

Appendix A

# **Strategic Framework**

## **2022-2023**

## Leaders' foreword

While it has been an enormous privilege to take on the responsibility of running Cambridgeshire County Council, the scale of the financial challenge we have inherited is substantial. Following the COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit we have needed to re-set our understanding of the risks and challenges facing Cambridgeshire. COVID-19 has left many of our most vulnerable residents with even more complex needs, and the combination of COVID-19 and Brexit has left many of our businesses and partners facing major staffing and financial challenges. As a Council we need to ensure that we are in a position to meet these challenges, not only for the short, but for the long term, while also giving support the households that need us most.

The Local Government Association's peer review report, which we commissioned on taking office, and which reported in September, made clear the scale of the financial difficulties we face. At that time, £82 million of savings were needed in the coming four years. The scale of this challenge, and the need to ensure long term financial security, mean we have some tough choices to make. Our policy on council tax reflects the need to ensure the council is able to support its vulnerable residents and maintain services in the future. However, we are also painfully aware of just how difficult the coming year will be for some households, with the recent cut to Universal Credit from central government coming at the same time as rapidly rising inflation, and astronomic increases in energy costs facing many families in April.

We know the Council will need to make sure financial support is there for those facing hardship in the coming year, which is why we are so determined to maintain our support for children on free school meals into the coming year.

We will also be extending the time during which families can apply for support beyond the winter, with the winter support grant process being continued throughout the coming financial year.

While we are inevitably having to focus on the short-term issues of ensuring the council is financially viable, and on COVID-19 support and recovery, we are

also deeply aware that the climate crisis is the biggest long-term threat and that action on this is also urgently needed.

The new “Just Transition fund” will provide funding through local committees to bring communities and partners together from across Cambridgeshire to find the best ways for each community to tackle the impact of climate change, along with longer term goals of addressing inequalities in health, education, and opportunity across Cambridgeshire. We are hugely proud of our ambitious programme in this area and looking forward to working with parish councils and voluntary sector organisations to cut carbon emissions, improve biodiversity and reduce inequality.

These are tough times for local councils as well as for many families. The demand on our services is huge, and with staffing a major issue across the whole of local government we finish with another thank you to all the council staff who have responded incredibly to the challenges of the past year. With COVID-19 still causing huge problems, and the need to manage “business as usual” alongside vaccination programmes and support for those isolating, staff across the County Council have been amazing in responding with imagination and flexibility to keep residents safe. I profoundly hope the coming year will be a little less demanding, and that we can all see a gradual return to something closer to normality. In the meantime, thank you all, for everything you do.



Add in signatures

Cllr Lucy Nethsingha

Cllr Elisa Meschini

Cllr Tom Sanderson

## Background

In May 2021 our County Council's Joint Administration published an agreement setting out their priorities for Cambridgeshire. They included targets for COVID-19 recovery, healthy living, combating poverty and tackling the climate emergency. It also signalled a commitment to forming strong and positive partnerships in the areas of public health, support for business, public transport, and building affordable, sustainable homes. An action plan was created for the interim period of nine months. Some progress already made against this actions plan includes:

