VCSE organisations have taken a leading role in ensuring the provision of support for vulnerable people throughout the pandemic, however they have faced significant financial pressures due to reduced income, the costs of making facilities Covid-19 secure and increases in demand.

What will success look like?

- There is a sustained increase in volunteering post-pandemic

- VCSE organisations remain financially viable and maintain service delivery

Our Commitments

- We will continue to provide communities with up-to-date information and advice to support and promote volunteering

- We will develop and maintain a volunteering offer across services such as libraries, museums and heritage, social care and environment and waste

- We will encourage Council employees to volunteer to develop their skills and experience, build links with communities and support local initiatives

- We will support volunteers to maintain their health and wellbeing

- We will support the growth and development of VCSE organisations by providing targeted grants and funding

- We will commission an ongoing programme of support for VCSE groups in areas such as governance, income generation, commissioning support, representation, and establishment

7. Improving Opportunities

This outcome aims to ensure that all children get the best start for life and have the opportunities they need to reach their potential, regardless of where they grow up, or the family circumstances they are born into. This reflects evidence that the first 1001 critical days of life (from pregnancy to age two years) have a significant influence on neurological brain development and lifelong outcomes for the child. We believe children are best supported to grow within their own families and as such the outcome also reflects the need to ensure families are resilient and self-sufficient. Further, it aims to ensure that disadvantaged adults, such as those with learning disabilities, autism and/or mental health conditions, are able to aim high and achieve their aspirations.

The impact of family and community disadvantage is felt before a child enters school and is likely to have a significant impact on their future educational attainment and life chances. Whilst the term 'disadvantage' is usually linked to a family's income, a wider definition incorporating the child's vulnerability in the context of their family or community is more useful. For example, children living in a home where there is domestic abuse, a parent has poor mental health and/or problematic usage of drugs or alcohol, are at greater risk of experiencing mental illness and engaging in harmful behaviours. We also know that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities may be disadvantaged.

A report from the Association for Young People's Health suggests that many of the risk factors for poorer outcomes amongst children and young people have been exacerbated by the pandemic, including financial hardship, poor emotional health and wellbeing and academic pressures. Young people already facing challenges in their lives (such as living in poverty, with a disability and/or in challenging family situations) seem to have been hardest hit.

Early education has the potential to drive social mobility and improve outcomes for the next generation. It is therefore essential that children arrive at school ready to learn. High quality care in the early years of a child's life supports better readiness for school, stronger cognitive skills and speech and language development. Investing in children's development in the early years leads to large payoffs for children, communities and the wider economy. It is estimated that individuals with five or more good GCSEs have average lifetime productivity gains of £100,000, compared to those with qualifications below this level.

Our services will be flexible and responsive to the needs of children and families, providing the right level of support at the right time. Wherever possible children's and families' needs will be met by universal services, however we will also invest in effective, targeted services that identify and support vulnerable families at an early stage. Supporting families requires effective collaboration between partner services. We will therefore work closely with partners, including through Leicestershire's Children and Families Partnership - a sub-group of Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board which brings together local authorities, police, health, schools, probation and the voluntary sector - to help ensure children and young people reach their full potential.

7.1 Every child gets the best start in life

The 1,001 days from pregnancy to the age of two set the foundations for an individual's cognitive, emotional and physical development. These 1,001 days are a critical time for development, and we are committed to improving how we support families during the 1,001 critical days.

Leicestershire generally performs well in child and maternal health, with a lower rate of under-18 conceptions, smoking at the time of delivery and low birth weight babies than England. It also currently has a slightly higher percentage of children achieving a good level of development at age 5 than the national average, although performance on this measure has historically tended to be below comparators.

However, Leicestershire ranks in the worst 25% of county areas for the percentage of children achieving the expected level of development at age 2-2.5yrs. It also performs poorly in terms of the percentage of eligible 2 year olds taking up free early education in Leicestershire (an initiative focused on the most socio-economically deprived households) and the percentage of children eligible for free school meals who achieve a good level of development at age 5. There is also further work to do around maintaining breastfeeding rates after initiation across the County.

There are 2 tiers of support for children with special educational needs (SEND): 'SEN Support' and 'Education, Health and Care Plan' (EHCP). EHCPs are the higher level of support. In Leicestershire, the percentage of children with SEND who have an EHCP and achieve a good level of development by age 5 is significantly higher than national average. However, for children on SEN Support, performance is below the national average.

For the past 10 years in Leicestershire there has been a year-on-year increase in the rate of children who are looked after in our care. Locally, as of 2019, Looked After Children were working below age related expectations when they start school - 72% were below age related expectations for Personal, Social and Emotional Development and 78% were below in Communication, Language and Literacy.

What will success look like?

- Services working in more integrated and collaborative ways to support pre-school children and their families
- Increase in the proportion of young children achieving a good level of development at foundation stage

Our Commitments

Services working in more integrated and collaborative ways to support pre-school children and their families

- We will focus on strengthening collaboration between partners to improve early education, health and wellbeing outcomes for pre-school children
- We will work with partners across education, health and care to promote breastfeeding initiation and continuation
- We will develop an integrated Early Years Pathway to ensure that vulnerable children are identified and supported early
- We will develop an integrated communication strategy to promote the 1001 Critical Days Children's Manifesto
- We will join up how services for pre-school children and their families report on performance to support a coherent understanding of our progress and where we need to improve
- We will help to ensure staff across health, care and education are informed about the needs of children with SEND and available support

Increase in the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at foundation stage

- We will focus on narrowing the development gaps that affect children and families who are at the greatest disadvantage (e.g. those who live in poverty or have a poor home environment, have special educational needs and/or are in our care)
- We will support parents and families to build on their understanding of children's needs so that they are able to get their children off to a good start

- We will help families access free childcare and provide high-quality childcare and early education that is fully inclusive and accessible
- We will support all childcare providers to offer sufficient high-quality early education places
- We will protect and where possible strengthen the service provided by our Children and Family Wellbeing Centres
- We will provide greater clarity on what success looks like when children are ready for school and on how we can support schools to be ready

7.2 Every child has access to good quality education

As of 2018/19, Leicestershire had a higher proportion of primary and secondary schools rated either good or outstanding than the national average. The vast majority of children and families are offered their first preference of school placement. Leicestershire also has better overall educational attainment rates than the national average from key stages 1-4, although outcomes at A-Level are consistently below comparator levels.

Although children in our care have significantly poorer educational outcomes than their peers, Leicestershire performs well compared to other counties in this area. Additionally, educational attainment for children with SEND who have an EHCP is better in Leicestershire than the national average at all key stages except key stage 2. However, for children on SEN Support, educational attainment is consistently below comparator levels. Further, for children in receipt of free school meals, educational attainment rates at key stages 2 and 4 are consistently lower locally than the national average.

