

Cambridgeshire County Council

Strategic Framework 2023-2028

Refresh for 2024-25



Joint Administration Foreword

As we look ahead to the changing needs of Cambridgeshire for the coming four years, and our vision to create a Greener, Fairer and more Caring Cambridgeshire, we cannot ignore the situation immediately in front of us.

As 2023 ended, the Local Government Association reported councils face an 'inflationary storm' with a predicted £4billion funding gap over the next two years, and so in facing an uncertain financial future Cambridgeshire County Council is not alone.

But we need to be clear that the issues we face are the result of three main things: increased demand for services, the impact of inflationary pressures and long term Government underfunding.

In the past year, we have continued not just to see the long tail of the Covid pandemic and its effects on children and young people resulting in a sharp increase in the need for specialist placements for a small number with extreme mental health issues, but a higher and faster than expected rise in older people once again needing residential care – a need which had reduced in the immediate aftermath. Family budgets continue to be stretched. We have provided support through topping up government grants to provide the full cost of free school meals during holidays for around 22,000 children, and numbers of emergency grants to other families through the household support fund have not reduced during the summer months.

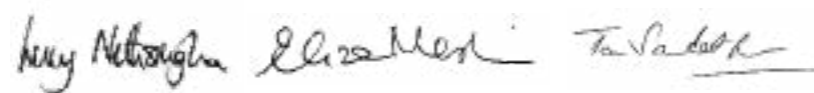
But we are also affected by wider national and even

international issues, such as interest rates which the Bank of England has said are likely to remain above 5% until 2026, which impact on all goods and services the council buys, the cost of borrowing as well as pay award costs for both council workers and a large externally commissioned workforce which includes residential care for vulnerable adults and children.

While there are many councils that face this situation, we are unique in that our population is growing faster than anywhere else in the UK, and amongst young and older people. This is something unrecognised by successive Governments who have not increased our funding formula for more than ten years. As a result, we receive funding for the size of population we had in 2013 – an unrealistic prospect even if we hadn't had such rapid growth.

However, we are a well-managed council – without some of the issues which have affected councils around the country recently – and we are working hard to ensure that through a mixture of savings, reduced spending, and good financial control we can continue to provide our most essential services.

We will continue our work to bring services closer to communities, to deliver services which reduce rather than increase the risks we are all experiencing due to climate change, to make travel safe and sustainable, reduce health inequalities and offer a safety net for those in most need.



Cllr Lucy Nethsingha
Leader of
Cambridgeshire
County Council



Cllr Elisa Meschini
Deputy Leader of
Cambridgeshire
County Council



Cllr Tom Sanderson
Leader of the
Independent Group
on Cambridgeshire
County Council

Chief Executive Foreword

Achieving the vision set for us by Cambridgeshire County Council's Joint Administration to be a Greener, Fairer and more Caring County is ambitious, especially at a time when people, families and local communities are all facing great financial pressures.

Everything we do is of huge importance to communities across the county. That is why I was pleased that this year, for the first time, we commissioned a detailed Quality of Life Survey to actively listen to and learn from the people of Cambridgeshire. During the summer we interviewed over 5,500 people across the county who broadly represent the population of Cambridgeshire, according to the 2021 census.

We know from this work that, broadly speaking, people are happy in the county, they feel safe and well connected to their local communities and think Cambridgeshire is a good place to raise children. However, this wasn't equally true for everyone. Younger people, people with disabilities, or people struggling economically all rated themselves lower in these areas.

Many people told us that they feel lonely or isolated and mental health concerns are highest among our youngest residents. These incredibly rich insights have all been used to inform the proposals for change and improvement that have been put forward to be considered by our politicians.

However, we must still balance our books before we can

progress with new innovations and new investments. We are thankfully not in the position of some councils across England, who are facing the most severe financial distress. We are and remain a well-managed council, with committed officers and people at all levels, who are focussed on delivering the very best for our residents.

