

Adults and Communities Department

# Commissioning Intentions

2021 – 2024



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# Introduction

This document captures the intentions the Adults and Communities department has for services we intend to commission over the next four years. The document outlines our approach to commissioning and what we expect to achieve in partnership with people who use our services, the market and providers we work with. It is a guide and aid to providers who intend to bid for business with us so that they can incorporate this into their own business plans and modelling. The document is also a statement to people who use our services of what they can expect and the rationale for these expectations.

As a department our commissioning approach is based on maximising outcomes for individuals. We continue to place our emphasis on independence and independent living and with increased use of asset-based support and strategies. This follows the strengthening of our department's two functions – adult social care and communities and wellbeing which contains our adult education, libraries and heritage functions.

The Adults and Communities department is committed to promoting wellbeing and independence for people who utilise our services. This includes people who require care and support, their carers along with people who are enriched by our learning, heritage and cultural offer. We will ensure the market is stable by working with providers to commission services in a sustainable, fair and transparent way.

Checks and balances that feature throughout our governance processes ensure officers in Leicestershire County Council are all working towards the same goals with the same values. These enable us to keep people safe, spend money wisely and make evidence-based decisions.

The Adults and Communities department also commissions in partnership with other local authorities and health across the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland footprint to give consistency in services across the area, benefit from joint working arrangements and elicit economies of scale.

We will also be preparing for the upcoming assurance of social care services by Care Quality Commission (CQC) and we will be looking to quality assure and develop our commissioning practice to be appropriate for the local market.

Looking at individuals and their communities' strengths as the basis on which to build services will be key to how we work with service users and will impact upon what and how we commission. Services will be expected to link into local communities, develop local assets and promote, where possible, the progression of individuals who use the service to independent lives.

There are several key documents that govern our approach to commissioning and the recovery of services following the pandemic and these are briefly discussed below.

# Context

## ***Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022***

'Working Together for the Benefit of Everyone: Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2018-22' has been developed by the council by focusing on the things that will make life better for people in Leicestershire, including the partnerships needed to make these improvements happen. It underpins everything that the Council does and forms the basis for this departmental plan. Further information is available [here](#).

## ***Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire, Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020 – 2024***

The ambitions and strategy for adult social care and communities are detailed in the Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire document. The full strategy and an easy read version is available [here](#).

Our ambition is quite simple, we want to take advantage of new ways of working learnt during the response to the pandemic and through engagement with people who use our services so that through the course of this strategy (2020-2024) we will:

- Enhance wellbeing, prevent, reduce, delay and meet individual and community need
- Ensure people and communities are resilient and safe in times of uncertainty and crisis
- Make it easier for people to access our services through information and digital routes
- Work collaboratively across our services and partners to commission the right support in the right place at the right time
- Use the inherent strengths of local communities to empower them to do more for themselves
- Employ and develop a highly trained and flexible workforce
- Ensure people feel safe, supported, enabled and satisfied when using our services
- Save and make accessible the cultural and historic heritage of the County

## ***Department of Health and Social Care White Paper – proposals***

The proposals in the White Paper move towards a new model of collaboration, partnership and integration. The proposed legislation aims to leave many decisions to the discretion of local systems. Our strategy is already working towards the spirit of the White Paper by enabling changes to the behaviours, attitudes and relationships of staff and leaders right across the health and care system.

## ***Asset-based approaches***

An asset-based approach harnesses the connections, potential and resilience within communities. It considers strengths rather than deficits and supports people and communities to promote skills, knowledge and experience. The department will use the approach to develop its operational practice, commissioning, and its relationships with adult social care providers.

# Challenges

In realising our ambitions, we understand and acknowledge several challenges that we will want to work with our provider market to address. These include:

- The continued recovery from the pandemic and ensuring our social care sector remains resilient.
- Supporting the recruitment and training of an appropriately skilled and resilient workforce.
- Creating holistic, joined up services through integration with health services.
- Ensuring we make best use of community assets to enable people who need our support.
- Ensuring innovation in commissioning, working with providers to shape our tendering process and meeting changing needs of our residents.
- To develop the quality assurance of commissioning and challenge existing commissioning practice.
- Maximising social value from our contracting arrangements to secure additional social, environmental and economic benefits for people in Leicestershire.

# Drivers for our commissioning approach

Our commissioning intentions are a realisation of many competing priorities that are intertwined by our core values, aspirations, ambitions, and strategic direction for the people who use our services. The following points detail some of these drivers with reference to our commissioning approach that encompasses wellbeing, preventing need, reducing need, delaying need and meeting eligible needs.

## Wellbeing

- We actively encourage services in the community which are recovery focused and maximise local assets to maintain wellbeing and prevent individuals and their carers going into crisis.
- It is very important to us that a partnership approach is developed with our providers to deliver social value.
- We will utilise Ethical Charters to underpin our service delivery through a conversation with markets to explore the barriers that may impede implementation.
- We will continue to provide support to independent community managed libraries which contribute to wellbeing opportunities in their local communities.

## Prevent need

- The residential care we commission for adults of working age will be expected to have an enablement focus and work with individuals on a safe and sustainable pathway to independent living.
- We want to ensure our providers are on the same technological journey as us and can therefore maximise their use of technology and digital innovation to help deliver services that enable independence.
- The social care market requires shaping to meet our needs and this will be actively worked upon. This includes all aspects of the market including direct payment providers and people who self-fund their care.
- Through the participation service we commission community and voluntary groups and organisations to support and deliver activities which improve wellbeing, prevent need and in turn support the development and sustainability of local community assets.

## Reduce need

- We aim to increase the County's extra care provision, helping older people to stay in the community for much longer. We will particularly welcome developments which are tailored to those living with dementia.
- We want to see an increase in the number of individuals supported flexibly by Personal Assistants (PAs) and this means we need to attract more people to work as PAs.

## Delay need

- We want to move away from residential care, particularly for adults of working age towards more independent models for living. We wish to commission more supported living schemes, particularly for those with mental health needs. Our Social Care Investment Programme will work with potential providers to facilitate this.
- We endeavour to generate specific services focused on transitions and delivering support to young people as they move into adulthood.
- We will exploit the potential of digital and data solutions as demonstrated through the pandemic.

## Meet need

- We continue to require providers who can help us to deliver the Transforming Care programme and can provide high quality services and solutions for those people with complex needs.
- We want to improve the diversification of our direct payment market by encouraging the establishment of micro enterprises to meet the needs of local people.
- We will continue to attract a skilled workforce through the initiatives of the Inspired to Care programme.
- The providers that we work with will be of high quality and will maintain high standards.

# Digital projects

The department is currently working on several digital initiatives ranging from customer facing technology through to improved and new back-office systems.

The department is updating and improving online assessments as well as introducing a new online financial assessment. These assessments link to our main back-office case management and customer finance systems and enable a seamless transition of the data to take place.

Work has also started to scope out our requirements for the re-procurement of our information systems as they approach the end of their current contracts. Since their implementation back in 2014, the need for closer integration and different ways of working with our partners in health and social care has increased dramatically.

The integration agenda calls for extended use of systems between partners. A joint programme to create a shared care record is underway between local health and care agencies.

The effective utilisation of technological solutions to all aspects of our work will present a significant cultural challenge and we will seek to work with stakeholders to further our ambitions in this area.

# Opportunities to be involved

There are lots of opportunities to be involved in the development of services and to stay informed of the department's work. E-bulletins have been sent to adult social care providers throughout the pandemic and recovery and can be viewed [here](#).