One of the key challenges in Leicestershire is a growing need for school places. Demand for EHCPs to support children with SEND has also increased significantly locally, at a rate higher than regionally or nationally. We recognise that the majority of children with SEND can and should have those needs supported in a mainstream setting at the SEN Support stage, without the need for an EHCP.

What will success look like?

- Sufficient, high quality mainstream school places and specialist SEND provision to meet growing demand
- Improved educational attainment amongst disadvantaged pupils (e.g. those in receipt of free school meals, with SEN and/or a disability)

Our Commitments

Sufficient, high quality mainstream school places and specialist SEND provision to meet growing demand

- We will work with partners to ensure that admissions arrangements promote diversity and choice and meet the needs of vulnerable groups
- We will ensure a sufficient supply of high-quality school places by monitoring capacity and extending or building new schools where required
- We will implement an ambitious sufficiency programme to develop SEND provision across the local area, including development of resources in pre-school settings and mainstream schools to promote inclusion and expansion of existing special schools

- We will maintain strong arrangements for the management of our assets, and strengthen our relationship with Academies, to ensure all school buildings (irrespective of their designation and funding arrangements) are fit for purpose

Improved educational attainment amongst disadvantaged pupils

- We will aim to help school pupils catch up with learning missed during the pandemic and continue to improve educational attainment

- We will focus on ensuring all children in our care access appropriate, stable education placements and positive educational experiences. Our Virtual School will ensure children in care and care leavers receive the best education possible and develop skills and knowledge for a successful future.

- We will work with partners through the SEND and Inclusion Board to ensure the culture of all mainstream schools and providers is inclusive and staff are well-equipped and supported to meet the learning needs of the vast majority of children, including those with SEND.

- We will work with further education colleges to develop opportunities for a more individualised learning experience for young people with SEND.

- We will focus on improving the quality of EHCPs and developing the EHCP process and Annual Reviews both within the local authority and between the local authority, clinical commissioning group and provider services

- We will ensure that when a child or young person needs move to a different educational provision or service, this is done in a timely manner with the appropriate information being made available so that needs are well understood

7.3 Families are self-sufficient and enabled to be resilient

Many families have emerging or complex needs which require support to enable their children to achieve good outcomes in life. To provide an effective response, we need to identify issues early, ensure joined-up working between services and work directly with families.

In 2019/20, Leicestershire County Council achieved its target for the number of families achieving significant and sustained progress through the Troubled Families programme, which aims to improve the lives and outcomes for England's most complex and 'troubled' families.

Disruption in family lives can lead to children missing education, with the impacts felt by children themselves, families and society. Leicestershire has low rates of children missing education. The number of elective home-educated (EHE) children has increased from approximately 150 six years ago to over 790 children which highlights the need to ensure families are well-equipped and supported to provide a suitable education.

Leicestershire has a high rate of children with SEND who have an EHCP and this has increased in recent years. As the majority of children with SEND can and should have those needs supported in a mainstream setting at the SEN Support stage without the need for an EHCP, this may suggest a need to develop the confidence and capacity of families to manage the needs of children with SEND.

What will success look like?

- Families are able to identify their own support networks and feel more able to deal with issues as they arise

- The Council continues to achieve its target for the number of families achieving significant and sustained progress

Our Commitments

- We will develop the Leicestershire Information and Support Directory and Local Offer to help families access information, guidance, and support

- We will support the delivery of Citizens Advice services and crisis and hardship support for people in need

- We will we work positively with parents and carers opting for EHE, offering a range of support to ensure that statutory duties are met

- We will work across the early help partnership to ensure all agencies are able to identify families who may require additional support at the earliest possible opportunity, and will work with partners to make sure families receive the best response to their needs

- We will continue to prioritise investment in preventative services to help to avoid the need for children to become looked after. We will ensure children who are at risk of family breakdown receive timely and, if necessary, intensive support to help them to remain living with their families

- We will develop our support to young people who encounter emotional difficulties or require other targeted early help support

7.4 Everyone is able to aim high and reach their full potential

Only 2% of children aged 16-17 in Leicestershire are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), below the national average (2.7%). The sub-groups we know are most likely to be NEET are care leavers, young carers, young offenders, young parents, and young people with learning and/or other disabilities. For example, the proportion of children with SEND who have an EHCP and are NEET at ages 16-17 is 9.4%; above the national average (8.9%).

The percentage of young people aged 19 with at least a level 2 qualification is consistently higher locally than the national average, however for those from poorer backgrounds who claimed free school meals during school, performance is consistently lower locally than the national average.

Leicestershire is in the best performing 25% comparators for the percentage of care leavers who are in education, employment, or training as well as for the percentage of care leavers who are living in suitable accommodation.

It is also in the best performing 25% comparators for the proportion of people aged 18-64 with a learning disability who are in paid employment and the proportion who are living in their own home or with their family. However, it is in the worst 25% of comparators for the proportion of those in contact with secondary mental health services who are in paid employment, and below the average amongst comparators for the proportion who are living independently.

What will success look like?

- Below national average rate of vulnerable young people (e.g. unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, those with SEN and/or disability, those who are from poorer backgrounds and/or care leavers) who are NEET

- Above national average rates of disadvantaged adults (e.g. those with learning disabilities, autism and/or mental health conditions) who are in paid employment and living independently

Our Commitments

Below national average rate of vulnerable young people who are NEET

- We will challenge schools in relation to statutory individualised careers guidance for vulnerable groups

- We will monitor the progress of learners beyond age 16 to ensure good progress and identify those at risk of becoming NEET in order to target them for additional support to participate in education or training and make positive and well-informed choices

- We will identify the interests and skills of children in our care and provide them with information and advice about educational and career options

- We will raise employers' awareness of the issues affecting care leavers to help ensure they offer the right support to care leaver employees

- Through our Teenagers with Babies Action Group, we will deliver actions to reduce NEET amongst Teenage parents, such as ensuring seamless support pathways and improving access to educational opportunities

- Our Youth Offending Team will provide young offenders with dedicated Education Worker and Careers Advisors to ensure they are actively engaged in education, training or employment and will advocate for them with schools, colleges, alternative providers, and employers

- We will expand the range of alternative providers for young offenders and others for whom formal educational placements are not suitable

Above national average rates of disadvantaged adults who are in paid employment and living independently

- We will maintain a person-centred process to support navigation through transition, from child to adulthood

- We will continue to offer engaging 'first steps' learning opportunities through our Adult Learning Service as a way of increasing participation for disadvantaged learners, and to prepare them for a more formal programme of learning

- We will work with all partners to promote and extend opportunities for supported employment for disadvantaged people

- We will support people to live in the least restrictive environments possible, by developing more supported accommodation, including 'step down' temporary accommodation, and exploring the benefits of single accommodation units with on-site shared support for adults with mental ill-health

8. Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure

This outcome aims to ensure that, using our local capabilities, innovations, and skills – we build a productive, inclusive and sustainable economy at the cutting edge of science, technology and engineering. It also reflects the need for our infrastructure to meet the demands of a growing population and economy, by providing great connections and sufficient employment space and housing of a range of types and tenure.

