

Council Plan Refresh 2024-25

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Foreword

One of the most important tasks of our year is to revisit and refresh our Council Plan and ensure it contains clear objectives for the year ahead as well as highlighting our ambitions and values and the outcomes we will strive to achieve.

Solid plans lie at the heart of all that we do and help us to steer a clear path to where we need to be over the course of the next 12 months, while identifying any challenges and opportunities along the way.

Rethinking the way we do our planning can be just as important, and as an enterprising council we are always looking to adapt and embrace new ways of thinking.

This year the council has changed the way it conducts strategic planning by implementing a new Integrated Strategic Planning approach. As part of this new approach we have identified a set of strategic objectives and supporting actions, setting out key activities we must deliver in 2024-25. You will find these 33 strategic objectives, all aligned to one of the five Outcomes, in the refreshed plan from page 20. This new approach supports the alignment of the budget to the council's priorities, ensuring that our ambitions match our capacity to deliver.

This is hugely important due to the challenging financial situation that we, along with councils across the country, continue to face.

We have always been and remain a well-run and prudently managed council, but factors beyond our control, including higher than anticipated inflation, fuel and energy costs and a continuing increase in demand for adult social care and children's services continue to put enormous strain on our budget.

In autumn 2023 we announced a number of strict cost-control measures after an in-year overspend of £46.4m was forecast. We acted quickly to put these measures in place and the forecast overspend reduced to just under £33m by November with work continuing to bring this down. The council is also considering a number of budget saving proposals in order to set a balanced budget for 2024-25.

However, this will not solve the issues in the longer term and we anticipate having to make tough decisions in the coming months.

We recognise that the high cost of living continues to affect Derbyshire households and businesses too, putting them under a great deal of pressure.

We are working hard to ensure support gets to those who need it most during these challenging times. We have again funded a warm spaces programme, making £150,000 available to groups to support people who are feeling lonely or struggling to heat their homes this winter. We continue to deliver Welfare Rights advice and have approved funding of nearly £400,000 to Rural Action Derbyshire to enable them to continue supporting affordable food projects across the county.

Despite these difficult times, it remains as important as ever to continue our climate change work, and we are committed to reducing the harmful levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

Locally, we have seen more frequent extreme weather including significant flooding in parts of the county, causing extreme disruption to residents, damage to homes, businesses and the county's transport and highways infrastructure.

To achieve our ambitious target of reducing the greenhouse gas emissions generated by the council to net zero by 2032, or sooner, the council has been working hard to review and rationalise our land and building assets and reduce emissions from operations such as streetlighting and travel for council business.

These and other actions have enabled the council to achieve a 70% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from its own estate and operations since 2009-10.

And we're delighted with the progress of our ambition to help facilitate the planting of one million trees across Derbyshire by 2030. Over 400,000 trees have already been planted, and this will be boosted following our successful bid to Defra to create a community forest – called Derbyshire's Heartwood Community Forest.

What is very clear in our refreshed Council Plan is that we continue to be ambitious for Derbyshire and our aspirations are as strong as ever.

Good news has come in the shape of the proposed East Midlands Combined County Authority which has moved one step closer to reality after the granting of Royal Assent to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, paving the way for the creation of the EMCCA and the region's first Mayoral elections in May 2024.

We are extremely proud of our county, and we are confident that by working with communities and partners we can achieve the objectives set out in our refreshed Council Plan and therefore support our residents and communities to thrive.

Our focus overall remains on delivering value for money and putting Derbyshire residents at the heart of all that we do.

Barry Lewis – Council Leader

Emma Alexander – Managing Director

About Derbyshire

- A county with a rich, diverse heritage with spectacular landscapes such as the Peak District National Park and other unique attractions such as the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site
- Derbyshire is a largely rural county with many sparsely populated areas alongside larger built-up urban conurbations
- The county has a total population of 803,400 people
- Derbyshire's population is expected to increase by 13% by 2043. Across the county population growth varies from just 5% projected in Derbyshire Dales to 30% in South Derbyshire
- Derbyshire has an increasingly ageing population with the 85+ population set to double by 2043
- The county's Black and Minority Ethnic population has more than doubled over the ten last years, now representing 6% (50,200) of the county's population
- Derbyshire's economy is worth £17.9 billion with the largest sector being manufacturing which employs over 44,500 people
- Around 9.5 million people in the surrounding cities of Derby, Sheffield, Nottingham, Manchester, and Leicester live within easy reach of Derbyshire
- 28 market towns play a significant role in the local economy. Chesterfield is the county's largest town, with a population of 89,400

