

# Strategic Plan

2022-26



# Table of Contents

1. Glossary.....	2
2. Introduction / Foreword .....	3
3. Strategic Outcomes (Our Vision for Leicestershire) .....	4
4. Clean and Green .....	5
5. Great Communities.....	9
6. Improved Opportunities.....	14
7. Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure .....	20
8. Safe and Well .....	26
9. Strategic Change Portfolio .....	33
10. Medium Term Financial Strategy.....	37
11. Enabling Services.....	38
12. Performance Management.....	39

## 1. Glossary

Term	Definition
LLEP	Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership
Partners	Tends to refer to other public bodies such as NHS, Police, Fire and Rescue Service, district councils, parish and town councils, but can also include private and third sector organisations
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 long-term vision and priorities for the next four years (2022-26).

Our vision 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. The actions in this Plan are not exhaustive; further detail on how we will deliver our priorities is set out in supporting Council and partnership strategies.

Whilst the outcomes are in separate sections, there are significant interdependencies between them. For example, reducing our carbon footprint supports both our aims to tackle climate change and to improve health outcomes. Additionally, improving children's development supports both our aims to ensure everyone can achieve their full potential and to increase skills supply and economic productivity. Links such as these are highlighted throughout the Plan and some actions are shown to support multiple outcomes.

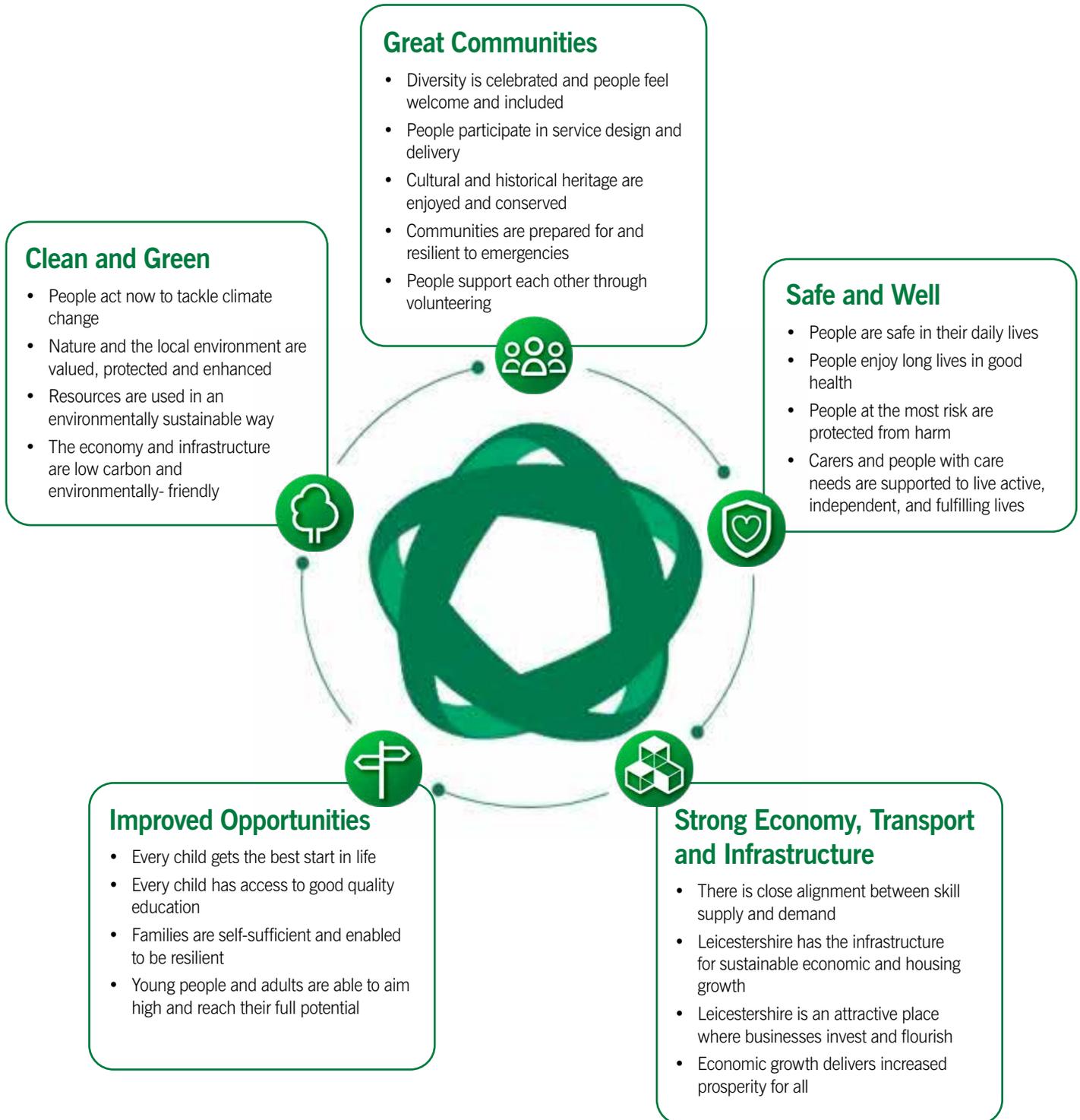
We recognise that our aspiration for a 'Clean and Green' future may seem at odds with our desire for 'Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure'. However, we are confident that through actions such as enabling sustainable transport, promoting business action on climate change and ensuring infrastructure developments are low or zero carbon, we can strike the right balance between 'green and growth'.

We will deliver this Plan 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. Strategic Outcomes (Our Vision for Leicestershire)



## 4. Clean and Green

This outcome reflects the need to protect and enhance the environment and tackle climate change. Global warming is increasing the frequency and intensity of flooding and heatwaves. It will affect social and environmental determinants of health including clean air, safe drinking water, food supply and secure shelter.

There is increasing recognition of the need to protect and enhance the environment. The 2015 Paris Agreement requires countries to limit temperature rise to below 1.5 to 2°C. Government has committed to reducing the UK's net emissions of greenhouse gases to zero by 2050. The County Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to achieving net zero carbon emissions from its own operations by 2030 and to work with partners to achieve net zero carbon emissions in Leicestershire by 2045.

The County Council has various levels of control and influence in protecting the environment and addressing climate change. It is responsible for managing the environmental impacts of its own activities (e.g. heating and powering offices, using vehicles and generating waste) and is able to help minimise the impacts of residents and businesses (e.g. by enabling and promoting sustainable transport, managing household waste in an environmentally-sustainable way and enforcing environmental legislation on businesses). It also has capacity to influence wider action by working with partners and lobbying Government.

We will help to tackle climate change by embedding environmental sustainability into everything we do. We will minimise the environmental impact of our activities and use our influence in areas such as transport, planning, economic development and community engagement to protect the environment.

### 4.1 People act now to tackle climate change and protect the environment

To achieve net zero carbon emissions in Leicestershire we need communities to take action to reduce their environmental impacts, such as by being more resource-efficient and travelling by sustainable modes.

99% of residents think that protecting the environment is important and from 2005-2019, there was a 36% reduction in domestic CO2 emissions. Leicestershire performs well in the energy efficiency of new build homes, but poorly in the efficiency of existing homes. It also has below average rates of electrical vehicle ownership and cycling and walking.