Our economy is primed for success. We have unrivalled assets such as a world-class university with one of the UK's largest science parks, a central location with the largest distribution park in Europe and the UK's 2nd largest freight airport. Our strong and growing manufacturing sector forms the backbone of our economy. Recently, the East Midlands Airport and Gateway Industrial Cluster sites in North West Leicestershire were selected for Freeport Status. This could provide a significant boost to manufacturing and logistics industries and create up to 60,000 additional jobs.

However, our economy faces significant challenges including lower productivity than the UK. This may be in part due to a lack of training, investment and innovation. Productivity helps businesses to grow more profitable and is a key determinant of the pay and living standards of residents.

The pandemic has also had a significant impact; leading to many jobs being classified as 'vulnerable' (particularly in hospitality, tourism, retail and manufacturing) and a contraction in job vacancies and hiring. This has impacted workers in low pay and/or insecure jobs the most and increased the risk of lower-skilled workers facing unemployment and job insecurity. Young people have been particularly affected by a reduction in entry level positions and apprenticeships. The capacity and capability of many businesses has also been significantly stretched in terms of their resilience and financial health, and rural areas have experienced disruptions to harvesting and demand for agricultural produce, as well as supply chain disruptions in the food and drink sector.

Pre-Covid, the Leicester and Leicestershire economy generated £24.5 billion in GVA, with 42,000 businesses and 538,000 jobs. Testament to its resilience and growth potential, we expect this to increase, despite the impacts of the pandemic, to £30.2 billion and 568,000 jobs by 2030.

The specific priorities and commitments for this outcome, outlined in the following pages, will enable the economy to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and support long-term growth. To deliver them, we will continue to work in close partnership with public sector partners, businesses, and universities. We will focus on ensuring that people have the skills they need to access employment, as this will support a good quality of life and help businesses to grow. We will ensure that infrastructure provides excellent connectivity, enabling access to opportunities and opening up sites for development. As highlighted in the Clean, Green Outcome, we also need to ensure that economic growth and infrastructure development supports the transition to net zero carbon emissions.

8.1 There is close alignment between skill supply and demand

Manufacturing and logistics are the key employment sectors in Leicester and Leicestershire, and we aim to accelerate growth in these areas. However, we also want to increase employment in business and financial services, tourism and hospitality and creative design, as well as facilitate growth in life sciences, environmental/low carbon technologies and space and aerospace. Local skills needs will also be driven by the shortfall in overseas workers, caused by Covid-19 and the fall in EU workers. This is likely to have a significant impact on the social care sector, which has already been facing recruitment and retention

difficulties for many years. There will be a need to encourage life-long learning, and to improve skills attainment across all of these priority sectors.

Leicestershire performs well in terms of the percentage of working-age population qualified to Levels 2+ and 3+, and the percentage of residents qualified to NVQ Level 4+ is similar to the national average. It also has a good supply of graduates to the local labour market and a strong and improving further education sector which provides a wide range of vocational training to meet local employer needs. However, there are insufficient numbers of local young people choosing to pursue careers in Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM), which is critical for our growth sectors.

Leicestershire has lower levels of in-work training than comparators and employers are reporting a lack of skilled workers in key sectors which is impacting business performance. The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)'s survey of local businesses in 2021 found that 21% of businesses had recruitment difficulties, 60% required improvement in basic work-based skills and over a third in digital skills.

Leicestershire has a lower unemployment rate than the national average. However, the rate has increased locally during the pandemic; the rate of Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit claimants increased from 1.6% in March 2020 to 3.3% in June 2021. Young people are likely to be disadvantaged due to missing education, reduction in apprenticeship opportunities, a more competitive labour market and lack of workplace digital skills.

What will success look like?

- Improvement in population skills and reduction in the proportion of employers reporting skills shortages or gaps
- Increased opportunities in the labour market for young people and reduced unemployment and job insecurity

Our Commitments

Improvement in population skills and reduction in the proportion of employers reporting skills shortages

- We will work with partners through the LLEP to:
  - Capture and analyse labour market information to identify skills shortages and growth businesses
  - Support the Further Education sector to expand and improve their facilities, especially where there is a strong link to growth sectors
  - Develop Skills Plans for priority sectors to promote relevant job opportunities and help businesses meet their recruitment and skills needs
  - Create a Leicester and Leicestershire Digital Skills Partnership to address digital skills deficiencies in the workplace and wider society
  - Focus on embedding employability skills so that individuals are well-prepared for employment and attractive to employers
  - Provide flexible leadership and management skills development programmes
  - Promote enterprise skills programmes to help people think about self-employment and support start-ups and existing businesses

Increased opportunities in the labour market for young people and reduced unemployment and job insecurity

- We will provide information, advice, and guidance on the labour market to parents, teachers and young people and promote STEM careers

- We will work with partners to identify pathways into employment and support youth engagement in emerging, productive, and buoyant sectors

- We will work with partners to continue provision of youth, employment, and career services such as Careers Hub and Youth Employment Hub

- We will work with partners to support the graduate careers and retention initiatives of local universities and to incorporate graduate skills into enterprise support, innovation, and growth initiatives

- We will work with partners to produce an Apprenticeship Action Plan to address the decline in apprenticeships due to Covid-19

- Our Kickstart scheme will provide employment placements for young people aged 16-24 at risk of becoming long-term unemployed

- We will work with local authorities, businesses, and education providers to support Leicestershire people back into employment following the Covid-19 crisis through re-training/job matching and stimulating entrepreneurialism

- Our Work + scheme will provide free one-to-one support, advice and information to people looking for secure paid employment or training

8.2 Leicestershire has the infrastructure for sustainable growth

We need our infrastructure to support continuous economic growth, whilst helping to tackle the climate emergency. There is a need to develop and promote sustainable forms of transport and decarbonise road transport.

Leicestershire's population is projected to rise to 860,618 by 2043 – an increase of 23% from 2018. Leicester and Leicestershire's Strategic Growth Plan identifies the need for 96,580 more homes by 2031 and a further 90,500 dwellings from 2031-50. Just under 200,000 new homes are therefore set to be built by 2050. These will need to be supported by new roads, schools, transport, and other infrastructure – estimated to cost £600m over the next 25 years.

The Strategic Growth Plan also identifies the need for an additional 367-423 hectares of land for employment use by 2031. Since 2010, there has been a transformation of the provision of world class business locations and premises in Leicester and Leicestershire; brand new Grade A office, technology and manufacturing premises accommodate 5,000 high-technology jobs. There is a need to continuously explore how existing employment areas can be supported and where new growth should be directed.

Road networks in Leicestershire are in fair condition with a relatively low percentage of roads requiring consideration of structural maintenance, although the percentage is higher for unclassified roads. However, unreliable journey times and congestion on local roads in county towns and on parts of the strategic road network (M1 Junctions) are a frequent complaint. Further, the predominantly rural nature of the county presents viability challenges for medium and long-distance public transport, which in turn means that it can be difficult to identify opportunities to travel by sustainable modes. Where mid or long-distance bus and rail opportunities exist, they may be infrequent, with long journey times, and stops located at potentially inconvenient locations.