About the Council

Our Ambition and Values

Ambition

“We will work together with our partners and communities to be an enterprising council, delivering value for money and enabling local people and places to thrive”

Values

The way we work – we will:

- Listen to, engage, and involve local people ensuring we are responsive and take account of the things that matter most to them
- Be open minded, honest, and accountable ensuring the decisions that we make are fair and transparent
- Spend money wisely making the best use of the resources that we have
- Work with partners and local communities because we know that we cannot tackle complex problems on our own
- Be aspirational about our vision for the future, for our organisation, local people, and communities

Our Outcomes

We want Derbyshire to have:

- Resilient, thriving, and green communities which share responsibility for improving their areas and supporting each other
- Happy, safe, and healthy people, with solid networks of support, who feel in control of their personal circumstances and aspirations
- A strong, diverse, and clean economy which makes the most of Derbyshire's rich assets and provides meaningful opportunities for local people to achieve their full potential
- Great places to live, work and visit with high performing schools, diverse cultural opportunities, transport connections that keep things moving and a healthy and sustainable environment for all
- High quality public services that work together alongside communities to deliver services that meet people's needs

Our Strategic Approach

Our strategic approach governs how we work, as a council, with and for communities, and in collaboration with partners. Three key areas of activity underpin the approach – Enterprising Council, Thriving Communities and Vision Derbyshire. Together these areas have placed the council in a stronger position to deliver its ambitions, adapt and respond to challenges and bring about the changes needed to ensure future success.

Moving forwards, over the forthcoming year the council will be refreshing its strategic approach to drive forward the ambitions of the council over the next four year planning period, 2025-2029. The way the council works with partners will be evolving to align with the emerging East Midlands County Combined Authority and to ensure Derbyshire residents gain optimum value from the £1.14 billion regional investment that has been agreed with government as part of the devolution deal. Our future work with communities will be remodelled with a focus on effective delivery and aligning activity with other strategic programmes, ensuring that the refreshed approach reflects both what the council does to support people, families and communities, as well as its ambitions for greater collaboration with communities and local agencies to address complex challenges. Driving efficiency, effectiveness and value for money across the organisation will be central to our approach, and the council will be accelerating its focus on transformation and maximising opportunities, to address budget challenges and to deliver modern services local people want and need.

Vision Derbyshire - working with our partners to succeed

- Collaborating with partners in new and powerful ways, maximising existing resources to collectively address complex challenges and shape future services to deliver better outcomes for local people and places.

Enterprising council - working within our organisation to succeed

- Transforming the organisation, working as one council, ensuring we are prepared for the future and able to respond to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Thriving Communities – working with our communities to succeed

- Supporting greater collaboration with and across our communities to bring about change, ensuring people and places thrive.

Our Services

The council is responsible for the delivery of a range of mandatory statutory duties including key functions such as Adults Social Care, Education, Children's Safeguarding, Public Health, Highways, Waste management, Libraries and Trading Standards.

- A total of 64 elected members represent the residents of Derbyshire
- Supports 420 schools to offer the best education
- Provides safe, stable homes for children in our care
- Deals with concerns about child safety and wellbeing
- Supports older and disabled people to live independently at home
- Deals with requests for adult social care assessments, advice, and information
- Runs 45 branch libraries and a mobile libraries
- Maintains 3,597 miles of roads and 2,796 miles of pavements and footways each year
- Looks after 1,182 bridges, 495 footbridges, over 3,000 miles of rights of way and 89,900 streetlights
- Runs nine household waste recycling centres and disposes of more than 400,000 tonnes of waste each year

The council will continue to fulfil its statutory duties and has also set out in this Plan a set of strategic objectives that prioritises the key activity for delivery during the year within our available resources, so that the council can continue to drive improved outcomes for local people and value for money.

