



ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
4 NOVEMBER 2024

DRAFT ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES DEPARTMENT
STRATEGY 2025-2029

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to invite members of the Committee to comment on the draft Adults and Communities Strategy 2025-2029, together with plans for consultation and timelines. The draft Strategy is attached as Appendix A to this report.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The draft Strategy follows on from the Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunities: Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020–2024.
3. The Strategy provides a framework for policy, process and ways of working for the Adults and Communities Department and supports the delivery of the County Council's statutory duties, national policy and statutory guidance
4. There are also different regulatory frameworks which govern Departmental activity. These include:
 - *Adult Social Care* -; Care Quality Commission;
 - *Culture Leicestershire* – Arts Council England and The National Archives;
 - *Leicestershire Adult Learning Service (LALS)* – Ofsted.
5. All services operate within the County Council's frameworks and corporate strategies such as the County Council's Strategic Plan 2022–2026, the People Strategy 2024–2028, and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.
6. The revised draft Strategy has been designed in co-production and engagement with the public who use the different Departmental services, providers of services for Adult Social Care and the service leads within the Council. It has been designed to support the delivery of the Department's duties.
7. The draft Strategy makes reference to the difficult financial position that all local authorities face and that where services are to be provided and commissioned, the Department will ensure these are cost effective and efficient.

Background

8. The current Strategy is due to reach its conclusion by the end of this financial year and focussed on a time when the County was experiencing the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Since then services have moved on, along with the Department's strategic aims.
9. To support the Department in planning for the next four years, a new, updated Strategy is required. This focuses on how the Department will work on key themes around promoting independence, community cohesion, and increased opportunities for the people of Leicestershire.
10. The draft Strategy features the service areas within the Adults and Communities Department. These include Adult Social Care, Culture Leicestershire and the LALS. It continues the strategic approach of the existing Strategy, focussing on the model of Wellbeing, Prevent, Delay, Reduce and Meet need and provides the aims for the different services across the Department over 2025–2029.
11. There are ambitions embedded within the current Strategy which are still valid for this refreshed version. These themes are to continue with new, updated descriptors about how the ambitions will be realised. The ambitions include:
 - Improved customer experience and satisfaction
 - Promoting wellbeing through universal services
 - Developing and supporting inward investment for new social care accommodation
 - Promoting independence
 - Working effectively with partners including co-production, co-design and engagement
 - Providing high quality information and advice
 - Building a flexible, talented, motivated workforce including apprentices
 - Seamless transition from children to adult services
 - Improved use of technology
12. Alongside the Strategy, a shortened snapshot of all of the aims will be collated into a summarised document to support Departmental business planning.

Consultation

13. To develop the aims of the Strategy to ensure it meets the needs of the public, co-production exercises have been completed with the public who use the different Departmental services and engagement with the providers of adult social care services.
14. The aims of the Strategy have also been developed with the Departmental service leads in addition to engagement with staff delivering front line services through a series of workshops.

15. As this Strategy can be read by internal staff, the public and partners, the draft strategy will be reviewed by the Adults and Communities Engagement Panel to ensure the language is appropriate for all to understand, prior to formal publication. There will also be consideration of how to make the Strategy more accessible through different media platforms.
16. On 17 December 2024, approval will be sought from the Cabinet for an eight week public consultation on the refreshed Strategy which it is proposed will commence in February 2025.
17. The draft Communication and Engagement Plan for the Strategy is attached as Appendix B to this report. The consultation and engagement will be promoted through social media channels and will incorporate a variety of methods to meet the differing needs of the people it is aimed to engage with.
18. Feedback from the public consultation will be analysed and where appropriate incorporated into the final Strategy. It is anticipated that some of the ambitions will change following public feedback.

Resource Implications

19. There will be some costs associated with the consultation process, and provision of information about the Strategy in a range of accessible formats, such as easy-read and a proposed video. This will be met from the existing Adults and Communities budgets.
20. There is also a cost attached to the design of the final document which will be met from existing Adults and Communities budgets.
21. The Strategy does not make a direct link to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, but it does reference the cost and demand pressures that the County Council is facing, and the effective use of available budgets and resources required for it to be successful.