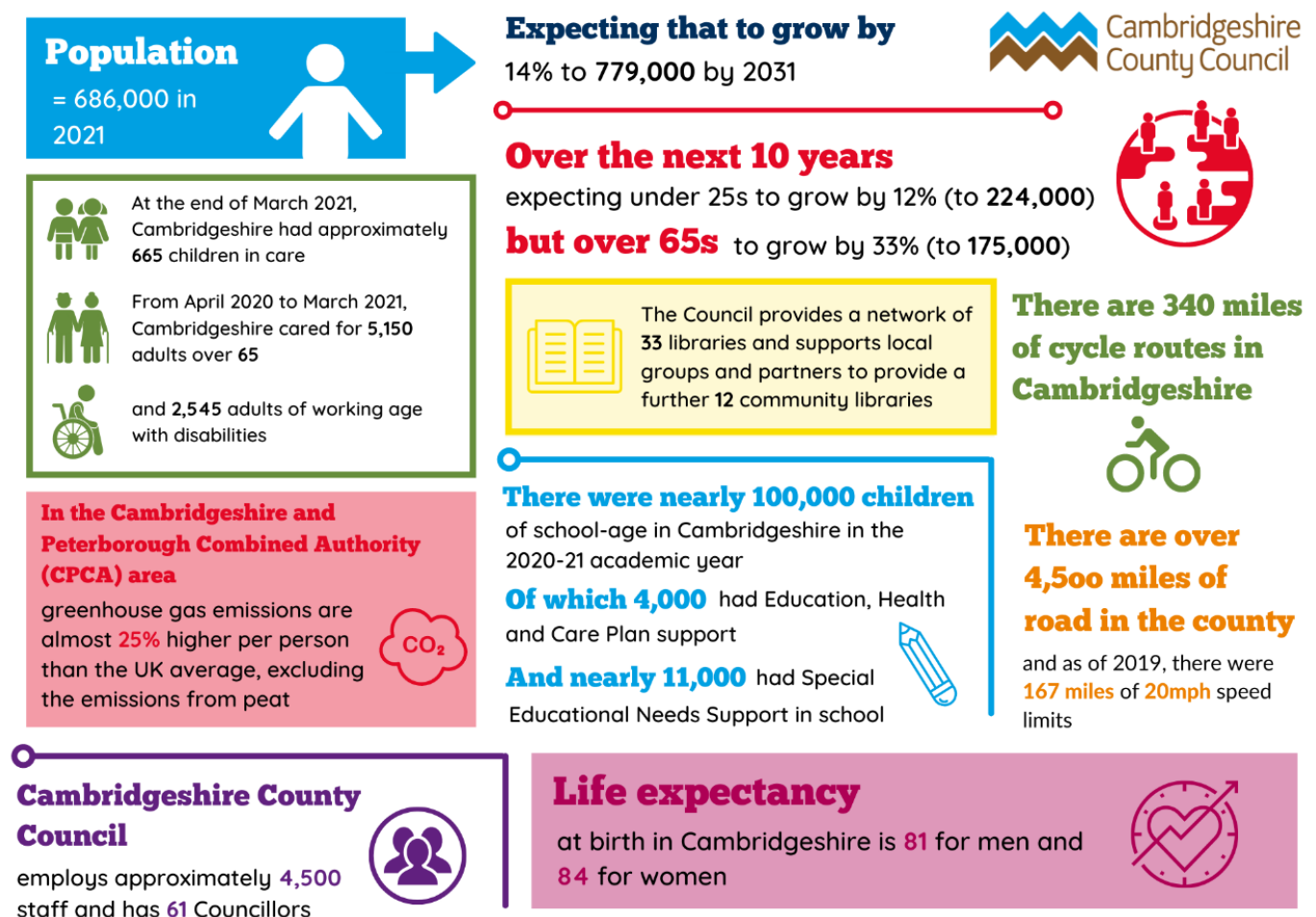
- Food vouchers provided for eligible children who receive free school meals during October half term as well as holiday food vouchers and other household support through the recently launched Household Support Fund.
- The 'real living wage' paid to all council staff identified as not reaching this level
- The Climate Change and Environment Strategy has been refreshed bringing forward the net-zero climate change and environmental targets towards 2030,
- Focussed on an integrated approach to support Children and Young People's Mental Health.
- Established and delivered a co-chaired Young Carers County Wide Steering group, Youth Advisory Board, and a range of training.
- Diversity & Inclusion training delivered to Safeguarding Partnership Board members.

This Strategic Framework reflects the change to the Council's direction and priorities whilst ensuring that the delivery of core services is maintained. It builds on the Joint Agreement action plan and develops this into five Strategic Priorities detailed below, which reflect the change to the Council's direction and priorities whilst ensuring that the delivery of core council services is maintained, particularly at this crucial time as we recover from COVID-19 and address the inequalities this has created or made worse. We are also facing

more complex social and environmental challenges; therefore, we need to adapt our approach and solutions.

In this changing environment it is important that we have a clear strategic approach which enables us to flex and adapt to the situation and works in collaboration across the public sector, our communities and our partners.

## Cambridgeshire and its people



## Strategic Framework

The Strategic Framework for this administration period is being developed as a two-phase approach; the first phase is a one-year short-term tactical approach to balance the 2022-23 budget and reflects that the Local Government Finance Settlement figure for 2022-23 was only a one-year budget settlement.

The second phase, 2023-2025, will take a longer-term, more visionary, and strategic approach. It will build upon the foundations of the first years change of direction and priorities for the Council such as social and environmental value and working more strategically with our public sector partners. We will do this whilst continuing to be responsible and sensitive in the decisions that we make so as not to disrupt the balance of our core statutory and regulatory services such as adult and children's social care and our road network.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has launched a consultation and will be working with Local Government during 2022-23 to determine how to distribute funding for 2023-24 onwards and we will continue to lobby government for a fairer share of funding for Cambridgeshire.