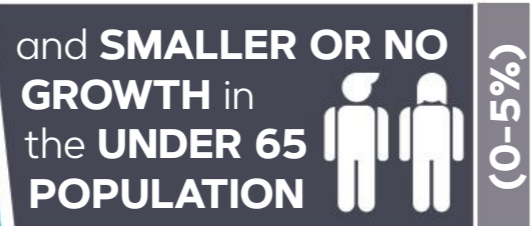
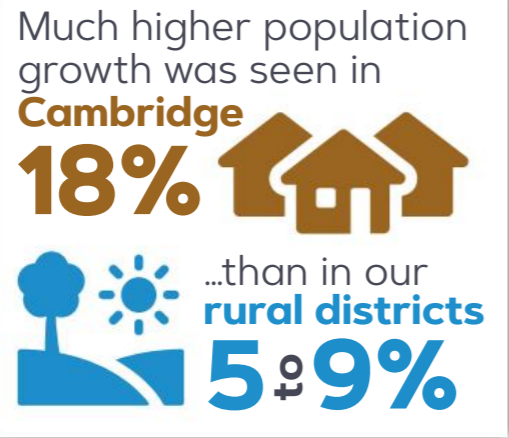
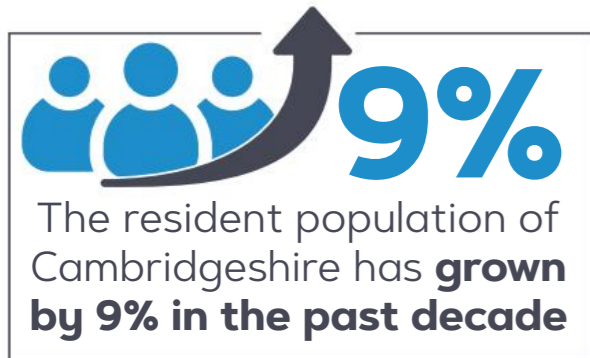
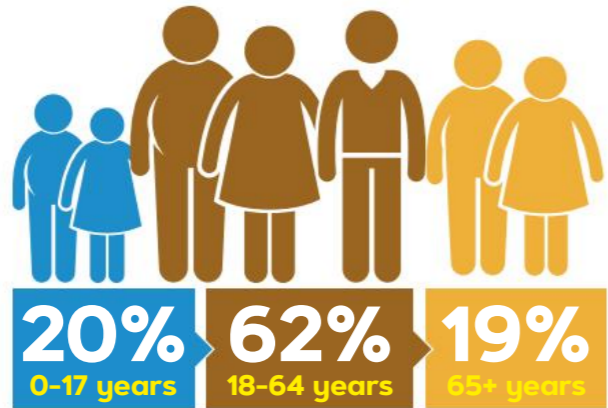
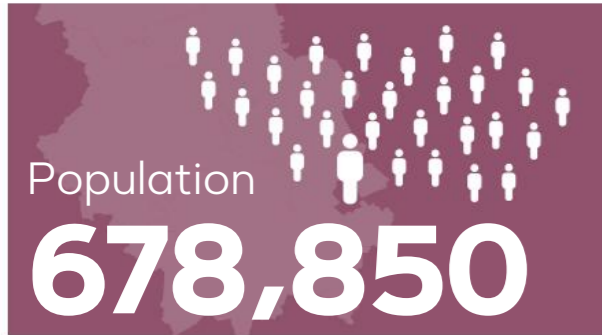
Yes, as a council, we have statutory duties to meet, but we have no statutory services, and so as we move forward, we are re-looking at everything we do, including our work with partners, to make positive changes and save money. We will also accelerate our use of new technologies and will further rationalise our office accommodation, to become more efficient and more effective. Importantly, we will continue to ensure our workforce is as productive, engaged, inclusive and proud to work for Cambridgeshire as we can, recognising that we are only ever as good as the people who work for the council.