#### Our aim by 2026

- More residents actively involved in tackling climate change

## Our actions

- Raise environmental awareness amongst local communities, schools and businesses to promote positive action
- Support people to be more resource efficient in their energy and water use
- Work with bus operators to deliver our Bus Service Improvement Plan which will promote affordable, frequent, and high-quality passenger transport services
- Work with the region's transport body, Midlands Connect, to improve passenger rail services
- Work with partners to enable and encourage electrical vehicle usage, such as by expanding charging points
- Enhance the infrastructure that supports cycling and walking, such as segregated infrastructure, cycle parking, pedestrian crossings and traffic reduction measures to create healthy streets and spaces
- Provide cycle training and work with schools and workplaces to provide people with the required skills and information to cycle and walk

## How we will measure success

- Percentage of domestic properties (new build / existing) with Energy Performance Rating C+
- Percentage of residents who report having made lifestyle changes to help tackle climate change
- Rate of electrical vehicle ownership
- Percentage of adults walking for travel, 3 days a week
- Percentage of adults cycling for travel, 3 days a week
- Number of volunteers helping to tackle climate change

## 4.2 Nature and the local environment are valued, protected and enhanced

Biodiversity describes the enormous variety of life on Earth. Biodiversity and the eco-system clean our water, purify our air, regulate the climate and provide us with food and resources for medicines. Loss or damage of natural environments is among the biggest threats to wildlife.



Intensively managed farmland, with applications of chemical fertiliser, pesticides and herbicides, is poor for wildlife. In Leicestershire, where more than 80% of the land is farmed, our wildlife continues to decline due to a lack of good habitats. Leicestershire has relatively few sites of recognised nature conservation value compared to other counties, with the best sites representing only about 1% of the land in Leicestershire.

## Our aim by 2026

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

### Our actions

- Create, protect and enhance sustainable green space and waterways on Council managed land and assets
- Promote and support environmentally sustainable farming practices which maintain and enhance biodiversity
- Work with the LLEP to develop a Natural Capital Investment Plan to minimise the loss of habitats

### How we will measure success

- Hectares of Council land in better management for nature
- Percentage of suitable Council land in better management for nature
- Number of trees planted by the Council

## 4.3 Resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way

We are using the planet's resources at a faster rate than they are being replenished and in a way which does not allow them to be reused. In order to address this crisis, we need to move to a circular economy model. This is a more efficient alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) where resources are used for as long as possible, then recovered, regenerated, or recycled.

Compared to other county areas, Leicestershire has a lower rate of household waste which is recycled and a significantly higher percentage of waste which is landfilled.

### Our aim by 2026

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

### Our actions

- Work with partners to reduce the volume of waste produced in Leicestershire, such as by supporting the national Love Food Hate Waste campaign, delivering education around food waste prevention and enabling communities to conduct their own waste prevention activities
- Manage waste in the priority order of prevention, reuse, recycling, other recovery and disposal
- Encourage appropriate use of our Recycling & Household Waste Sites service
- Provide an efficient and sustainable trade waste recycling, treatment and disposal service

### How we will measure success

- Percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill
- Percentage of household waste sent by local authorities for reuse, recycling, composting

## 4.4 The economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environmentally friendly

Decarbonising the economy and infrastructure is one of the key solutions to addressing the climate emergency, as nearly 70% of Leicestershire's emissions come from commercial, industrial and transport sources. This will require action from the Council, partners and businesses.

From 2005-2019, there was a 54% reduction in commercial CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Leicestershire and a 40% reduction in industrial CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. However, transport emissions fell by only 8%.

A survey of local businesses from March-June 2021 (LLEP Business Tracker) found that 35% had taken action to reduce their carbon impact in the past 2 months and 50% planned to do so over the next 6 months.

## Our aims by 2026

- Net-zero carbon emissions from the Council's own operations by 2030, with an interim 64% reduction by 2025
- Work with partners to ensure Leicestershire is on track to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2045

## Our actions

- Develop and implement a Net Zero Carbon 2030 Plan for the Council
- Reduce our demand for energy and increase our generation and use of renewable energy
- Through the Environment Group, collaborate with district councils and the LLEP to coordinate development and implementation of environmental programmes and promote a green recovery
- Own and manage efficient and sustainable properties through our Corporate Asset Investment Fund
- Work with partners to develop the training and skills routes required for zero carbon development
- Encourage businesses to reduce their carbon impact and promote business opportunities arising from net-zero transition
- Work with partners to support the capacity of SMEs to supply low-carbon products and services, expand links between businesses and universities to enhance low-carbon research and development and develop a central integrated hub for demonstration of low-carbon technology
- Reduce pollution and contamination through our Trading Standards service
- Investigate and pursue opportunities to increase carbon sequestration through natural solutions such as tree planting
- Work with bus operators to deliver our Bus Service Improvement Plan which will promote affordable, frequent, and high-quality passenger transport services
- Work with the region's transport body, Midlands Connect, to improve passenger rail services
- Work with partners to enable and encourage electrical vehicle ownership and walking and cycling, including through provision of infrastructure

## How we will measure success

- Total CO2e emissions from the Council (buildings, sites, street lighting and traffic signs, fleet)
- Amount of renewable energy generated as a percentage of consumption by the Council
- CO2 emissions in the local area within the scope of local authority influence
- Percentage of businesses taking action to reduce their carbon impact



## 5. Great Communities

This outcome aims for Leicestershire to have active and inclusive communities in which people support each other and participate in service design and delivery. It reflects our aspiration to have frequent dialogue with communities about local priorities, how well services are working and how they could be improved. Communities also need to be resilient; able to avoid, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

The communities we live in and the relationships we have are the primary source of our physical and mental health – which in turn influence 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.

We will support communities to take advantage of and build on the assets within their local area (e.g. buildings, people, skills and networks) to solve local challenges. We will strengthen community capacity by supporting the VCSE sector and building upon successful partnerships which have been shown to deliver better outcomes for residents, such as our work with district councils during the Covid-19 pandemic to establish community hubs to support the most vulnerable people in our County.

We will use a wider range of engagement methods to ensure residents can have their say in decisions affecting their local areas. Building on the exceptional collaborative work undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic with partners such as district councils, Police and the NHS, we will support communities to minimise the impact of any emergencies and ensure a seamless return to normal life.

### 5.1 Diversity is celebrated and people feel welcome and included

We are committed to equality and diversity because we believe that everyone deserves to be treated fairly and that people are happier when they can be themselves without fear of discrimination or inequality.

There has been a decrease in the percentage of residents who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (from 96% in 2019/20 to 91% in 2021/22). The rate of hate crime has also increased since the EU referendum and during the pandemic.