In terms of digital infrastructure, the pandemic has accelerated the pace of digital transformation of businesses and public services, with employers expecting digital skills to become increasingly important.

Whilst this has created opportunities for enhanced business efficiency, productivity and resilience, it has also exposed the 'digital divide' in society with residents unable to afford and/or use digital devices, rural areas lacking access to high speed broadband or 4G or 5G services and independent retailers in our Towns and Rural areas struggling to sell on-line or advertise themselves by social media.

What will success look like?

- Infrastructure capacity and capability supports growth, whilst supporting net zero carbon emissions
- Sufficient employment sites and premises for growth

Our Commitments

Infrastructure capacity and capability supports growth, whilst supporting net zero carbon emissions

- Through our Corporate Asset Investment Fund, we own and manage a diverse portfolio of property and other investment assets. We will use this to support growth in the county and ensure there is a diverse range of properties and land assets available to meet the aims of economic development

- We will continue to provide safe, suitably maintained highways that support and encourage new housing development and economic growth and employ a flexible approach to reviewing, amending, and developing the network to reflect changing travel demand and traffic patterns

- We will maximise opportunities from technological innovations; utilising evidence gathered on the Major Road Network and from key radial routes to support end to end journey planning and better traffic management

- We will continue to press Government for long-term funding streams to help us maintain our highway assets and support passenger transport services

- We will work in partnership with local bus operators to promote and champion the provision of affordable, frequent, and high-quality passenger transport services and support with the recovery of the passenger transport market following the Covid-19 pandemic by identifying opportunities to provide access to essential services in the most cost effective and efficient way

- We will engage with the freight and logistics sector, to better understand the needs of the sector and ensure that schemes are developed which support the efficient movement of freight into, around, and out of Leicestershire

- We will work with partners through Midlands Connect to invest in strategic road and rail improvements to reduce congestion, improve journey times and support housing growth (e.g. Midlands Rail Hub proposal - rail infrastructure improvements to provide better rail links across the Midlands)

- We will continue engaging with HS2 Ltd to ensure that Leicester and Leicestershire's interests are protected and/or advanced throughout construction

- We will encourage and support active and sustainable travel options, where appropriate, by learning from best practice and encouraging the uptake and use of electric vehicles and micro-mobility as appropriate, including through provision of infrastructure

- We will work with partners through the LLEP to improve digital connectivity through broadband, Wi-Fi and 5G connectivity in rural blackspots and will define and implementing the Council's first digital connectivity strategy

Sufficient employment sites and premises for growth

- We will work with partners to renew existing employment sites and premises where there is demand

- We will work with partners to maintain confidence and momentum of development of strategic sites and the Freeport

8.3 Leicestershire is an attractive place where businesses flourish

The Leicestershire economy is dominated by small businesses - with 89.2% of businesses micro-sized (employing 9 or fewer people). Building on the support from our growth hub and successful partnership initiatives, we can continue the substantial progress made in the last 10 years, as evidenced by the growth in number of businesses (+18% between 2014 and 2019) and improvements in start-up and survival rates.

However, productivity rates are lower locally than the national average. Investment in research and development (R&D) is a key driver of innovation and productivity growth. Investment in R&D in Leicestershire has however been consistently below the national average; In 2016 R&D expenditure was equivalent to 1.5% GVA for Leicestershire, Rutland, and Northamptonshire – below the UK average (1.7%), and government target of 3% in the longer-term. This highlights the need to increase investment and activity in R&D and innovation and to lever existing R&D capabilities from our leading corporations.

Leicester and Leicestershire is a prime location for international businesses – with 18% of all businesses exporting overseas in 2020, and 83% of exporters selling to markets in the EU. Over the next 10 years, businesses must adapt to the new challenges and opportunities posed by Covid-19 and EU-Exit, as illustrated by the value of goods exported from the UK declining by 16% throughout 2020 – the largest drop since comparable records began.

What will success look like?

- Growth and expansion of existing innovation and R&D strengths

- Further increase in business density; particularly in growth sectors and knowledge-based businesses

Our Commitments

Growth and expansion of existing innovation and R&D strengths

- We will work with partners through the LLEP Innovation Board to drive forward accelerated innovation priorities

- We will work with partners to ensure the R&D sector has sufficient skills, capabilities and support to retain and attract new R&D programmes

- We will support R&D funding bids, innovation and knowledge transfer initiatives and increase public and private investment in R&D and innovation

- We will work with partners to increase opportunities for collaboration, knowledge exchange, pooling of resources, and applied problem solving

- We will support development of business and university networks to promote technology adoption and digital transformation

- We will work with businesses to improve the culture of innovation and awareness of the business performance benefits

Further increase in business density; particularly in growth sectors and knowledge-based businesses

- We will continue to support the key growth sectors of life sciences, space and earth observation, sports and sport science, advanced engineering, ICT, food and drink, logistics and professional and financial services – as well as the locally important sectors of agriculture, textiles, creative and cultural, construction, tourism and the visitor economy, and the voluntary and non-profit sectors

- We will work with partners to encourage and support international business expansion, including in the Freeport site

- We will develop and implement the Freeport strategy and SME support for exporting, identifying key sectors and opportunities

- We will continue to provide advice and support to businesses to assist recovery from Covid-19 and adaptation to the new EU trading relationships

8.4 Economic growth delivers increased prosperity for all

We aim for local economic growth to advance equality by creating opportunities for all, and for the benefits of increased prosperity to be distributed fairly.

Leicestershire is not deprived overall; the county is ranked 137th out of 152 upper tier authorities in England for Multiple Deprivation, where 1st is the most deprived. However, pockets of significant deprivation exist; four neighbourhoods in the county fall within the most deprived decile in England.

There is a lower number of children living in poverty locally than the average amongst county authorities and a lower percentage of children in secondary schools receiving free school meals. However, the percentage is higher than comparators for nursery and primary school children. Further, Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) is lower locally than average amongst county authorities.

Leicestershire has a low rate of households assessed as being at risk of homelessness, ranking in the best performing 25% comparators. However, financial pressures on residents are likely to increase as government Covid-19 support measures end. Local survey data suggests that over half of residents are worried about the economic wellbeing of their friends and family and significantly more are worried about their own economic well-being.

What will success look like?