It is in this way, we believe residents will see us continuing to make good on our greener, fairer and more caring ambitions, as we continue to support a growing county and tackle deep rooted inequalities by always thinking like residents and acting like taxpayers.



Dr Stephen S. Moir
Chief Executive of
Cambridgeshire
County Council

Cambridgeshire and its people



Source: ONS, Census 2021

Communities have become more diverse, ESPECIALLY IN CAMBRIDGE

The proportions of the population in all high level ethnic groups apart from "White" have increased since 2011

With "White" falling from **93%** of the total population to **89%** of the total population at Census 2021

All districts have seen a notable increase in the White: Other ethnic groups since Census 2011



Cambridgeshire and its people

In 2023 Cambridgeshire County Council – working with an independent market research company – ran its first Quality of Life survey, involving 5,500 people broadly representing the demographic make up of the County. We aim to repeat this survey over the next two years.





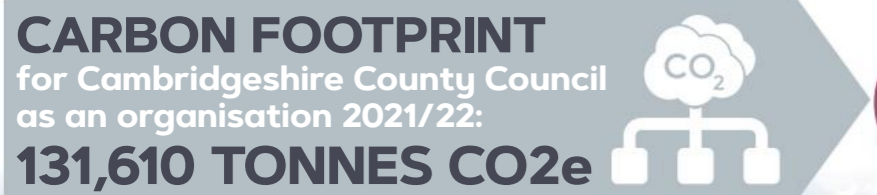
“ Create a **greener, fairer** and more **caring** Cambridgeshire ”



We want to be ‘greener’, because tackling the climate crisis and looking after nature is necessary to help our communities to thrive in a changing environment



Source: combination of BEIS data and CCC calculations



the **largest share** was from **Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)** followed by **Waste and Construction**

Source: CCC Carbon Footprint Report 2021-22



“ Create a **greener, fairer** and more **caring** Cambridgeshire ”



We want to be ‘fairer’, because the pandemic and cost of living crisis that followed have worsened inequalities in health, income and education, and we need to make sure the prosperity enjoyed in some parts of the County is enjoyed by all.

Cambridgeshire has 16 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the 20% most relatively deprived nationally as measured by the Indices of multiple deprivation 2019

11 of these are in Fenland, 3 in Cambridge City and 2 in Huntingdonshire.

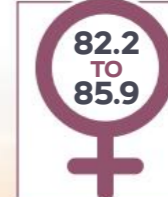
Source: CCC Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 – Key Findings in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough



LIFE EXPECTANCY
figures for males and females is **NOT** the same across the county

The range for males is 78.5 years in Fenland through to 83.1 years in South Cambridgeshire

78.5 TO 83.1



For females life expectancy is slightly higher than for males. However there are still inequalities with Fenland at 82.2 years through to South Cambridgeshire at 85.9 years

Source: Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Insight <https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/jsna-2023/all-dashboards/jsna-2023-dashboards-life-expectancy/>

The Cambridgeshire County Council Vision



“ Create a **greener, fairer** and more **caring** Cambridgeshire ”



We want to be more ‘caring’, because the most vulnerable in our County are the most at risk of needing additional care and support. We can reduce these risks by intervening early to prevent further escalation of need.



Around **2,500** carers supported at any one time



Around **7,406** children supported with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

AN INCREASE OF 103% since January 2017

2,750 social care cases at any one time... including around 600 children in care aged 0-17 and around 300 children with a recorded disability



1,246 PUPILS in schools with caring responsibilities identified in January 2023



10,885 PUPILS

with special educational needs in schools who receive ‘SEN Support’ rather than having an EHCP reported in May 2023



Over **5,000** Children supported with an early help episode in the past 12 months



Around **7,700** adults aged 18+ receive long-term social care

Fully or partially funded by the County Council



The Cambridgeshire County Council Vision

We will deliver this vision by being Closer to our Communities, taking a ‘decentralised’ approach to our relationships with our partners, communities and residents, so that Cambridgeshire can become greener, fairer and more caring in the ways that are most suitable to the variety of people and communities we serve.