This Strategic Framework sets the tone and direction that will enable our delivery of the strategy and our policy setting to achieve the Council's vision of a creating a greener, fairer, and more caring Cambridgeshire. This will be reflected in key policies and strategies that enables us to prioritise and make decisions, including investments, using financial, environmental, and social criterion.

The Strategic Framework, of which the Business Plan forms a central part, comprises the following elements:

- A **Strategic Vision**, describing the Council's long-term vision for Cambridgeshire
- A set of **Corporate Priorities** which drive our work to achieve the vision
- The Council's **Business Plan** which describes how we will allocate resources to deliver these outcomes within the resources we have

- A set of **strategies**, partnership agreement and action plans to deliver these outcomes within the resources (not included within this document)
- **Service plans** which describe how each of our directorates work to deliver our Business Plan objectives and any transformational change
- The **Performance Management Framework** which underpins our performance management and allows us to track progress

## • Strategic Vision

Our councillors and staff across Cambridgeshire are committed to:

Creating a greener, fairer and more caring  
Cambridgeshire

## • Corporate Priorities

Our five Corporate Priorities are our key areas of focus which drive and direct the council to achieve its vision:



### 1. Environment and Sustainability

**We are committed to tackling climate change and sustainability, so we will:**

- Take proactive measures in moving forward the net zero target for Cambridgeshire County Council towards 2030
- Promote biodiversity in Cambridgeshire and increase our county's natural capital
- Ensure all spending and investment decisions consider net zero to reduce carbon emissions, and environmental criteria have equal weight to social and financial criteria in all our contracting

- Work with partners to respond to changes in Government strategy around waste, promote a circular economy and more sustainable waste management practices
- Build climate resilience into our service delivery and infrastructure



## 2. Health and Care

**We are committed to ensuring people in Cambridgeshire enjoy healthy, safe and independent lives, so we will:**

- Move towards delivering care at neighbourhood level, empowering people and communities using different models of delivery including more in-house provision, based on the concept of 'Care Together'
- Work with partners to establish the Integrated Care System to provide more seamless services to users, ensuring local democratic accountability, focusing on prevention and early help, to enable children and young people to have the best start in life and people to live healthy lives independently for longer
- Drive up the quality and dignity of care work and care services to be regarded as a profession, integrating the Council's social value approach
- Improve outcomes and combat health inequalities based on population health management across the county including leading the 'health in all policies' approach across the authority
- Work with partners to develop and deliver a system wide Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities.





### 3. Places and Communities

**We are committed to ensuring Communities are inclusive, creative and equitable so we will:**

- Establish local area committees to enable decision making in the community which is as close to the people they affect as possible
- Deliver practical, localised and evidence-led actions that improve social mobility, reduce poverty and address inequalities
- Establish the principles and practice of Community Wealth Building to enable the economic system to build wealth and prosperity for everyone
- Enable communities to work creatively and collaboratively to address their local needs
- Creating 'Places' that support communities to live low carbon, resource efficient lifestyles



### 4. Children and Young People

**We are committed to ensuring Children and young people have the opportunity to thrive, so we will:**

- Focus on the early years of a child's life to provide them with the best opportunities possible to give them the Best Start in Life
- Develop the Children's Collaborative as part of the Integrated Care System in order to better align health, early help and social care support, to improve outcomes in areas including mental health and child criminal exploitation
- Work across the partnership including health, district councils, the community and voluntary sector to deliver targeted support at neighbourhood and district level in line with our Strong Families, Strong Communities partnership early help strategy
- Continue the Family Safeguarding approach in our children's social care services, so that children and young people are safeguarded from harm

- Support our children and young people in care to achieve the best possible outcomes and ensure that our care leavers are able to access the support they need as they move into adult life
- Ensure that our schools have the support they need in order that all of our children, including those with Special Educational Needs succeed in learning.