#### Our aims by 2026

- Work with partners to increase community cohesion and tackle hate crime
- Council services are more accessible and inclusive

#### Our actions

- Deliver our Equalities Strategy to improve service accessibility and equity in employment opportunities
- Fulfil the Race at Work Charter, Disability Confident Scheme and the Stonewall Workforce Equalities Index
- Organise and promote civic events throughout the county to celebrate our diverse communities
- Support the Inter Faith Forum to promote greater understanding and awareness of faith and religion
- Support the Equality Challenge Group to scrutinise our service accessibility and inclusivity
- Work with partners through the Safer Communities Strategy Board to help prevent and tackle hate crime

#### How we will measure success

- Percentage of residents who feel that in their local area, people from different backgrounds get on well
- Rate of hate crime incidents
- Percentage of residents who agree the Council treats all types of people fairly
- Percentage of the Council workforce who feel that the Council is committed to equality & diversity

## 5.2 People participate in service design and delivery

Residents should feel that they can get involved in decisions about public services and policies which affect their lives. County Councillors have a key role in representing the needs and interests of residents, however the Council aims to improve how it engages residents in service design and delivery so that more residents feel they can influence Council decisions. Currently, 50% of residents feel well informed about the Council and 69% state that they trust the Council. However, only 32% feel that they can influence Council decisions.

Neighbourhood Plans enable residents to develop a shared vision which shapes development in their local areas. There are now 125 active Neighbourhood Planning group and 35 communities managing their local library, with many of these being community hubs which support the needs of local people.

### Our aim by 2026

- Increase in the proportion of residents who feel that they can influence Council decisions

### Our actions

- Improve how we engage residents in service design by using a wider range of engagement methods and applying the best practice principles from the Consultation Institute Charter
- Support the development of Neighbourhood Plans by communities which seek to establish them
- Support the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector and town and parish councils in their roles as providers of community-managed services and as community leaders
- Support communities to plan and deliver services, such as libraries and heritage sites



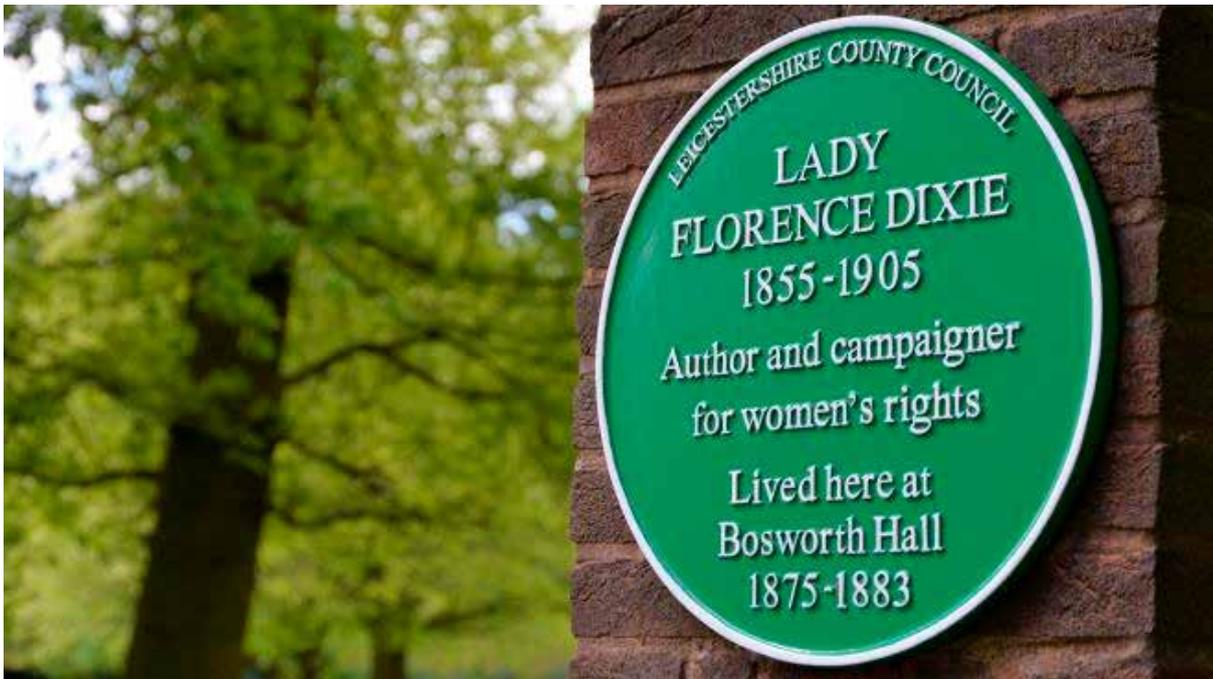
### How we will measure success

- Percentage of residents who feel well-informed about the Council
- Percentage of residents who feel that they can influence Council decisions
- Number of Neighbourhood Plans adopted
- Number of communities running their own library

### 5.3 Cultural and historical heritage are enjoyed and conserved

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. We want to preserve and make accessible our local cultural and historic heritage to enhance the wellbeing of local residents.

From 2018/19-2019/20, there was an 8% reduction in visits to heritage sites between 2018/19 and 2019/20. Covid-19 has had a significant impact, with the county's heritage sites and libraries 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.



#### Our aim by 2026

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

#### Our actions

- Our libraries, heritage, country parks and adult learning programmes will provide accessible community facilities, exhibitions and parks and outdoor activities with a wide range of learning opportunities
- Support communities to engage in cultural and heritage activities and develop their own bespoke programmes of cultural events and activities
- Support schools with a wide range of resources, pupil sessions and professional help to stimulate reading for pleasure and creative learning across the curriculum
- Preserve and provide access to resources which can be used to research Leicestershire's history
- 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
- Offer a wide range of online adult learning courses in venues across Leicestershire

#### How we will measure success

- Library site and website visits and loans
- Museum and heritage site and website visits

## 5.4 Communities are prepared for and resilient to emergencies

Covid-19 has highlighted the importance of communities being able to respond to, withstand and recover from adverse situations. Developing a Community Response Plan enables a community to identify the skills, knowledge and resources in their local area which can be mobilised during a crisis. There are currently 53 Community Response Plans across Leicestershire.

### Our aim by 2026

- Increase in the number of active Community Response Plans

### Our actions

- Work with the local Resilience Partnership to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies
- Support communities to prepare for emergencies by developing Community Response Plans
- Provide business continuity information and advice to businesses and VCSE sector organisations
- Support resilience to changes in climate, such as by fulfilling our duties as Lead Local Flood Authority
- Maintain our Resilient Highways Network to ensure traffic keeps moving despite disruptive events
- Work with partners to provide emergency short-term food and fuel support to those in need

### How we will measure success

- Number of active Community Response Plans

## 5.5 People support each other through volunteering

Volunteers perform a key role in supporting local communities and delivering our vision for Leicestershire. We want to support volunteering opportunities and activity because we recognise the significant contribution which volunteers make in delivering wider community benefit beyond the Council's direct service provision.



Leicestershire has a dynamic and diverse Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, ranging from small grassroots groups to national charities. During the Covid-19 pandemic, VCSE organisations supported vulnerable people whilst experiencing significant financial pressures and increases in demand. There was also a surge in volunteering with over 1,000 volunteers supporting vulnerable people and a further 1,250 assisting with vaccinations. However, pre-pandemic there was a long-term downward trend in volunteer numbers.