To do this we have SEVEN ambitions:

Ambition 1

Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes



Ambition 2

Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable



Ambition 3

Health inequalities are reduced



Ambition 4

People enjoy healthy, safe and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs



Ambition 5

People are helped out of poverty and income inequality



Ambition 6

Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised



Ambition 7

Children and young people have opportunities to thrive



Delivering these ambitions often involves us working with all our partners including the voluntary sector, businesses and communities to tailor services around people, families and the communities they live in.

Ambition 1

Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes



Cambridgeshire's 2023 Quality of Life Survey showed 76% of respondents were concerned about climate change, and 85% wanted the council to do more to protect and enhance the natural environment.

To achieve this Ambition we will:

- Plan for and manage climate risk, so we can cope with the impacts our changing climate brings
- Reduce the council's direct carbon emissions to net zero by 2030
- Support partners, residents, businesses and communities to live and work more sustainably
- Help build a local circular economy to increase reuse and recycling whilst minimising waste
- Embed net-zero by design and climate resilience into our transport delivery and infrastructure asset maintenance
- Maximise the extent and quality of nature areas across Cambridgeshire, giving more people access to green space
- Support Local Nature Groups that manage and enhance their communities' green spaces
- Support Community Flood Groups to build resilience in areas at risk of flooding
- Improve insulation of homes and ensure new homes are sustainable



We will get Closer to Communities by:

Facilitating more community-led plans for decarbonisation and biodiversity

We will track progress by:

- ✓ Monitoring our annual county-wide carbon footprint data
- ✓ Measuring biodiversity to establish where and how we can bring the biggest benefits to nature

Ambition 1

Since launching this Ambition we have:

- ✓ Reduced the council's scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions by 36% from 2018-19 to 2022-23, with 22 council building heating systems replaced with low carbon heating, saving an estimated 370 tCO₂e per annum at a cost of £6.6 million (£3 million of this coming from successful grant applications)
- ✓ Launched a new home energy efficiency and low carbon heating service for residents in Friday Bridge, Fenland
- ✓ Collaborated with City and District Councils to retrofit 550 low-income households to help with the cost of living crisis, securing £11.5 million for off-gas grid residents to take action to reduce energy costs
- ✓ Opened the St. Ives Smart Energy Grid, comprising solar canopies, battery storage, EV charging and supplying clean green electricity locally
- ✓ Retrofitted 62 Cambridgeshire schools with energy measures saving more than £11 million on annual energy bills and cutting carbon emissions of 1,312 tCO₂e per annum
- ✓ Secured £5.4 million of grant funding to decarbonise heating systems across 23 schools, with 10 schools having completed low carbon heating installs this year, saving 424 tCO₂e per year
- ✓ Introduced a climate-based corporate outcome as part of our staff appraisal system and essential training for all council staff
- ✓ Won an international Edie Award for the Swaffham Prior Renewable Heat Network, a community led project delivered by Cambridgeshire County Council, working in partnership with Swaffham Prior Community Land Trust, Government and Bouygues Energies and Services Ltd. The Project has seen 60 homes connected to renewable heating, with more planned



Ambition 2

Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable



Cambridgeshire's 2023 Quality of Life Survey showed the condition of our highways was among residents top concerns, but users were highly satisfied with Park and Ride sites and the Guided Busway.