## 5. Transport

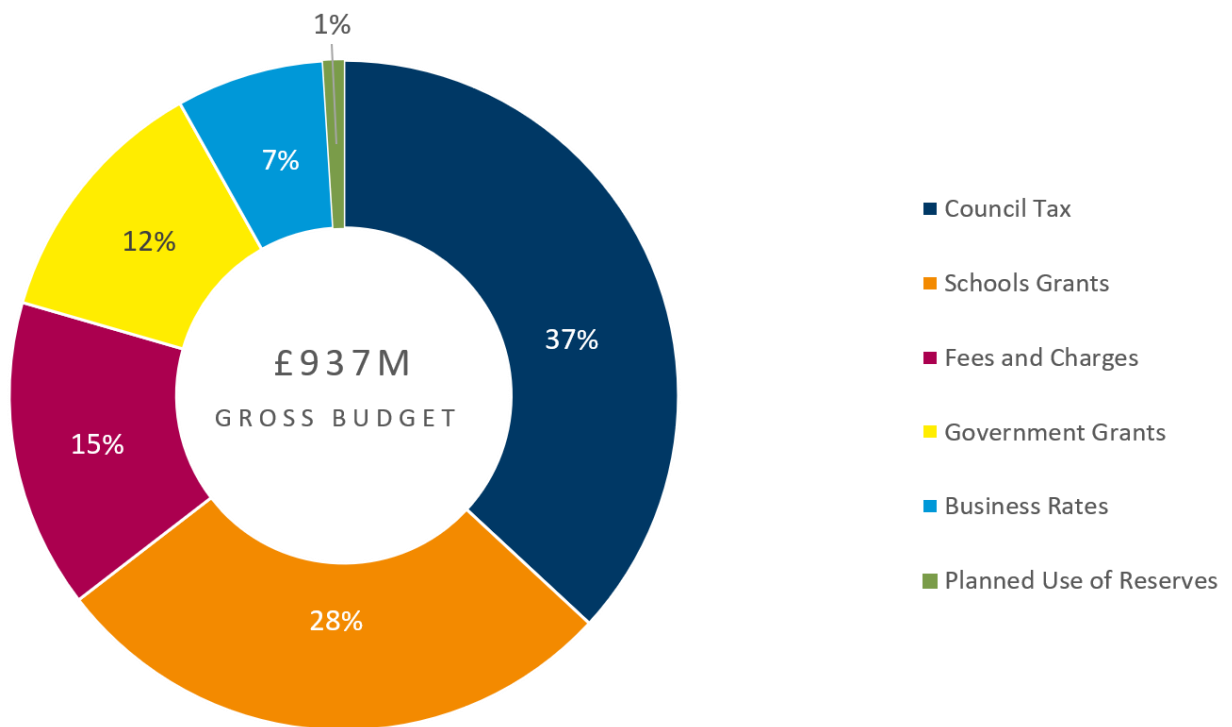
**We are committed to enabling safer and sustainable travel around the county, so we will:**

- Investing more in road, footway and cycleway maintenance as well as routine gully clearance
- Undertake consultation with communities openly and transparently on highways projects that affect them
- Encourage more residents to make use of active and sustainable travel options
- Support infrastructure development and securing safe routes and connections for pedestrians and cyclists
- Work in partnership with local communities to make the option of 20MPH zones more widely available, and easier to obtain