### **Our aims by 2026**

- There is a wide variety of volunteering opportunities and activity across Council services
- VCSE organisations remain financially viable and maintain their service delivery

### **Our actions**

- Develop and maintain volunteering opportunities across Council services
- Provide communities with up-to-date information and advice to support and promote volunteering
- Encourage Council staff to volunteer to build links with communities and support local initiatives
- Support volunteers to maintain their health and wellbeing
- Support the growth and development of VCSE organisations by providing targeted grants and funding
- Support VCSE organisations in areas such as governance, income generation and commissioning

### **How we will measure success**

- Percentage of residents who have given unpaid help in the past 12 months
- Number of volunteering enquiries received by Voluntary Action Leicestershire
- Number of volunteering opportunities across Council services
- Number of hours of volunteering by Council-managed volunteers
- Amount of SHIRE Community Grants awarded to VCSE organisations
- Feedback from VCSE organisations regarding current and future challenges



## 6. Improved Opportunities

This outcome aims to ensure that all children and young people get the best start for life and have the opportunities they need to fulfil their potential, regardless of their circumstances. We believe children are best supported to grow within their own families and as such the outcome reflects our aspiration for families to be self-sufficient. It also 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 disadvantage is felt before a child enters school and can have a significant impact on their future prospects. Whilst the term ‘disadvantage’ is usually linked to a family’s income, it can also be linked to vulnerability in the context of the child’s family. For example, children living in a home where there is domestic abuse, poor mental health and/or problematic usage of drugs or alcohol, are at greater risk of experiencing mental illness and engaging in harmful behaviours. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities may also be disadvantaged, and some children face multiple disadvantages.

Education has the potential to drive social mobility and improve outcomes for the next generation. It is estimated that people with five or more good GCSEs have average lifetime productivity gains of £100,000, compared to those with qualifications below this level. 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 therefore benefits children, communities and the wider economy.

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. We will work closely with partners, including through Leicestershire’s Children and Families Partnership, to help ensure children and young people can reach their full potential.

### 6.1 Every child gets the best start in life

The first 1,001 critical days from pregnancy to the age of two set the foundations for an individual’s cognitive, emotional and physical development. We want to improve how we support families during these 1,001 days.



Leicestershire generally performs well in child and maternal health. However, it is similar to the national average in the percentage of children achieving a good level of development at foundation stage and it ranks in the worst 25% of counties 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 (an initiative for low-income households) and the percentage of children eligible for free school meals who achieve a good level of development at age 5.

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 there have been year-on-year increases in the rate of children looked after in our care. These children are consistently working at below age related expectations when they start school.

### **Our aims by 2026**

- Increase in the percentage of children achieving the expected level of development at age 2-2.5yrs
- Increase in the percentage of children achieving a good level of development at foundation stage

### **Our actions**

- Develop an integrated communication strategy to promote the 1001 Critical Days Children's Manifesto
- Strengthen collaboration with partners to improve education and health outcomes for pre-school children
- Work with partners across education, health and care to promote breastfeeding initiation and continuity
- Inform staff in education, health and care about the needs of children with SEND and available support
- Develop an integrated Early Years Pathway to ensure vulnerable children are identified and supported
- Encourage and support eligible families to access free early education (FEEE)
- Support childcare providers to offer sufficient high-quality early education places
- Protect and strengthen the services provided by our Children and Family Wellbeing Centres
- Support children's development through learning opportunities in libraries (e.g. reading sessions)

### **How we will measure success**

- Percentage of eligible families taking up free early education (FEEE) for their child
- Percentage of children achieving a good level of development at ages 2-2 ½ years
- Percentage of children achieving a good level of development at foundation stage
- Percentage of looked after children achieving age-related expectations when they start school

## **6.2 Every child has access to good quality education**

As of August 2021, Leicestershire had a similar proportion of primary and secondary schools rated either good or outstanding to the national average. The vast majority of children and families are offered their first preference of school placement. However, there is a growing need for school places.



Demand for the higher level of support (EHCPs) for children with SEND has also increased significantly, leading to rising demand for specialist SEND provision. We believe however that most children with SEND should have their needs met in a mainstream school setting at the lower level of support (SEN Support).

Leicestershire has better educational attainment rates than the national average at primary level, however, at secondary level attainment is similar to the national average. Whilst children in our care have significantly poorer educational outcomes than their peers, Leicestershire performs well in this area compared to other counties. Additionally, educational attainment for children with SEND on the higher level of support (EHCP) is better locally than the national average.

However, Leicestershire consistently performs below comparator levels in the educational attainment of children with SEND on the lower level of support (SEN Support). Further, at key stages 2 and 4, educational attainment of children in receipt of free school meals is consistently lower locally than the national average.

### **Our aims by 2026**

- Sufficient, high quality mainstream school places and specialist SEND provision to meet demand
- Improved educational attainment amongst pupils who are more disadvantaged (i.e. those who are in receipt of free school meals, are in our care and/or have special educational needs)

### **Our actions**

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

- Work with partners to ensure that admissions arrangements promote diversity and choice
- Monitor school capacity and extend or build new schools where required
- Implement an ambitious programme to develop SEND provision across the local area, including resources in mainstream schools to promote inclusion and expansion of existing special schools
- Maintain our school buildings and strengthen our relationships with academies to ensure that all school buildings (irrespective of their designation and funding arrangements) are fit for purpose

### Improved educational attainment amongst pupils who are more disadvantaged

- Ensure that all children in our care and care leavers access appropriate, stable education placements and positive educational experiences, such as through our Virtual School
- Work with partners through the SEND and Inclusion Board to ensure that all mainstream schools and providers are inclusive, with staff able and supported to meet the learning needs of those with SEND
- Work with further education colleges to develop individualised learning for young people with SEND
- Improve the quality of EHCPs, the EHCP process and Annual Reviews both within the local authority and between the local authority, clinical commissioning group and provider services
- 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 available

#### How we will measure success

- Percentage of pupils offered first choice of school (primary / secondary)
- Percentage of schools rated good or outstanding (primary / secondary / special)
- Percentage of pupils achieving the expected level of attainment from Key Stages 1-4

### 6.3 Families are self-sufficient and enabled to be resilient

Many families have complex needs which require support to enable their children to achieve good outcomes in life. We need to identify issues early and work directly with families in collaboration with other services.

Leicestershire County Council has a strong track record of supporting families experiencing multiple disadvantages to achieve significant and sustained progress through the Supporting Families programme.

Disruption in family lives can lead to children missing education, with the impacts felt by children, families and wider society. Leicestershire has low rates of children missing education. However, the number of children electively home-educated (EHE) has increased significantly in recent years. We need to ensure that families opting for EHE are aware of what is expected of them and able to provide a good quality education.

#### Our aim by 2026

- Families are able to deal with issues as they arise, and the Council achieves its targets for the number of families achieving progress through the Supporting Families Programme (set at 464 families in 2022/23)

#### Our actions

- Develop the Leicestershire Information and Support Directory and Local Offer to help families access information, guidance and support
- Support the delivery of Citizens Advice services and crisis and hardship support for people in need
- Work positively with families opting for EHE, offering support to ensure statutory duties are met
- 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 provide the best response
- Help avoid children becoming looked after by prioritising investment in early help / preventative services and ensuring children at risk of family breakdown receive timely, and if necessary intensive, support
- Develop our support for young people experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties

## How we will measure success

- Percentage of families achieving positive progress through the Supporting Families Programme (Education and learning / Progress to work / Home and money)
- Number / percentage of families achieving significant and sustained progress through the Supporting Families Programme

### 6.4 Young people and adults are able to aim high and reach their full potential

To fulfil their potential, young people need access to relevant, good quality post-16 education, training and employment opportunities. It is also critical that adults who may be disadvantaged due to learning disabilities and/or mental health issues are able to live as independently as possible and access suitable employment.