To achieve this Ambition we will:

- Work with our partners to deliver a single vision for transport across Cambridgeshire
- Engage with our partners and communities to secure the greatest achievable benefits from major highway schemes and new developments
- Work with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and the Greater Cambridge Partnership to enhance bus services and provide a sustainable long term local funding solution for bus service support
- Become an Active Travel Centre of Excellence that sees more residents safely participating in active travel
- Promote and facilitate alternatives to fossil fuel-based car travel
- Work through the Vision Zero Partnership to achieve a consistent reduction in deaths or serious injuries by 2040
- Support local communities through the Local Highways Improvement programmes
- Recycle and reuse materials in our highways projects
- Manage highways infrastructure in a safe and functional state



We will get Closer to Communities by:

Supporting communities to participate in decision making about their local transport networks

We will track progress by:

- ✓ Monitoring the number of motorised vehicles and the take up of cycling and walking
- ✓ Assessing the condition of our road network
- ✓ Monitoring the numbers of killed or seriously injured casualties

Ambition 2

Since launching this Ambition we have:

- ✓ Delivered approximately 60 Local Highway Improvement Projects, which are often focussed on addressing road safety and speed reduction on behalf of local communities
- ✓ Spent approximately £8 million on 14 major carriageway maintenance upgrades countywide, and approximately £3 million on 25 individual footpath and cycle path renewals to enable safer, more sustainable travel for highway users across the county
- ✓ Delivered 54 drainage maintenance schemes, spent £1 million designing a further 15 projects and delivered five significant drainage upgrades across the county and investigated a further 10 notable problem sites to develop a forward pipeline for future investment
- ✓ Consulted on and agreed a new Active Travel Strategy and secured £910,000 to develop and construct five new Active Travel schemes across the county
- ✓ Delivered significant upgrades to active travel infrastructure through our DTSA programme at Barton Road (£600,000) and Storeys Way (£170,000) in Cambridge and continued to work with communities and elected representatives countywide to design and progress over 20 projects which are focussed on more sustainable and safer travel through new, or upgrades to existing, infrastructure
- ✓ Completed work to deliver the Kings Dyke crossing



Ambition 3

Health inequalities are reduced



Cambridgeshire's 2023 Quality of Life Survey showed more than a third of residents struggled with mental health issues and 40% with physical health problems, and while our level of smoking, vaping or drinking are in line with national averages, they are more prevalent among younger people.

To achieve this Ambition we will:

Work with partners and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Board to support the Integrated Care System to:

- Improve outcomes for our children and young people
- Reduce inequalities in preventable deaths for those under 75 years old
- Increase the number of years that people live in good health
- Create an environment that gives people the opportunity to be as healthy as they can be
- Reduce poverty through better employment and housing
- Combat health inequalities by ensuring that all council policies contribute to the better health of our population
- Protect and enhance the council's directly provided services and guarantee the oversight of elected Members in shaping these services



We will get Closer to Communities by:

Responding to local priorities to act on wider determinants of health – for example, by designing and delivering family learning alongside communities and local solutions to local issues, such as loneliness or opportunities for exercise

We will track progress by

- Monitoring healthy life expectancy
- Reducing the number of preventable deaths before the age of 75
- Scrutinising the quality of the council's public health programmes, prioritising activities which can genuinely make a difference

Ambition 3


Since launching this Ambition we have:

- Delivered staff and member training on the wider determinants of health
- Developed and launched the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, embedding prevention into all priorities
- Launched a mental health campaign for LGBTQ+ young people alongside the Kite Trust building on research from the charity Just Like Us showing that LGBTQ+ young adults are more than twice as likely to hurt themselves deliberately than non-LGBTQ+ young adults. Evaluation showed that 70% of respondents in the target group had seen the campaign, and 67% learnt something new from it or said it was helpful to them
- Participated in the HMRC led Operation CeCe aimed at disrupting the activities of sellers of illicit tobacco, including the seizure of 5,288 non-compliant vapes found to contain higher levels of nicotine than they should
- Undertaken underage sales operations to tackle the sale of age restricted products to young persons
- Issued Prevention of Future Death Reports to raise awareness of preventable deaths




Ambition 4

People enjoy healthy, safe and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs

 Cambridgeshire's 2023 Quality of Life Survey showed around 5% of people struggled to live independently, but that this was higher for younger people and those with disabilities. People reporting they had recently had a fall were 11% more likely to be older, female or people with disabilities.