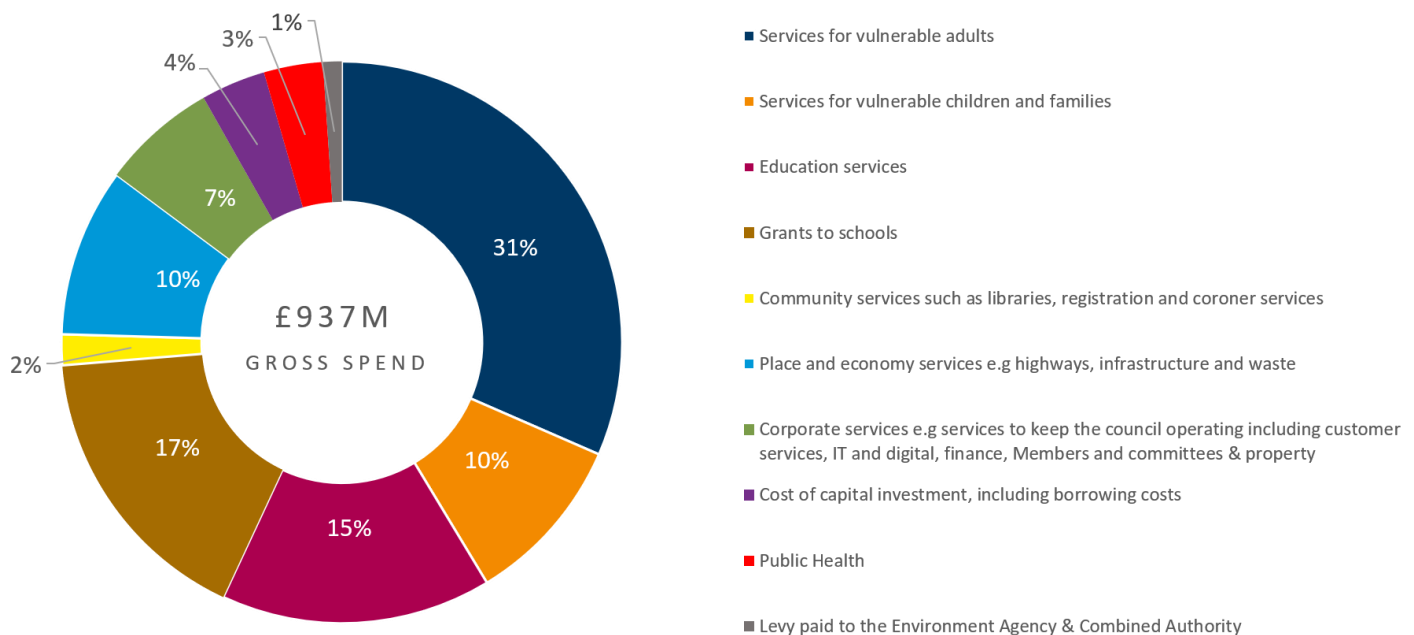
## Business Plan

Our annual Business Plan describes how we use our resources to achieve the priorities of the Council. The graphs below show how the 2022-23 budget is made up and where we will be spending it:

### WHERE THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET COMES FROM



## WHERE THE COUNCIL'S BUDGET IS SPENT



## Performance Framework

Performance management is a tool that allows us to measure whether we are on track to achieve our corporate priorities. If we are off-track, we change our activities to improve service delivery, value for money and the outcomes people experience. The Performance Framework will further develop alongside the second phase of the Strategic Framework.

## Developing the 2023-2025 Corporate Strategy

This 2023-2025 framework, our second phase, will build on the foundations created in the 2022-2023 Strategic Framework, our first phase. Recognising the complex environment and challenges we face we must therefore expand our use of relevant social, economic and environmental information and evidence and our strategic partnerships to further shape our delivery of our longer-term priorities. This approach will enable us to focus our local resources to the most relevant and impactful issues. This work will need to be guided by some values

for how we work internally, with communities and across the wider public service system; these could include:

- The economic view. Understanding Cambridgeshire's unique economy and its success, the link with the household and individuals economic positions and potential, and the influence public and private organisations have.
- Nurture human nature and enable their voice. We should reflect long-term human wellbeing and ecological stability in all decision making. We will promote diversity, participation, creativity and collaboration across all areas of our business, strengthen community networks and work with a spirit of high trust.
- Thinking in systems. The ambitions we have will require us to think differently about how we work. We recognise that we are part of a complex system and we will aim for effective, transparent and inclusive democratic processes at all levels, recognising areas for control, for stewardship, for influence and participation.
- Reducing inequalities. We recognise that inequity exists in Cambridgeshire, whether wealth, health, education, life expectancy or access to opportunities, and so we need to purposefully address these inequalities to shift to a more balanced and fair local area. We will work in the spirit of open design and share the opportunity that is created with all those who co-created it.
- Climate and environment. We will ensure our decisions enable us to reduce the impact of climate change and achieve Net Zero. We will focus on being regenerative – bringing back the nature that's been lost to our region. We will act as a sharer, repairer, innovator, regenerator and a steward to the natural resources within our County, through circular economies and more.
- We will also take the opportunity to work in partnerships across the public, private and voluntary sectors and with communities to develop and implement solutions. This will further embed a new way of thinking across the Council, understand the connections of our organisations, our lives and the decisions we make across a broad set of priorities.

Our next steps are:

- To continue to build this social foundational approach in our organisation
- Analyse and design measurable, achievable and specific targets
- Further develop this approach by working with our partners, communities and stakeholders to recognise our values and complementary delivery of our local priorities, where appropriate
- Our five Corporate Priorities will be reviewed in line with our supporting principles, the above proposed values and reflecting the current climate including the results of the DLUHC financial settlement consultation and the COVID-19 pandemic.