- Growth in Gross Value Added (GVA) corresponds with an increase in GDHI and a reduction in the percentage of children receiving free school meals

Our Commitments

- We will focus on supporting inclusive economic growth in the disadvantaged areas and groups of Leicestershire

- Our Work + scheme will provide free one-to-one support, advice and information to people looking for secure paid employment or training

8.5 Leicestershire has the right homes in the right places to meet needs

Housing is generally an area of good performance, as Leicestershire ranks in the best performing 25% of comparators for the rates of new houses and affordable houses built. However, expensive house prices in rural areas puts housing out of reach for many and Leicestershire has a high rate of local authority owned homes which are 'non-decent' (an issue in Charnwood, Hinckley and Bosworth, North West Leicestershire and Melton). As highlighted, there is a need for 187,096 new houses by 2050, with 96,580 of those required by 2031. These will need to be low carbon developments and include affordable housing. The number of older people living in Leicestershire is also forecast to increase significantly, and many will require specialist accommodation.

What will success look like?

- Leicestershire is on track to deliver the 187,096 new dwellings required by 2050

Our Commitments

- We will work with developers, landowners, and statutory agencies to remove the barriers to development

- We will focus development in major strategic locations to reduce the amount that takes place in existing towns, villages, and rural areas. This will allow us to plan for new housing and employment with new and improved roads, public transport, schools, health services, shops, and open space

- We will explore ways to secure financial contributions through development to support essential infrastructure (e.g. highway capacity, schools etc)

- Through the Leicestershire Rural Housing Group, we will guide work to assess and meet the housing needs of people in the villages of Leicestershire

- We will work with partners and developers to help ensure all housing developments are low carbon and enhance biodiversity

- We will develop further the Social Care Investment Plan to secure suitable accommodation choices for social care service users

9. Keeping People Safe and Well

This outcome aims to ensure 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. It also aims to ensure people are safe and protected from harm.

Health and wellbeing is an asset to individuals, communities and wider society. Good mental and physical health is a basic precondition for people to take an active role in family, community, and work life. However, these benefits are undermined by health inequalities. Those living in the most disadvantaged areas often have poorer health outcomes, as do some ethnic minority groups and vulnerable people. Health inequalities have been further exposed by Covid-19 as it has taken a disproportionate toll on groups already facing the worst health outcomes.

Health inequalities are driven by factors beyond age, gender, genetics, lifestyle, social and community networks, socio-economic, cultural and environmental factors. The Council has influence and responsibility over some of these 'wider determinants of health' such as education, housing, transport, culture and clean air. It also fosters economic opportunity which is reflected in the supply and quality of jobs in the local area. Further, it empowers people to help themselves and each other, for example through volunteering and local initiatives.

We will work with partners through Leicestershire's Health and Wellbeing Board to improve the health and wellbeing of children and adults and reduce health inequalities. This will include addressing the wider determinants of health, with a focus on breaking down intergenerational cycles of deprivation and poor health outcomes. We will ensure that everyone has access to information and advice which supports their wellbeing and enables them to think ahead and plan for their future. We will promote wellbeing by building upon peoples' strengths and community assets. We will identify people who may be at risk of needing social care support in the future and help them to gain or regain the skills to live independently. We will also enable those requiring further support to take control of their health and wellbeing and to live active, independent, and fulfilling lives through easy access to effective, personalised care.

To help keep people safe, we will work with partners through Leicestershire's Safer Communities Board to strengthen links between work-streams being undertaken to reduce crime and disorder within communities. We will also fulfil our statutory duties to safeguard vulnerable children and adults who have experienced, or may be at risk of experiencing, abuse, or neglect. This will include work with partners through the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults' Board and Safeguarding Children's Partnership to coordinate and continuously review and improve safeguarding practices.

9.1 People are safe in their daily lives

Total crime levels are relatively low in Leicestershire compared to other areas and have reduced in recent years. The number of people killed or seriously injured on the County's roads is also low and public satisfaction with road safety is high. Leicestershire also has low rates of youth offending.

However, during 2020/21 there were significant increases in: hate crime (+32%); sexual offences (+32%); drug offences (+24%) and violence with injury (+13%). There was also an increase in reported anti-social behaviour across the County during 2020/21. There has been a reduction in the percentage of residents who feel safe when outside in their local area after dark, from 88% in 2019/20 to 79% in 2020/21. A survey by the Leicestershire Police and Crime Commissioner found that respondents tended to attribute this to a lack of street lighting and the proximity of anti-social behaviour and crime.

From 2018/19 to 2020/21, there has been a year-on-year reduction in the number of referrals to child safeguarding for child sexual exploitation. However, the rate of referrals for child criminal exploitation has

however increased slightly from 140 in 2019/20 to 145 in 2020/21. There is a risk that child criminal exploitation and violence related to young people may increase or become more visible during Covid-19 recovery.

What will success look like?

- Less crime and fear of crime and increase in the percentage of residents who feel safe when outside in their local area after dark
- Fewer children and young people involved in and impacted by criminal behaviour

Our Commitments

Less crime and fear of crime and increase in the percentage of residents who feel safe when outside in their local area after dark

- We will work with Police and other agencies to ensure anti-social behaviour is dealt with swiftly and effectively
- We will work with partners to raise awareness of and tackle all forms of hate crime in which people are targeted based on their personal characteristics
- We will help to reduce the prevalence of modern slavery and trafficking by ensuring our suppliers adhere to the highest standards of ethics and working with the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Modern Slavery Action Group to raise awareness, disrupt crimes and safeguard victims
- We will work closely with partners and communities through the Violence Reduction Unit to prevent serious violence
- We will work with partners to raise awareness of and tackle scammers and rogue traders who exploit vulnerable consumers
- We will enforce standards related to food and product safety

Fewer children and young people involved in and impacted by criminal behaviour

- We will deliver a robust, whole-family approach to prevent children and young people from engaging in criminal behaviour
- We will work with partners to provide safe spaces for children and young people to play, without the risk of being groomed into criminal exploitation
- We will deliver preventative street-based work with young people targeted in areas with high levels of anti-social behaviour
- We will identify and address the exploitation of children and young people and provide care and support to those affected

9.2 People at the most risk are protected from harm

There is an upward trend in demand for child safeguarding, with an increase in the rate of Section 47 enquiries (initiated to decide whether action should be taken to safeguard a child suspected to be suffering or at risk of suffering harm) and children on child protection plans. The rate of children looked after by the local authority has also increased year-on-year for the past 10 years.

Whilst the rate of reported domestic abuse-related incidents remains below the national average, it has increased in Leicestershire from 21.1 per 1,000 population in 2017/18 to 23.1 in 2019/20 and during

2020/21 there was a 20% rise in Domestic Violence with Injury and a rise in psychological abuse. Domestic abuse has also been a more prominent feature in child safeguarding cases during the last year.

What will success look like?

