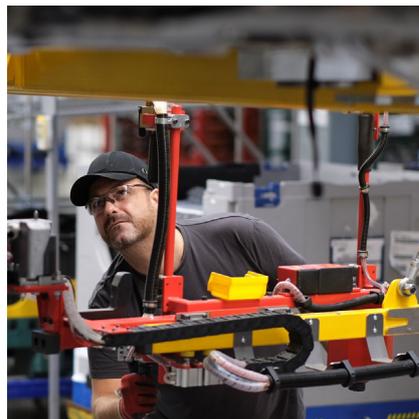


DRAFT FOR ENGAGEMENT MARCH 2026

Recalibrating Warwickshire

Warwickshire County Council
Council Plan 2026-30



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Recalibrating Warwickshire

On behalf of Warwickshire County Council, I am proud to introduce Recalibrating Warwickshire - our plan to deliver improvement for the people of Warwickshire.

This council has many strengths; staff who are talented and committed, stable public services and a county that is one of the best places in the UK to live, work and start a family. But we also face several major challenges:

- Rising demand for children's services and adult social care.
- A SEND system under pressure, with families often feeling let down.
- Roads and infrastructure that are struggling to keep pace with growth of local areas
- Layers of bureaucracy, targets and form-filling that add cost but don't improve outcomes
- A cost-of-living squeeze on residents and local businesses, with financial pressures and costs continuing to soar
- A council finance system overly reliant on borrowing, continuous council tax rises in an economy of never-ending pressure on families' household budgets.

Our residents are being asked to pay more and more each year. At the same time, many feel they get less in return. That is not sustainable - for you, or for us.

This plan sets out how we will recalibrate Warwickshire, to make sure that the people of Warwickshire get a better deal.

We will:

- Put residents of our county and their interests first in everything that we do. From planning decisions to how we allocate school places and design social care, we will fight for the best interests of local people.
- Scrutinise ourselves by cutting waste and needless red tape and bureaucracy, and reviewing every contract to ensure value for money
- Support residents who need help to make sure they don't get left behind. We will do this by putting a new focus on prevention, personal responsibility and early intervention instead of crisis management to reduce the likelihood of an individual needing more expensive care in later life.
- Build stronger communities through new town and parish councils, safer streets, better-maintained roads and visible improvements to our towns, villages, high streets and our countryside. Our towns and villages are the lifeblood of our economy, heritage and culture and we must do all we can to support them.

We will do this while keeping council tax increases as low as possible, to recognise the financial pressures faced by all the residents of Warwickshire, always remembering that every pound we spend needs to deliver for you, the taxpayer.

You will also see a different tone and approach from the Council

- We will focus on clear, common-sense outcomes.
- We will review previous commitments on Net Zero and climate “emergencies”, with a view to replace them with a practical environment and energy plan that delivers real benefits for Warwickshire - lower bills, cleaner rivers and less flooding.
- We will make sure that we meet our legal obligations, but we will remove unnecessary form filling and box ticking exercises.
- We will talk openly and proudly about personal responsibility, the limits of what the Council can and what it should do, while championing the importance of strong families and local communities.

This is a live document. We will keep ‘Recalibrating Warwickshire’ under regular review and update it as needed, through transparent decisions taken in public.

Our ambition is straightforward:

To make sure that Warwickshire is a place where local business can flourish, families can thrive and where children have the best chance in life. Above all, we want Warwickshire to be a place where residents know that their council is doing all it can to make them safer, healthier and wealthier.



Cllr George Finch
Leader of Warwickshire County Council



Monica Fogarty
Chief Executive, Warwickshire County Council

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Our Council Plan

The Council Plan sets out our purpose and direction for our residents, partners, businesses and staff.

Aligned to our Medium-Term Financial Strategy and supported by key strategies it sets the high-level policy direction for the whole organisation.

The Council Plan should be read alongside the Council Delivery Plan which translates the mission into a set of short-term objectives and the actions we will take over a rolling two-year programme. Progress towards these outcomes will be measured by our Performance Management Framework.

This Plan covers a period of profound change for local government in Warwickshire. It sets out the priorities which we will focus on and our commitment to doing all we can to help Warwickshire achieve its potential over the next four years.

The new Council Plan means that residents, partners, businesses and investors will know where the Council is heading, what we stand for and how you will know that the Plan has been successfully delivered.

To reach as many people as possible, the Council Plan is also available in digital and easy to read versions..

Links:

Medium-Term Financial Strategy
Performance Management Framework

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Plan on a page

Our mission:



Improve services



Build new, better local government



Transform for the future

MISSION CRITICAL

Our areas of focus:

People



Happy, healthy and safe children



Healthy, happy and independent lives



Educational opportunities, sufficient places and SEND

Places



Economy, growth, jobs and skills



Highways and transport



Vibrant places safe communities and environment

Fit for the future

Our areas of Focus are underpinned by four common goals:



Value for money



Optimising technology and innovation



Driving community power



Being a great employer

Delivery and impact

We will ensure delivery through our:



Council Delivery Plan



LGR Implementation Plan



Value for money programme

We will measure impact through the:



Performance Management Framework

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Our Mission

Our Mission to 2030 is clear and simple:

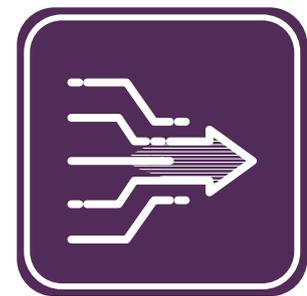
Improve services; build a new, better form of local government for Warwickshire; and transform for the future.