Leicestershire performs better than the national average for the percentage of children aged 16-17 who are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), at 2.4% in Leicestershire compared to 2.8% nationally, and ranks in the best performing 50% of county areas. Those most likely to be NEET include care leavers, young carers, young offenders and those with learning and/or other disabilities. Leicestershire is in the best performing 25% of county areas 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.



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

Leicestershire is in the best performing 25% of counties for the proportion of people aged 18-64 with a learning disability who are in paid employment and the proportion who are living independently. However, it is in the worst 25% of counties for the proportion of those in contact with secondary mental health services who are in paid employment, and for the proportion living independently.

## Our aims by 2026

- Leicestershire performs in the best 25% of counties for the rate of young people aged 16-17 who are NEET

- Leicestershire remains in the best 25% of counties for the percentage of adults with a learning disability who are in paid employment, and the percentage who are living independently
- The percentage of adults in contact with secondary mental health services who are in paid employment, and the percentage who are living independently, increase to be above the national average

## Our actions

### Preventing young people from becoming NEET

- Support schools to develop statutory individualised careers guidance for vulnerable groups'
- 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
- Deliver our 'promise' to care leavers (launched in collaboration with district councils, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Combined Fire Authority) to support care leavers to access employment or training through measures such as qualifications and ring-fenced apprenticeships
- Through our Teenagers with Babies Group, deliver actions to reduce NEET amongst teenage parents, such as by ensuring seamless support pathways and improving access to educational opportunities
- Provide children in contact with our Youth and Justice Service with dedicated Education Workers and Careers Advisors to ensure they are actively engaged in education, training or employment
- Support the range of alternative providers for children and young people for whom formal educational placements are not suitable
- Be an active partner with the Enterprise Adviser Network which inspires and prepares young people for the world of work, by linking business/ employer volunteers (Enterprise Advisers) with local schools and colleges
- Be a delivery partner with the European Social Fund Employment Hub (until 2023) which promotes apprenticeship opportunities to businesses. The project brings together businesses and young people.
- Maintain a person-centred process to support transition from childhood to adulthood

### Supporting disadvantaged adults to access paid employment and live independently

- Offer engaging 'first steps' learning opportunities through our Adult Learning Service as to increase participation by disadvantaged learners and prepare them for more formal learning
- Work with partners to promote and extend opportunities for supported employment for disadvantaged people
- 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

## How we will measure success

- Percentage of young people aged 16-17 who are not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) or whose activity is not known
- Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (EET)
- Percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation
- Percentage of young people with special educational needs who are in education or training
- Percentages of adults who live independently (learning disabilities / mental health)
- Percentages of adults who are in paid employment (learning disabilities / mental health)

## 7. Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure

This outcome aims to use local innovation and skills to build a productive, inclusive and sustainable economy at the cutting edge of science, technology and engineering. It reflects the need for our transport, housing and digital infrastructure to meet the demands of a growing population and economy.

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 largest freight airport. Recently, the East Midlands Airport Gateway Industrial Cluster site in North West Leicestershire was selected for Freeport Status. This will provide a significant boost to our strong and growing manufacturing and logistics industries and create up to 60,000 additional jobs.

However, our economy faces significant challenges including lower productivity than the UK. The Covid-19 pandemic has also challenged businesses in terms of their resilience and financial health. Before Covid-19, the Leicester and Leicestershire economy generated £24.5bn in Gross Value Added (GVA). Testament to its resilience and growth potential, we still expect this to increase to £30.2bn by 2030.

We will support people to develop the skills they need to access employment, particularly in our growth sectors. We will help to ensure that our infrastructure provides excellent connectivity – enabling access to opportunities and opening up sites for development – whilst supporting net zero carbon emissions by 2045.

### 7.1 There is close alignment between skill supply and demand

It is important to ensure that education and skills are well-aligned to the needs of employers as this will drive economic growth and ensure people are able to get good jobs and make progress in their careers.



Local skills needs are driven by the needs of our key sectors (manufacturing and logistics) and other growth sectors such as life sciences, low carbon technologies, creative industries and aerospace. In 2021, a LLEP survey of local businesses found 21% were experiencing recruitment difficulties due to skills issues, 60% needed more basic work-based skills and 33% needed digital skills. The shortfall in overseas workers caused by Covid-19 and EU-Exit may further increase demand for skills, particularly in sectors such as social care.

Leicestershire performs well in the percentage of working-age adults qualified to Levels 2+ and 3+ . It also has a strong further education sector and good supply of graduates to the labour market. However, our growth sectors need for more young people to pursue careers in Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) and there are challenges in retaining young people and graduates in Leicestershire.

### **Our aims by 2026**

- Reduction in the proportion of employers reporting skills shortages or gaps
- Increased opportunities in the labour market for young people

### **Our actions**

#### **Reduction in the proportion of employers reporting skills shortages**

- Work with partners to:
  - Capture and analyse labour market information to identify growth sectors and skills shortages
  - Support the Further Education sector to expand and improve their facilities and links to growth sectors
  - Develop Skills Plans for growth sectors to help businesses meet their recruitment and skills needs
  - Be an active member of the Digital Skills Partnership to address digital skills deficiencies
  - Provide flexible leadership and management development programmes
  - Promote enterprise skills programmes to support self-employment, start-ups and existing businesses
  - Provide opportunities for learning and skills development through libraries and Adult Learning

#### **Increased opportunities in the labour market for young people**

- Work with partners to provide information, advice and guidance on the labour market to parents, teachers and young people
- Work with partners to identify and promote youth pathways into employment in emerging sectors
- Work with partners to provide youth career services such as Careers Hub
- Work with partners to support the graduate retention initiatives of local universities and businesses
- Work with partners to produce an Apprenticeship Strategy and Delivery Plan
- Be a delivery partner with the European Social Fund Employment Hub (until 2023) which promotes apprenticeship opportunities to businesses. The project brings together businesses and young people.
- Through the Kickstart scheme, provide employment for young people at risk of unemployment
- Through our Work and Skills Leicestershire scheme, provide free one-to-one support, advice and information to help people access secure paid employment or training
- Be an active partner with the Enterprise Adviser Network which inspires and prepares young people for the world of work, by linking business/ employer volunteers (Enterprise Advisers) with local schools and colleges

### **How we will measure success**

- Working age population qualification rates
- Unemployment and employment rates
- Percentages of businesses experiencing recruitment issues or skills shortages
- Apprenticeship start and achievement rates

## 7.2 Leicestershire has the infrastructure for sustainable economic and housing growth

We need our housing, transport and digital infrastructure to support economic and population growth, whilst helping to deliver net zero carbon emissions.



Leicestershire's population is projected to rise by 19% from 2021-2043. There is therefore a need for 96,580 new houses by 2031, which will need to be low carbon and include affordable housing. The number of older people living in Leicestershire is forecast to increase significantly, which will necessitate development of specialist housing suitable for those who are frail and/or disabled. These houses need to be supported by new roads, schools, transport and other infrastructure.