Budget

The council employs more than 11,200 people and has a budget of £714.8m in 2024-25 that is used to deliver a broad range of services including its statutory responsibilities. This money comes from six main sources and is spent on the following service areas:

Where the money comes from (£m)

Total income £714.8m

- Council Tax (£410.1m)
- General grants (£154.0m)
- Business rates top up grant (£101.9m)
- Business rates (£21.0m)
- Revenue support grant (£16.8m)
- Use of reserves (£11.0m)

How the money will be spent (£m)

Total spend £714.8m

- Adult Social Care and Health (£303.3m)
- Children's Services (£151.7m)
- Place (£109.6m)
- Corporate Services and Transformation (£77.6m)
- Contingency, interest, receipts and debt charges (£72.6m)

Savings (£m)

- Adult Social Care and Health (£19.0m)
- Children's Services (£12.6m)
- Corporate Services and Transformation (£5.8m)
- Place (£2.7m)

Our Plan for 2024-25

Challenges and Opportunities

Budget pressures

The council has always been and remains a well-run and prudently managed council that delivers vital, high quality, value-for-money services for the residents of Derbyshire. Spending money wisely and making the best use of available resources is at the heart of all decisions, being one of the core values that underpins how the council operates.

Like many other local authorities across the country, the council is facing significant financial pressures as a result of factors that are outside our control. High levels of inflation have driven up the cost of fuel, energy and materials and led to increases in the cost of delivering many essential local services.

The demand for many services such as adult social care and the safeguarding of children has also continued to rise. Alongside this, we can be called upon in our role of supporting communities to be safe and resilient, whether responding to public health challenges or supporting residents and businesses affected by significant flooding in parts of the county. This, together with the increasing cost of providing services is placing intense pressure on the council's budget resulting in difficult decisions needing to be made around spending.

The council is committed to finding a way through these difficult times. Our approach includes lobbying central government for additional resources, transforming the way in which we operate, making additional budget savings, scrutinising all spending decisions and putting in place cost control measures when required. The council recognises that many of the challenges cannot be faced alone, and we are committed to working collaboratively with our partners to combine resources and find solutions to deliver better outcomes for local people and businesses.

High cost of living

The challenging national economic conditions, including the high cost of food, fuel and energy prices continue to affect residents and businesses across the county, placing those already facing disadvantage at an even greater risk of severe financial hardship. The council is working to ensure support gets to those who need it most during these challenging times, including the delivery of the Welfare Rights advice and provision of warm, safe spaces in our buildings.

Climate Change

The Council is committed to reducing the harmful levels of greenhouse gas emissions in the environment to help limit the devastating impact climate change can have upon communities as well as the natural and built environment. Locally, the increase in global temperatures has led to more frequent extreme weather events such as heatwaves, droughts, storms, and extreme rainfall. The frequency of significant flooding in parts of the county has also increased, causing damage to homes, businesses and the county's transport and highways infrastructure.

To achieve our ambitious target of reducing the greenhouse gas emissions generated by the council to net zero by 2032, or sooner, the council has been working hard to review and rationalise our land and building assets and reduce emissions from operations such as streetlighting and travel for council business. This has included reducing the number of journeys taken and encouraging employees to use public transport, walk or cycle, or use the council's pool of electric vehicles rather than their own cars.

These and other actions have enabled the council to achieve a 70% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from its own estate and operations since 2009-10. As well as continued rationalisation of assets, further effort will be focused on tackling the more challenging emissions such as those resulting from heating council buildings and the further reductions required from business travel activity. Supplementary work is now underway to explore how the further reductions needed might be achieved, as well as how these projects can be funded. Where emissions cannot be reduced to zero, appropriate offsetting measures are being explored, which includes renewable energy generation on council land and buildings, tree planting and other forms of habitat creation.

The council is also helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated across the county from our homes, transport and industry to net zero by 2050 or sooner, by working with people in our communities, businesses, local councils, interest groups, other partners and government to take action and deliver the council's Climate Change Strategy: Achieving Net Zero (2021-2025).

Our aspirations for the future

Despite the ongoing challenges, our aspirations for Derbyshire remain as strong as ever.

The council will continue to work with partners to drive forward a collaborative working model across all local authorities in Derbyshire where there is common recognition in the value of tackling challenges together. This will initially include areas of work relating to economic development, business and skills and climate change.

Alongside Nottinghamshire County Council, Derby City Council and Nottingham City Council, the council has agreed a £1.14 billion devolution deal with government that has seen the councils working together to create a new Mayoral Combined County Authority for the East Midlands (EMCCA). This will see funding and powers move from national to regional level to improve transport, adults skills training, housing, the environment, and to encourage the creation of quality local jobs that give people a decent standard of living and a better quality of life.

Devolution also offers local people a much greater say over issues that affect them and will provide the funding and tools to help the area recover fully from the current challenging economic climate, ensuring support and opportunities are available to all, to build a fairer, more inclusive future for the county.

The granting of Royal Asset to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill in October 2023 and subsequent approval of plans by each of the four local authorities will see the creation of the EMCCA and the region's first Mayoral elections in May 2024.