To achieve this Ambition we will:

- Promote early intervention and prevention measures to improve physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Involve local people in shaping services, which focus on helping people early, fully coordinating with the NHS and our other partners
- Deliver care at a more local, neighbourhood level, personalising care around the individual in ways that maintain high quality services for people who need them, and which empower people and communities to stay healthy, connected, safe and independent
- Protect and enhance people's choice and control, adopting a rights-based approach to service delivery
- Commission services that drive up the quality and dignity of care work and bring additional benefits to Cambridgeshire's people and communities
- Ensure adults at risk are safeguarded from harm in ways that meet their desired outcomes, providing transparency and accountability in cases where the health and care system falls short
- Continue to expand digital connectivity coverage across the county to reduce the risk of digital exclusion preventing people from accessing social care services

 **We will get Closer to Communities by:** Continuing to deepen engagement with, and participation in, the work of Integrated Neighbourhoods, which are local partnerships of health, emergency services, voluntary and community sector and council services usually centred on local clusters of GP surgeries

We will track progress by

- Monitoring the social care related quality of life
- Monitoring the number of permanent admissions to care homes

Ambition 4

Since launching this Ambition we have:

- Launched a new social work academy and boosted training and career opportunities for local care workers, including a Care Certificate
- Increased the proportion of people using social care who receive direct payments
- Launched Individual Service Funds in East Cambridgeshire, which allow a third party to manage a person's care and support budget in line with the person's wishes
- Started delivery of the Self-Directed Support Programme, which was co-designed with stakeholders and gives people more choice, control and flexibility in how their care needs are met
- Created 10 additional care micro-enterprises, which consist of local people supported to set up their own small businesses that provide their neighbours with personalised care and support, amongst other services that support independence at home



Ambition 5

People are helped out of poverty and income inequality



Cambridgeshire's 2023 Quality of Life Survey showed 86% of residents were concerned about cost of living increases, with 47% of those who have made more than one change because of this (limiting heating, food or medicines) also reporting their mental health had been affected in the past year.

To achieve this Ambition we will:

- Develop an Anti Poverty Strategy for Cambridgeshire in collaboration with our partners, and informed by those who have experienced poverty, that addresses crisis support and the underlying causes of poverty in the county
- Support people to maximise their income to support them in a crisis
- Help households in need to boost their income and reduce their outgoings
- Work with our partners to ensure that support for people is straightforward, equitable, and does not stigmatise
- Support families with access to free school meals and help for families during school holidays
- Support entry to, and good quality participation in, the labour market
- Ensure people can access support to develop their skills as a route to financial security
- Influence our suppliers and providers to pay the real living wage



We will get Closer to Communities by:

Facilitating data sharing to identify those people who are at risk and creating place-based partnerships that can provide wrap-around support

We will track progress by

- ✓ Monitoring the number of universal credit claimants
- ✓ Monitoring the percentage of learners who join us with few or no qualifications, who go on to further learning, work, or apprenticeships

Ambition 5


Since launching this Ambition we have:

- ✓ Delivered more than £7m in direct support to families who are struggling financially, through the household support fund or holiday food vouchers for more than 22,000 Cambridgeshire children on free school meals
- ✓ Provided Council Tax relief to our care-experienced young people
- ✓ Continued to perform in the top 20% of councils nationally, and surpass our statistical and local neighbour councils, in having a low percentage of young people not in education, employment or training
- ✓ Paid our employees the real living wage
- ✓ Increased our funding to care providers so that they can pay their employees the real living wage
- ✓ Supported and promoted school uniform swaps across the county



Ambition 6

Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised

 Cambridgeshire's 2023 Quality of Life Survey shows 75% of residents feel connected to their local area, and there are high levels of satisfaction with services available to all such as libraries, registration services, waste disposal and recycling, but 52% of residents are concerned about investment and jobs.