Road networks in Leicestershire are in fair condition with a low percentage of roads requiring structural maintenance. However, there are unreliable journey times caused by congestion on roads in local towns and on parts of the strategic road network. Further, rurality presents challenges for medium and long-distance public transport, meaning it can be difficult to enable opportunities to travel by sustainable modes.

To drive economic growth, we also need an additional 367-423 hectares of land for employment use by 2031. Since 2010, there has been a transformation in the provision of world class business locations in Leicestershire with new office, technology and manufacturing premises accommodating 5,000 jobs. We need to continue to support existing employment areas and identify where further growth should be directed.

Expanding digital connectivity will accelerate economic growth. The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated digital transformation, with employers expecting digital skills to become increasingly important. Whilst this has enhanced business efficiency, productivity and resilience, it has also exposed the 'digital divide' in society with some lacking access to digital technology and connectivity.

### Our aim by 2026

- Infrastructure capacity and capability supports growth and net zero carbon emissions

## Our actions

- Support district councils in their roles as local housing authorities to improve existing housing stock and maximise opportunities for development of low carbon and affordable houses
- Deliver the Social Care Investment Plan to secure specialist accommodation choices for social care service users, including those who are frail and/or disabled
- Secure financial contributions from developers to support infrastructure (e.g. schools, highways)
- Work with partners to renew existing employment sites and premises where there is demand
- Work with partners to maintain momentum in the development of strategic sites and the Freeport
- Through our Corporate Asset Investment Fund, own and manage a diverse portfolio of property and other investment assets which support economic growth and environmental sustainability
- Provide safe and well-maintained highways which support housing development and economic growth
- Maximise opportunities from technological innovations; utilising evidence gathered on the Major Road Network and key radial routes to support end to end journey planning and better traffic management
- Work with bus operators to deliver our Bus Service Improvement Plan which will promote affordable, frequent, and high-quality passenger transport services
- Engage the logistics sector to better understand its transport infrastructure needs and support the efficient movement of freight into, within and out of Leicestershire
- Work with the sub-national transport body, Midlands Connect, to improve passenger rail services
- Engage HS2 Ltd to ensure that Leicestershire's interests are addressed throughout construction
- Work with partners to enable and encourage electrical vehicle usage, including through infrastructure
- Enhance the infrastructure that supports cycling and walking, such as segregated infrastructure, cycle parking, pedestrian crossings and traffic reduction measures to create healthy streets and spaces
- Work with partners through the LLEP to improve broadband, Wi- Fi and 5G connectivity across Leicestershire and define and implement the Council's first digital connectivity strategy

## How we will measure success

- Number of new houses completed
- Number of affordable houses delivered
- Percentage of principal and non-principal roads where structural maintenance should be considered
- Levels of public and business satisfaction with traffic levels
- Rates of travelling by, and public satisfaction with, public transport
- Rates of electrical vehicle ownership and cycling and walking
- Percentage of premises with gigabit-capable broadband

### 7.3 Leicestershire is an attractive place where businesses invest and flourish

89% of businesses in Leicestershire are micro-sized (employing 9 or fewer people). The number of businesses has increased significantly (+18% between 2014 and 2019), with improvements in start-up and survival rates.

However, productivity rates are lower locally than the national average. This may be partially driven by low investment in research and development (R&D) – a key driver of innovation and productivity. In 2016 R&D expenditure was equivalent to 1.5% GVA in Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire – below the UK average (1.7%) and government target of 3%. 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 are in a prime location for international businesses; 18% of local businesses exported in 2020, with 83% selling to EU markets. However, businesses need to adapt to the challenges posed by Covid-19 and EU-Exit; the value of goods exported from the UK declined by 16% in 2020.

### **Our aims by 2026**

- Increased investment in Research and Development
- Increase in the number of businesses and business survival rates

### **Our actions**

#### **Growth and expansion of existing innovation and R&D strengths**

- Work with partners through the LLEP Innovation Board to drive forward innovation priorities
- Work with partners to ensure the R&D sector has the skills and support to attract new programmes
- Support R&D funding bids and knowledge transfer initiatives to promote investment in R&D
- Support collaboration between businesses and universities to help translate research into innovations
- Work with businesses to develop a culture of innovation and awareness of the performance benefits
- Support our traditional strengths in manufacturing and logistics in addition to growth sectors such as advanced manufacturing and engineering, life sciences, low carbon technologies and aerospace
- Work with partners to encourage foreign and domestic inward investment and expansion into the County, including in the Freeport site
- Develop and implement the Freeport strategy and support for international business
- Advise businesses to assist recovery from Covid-19 and adaptation to new EU trading relationships

### **How we will measure success**

- Rates of businesses and new enterprises per 1,000 population
- Research and Development (R&D) expenditure as a share of Gross Value Added (GVA)
- Gross Value Added (GVA) per job
- Business confidence levels

## 7.4 Economic growth delivers increased prosperity for all

Inclusive economic growth does not just contribute to Gross Value Added (GVA) in the local economy; it improves living standards by reducing levels of deprivation and creating opportunities for everyone.

Leicestershire is ranked 137th out of 152 upper tier authorities in deprivation (where 1st is the most deprived). It also has a low rate of households at risk of homelessness. However, pockets of deprivation exist, with four neighbourhoods in the county falling within the most deprived 10% in England.

The percentage of school pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average but has risen significantly in recent years. Gross Disposable Household Income (GDHI) – the amount of money which households have available for spending or saving – is lower than the average amongst county authorities.

### Our aim by 2026

- Growth in Gross Value Added (GVA) in the local economy corresponds with a reduction in deprivation

### Our actions

- Through the Kickstart scheme, provide employment for young people at risk of unemployment
- Through Work and Skills Leicestershire, provide free information and advice to help people access employment or training
- Deliver gigabit broadband in rural areas to help ensure equality of digital opportunity

### How we will measure success

- Gross Value Added (GVA) per head
- Index of Multiple Deprivation
- Percentage of households in fuel poverty
- Percentage of school pupils in receipt of free school meals
- Gross Disposal Household Income (GDHI) per head
- Rates of homelessness and rough sleeping



## 8. Safe and Well

This outcome aims to ensure that people are safe and protected from harm, live in a healthy environment and have the opportunities and support they need to live active, independent and fulfilling lives.

Good health is a basic precondition for people to take an active role in family, community and work life. Leicestershire performs well across a range of health indicators and has higher average life expectancies than England. However, there are persistent health inequalities; life expectancy is 6.3 years lower for men and 5.0 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Leicestershire compared to the least deprived areas.

Health and wellbeing outcomes are influenced by a range of social, economic and environmental factors, known as the 'wider determinants of health'. These include factors such as early childhood experiences, social support and community inclusivity, crime rates, income levels, educational opportunities, availability of transport, access to nutritious food and safe drinking water and the quality of housing and infrastructure.

The Council can influence these factors in various ways such as by working with partners to build community capacity, support community safety, protect vulnerable people, facilitate skills development and job creation, enhance the quality of housing and infrastructure and promote healthy lifestyles.