Integrated Strategic Planning

As part of a new approach to integrated strategic planning, designed to achieve a closer integration of service and financial planning, the council has identified a set of Strategic Objectives which describe the key activity the Council must deliver in the year to achieve the Council's Ambition and five key Outcomes.

- Resilient, thriving, and green communities
- Happy, safe, and healthy people
- A strong, diverse, and clean economy
- Great places to live, work and visit
- High quality public services

A total of 33 Strategic Objectives have been identified for delivery and are set out on the following pages. The Strategic Objectives have been plotted against the 2024-25 timeline and this has been represented as a Base Plan, enabling a single overview of planned activity throughout the year to be created.

The Base Plan promotes a better understanding of the full range of planned activity and resource requirements across the organisation, assisting the council to evaluate its strategic options and to prioritise activity. This supports the alignment of the budget to the council's priorities, assists effective resource planning and enables the council to ensure that its ambitions match the organisation's capacity to deliver.

The Base Plan will also be used to present and track the council's performance in achieving the Strategic Objectives, supporting a better understanding of the overall progress the council is making and enabling a stronger strategic focus on any key areas of underperformance.

Strategic Objectives Base Plan

What we will deliver in 2024-25

Strategic Objectives

Outcome 1 - Resilient, thriving, and green communities which share responsibility for improving their areas and supporting each other

1. Support people of all ages and communities in need, including financial help from our Derbyshire Discretionary Fund, and other activities that promote financial inclusion and tackle cost of living pressures
2. Collaborate with partner agencies to promote positive mental wellbeing and improve support for local people with a particular focus on suicide prevention and building resilience
3. Support communities through partnership working to protect and enable people of all ages to live healthier and safer lives
4. Ensure council leadership in mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change, achieving net zero, and enabling nature recovery

Outcome 2 - Happy, safe, and healthy people, with solid networks of support, who feel in control of their personal circumstances and aspirations

5. Support people to live their best lives independently at home, connected to the community and local resources, stepping in with more help where needed
6. Help people recover and regain stability, independence and control following a personal crisis or illness
7. Work across the system with partners, carers and residents to provide support in a safe, supportive homelike setting
8. Work across Derbyshire with partners and key health services to deliver good health, resilience and wellbeing to enable children and young people to have the best start in life
9. Enable people and partner organisations to tackle key risk factors of health including inactive lifestyle, smoking, diet and alcohol consumption to improve health outcomes
10. Implement our 'Stronger Families' team to support families in crisis, reduce admissions to care, and reunify families where safe to do so
11. Develop and implement a Placement Strategy for children and ensure sufficiency of accommodation and educational provision across Children's Services
12. Drive development and reform of our Fostering Service

Outcome 3 - A strong, diverse, and clean economy which makes the most of Derbyshire's rich assets and provides meaningful opportunities for local people to achieve their full potential

13. Support continued and sustainable growth in the Derbyshire Economy
14. Drive preparation, facilitation and delivery of regeneration programme for Derbyshire sites and infrastructure proposals to support regeneration and renewal
15. Develop and deliver a strategic approach to sustainable travel and integrated transport across the county
16. Develop the county's long-term Waste Strategy and integrated operating model to deliver a step change in recycling and environmental performance across the county

Outcome 4 - Great places to live, work and visit with high performing schools, diverse cultural opportunities, transport connections that keep things moving and a healthy and sustainable environment for all

17. Establish and implement effective partnership arrangements with the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) to maximise the benefits of a devolution deal for Derbyshire
18. Deliver a safe, effective, efficient and innovative Highways Service
19. Recognise and value carers and our Adult Social Care workforce and the contribution they make to sustaining care and support in a challenging market
20. Drive improvements to schools and services for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Outcome 5 - High quality public services that work together alongside communities to deliver services that meet people's needs

21. Strengthen effectiveness of strategic partnerships to drive improved outcomes for children
22. Develop more equal partnerships between people who use services, carers and professionals to deliver better outcomes
23. Ensure there is a good choice of affordable Adult Social Care support available across the county with a focus on people's experiences and improving quality
24. Develop the council's Customer Experience Strategy to deliver improved resident satisfaction and community engagement
25. Develop and engage the council's workforce to enable the organisation to be an enterprising council
26. Develop a new operating model to support the effective delivery of Children's Services
27. Deliver the Children's Services Financial Strategy to improve outcomes for children and address rising demand
28. Develop and implement an improvement programme across the Finance service to ensure effective financial management
29. Enhance the efficiency of the council's property holdings by strategically, optimising the portfolio, ensuring it consists of affordable assets that support essential services or serve as viable investments

