

Strategic Framework

2021 – 2025

Introduction

In Cambridgeshire, we want everyone to have the opportunity to thrive – in education, in employment, and in their community.

People are what matter to us – residents, visitors, employers and employees – and we will work hard to make sure people are at the very heart of what we do as a council.

People want to live comfortably and well in a warm, safe and affordable home, within a cohesive community that is at the heart of everything we do, one that is rich in opportunity and creativity, where there are diverse opportunities for learning and employment, and where people are well-connected, so they can look out for each other and benefit from living in a safe, clean, green environment.

They expect to have a good quality of life, to be able to choose to live a healthy life, where they have the opportunities they need to improve their emotional and physical health, and where health inequality is a thing of the past.

People that need our help and support have to know they will get that quickly and in ways that respond to their specific needs – people are individuals, and the ways in which we protect and care for those who need us will recognise this.

Our booming economy should be supported in order to continue to thrive, providing opportunities for people within Cambridgeshire to be able to access, good work prospects locally, with opportunities to increase their earnings through learning and growth.

Children are entitled to have the best start in life, and have all of the opportunities available to them, wherever they live, to learn, develop and live life to the full.

We want our council to continue to be a council which builds on our services that enables this to happen, a council that doesn't present barriers or make things complicated, but that works with people, alongside our communities and our partners, to make Cambridgeshire a great place to raise families, live, work and play.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Count'.

Steve Count Leader of
Cambridgeshire County Council



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gillian Beasley'.

Gillian Beasley, Chief Executive of
Cambridgeshire County Council

Why this Matters

The world around us is changing – we need to respond to the ongoing challenge of COVID-19, we have to continue to do all we can to tackle climate change, we must make sure that all of our communities benefit from growth, and it's essential we keep pace with the dynamic changes, to the way the world connects.

And most importantly of all, all of this needs to be done to make sure we level-up our county so that wherever you live, you will have the best opportunities to thrive as a Cambridgeshire resident.

We are a fast-growing county, with ever-increasing opportunities for people to grow with us: more employment, more leisure opportunities, more housing, and more opportunities to learn. But we are also a county with some differences, where people in some of our places are not easily able to take full advantage of these opportunities because of where they live, their aspiration for change, their economic circumstances, or their lifestyle choices. We want all of our residents, wherever they live, to recognise that Cambridgeshire is a place where they can thrive economically and socially, and where they see and feel the benefits associated with this on their health, wellbeing and prosperity.

As well as a growing county, we are also a county where fortunately people are often - living longer, although sometimes this will mean we need to look after people at a time of their lives when we should be proud to give back to them. Similarly, there are more people, of all ages, that are less physically or mentally able to cope without some help in our county, who may need a little extra support in their lives. We have been rethinking the way care is traditionally provided to individuals with needs, a non-personalised largely 'one size fits all' approach is not appropriate, and we need to treat all of our residents, regardless of their needs, as valuable assets each of whom make up our community. Our care will concentrate on being more proactive and more strengths-based, building on peoples' potential, and provided at the most local level possible, by providing support from the most local area possible.

We will continue to respond quickly and proactively to public health concerns, including the Coronavirus, offering help and support to our most vulnerable residents to keep them safe, and supporting communities impacted by local outbreaks.

All of this will be underpinned by our continuing transformation programme to reset our relationships for the benefit of our communities. During the pandemic we have witnessed the true strength and passion people have to look out for one another, and the council needs to provide the right support for that to continue.

The Council's Strategic Framework

In this changing environment, it is more important than ever that we have a clear strategic approach which will enable us to evolve as challenges become more complex and as collaboration across the public sector and with our communities becomes increasingly critical.

Our strategic framework ensures that our plans are driven by our shared vision to make **Cambridgeshire a great place to call home** and focuses on achieving a number of outcomes for the people of Cambridgeshire. The framework, of which this Business Plan forms a central part, comprises the following elements:

- ♦ A **Corporate Strategy**, describing the Council's long term vision for Cambridgeshire, the outcomes we strive for and our priorities for change;
- ♦ A set of ambitious **performance measures** which will be used to hold us to account for improvements across Cambridgeshire;
- ♦ The Council's **Business Plan**, which describes how we will commission services to deliver these outcomes within the resources we have;
- ♦ A suite of **key strategies** describing a detailed corporate approach to the management of core activities such as finances, workforce, digital services, commercial, assets and carbon reduction;
- ♦ A set of **partnership agreements and action plans** which describe multi-agency approaches to deliver improved outcomes across Cambridgeshire;
- ♦ **Service plans**, which describe how each of our directorates work to deliver our business plan objectives, including priorities for delivery as well as transformation and service improvement initiatives; and
- ♦ The Council's **transformation programme** which brings together our ambitious programme of change to ensure that we have the resources and capacity to deliver at pace.