We will embed a 'Health in all Policies' approach to systematically consider the health implications of all decisions. We will provide information and advice to support people to take control of their wellbeing and plan for their future. We will identify people who may be at risk of needing social care support and help them to gain or regain the skills they need to live independently. We will also support carers and those with care needs to live active, independent, and fulfilling lives through easy access to person-centred care and support.

We will also help keep people safe by working with partners such as district councils, NHS, Police and Fire and Rescue services to raise awareness of and prevent crime and to identify and protect vulnerable people. This will include work to review and improve our safeguarding practices.

### 8.1 People are safe in their daily lives

Crime levels are relatively low in Leicestershire compared to other areas. The number of people killed or seriously injured on the County's roads is also low and public satisfaction with road safety is high.

However, crime levels have shown an upward trend and 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.

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

#### Our aims by 2026

- Increase in the percentage of residents who feel safe in their local area
- Fewer children and young people involved in and impacted by criminal behaviour

#### Our actions

##### Increase in the percentage of residents who feel safe in their local area

- Work with partners including the Police to raise awareness of and tackle all forms of hate crime
- Help to tackle modern slavery and trafficking by ensuring our suppliers adhere to ethical standards and working with the Modern Slavery Action Group to raise awareness, disrupt crimes and safeguard victims
- Work with partners through the Violence Reduction Unit to help prevent serious violence
- Raise awareness of and tackle scammers and rogue traders who exploit vulnerable consumers

- Work with the Road Safety Partnership to support the Safety Camera Scheme and delivery of Driver Education Workshops as well as speed reduction initiatives including Community Speed Enforcement
- Ensure road safety audits are undertaken during our own projects and those undertaken by others
- Develop a Road Safety Strategy

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

- Deliver a whole-family approach to prevent children and young people from engaging in crime
- Deliver preventative street-based work in areas with high levels of anti-social behaviour
- Identify and address the exploitation of children and young people and support victims

#### **How we will measure success**

- Percentage of residents who feel safe in their local area
- Resident perceptions of the level of anti-social behaviour in the community
- Detriment to consumers prevented by Trading Standards
- Number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads
- Road safety satisfaction levels
- Rate of referrals to child safeguarding for child sexual or criminal exploitation
- Rate of first time entrants to the criminal justice system aged 10-17
- Hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object amongst under-25s

## **8.2 People at the most risk are protected from harm**

There is a long-term upward trend in demand for child safeguarding, with an increase in the rate of safeguarding investigations and children on child protection plans. The rate of children looked after by the Council 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. The Leicestershire Needs Assessment undertaken by Safelives in 2021 shows a year-on-year increase in under-18s becoming victims of domestic abuse. In 2020/21 this equated to almost a doubling on the previous year.

## Our aim by 2026

- Vulnerable children and adults are identified and protected from harm and abuse

## Our actions

### Vulnerable children and adults are identified and protected from harm and abuse

- Risk assess and quality assure care providers to ensure services are safe and protect vulnerable children and adults
- Work with partners to review the lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic regarding safeguarding
- Improve how we safeguard babies by establishing robust procedures and raising awareness of risk factors
- Develop a communications strategy to deliver universal safety messages to children and young people
- Combat sexual violence and domestic abuse by delivering our Domestic Abuse Reduction Strategy (2022-5) – protecting survivors and their families in safe and appropriate accommodation and improving our understanding of perpetrators and how to respond to them
- Develop trauma-informed practices across the Leicestershire Children and Families Partnership to support children to recover from Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Raise awareness amongst communities to prevent people becoming victims and ensure they know how to seek help and have the confidence to do so
- Improve our understanding of the impact of equality and diversity issues on access to safeguarding

## How we will measure success

- Percentage of safeguarding enquiries where the desired outcome was fully or partially achieved
- Percentage of service users who say that services make them feel safe
- Domestic crime and incident rate
- Number of safe accommodation spaces for domestic abuse victims
- Children's placement stability rates
- Rates of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within 12 months

## 8.3 People enjoy long lives in good health

As highlighted previously, the health of people in Leicestershire is generally better 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.

Health outcomes are influenced by a wide range of social, economic and environmental factors, known as the 'wider determinants of health'. For example, 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.

We are living in an obesogenic environment, with an abundance of energy dense food, motorised transport and sedentary lifestyles. Two thirds of adults, and one third of children in year 6, are either overweight or obese. There has been an increase in physically inactive adults, from 19.5% in 2018/19 to 21.9% in 2019/20. Some areas of the county have higher rates of overweight/obesity and physical inactivity than England. There is a need to improve the healthy weight environment such as by promoting sustainable/active travel, reducing the number of fast food outlets and providing people with skills and resources to cook and eat healthily.



Leicestershire has high rates of people reporting low happiness and high anxiety. 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.

### Our aims by 2026

- 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 actions

#### Improved healthy life expectancy and reduced health inequalities

- Deliver a wider determinants programme of work to address the social, economic and environmental factors which influence health outcomes, thereby improving health and reducing health inequalities
- Embed a Health Equity in All Policies approach to help ensure our decisions improve health outcomes
- Through Healthy Together 0-19, provide Health Visiting and School Nursing to support the health and wellbeing of children and young people
- Provide information and advice to enable people to access health and wellbeing services and resources
- Identify those at risk of needing social care support and intervene early to maintain wellbeing
- Deliver our Substance Misuse Strategy (2020-23) to support people to make informed healthy lifestyle choices to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drug misuse and improve their wellbeing

#### Increased proportion of residents with a healthy weight

- Work with partners to create an environment which facilitates healthy choices
- Support people to achieve and maintain a healthy weight through prevention, self-management and weight management support
- Prioritise healthy weight through systems leadership, creating a workforce that are confident to promote healthy weight

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

- Promote positive mental health and awareness of risk factors for poor mental health
- Sustain excellent customer satisfaction with our cultural, wellbeing and adult learning services; promoting and facilitating access to libraries, museums and learning centres to promote wellbeing
- Support communities to engage in cultural and heritage activities and develop their own bespoke programmes of cultural events and activities
- Ensure that our residential planning applications for our own land enable public access to green space, and support district councils to develop plans to improve public access to green space
- Implement 'Making Every Contact Count Plus' to deliver brief interventions which enhance wellbeing
- Work with partners such as the NHS to ensure the early detection and treatment of mental health and wellbeing needs and improve access to mental health services for all ages

#### **How we will measure success**

- Average healthy life expectancy
- Percentages of adults walking / cycling for travel at least 3 days per week
- Levels of air pollution – fine particulate matter
- Percentage of residents with access to green space within a 10 minute walk
- Percentages of children / adults who are physically active
- Percentages of children / adults classified as overweight or obese
- Rate of school pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs
- Rates of hospital admissions for mental health conditions (under 18s)
- Self-reported wellbeing measures
- Rate of excess under 75 mortality rate in adults with serious mental illness

## **8.4 Carers and people with care needs are supported to live active, independent, and fulfilling lives**

Leicestershire ranks in the best 25% of county areas for the performance of its reablement services, which support those with physical or mental health needs to maintain or regain their independence and avoid unnecessary admissions to hospital or residential care. Leicestershire also has low rates of adults being admitted into residential or nursing care which is important as research suggests that people tend to prefer alternative accommodation options.