To achieve this Ambition we will:

- Promote a mixed economy in council services, expanding the number of directly provided in-house services, where appropriate, and offering better access to local community groups to be able to work as our partners
- Work alongside the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to ensure the support for skills development is accessible, targeted and relevant
- Support the local economy to keep more of the Cambridgeshire pound local
- Support small business start-ups, self-employment and social enterprises
- Secure additional benefits and greater social value for our communities when we procure and commission goods and services

We will get Closer to Communities by:

Participating in local community wealth building partnerships, where large institutions such as health trusts and universities use their spending to encourage more locally-owned businesses

We will track progress by

- ✓ Monitoring the social value, or additional benefits for communities, achieved from goods and services the council purchases
- ✓ Monitoring the percentage of organisational spend that is locally based

Ambition 6

Since launching this Ambition we have:

- ✓ Outlined 17 Closer to Communities pilots, that include repositioning our library service as the 'front door' to wider council support and a range of partner services
- ✓ Delivered Enabling Growth Outdoors to support young people aged 10-18 not in mainstream education at Wisbech Community Farm, as part of the Closer to Communities pilot schemes
- ✓ Extended access to libraries and achieved Library of Sanctuary status in recognition of our work to support those who are seeking refuge in our county
- ✓ Appointed a Migrant Policy and Partnerships Officer – a post created following a decision made by Full Council this year to increase local level support for asylum seekers and migrants
- ✓ Created 10 additional care micro-enterprises, which consist of local people supported to set up their own small businesses that provide their neighbours with personalised care and support, amongst other services that support independence at home



Ambition 7

Children and young people have opportunities to thrive



Cambridgeshire's 2023 Quality of Life Survey showed 77% say Cambridgeshire is a good place to raise children, 68% believe children are safe and 66% that they have access to great education, but 30% of parents said their child had suffered from mental health issues in the last year, and 46% of those who use them aren't satisfied with services for children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

To achieve this Ambition we will:

- Provide families with high quality pre-birth and early years support
- Ensure our children are ready to enter and exit education prepared for the next phase in their lives
- Ensure all children have access to education from early years through to post 16 provision
- Challenge and support all settings to set high aspirations for all children and young people
- Protect children and young people from harm using safeguarding approaches
- Improve outcomes for children and young people with complex needs, including mental health needs
- Meet special educational needs early and locally
- Ensure that young people who experience care can access the support they need to move into adult life
- Work with partners to coordinate NHS, Early Help and Social Care, upholding our principles of directly providing services where this delivers the best outcomes for residents, and guarantee the oversight of locally elected and accountable bodies in shaping these services



We will get Closer to Communities by:

Designing youth services in partnership with young people, their families and the local voluntary and community sector

We will track progress by

- ✓ Monitoring the educational outcomes of our children in care
- ✓ Monitoring the educational attainments as key stages of learning
- ✓ Monitoring the number of children with a child protection plan

Ambition 7

Since launching this Ambition we have:

- ✓ Launched a new social work academy and boosted training and career opportunities for social care staff throughout children's services to help recruit and retain staff in a sector which has national recruitment issues – helping vulnerable children and their families
- ✓ Received government go-ahead and funding to establish two new special free schools in the county: a 210-place, multiple needs school in March and a 60-place school in Gamlingay for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs
- ✓ Provided Council Tax relief to our care-experienced young people
- ✓ Become the 3rd County Council in the country to recognise 'care experience' as a protected characteristic as part of a UK wide campaign
- ✓ Received an additional £412,000 in grant funding because we exceeded our annual target set by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) – helping 516 families in need to achieve significant and sustained progress



The Cambridgeshire County Council Corporate Approach

Our Vision and 7 Ambitions drive everything we do. They are enabled by our key cross-cutting and Ambition-focused strategies, which shape our operational strategies, policies and plans.