- Safeguarding approaches are effective in recovery from Covid-19 and informed by learning from the pandemic
- Vulnerable people are identified and protected from harm and abuse

Our Commitments

Safeguarding approaches are effective in recovery from Covid-19 and informed by learning from the pandemic

- We will focus on identifying and responding to hidden harm (e.g. self-neglect, mental ill-health and/or learning disabilities, domestic abuse)
- We will support care homes with Infection Control, vaccination, and Personal Protective Equipment support to minimise Covid-19 outbreaks
- We will risk assess and quality assure care providers to ensure services are safe and protect vulnerable children and adults
- We will work with partners to review the response to and forward implications of Covid-19 and recovery work regarding safeguarding

Vulnerable people are identified and protected from harm and abuse

- We will improve how we work with families to safeguard babies by ensuring robust procedures are in place and raising awareness of risk factors
- We will develop a communications strategy to support partners to deliver universal safety messages to children and young people
- We will work with partners to develop joint responses to risk including child sexual exploitation, domestic abuse, gangs, missing from home
- We will focus on combatting sexual violence and domestic abuse by developing a Domestic Abuse Strategy, protecting all survivors and their families in safe and appropriate accommodation and improving our understanding of perpetrators and how to respond to them
- We will develop trauma-informed practices and offer direct work to support children to recover from Adverse Childhood Experiences
- We will ensure that work with young people to reduce risk and vulnerability assists prevention of adult safeguarding need
- We will work with communities to prevent people becoming victims and ensure they know how to seek help and have the confidence to do so
- We will develop understanding of equality and diversity issues and the impact on access to safeguarding services
- We will review and change systems to ensure that the new Liberty Protection Safeguards Legislation and codes of practice are in place

9.3 People enjoy long lives in good health

The health of people in Leicestershire is generally better than the England average, as it is one of the 20% least deprived counties in England. Life expectancy for both men and women is higher in Leicestershire than the England average. However, healthy life expectancy (an estimate of how many years people might live in a 'healthy' state) is only marginally higher than the national average and there are significant health inequalities in the county, as life expectancy is 6.3 years lower for men and 5.0 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Leicestershire than in the least deprived areas.

As highlighted, health outcomes are influenced by a range of social, economic and environmental factors, known as the 'wider determinants of health'. Air pollution, particularly fine particulate matter (PM2.5), is a significant health hazard. PM2.5 is the 3rd leading cause of preventable deaths in Leicestershire.

Additionally, two thirds of adults, and one third of children in year 6, are either overweight or obese. This increases their risk of having long-term conditions like type 2 diabetes and reduces expected lifespan. There has also been a rise in adults classified as physically inactive from 19.5% in 2018/19 to 21.9% in 2019/20. Whilst these figures are similar to the national average, some areas of the county have higher rates of overweight/obesity and physical inactivity than England. Physical inactivity has also been exacerbated by the pandemic, with the deconditioning of the population during lockdown restrictions.

In terms of mental health and wellbeing, Leicestershire has a high rate of people reporting a low happiness score and a high rate reporting a high anxiety score. Although there is a low rate of suicides in Leicestershire compared to other counties, the county has a high rate of excess deaths amongst those aged under 75 with a severe mental illness. These excess deaths are explained not only by suicides and accidents but also physical illnesses; studies show that that all-cause mortality in people with severe mental illness is 2 to 3.5 times higher than in the general population. There has also been a significant increase in the number of cases referred to adult social care mental health teams during the pandemic, which has also occurred across the country. Surveys and cases also suggest that ongoing Covid-19 restrictions are having an impact on mental health of children and young people.

What will success look like?

- Improved healthy life expectancy and reduced health inequalities
- Increased proportion of residents with a healthy weight
- Improved mental wellbeing and reduced prevalence of mental ill health

Our Commitments

Improved healthy life expectancy and reduced health inequalities

- We will focus on breaking down intergenerational cycles of deprivation and poor health, promoting new ways of working to tackle disadvantages
- Through Healthy Together 0-19 we will provide Health Visiting and School Nursing to support the health and wellbeing of children and young people
- We will provide information and advice to enable people to access services, facilities and resources which contribute towards wellbeing
- We will deliver a wider determinants programme of work to address the range of social, economic and environmental factors which influence health outcomes, thereby improving health and reducing health inequalities. This will include for example our work with partners to improve air quality.

- We will embed a Health Equity in All Policies approach to ensure policy decisions help to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities

- We will identify those at risk of needing social care support in the future and intervene early wherever possible to maintain wellbeing

Increased proportion of residents with a healthy weight

- We will provide weight management support and guidance to residents, so that they can achieve and maintain a healthy weight

- We will work with partners through Active Together (Leicestershire and Rutland Sport) to support people to get and stay active; ensure physical activity and sport facilities are high quality and accessible and promote the county as a premier location for sport businesses

- We will work with partners in a 'whole-system' approach to deliver the Healthy Weight Strategy; creating an environment which facilitates healthy choices and supports individuals to be physically active and maintain healthy weight

Improved mental wellbeing and reduced proportion of residents experiencing mental ill health

- We will promote positive mental health and improve awareness of risk factors for poor mental health to increase resilience

- We will learn from and sustain the excellent customer satisfaction with our cultural, wellbeing and adult learning services; promoting and facilitating access to our libraries, museums and learning centres to promote the wellbeing of residents and their communities

- We will implement Making Every Contact Count Plus to make the most of opportunities to support peoples' wellbeing

- We will work with partners to improve access to mental health services for all ages to promote recovery and independence

- We will work with partners to ensure the early detection and treatment of child mental health and wellbeing needs

9.4 Carers and people with care needs are supported to live active, independent, and fulfilling lives

Leicestershire's reablement services effectively support those with physical or mental health needs to maintain or regain their independence and avoid unnecessary admissions to hospital or residential care; In 2020/21 Leicestershire ranked in the best 25% of comparators for reablement outcomes. Additionally, Leicestershire has low rates of adults aged either 18-64 or 65+ being permanently admitted into residential or nursing care. This is important because residential care is an expensive resource for individuals and the local authority and research suggests that people tend to prefer alternative options.

Leicestershire also has a high proportion of people with social care needs who are in receipt of a direct payment or personal budget; enabling people to access personalised care and support by choosing provision which is suitable to meeting their outcomes.

However, there is a need for improvement in the proportion of people who find it easy to access information about adult social care services and in the quality of life and overall satisfaction of those who receive care and support. In 2019/20, Leicestershire also ranked in the worst 25% comparators for the proportion of adult service users who felt safe or that they had control over their daily lives. The level of

social contact in the daily lives of carers and users of social services also remains comparatively low and an area for improvement, something which the Covid-9 crisis has made worse.

As mentioned, the number of older people, and those living with dementia and/or mobility problems, is forecast to increase significantly. Some will require housing adaptions to meet their changing needs and others will need more specialist accommodation or support.

What will success look like?