Further, in Leicestershire, a high proportion of people with social care needs receive personalised care and support through direct payments or personal budgets which enable them to choose the services they receive.

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. As highlighted previously, the number of older people, and those living with dementia and/or mobility problems, is forecast to increase significantly. Some will require housing adaptations and others will need specialist housing and support.

## Our aims by 2026

- 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 feel more recognised, valued and supported to undertake their caring role

## Our actions

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

- Improve access to information and advice through digital channels including the Directory of Services
- Work with partners to proactively provide advice and information about housing, including development of social prescribing and encouraging people to plan for their future housing needs
- Provide quality information, advice and guidance for those living with dementia and their carers

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

- Respond to customer feedback to improve satisfaction with our adult social care services
- Recruit and train a skilled and resilient social care workforce, whilst inspiring more people to work in the sector and improving job satisfaction through rewarding careers and opportunities
- Work with the NHS to deliver integrated services at the point of delivery with seamless transitions between health and social care
- Enable people to be self-reliant and independent through crisis support and reablement services
- Work with partners to provide carers and/or those with care needs with the right equipment and technology to enable them to live independently for longer
- Review progress on the Living Well with Dementia Strategy (2019-22) and co-produce a new strategy
- Explore solutions to transport issues to enable older people to remain active and independent
- Support people receiving direct payments to choose the provision suitable to meeting their outcomes
- Deliver the Social Care Investment Plan to secure specialist accommodation choices for social care service users, including those who are frail and/or disabled

### **Carers feel recognised, valued, and supported to undertake their caring role**

- Work with partners to identify carers and ensure they are signposted to information and services
- Provide opportunities for carers to inform and shape service development
- Develop carer-friendly communities by raising awareness about the needs of carers
- Promote health checks for carers to help them to maintain their own physical and mental health
- Work with housing providers and others to ensure carers can access equipment and adaptations
- Ensure carers can access assessments which determine if they require further social care support



### How we will measure success

- Percentages of service users / carers who find it easy to find information about support
- Percentages of service users / carers receiving self-directed support
- Percentage of service users who have control over their daily life
- Percentages of service users / carers who have as much social contact as they would like
- Percentage of people who had no need for ongoing services following reablement
- Percentages of service users / carers who are satisfied with their care and support



# 9. Strategic Change Portfolio

The Council's Strategic Change Portfolio (SCP) outlines how it will transform operational service delivery to maintain or improve outcomes. It consists of four key 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 targets and deliverables for each programme as described below.



## 9.1 Sustainable Finances Programme

The savings requirements contained within the Council's annually refreshed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 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 services supporting those with special educational needs (SEND).

## 9.2 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.

### Our aims by 2026

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

## Our actions

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

- Develop and implement Customer and Digital strategies to support high-quality, consistent customer experience through improved digital services
- Increase our understanding of customers and actively involve them in our channel development
- Ensure services are accessible through multiple channels (e.g. digital access, telephone and face-to-face channels) so no groups are excluded and engage with Leicestershire Equality Challenge Group to further identify and mitigate the impact of digitalisation on those with protected characteristics
- Develop a community-based programme to support residents to learn how to use digital technology
- Improve front-end communications interfaces to ensure enquiries are directed to the right channel
- Deliver a new target operating model for our Customer Service Centre

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

- Increase the amount of automation for repetitive, low value activities and integrations
- Increase service user adoption of digital solutions by driving a cultural shift to “digital by choice”
- Improve our ability to resolve queries on first contact using the optimal channel

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

- Work with Council 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



## How we will measure success

- Customer satisfaction levels
- Cost reduction and avoidance
- Response handling rates
- Application of digital tools and processes
- Rates of channel shift to automated and self-serve processes

### 9.3 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).

Leicestershire County Council is ahead of target in the delivery of net-zero emissions by 2030. From 2008/09-2020/21, the Council reduced the greenhouse gas emissions from its own operations by 74%. This may have been further supported by impact of Covid-19 in reducing business mileage and emission from our estate.

There are also increasing opportunities to secure external funding and investment to reduce our carbon emissions. 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 due to the challenging financial position of the council and demands on resources. Our aims and actions to deliver this programme are set out in the section on the 'Clean and Green' outcome ([see here](#)).

### 9.4 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 led to a change in how we work with each other and provide services. There is now a need for greater flexibility and remote working which will be delivered through our Ways of Working Programme.

#### Our aims by 2026

- All staff have 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 people can collaborate

#### Our actions

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

- Provide all staff with an assigned 'worker style' and the IT kit they need
- Ensure all IT equipment is replaced in good time to ensure technology is effective and productive
- Ensure all staff can work remotely through specialist technology, software and remote access
- Staff meetings to be 'digital by default' - hybrid and face-to-face meetings will be supported

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

- Focus on objectives and outputs not on presenteeism for office-based staff
- Empower staff to choose where they work, whilst prioritising service and customer needs
- Senior leaders and managers to lead by example – champion > role model > challenge

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

- Set up workplaces to support collaboration, productivity, wellbeing and customer service
- Prioritise space for activities - flexibility to be the norm with fixed desks kept to minimum
- Encourage staff 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.



### How we will measure success

- Productivity levels
- Business mileage costs
- Property costs and income generation
- Staff wellbeing indicators and sickness absence rates
- Recruitment and retention indicators
- Environmental impact



# 10. Medium Term Financial Strategy

Delivery of this Strategic Plan is enabled by the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) which sets out a credible financial plan supporting the aims and actions in the Plan.

The Council is operating in an extremely challenging financial environment following a decade of austerity and spending pressures, particularly from social care. This has been further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and there is significant uncertainty around future funding levels. Despite this, we will deliver this Strategic Plan by focusing our available resources on the key priorities set out in previous sections.

## Our aims by 2026

- Delivered a revenue budget and capital programme which reflected the Council's key priorities
- Maintained a sustainable financial position that ensures the Council is resilient to financial shocks
- An improved financial position for Leicestershire arising from progress on Fair Funding

## Our actions

- Raise awareness of our financial position and maintain transparency around our savings proposals
- Target efficiency savings and new income generation before service reductions
- Regularly update assumptions to support the efficient flow of resources to Council priorities
- Promote a culture of forward planning to ensure there is time for corrective action
- Embed financial discipline in decision-making to increase value for money for taxpayers
- Through our Corporate Asset Investment Fund, invest in commercial schemes to generate income



## How we will measure success

- Level of risk in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)'s Financial Resilience Index
- Avoidance of unplanned in-year budget cuts or short-term, reactive actions to resolve unforeseen financial issues

# 11. 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.



## 11.1 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.



## 12. Performance Management

The Council's progress and performance in delivering this Plan will be monitored by Outcome Boards.

Council Departments will be required, through their annual service planning processes, to identify actions for each forthcoming year which will help to achieve the aims set out in this Plan. The Outcome Boards will monitor progress in the delivery of these actions, as well as other actions already set out in this Plan. They will also ensure that all Council plans and strategies align with and supports the aims in this Plan.

Outcome Boards will provide 6-monthly highlight reports to our Corporate Management Team in order to inform strategic decision-making and resource allocation. The Council's Scrutiny Committees will receive quarterly updates and our Annual Performance Reports will provide a summary of progress each year.