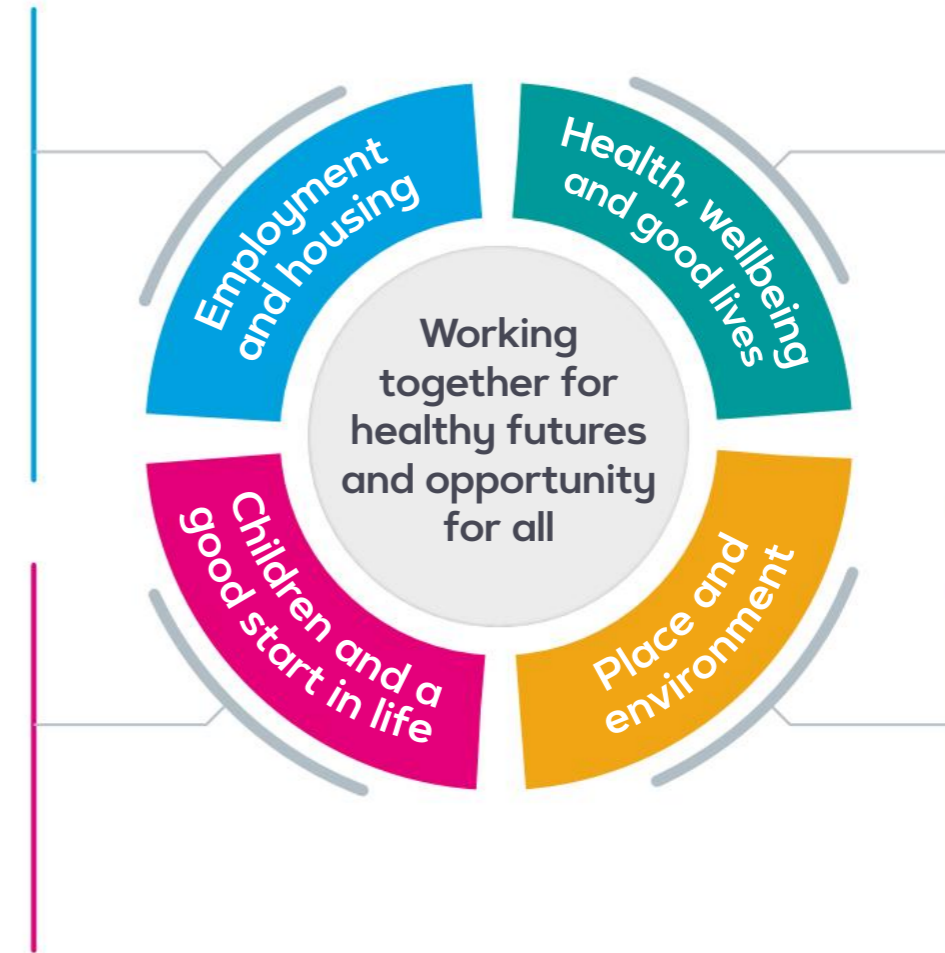
Working with our public sector partners

Our Vision and Ambitions for Cambridgeshire County Council align with those of our public sector partners

This has enabled us to agree a single system strategy identifying the issues to tackle together to achieve better outcomes for people

- Skills
- Fair pay and good work
- Opportunities for all
- Wellbeing, safety and security in work
- Affordable lifelong homes
- Better housing
- Social mobility
- Fewer households living in poverty

- Physical activity
- Ready for the future
- High aspirations for all
- Reduce childhood obesity
- Address inequalities in health and social outcomes
- Social connection
- Better mental health
- Ready for education



- Early intervention
- Local support
- Collaborative health
- High-quality acute and social care provision
- Volunteering
- Lifelong activity
- Independent living
- Drugs and alcohol education and support
- Tracking violence against women and girls

- Healthy environments
- Green space and nature
- Connectivity
- Biodiversity
- Sustainability
- Connection and inclusion
- Safe communities
- Active and social places

Financial details to follow after the budget setting meeting at Full Council