Our Strategic Priorities

Our strategic priorities are what drives and directs this council. They set the tone and ambition for this organisation, and they need to make sense to our residents. Our residents should feel proud of Cambridgeshire and their County council, an organisation they know has their best interests at its very core. Similarly our staff should justifiably feel proud of working for the County council, an organisation that places the needs and aspirations of its residents ahead of anything else, one that truly recognises that without our staff nothing would be possible. We want our partners to feel proud of coming alongside us to create opportunity and to tackle our challenges. Additionally we need to maintain an environment where businesses invest right across our county, creating employment opportunities fit for a dynamic, growing population.

We have set five strategic priorities that will take us where we need to be:

- **Communities at the heart of everything we do**
- **A good quality of life for everyone**
- **Helping our children learn, develop and live life to the full**
- **Cambridgeshire: A well-connected, safe, clean, green environment**
- **Protecting and caring for those who need us**

Collectively, our strategic priorities will deliver our vision for making **Cambridgeshire a great place to call home**, and we have set out below the main areas of focus that we will deliver against each priority.

Our Five Strategic Priorities:

Communities at the heart of everything we do:

- The way we design and deliver our services will meet the unique needs of all of our residents, and we will be good partners with other organisations who equally strive to make Cambridgeshire the best place to live and work. We recognise that every community is different, with their own identities, strengths and challenges, and we will ensure this is understood right across our council.
- We will listen to and work alongside our residents, our colleagues across parish, town and district councils, our public sector partners, and our voluntary and faith sector partners.
- We will work in a solutions-focussed way as a matter of course, striving to work together to find the right way forward however complex the issue.
- We will make sure the right services are available to our residents in their own neighbourhoods wherever we can, making them more accessible in ways and in places that make the most sense to them.

A good quality of life for everyone:

- All of our residents and communities will have the opportunities they need to have a good quality of life: opportunities to be economically strong and independent, to enjoy social interactions within their community, and to live a healthy life.
- There has never been a more important time to make best use of public funds. We will strive to improve outcomes as efficiently as possible by working creatively with our communities and building on our successful partnerships.
- We will work hard to level up the differences that exist in some parts of our county, creating opportunity for people to become healthier, more prosperous and more independent.

Helping our children learn, develop and live life to the full:

- Our children will have the best start in life, with a positive focus on their early years, kickstarting their abilities for future learning and they will learn in local schools that strive to be the best they can be.
- Older children will have opportunities to become more active in their communities, to participate in activity that develops them, and that sets them up for adulthood.
- Children and young people who lose their way or become vulnerable to risk or harm will receive positive, proactive support to set them on a different path and to keep them safe

Cambridgeshire: A well-connected, safe, clean, green environment:

- All of our communities, urban and rural, wherever they are in the county, will enjoy reliable, fast broadband and mobile connectivity.
- Our green and open spaces will be well cared for, and available for everyone to enjoy, creating opportunities for sports, leisure, relaxation and learning.
- We will work with our community safety partners to help make all of our communities the safest they can be, places where people look out for each other and are proud of where they live.
- We will provide choice for our residents so they can decide for themselves how best they want to get around our county – by road, by cycle, or on foot – safely and efficiently.

Protecting and caring for those who need us:

- Where people need our care, it will be relevant to them and will meet their needs, and it will be provided for them as locally as possible.
- Our care will focus on the choices people want to make about their own lives, and will strive to help people to live at home and in their own community for as long as possible, where it is safe for them to do so.
- The children in care we look after will receive the best care we can provide, in our role as their corporate parent, where we help them to flourish and thrive and get ready for independence and adulthood.
- We will look after and support children in care, ensuring they have the same opportunities that all other young people have in our county, and will prepare them well for adulthood and independence.
- We will protect the health of our residents through meaningful public health work, keeping communities safe from harm and supporting people that want to improve their own wellbeing.

Performance

We review our performance frequently to make sure that we are delivering on our aims.

Our Service Committees monitor performance and finance in their areas monthly, and the General Purposes Committee oversees overall progress in delivering on outcome areas.

Each Service Committee chooses measures and targets to help them understand performance. This might include monitoring the activity in the service (like how many people are being supported) as well as monitoring the outcomes of the service (like how many people live independently after successfully being supported by reablement services, or the increase in footfall to libraries). Service Committee Integrated Finance Monitoring and Performance Reports are available on the Council's website.

All of the measures chosen by the Service Committees are categorised as being most relevant to one of the Council's outcomes. The General Purposes Committee then oversees the performance of all of these indicators in each of the outcome areas in a monthly Integrated Finance and Performance Report, which is also available on the Council's website, as is the full list of all performance indicators overseen by Service Committees.

The General Purposes Committee also manages our financial situation, supervises the performance of the Transformation Programme, monitors corporate indicators like staff sickness, and manages key corporate risks as part of the same report.

If performance is not at the expected standard, the Service Committee implements an improvement programme as well as taking a report to the General Purposes Committee explaining the situation and what action is being taken to get back on track.