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

- Improvements in the experiences of those who receive adult social care and support

- Carers are recognised, valued, and supported to undertake their caring role, whilst maintaining their own health and wellbeing

Our Commitments

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

- We will improve access to information and advice through our digital plans including the directory of services and First Contact Plus

- We will work closely with partners to take a more proactive approach to providing advice and information relating to housing, including development of social prescribing and empowering frontline staff to encourage people to take responsibility for their housing needs

- We will continue to provide good quality information, advice, and guidance for those living with dementia and their informal carers

Improvements in the experiences of those who receive adult social care and support

- We will implement activities identified through research with our customers to improve satisfaction with our adult social care services

- We will work with partners to deliver integrated services at the point of delivery with seamless transitions between health and social care

- We will provide effective crisis response, reablement services, equipment, and technology to enable people to be self-reliant

- We will review progress on the Living Well with Dementia Strategy 2019-22 and co-produce a new strategy and action plan with our partners

- We will continue to ensure care services and support procured by the Council provide a good supply and quality of dementia care

- We will explore solutions to transport issues, enabling older people to remain active and independent and connected to community

- We will support people in receipt of direct payments and Personal Assistants to choose the provision suitable to meeting their outcomes

- We will develop further the Social Care Investment Plan to secure suitable accommodation choices for social care service users

- We will work with providers of services to maximise peoples' opportunities for independence, health, and wellbeing

Carers are recognised, valued, and supported to undertake their caring role, whilst maintaining their own health and wellbeing

- We will work with partners to identify carers and ensure they are signposted, if required, to relevant information and services

- We will ensure accurate advice, information and guidance is available to assist carers to navigate health and social care services

- We will listen and involve carers in the development of services that enable them to continue to provide their caring role

- We will develop carer-friendly communities by awareness-raising within existing community groups

- We will promote health checks for carers to help them to maintain their own physical and mental health and wellbeing

- We will work with housing and other organisations to ensure carers can access technology, equipment, or adaptations

- We will ensure carers have access to assessments which will determine if social care services have a statutory duty to assist them

10. Enabling Services

Delivery of this Plan is dependent on a wide range of 'back-office' services such as Finance, IT, HR, Legal, Communications, Property Services, Strategy and Business Intelligence, Democratic Services and Business Support. These organisation-wide functions support frontline services by providing business support based on specialised knowledge, best practice and technology. They also support good governance, ensuring that:

• Resources are directed in accordance with agreed policy and according to priorities

• There is sound and inclusive decision making

• There is clear accountability for the use of those resources

Good governance is about ensuring the Council is doing the right things, in the right way and for the benefit of the communities it serves. It leads to high standards of management, strong performance, effective use of resources and positive outcomes. The diagram to the right illustrates the core principles of good governance which the Council is committed to and how they relate to each other: Principles A and B permeate implementation of principles C to G.

Back-office services have a key role in ensuring that the Council adheres to these principles and achieves positive outcomes for service users. For example, Strategy and Business Intelligence support principle C by assisting decision-makers in defining the Council's overall vision and outcomes. Additionally, Finance support Principle F by enforcing financial discipline, strategic resource allocation and efficient service delivery.

C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit, to deliver effective accountability

A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of the law

D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimize the achievement of the intended outcomes

B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

10.1 Leicestershire County Council Values and Behaviours

Good governance flows from shared values and culture. Our values, set out below, underpin everything we do and describe how we will deliver this Plan.

Positivity

We find the best way to get things done. We challenge ourselves to deliver high-quality services and inspire others to deliver results.

Flexibility

We are adaptable in order to support the needs of the business – working collaboratively and supporting colleagues.

Openness and Transparency

We are honest with the people we work with and serve. We share information and communicate clearly.

Trust and Respect

We enable our staff to take ownership and be accountable for their own performance, actions and decisions. We value diversity and listen to the views of others.

11. Monitoring Outcome Delivery

Council officers will oversee delivery of this Plan through Outcome Boards which will meet on a quarterly basis. These will ensure that the Council maintains focus on achieving the outcomes throughout service planning and delivery and that the aims of this Plan are reflected in all relevant supporting strategies.

The Council's Scrutiny Committees will receive quarterly reports on progress in delivering the outcomes in this Plan and our Annual Performance and Benchmarking Reports will provide a summary of progress each year.

Progress in delivering the outcomes will also be monitored internally by the Outcome Boards through updates on delivery of key activities supporting outcome delivery along with reviews of Leicestershire's performance on the Performance Indicators set out in Appendix A. Updates on outcome delivery and performance will be shared with our Corporate Management Team, led by the Chief Executive, to inform strategic decision-making and resource allocation.

12. Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provides information on its financial planning over a four year period. Our latest Strategy, covering 2021-25, focuses on protecting frontline services and weathering the coronavirus crisis. The MTFS, along with other plans and strategies such as the Strategic Change Portfolio, aligns with and underpins the Strategic Plan.

The Council continues to operate in an extremely challenging financial environment following a decade of austerity and spending pressures, particularly from social care. The position has also been severely affected by Covid-19 and the ongoing financial impacts of the pandemic are unclear. There is also significant uncertainty and risk around future funding levels.

What will success look like?

- A credible 4-year financial plan to deliver at least 2-years of balanced budget followed by 2-years with a financial gap that is at a manageable level
- A financial plan that reflects the council's key priorities
- Delivery of planned savings and active pipeline of new initiatives
- Sustainable level of service growth, particularly in social care
- SEND capital and revenue costs contained within designated external funding streams
- Capital programme that balances support for the Council's priorities with financial sustainability
- Balance-sheet that supports the Council's resilience to financial shocks
- Above 'normal' share of eligible funding schemes secured and sufficient developer contributions towards the cost of local infrastructure
- Progress on Fair Funding to increase Leicestershire's share of national funding

Our Commitments

- We will raise awareness inside and outside of the Council of our financial position and the challenges faced
- We will maintain transparency around our savings proposals
- We will target efficiency savings and new income generation before service reductions
- We will ensure regular updating of assumptions to support the efficient flow of resources to Council priorities
- We will promote a culture of forward planning to ensure there is time for corrective action
- We will embed financial discipline in decision making to increase value for money assurance for Council Taxpayers
- Through our Corporate Asset Investment Fund, we will continue to invest in commercial schemes which support the Council's budget

13. Strategic Change Portfolio

The Council has long held an internal approach to transformation that ensures we respond effectively to national and local drivers of change, including the need to transform local services whilst seeking to maintain or improve outcomes. The Council's Strategic Change Portfolio (SCP) brings together the collective response to these drivers of change, delivered through four primary programmes:

- Sustainable Finances
- Customer & Digital
- Carbon Reduction
- Ways of Working

Overseen by the Council's Transformation Delivery Board, and managed through Departmental Change and Programme Boards, the SCP contains key targets and deliverables for each programme as described below.

13.1 Sustainable Finances Programme

The savings requirements contained within the Council's annually refreshed Medium Term Financial Strategy remain a central driver for the Council's change portfolio. However, the scale of the financial and transformation challenge is increasing, with the simple changes having been made and the straightforward savings long-since delivered. What remains is complex change, often involving multiple partners and many risks.

The body of work contained within the portfolio, refreshed annually, currently represents future savings targets in excess of £48m, including £21m for SEND.