Timetable for Decisions

22. The draft Strategy will be presented to the Cabinet on 17 December 2024 seeking approval to commence the eight week public consultation in February 2025.
23. The outcome of the consultation will be reported back to this Committee on 2 June 2025, with a view to the final Strategy being approved by the Cabinet on 17 June 2025.
24. Subject to the Cabinet's approval the Strategy will then be published.

Conclusions

25. The Committee's discussion and comments on the draft Strategy and draft Communication and Engagement Plan will inform the approach to the public consultation and help the Department to shape its final Strategy.

Background papers

- [Delivering Wellbeing and opportunity in Leicestershire – Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020-24](#)
- [Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2022-26](#)
- [Leicestershire County Council People Strategy 2024-2028](#)
- [Equality, Diversion and Inclusion Strategy-2024-2028](#)

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

26. None

Equality Implications

27. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has been produced, and is attached as Appendix C to this report.
28. The EIA screening concludes that the Strategy should have a positive impact:
- It makes reference to the County Council's People Strategy and its commitment to ensuring Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) remain a strong focus over the new strategy period.
 - Within the service offer of Culture Leicestershire and Adult Learning, it makes reference to bringing communities together; providing learning to overcome barriers; offering courses in a range of formats and venues to the suit learning needs of people.
 - Culture Leicestershire also has an aim within the strategy to reach more diverse communities across the County.
 - The Strategy references the aim to tackle digital exclusion so that if information is provided on the internet, via email, or another electronic means, people who would struggle to access information in this way will have the opportunity to have the means and skills to do so.
 - The Department and Strategy will also support vulnerable people and people living with disabilities within their communities.
29. A full EIA will be produced following the closure of the public consultation to ensure that the Strategy identifies any areas of potential discrimination for service users and where future actions should be targeted.

Human Rights Implications

30. The revised Strategy aims to have a positive impact on a person's Human Rights:
- It makes reference to the statutory responsibilities under the Mental Health Act and the Mental Capacity Act to promote people's rights and support their wellbeing.
 - It covers an aim over the course of the strategy to develop the Adults and Communities Department's focus on 'Right's-based' practice, covering Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, Mental Health Act Assessments, Safeguarding and responsibilities to the Court of Protection.
 - It details the continuing use of the Positive Behaviour Support Team, to work with providers of adult social care, to reduce restrictive care practices.

Environmental implications

31. The work to deliver the Strategy will have potential impacts on the environment and climate, in terms of both the departmental activities and those of its service providers. The Department supports the County Council's Strategic Plan and the Clean and Green outcomes cited within it.

Partnership Working

32. The revised Strategy aims to have a positive impact on partnership working by:
- Showing commitment to working with adult social care partners (Health, voluntary services, statutory partners)
 - Continuing to develop strategies in conjunction with Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council
 - Co-producing services and information that is provided to the public, with the public
33. All these partners will be consulted on the draft Strategy and the Department has arrangements in place for the ongoing strategic management of these relationships.

Health Implications

34. The revised Strategy aims to have a positive impact on Health Implications by:
- Making reference to the Department's commitment to working in integration and partnership with the Integrated Care Board (ICB)
 - Outlining the preventative and enabling functions of the Homecare Assessment and Reablement Team (HART), Occupational Therapy service and the Integrated Care Team.
 - Referencing the LALS course offer, which can support a person around their wellness - including mental health.
 - Detailing the courses to support employment offered by LALS. These courses are to be developed in line with what the market needs and their aim to reduce the demand on other services through education.
 - Showing how the libraries offer reading lists to support people managing their own health, such as on different health conditions.
 - Covering how libraries and community venues offer safe spaces
 - Having a commitment in the strategy for adult social care, along with Health partners, to reduce health inequalities for people with a learning disability.

Appendices

Appendix A – Draft Adults and Communities Strategy 2024-2029
 Appendix B - Communication and Consultation Plan
 Appendix C – Equalities Impact Assessment

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