30. Improve customer and employee experience at our sites by delivering fit for purpose spaces that are consistent, positive and conducive to productivity, thereby supporting overall efficiency in service delivery
31. Drive asset-led transformation in service delivery by envisioning and developing the future County Council Headquarters and operating model, aligning them with the broader vision for the public estate
32. Implement a Digital Improvement Programme to better support and develop systems across the council
33. Embed best value principles in all aspects of Place service delivery, driving innovation and improvement in the achievement of council objectives

Delivering the Plan

The Council Plan is supported by an overarching Strategic Objectives Implementation Plan and the council's Financial Plan and each department has a Service Plan which sets out how the department will deliver the actions in the Council Plan.

In addition to monitoring progress on the actions set out above, the following measures will also be monitored on a quarterly basis to show how we're progressing in delivering the Council Plan. For further information, the Financial Plan, Council Plan Delivery Plan, Departmental Service Plans and Quarterly Performance Reports on Council Plan progress are available on the Derbyshire County Council website.

Council Plan Measures

Resilient, thriving, and green communities

- Percentage of people supported by Health and Wellbeing coaches with a shared agreement
- Council carbon emissions from all main sources (excluding schools)
- Derbyshire carbon emissions from all sectors

Happy, safe and healthy people

- Average Health Status improvements (physical health, psychological health and quality of life) reported through the Treatment Outcome Profile
- Number of 6-8 week reviews delivered by the 0-19 Public Health Nursing Provider within the timeframe
- Number of New Birth visits delivered by the 0-19 Public Health Nursing provider between 10-14 days
- Number of individuals completing Live Life Better Derbyshire health and Wellbeing MOT
- Number of new people accessing support through a Direct Payment has increased
- Number of people achieving a 4 week Quit through Live Life Better Derbyshire smoking cessation programme
- Number of people following a safeguarding Section 42 enquiry say their outcome has been met
- Number of people participating in Live Life Better Derbyshire's weight management programme
- Number of people participating in physical activity sessions organised by Live Life Better Derbyshire
- Number of people participating in the Live Life Better Derbyshire smoking cessation programme
- Number of people who have been supported through short-term homecare offer and have fully regained their independence
- Percentage of people approaching Adult Social Care who have been supported to retain their independence through early help and signposting
- Proportion of children in care in internal residential provision
- Number of children returned home

- Number of children stepped down
- Children placed in ideal placement type according to their care plan
- Reduction in admissions to care
- Children successfully returned home from care
- Utilisation rate of council foster carers
- Number of council foster carers
- Reduce number of foster carers leaving the council
- Proportion of children living with council foster carers

A strong, diverse, and clean economy

- Number of public electric vehicle charging points installed working with partners
- Number of start-up businesses supported
- Percentage of household waste recycling rate
- Residual household waste (kg per household)

Great places to live, work and visit

- Number of carers accessing support services
- Number of people killed or seriously injured on the council's road network
- Timeliness of Education, Health and Care needs assessments
- Reduction in tribunals and appeals relating to Education, Health and Care plans
- Increase in parental satisfaction for school services for children with special educational needs and disabilities
- Road defect response times
- Percentage of Principal roads where maintenance should be considered
- Percentage of Non-principal classified roads where maintenance should be considered
- Percentage of the Unclassified road network where maintenance should be considered

High quality public services

- Percentage of residents who are satisfied with Derbyshire County Council
- Percentage of residents agreeing that they feel informed about council decisions
- Percentage of residents agreeing that the council provides value for money
- Achievement of in year budget savings
- Amount of money raised from the disposal of council land and buildings
- Time to hire (Days between a job vacancy shortlisting and contract offer)
- Sickness as a percentage of available working hours

- Monitor quality of Care Homes (18-64) across Derbyshire - percentage of offer that is outstanding/ good
- Monitor quality of Care Homes (65+) across Derbyshire - percentage of offer that is outstanding/ good
- Monitor quality of Home Care across Derbyshire - percentage of offer that is outstanding/ good

Have Your Say

Our Council Plan has been informed by engagement with service users, residents and communities, in particular through our Annual Residents Survey, Your Council Your Voice. We would very much welcome your views on the Plan.

If you would like to discuss any part of it, are interested in getting involved, have any comments or require more information then please contact:

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