13.2 Customer & Digital Programme

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed customer expectations of how our services should be delivered and the need for more immediate access to information and support via a broader range of channels is greater than ever before. In response to the changing needs of our citizens we will focus on developing and delivering against an improved, council-wide customer and channel strategy which supports the delivery of modern and effective services in the most efficient and sustainable way. By promoting innovative, digital ways of working, we will seek to shape the Council's interaction with its customers as part of our digital revolution and to enable improved customer journeys leading to an enhanced customer experience and faster, first time resolution of customer needs.

By 2024...

- Innovation will be our business as usual
- Automation and digital will have improved services and reduced cost
- Customer journeys for staff and residents will be simple

What will success look like?

- Customers directed to the right channel, at the right time, in the most efficient way
- Our customer channels maximise citizen value whilst reducing the cost of service
- A whole system approach is taken to designing our customer journey and back office processes

Our Commitments

Customers directed to the right channel, at the right time, in the most efficient way

- We will further develop our Customer and Digital strategies to shape our delivery of services
- We will increase our customer understanding and actively involve our customers to inform our channel development
- Through engagement with groups such as the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group, we will continuously seek to understand and mitigate the impact of digitalisation and channel development on those with protected characteristics, to ensure services remain accessible to all
- We will improve our front-end communications interfaces to support the routing of customer enquiries to the right channel at the right time
- We will deliver a new target operating model for our Customer Service Centre
- We will support high-quality, consistent customer experience council-wide
- We will enhance the customer experience through improved digital services

Our customer channels maximise citizen value whilst reducing the cost of service

- We will increase the amount of automation for repetitive, low value activities and integrations
- We will increase customer adoption of improved digital solutions driving a cultural shift to "digital by choice"
- We will improve our ability to resolve queries on first contact using the optimal channel
- We will identify opportunities to reduce the cost of service provision through more effective deployment of resources and/or efficiency savings

A whole system approach is taken to designing our customer journey and back-office processes

- We will work jointly with departments to develop and deliver improved customer journeys
- We will improve our contact and system data to inform continuous improvement activity
- We will seek to exploit emerging technologies and system integration where possible to enable more streamlined end-to-end working

13.3 Carbon Reduction Programme

The Carbon Reduction Programme aims to achieve net zero carbon from the Council's own operations by 2030, with an interim target of 64% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 (compared to 2016/17 emissions)

The Council's emissions are set out in our annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report (GHG) and expressed in a standard measure of tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) in line with national guidance which follows the international Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard. Existing

efforts and future opportunities to reduce our carbon emissions from internal operations were documented, resulting in the development of a draft roadmap to net-zero emissions by 2030.

The Council is in a good position in comparison to many other authorities due to the quantity and quality of data we have in relation to our emissions and our historic efforts to reduce emissions which date back as far as 2008/09 Overall, in 2019/20, the council had reduced its greenhouse gas emissions from its own operations by 67% to 11, 663 tCO2e compared to 35, 778 tCO2e 2008/09.

The impact of Covid-19 has been seen most significantly in business mileage and to a lesser degree in emissions from our estates, and an emerging objective is to look to retain as much of these carbon reductions as possible, primarily through close engagement with our Ways of Working Programme. Even before the impacts of Covid-19 on carbon emissions are considered, Leicestershire County Council is ahead of target in the delivery of net-zero emissions by 2030.

As highlighted, the recognition of the climate and biodiversity emergencies mean that there is increased local, national and international policy commitments to address the issues. This has led to increasing opportunities to secure external funding and investment. The most recent success has been in our bid for decarbonisation funding, securing £3.6m towards works on our key buildings, including expansion of the biomass heating system across County Hall.

However, meeting the ambitious net-zero 2030 target remains a significant challenge, particularly in light of the challenging financial position of the council and demands on staff resources There is also the risk that national legislation or local policies change, impacting on our baseline or possible solutions to decarbonise our operations.

What will success look like?

- Net-zero carbon emissions from the Council's own operations by 2030, with an interim 64% reduction by 2025
- Leicestershire County Council is a climate active organisation – carbon reduction and adapting to climate change are included in decision making

Our Commitments

- We will complete an assessment of the cost and technology implications of achieving net zero carbon by 2030 for the council
- We will produce a Net Zero Carbon 2030 Plan for the council
- We will reduce our demand for energy, increase our use and generation of clean energy
- We will explore opportunities to remove carbon from the atmosphere through nature based solutions such as tree planting
- We will include net zero carbon criteria in our decision making
- We will create a culture for carbon reduction through communications, training, tools and guidance

13.4 Ways of Working Programme

The Covid-19 pandemic saw a huge shift in organisational culture – with many working from home for the first time. This brought about a change in mentality around how we work with each other and how we serve our customers. It led to a wholescale rethinking of how departments and teams need to operate in the future; including the need for a higher degree of flexibility and more remote working than previously thought possible.

In the latter half of 2020, the Workplace Programme Board, along with wider stakeholders came together to rescope the vision and objectives into a new programme called "Ways of Working" – building on the already great foundations and principles established through the workplace programme as well as key learnings and opportunities presented throughout the pandemic in relation to changing ways of working.

What will success look like?

- All staff are provided with the technology and training needed to do their job effectively

- The way we work embodies continuous improvement, innovation, and ambition

- Council-operated workplaces are a shared resource based on need, where staff and customers can collaborate

How are we doing this?

Technology
→ Laptops
→ 2 in 1s
→ Smartphones
→ Remote Access

Ability to work remotely and on the move

No longer fixed to an office or desk

People
→ Leadership
→ Smarter working
→ Culture
→ Our new People Strategy

Permission to work remotely and on the move

Culture of smarter working and trust

Workplaces
→ Collaboration
→ Improved space
→ Reduce cost
→ Activity based

Compliment to working remotely and on the move

Truly flexible workplaces

Our Commitments

All staff are provided with the technology and training needed to do their job effectively

- All staff will have an assigned 'worker style' and the IT kit they need

- All IT equipment will be centrally owned and replaced in good time to ensure technology is effective and productive

- All staff will have the ability to work remotely through specialist technology, software, and remote access – no one will be tied to a specific location

- Where appropriate, staff meetings will be 'digital by default' - hybrid and face-to-face meetings will be supported with investment in workplace technology and collaboration spaces

The way we work embodies continuous improvement, innovation, and ambition

- We will focus on objectives and outputs not on presenteeism for office-based staff

- Staff - in consultation with managers - will be empowered to choose the right location to deliver their work - freedom to choose with responsibility to meet service and customer needs first

- Senior leaders and managers will lead by example – champion > role model > challenge

Council-operated workplaces are a shared resource based on need, where staff and customers can collaborate

- Our workplaces will be set up to better support collaboration, productivity, wellbeing, and customer service

- We will prioritise space for activities, not individuals - flexibility will be the norm and use of fixed desks will be kept to a minimum

- We will all work in the most appropriate location for the task we are doing rather than being at a council office or workplace by default

- Staff will be encouraged to work as flexibly as possible, using a mix of workplaces (offices, working from home, remote working) to best meet service and customer needs, and support staff wellbeing.