Improve services



Build new, better local government



Transform for the future

Our Council Plan is set against the context in which we are operating. It focuses on delivering high-quality services while navigating a complex environment of financial pressures, rising demand for statutory services, economic challenges, the opportunities and risks of technological change, key national policy developments and major Government reforms in how local government is structured.

Over the next four years we must achieve three things simultaneously:

- Improve the quality of the Council services we deliver and their value for money.
- Ensure a smooth transition to new local government structures by April 2028, maintaining, enhancing and then transforming service delivery and standards through devolution and public service reform.
- Create opportunities for everyone to have a brighter future, working with partners, business and communities to shape new and innovative solutions to the big social, economic and environmental opportunities and challenges we face.

The sections below set out **why** this is our approach, **what** we will focus on; and **how** we will make it happen.

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Our rationale Why we need a Plan

Our county and council face unprecedented challenges and opportunities. Rising demand for critical services, growing financial pressures and national reforms mean we must act now to improve services, prepare for the significant change ahead and transform for the future. There are major opportunities through technology and digital innovation to transform the way we work, improving key outcomes and supporting our ambition to devolve more power and resources to Warwickshire. We must make the most of those opportunities for Warwickshire, to deliver better outcomes for our residents, communities and businesses.

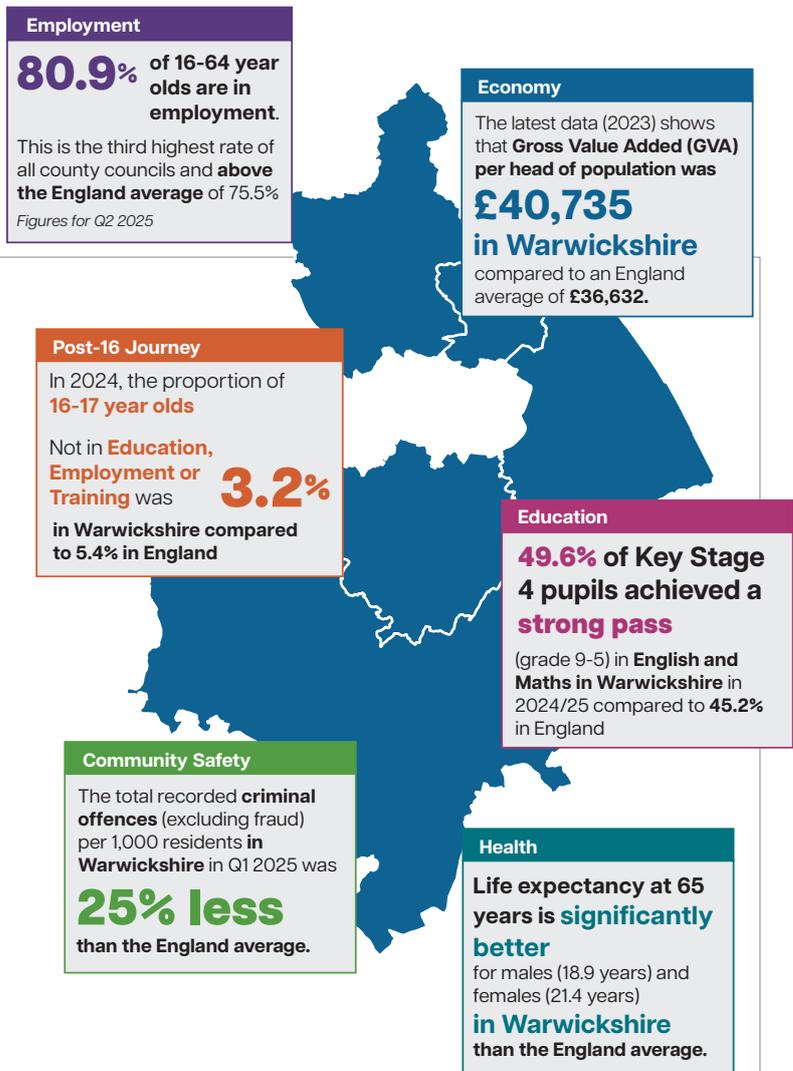


Improving services

Local government services are under increasing strain. Demand continues to rise far more quickly than available resources, particularly in high-cost areas such as Children’s and Adult Social Care, Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Home to School Transport, creating unsustainable financial pressures.

Communities across Warwickshire have diverse and evolving needs, meaning that the challenges they face across the full range of life outcomes differ across the county. This requires flexible, targeted and responsive services which are tailored to the places and the people we serve.

The diagram highlights some of these areas and Our State of Warwickshire report 2025 provides further insight and detail on this.



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Despite the long-term nature of these challenges, there is an opportunity to act and make a difference now, improving services and value for money, focusing on our priority outcomes while stopping unnecessary activity, and ensuring we are in the best possible position for future change.



Building a new, better local government structure for Warwickshire

The Government is driving Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) across all remaining two-tier areas (areas with both county and district/borough councils), which is likely to create one or two new unitary councils in Warwickshire by April 2028. This is a reality and represents the most significant change for local government in a generation.

This Plan recognises that LGR will be a key priority over the next two years and beyond. As Warwickshire's councils navigate this complex transition and embed the new arrangements service continuity for residents and stability for staff will be essential.

We are clear that the new structure will combine the best of the county, district and borough councils' services and capabilities, building on our existing strong relationships. We will work constructively and enthusiastically to build this new local government structure for Warwickshire, and make sure it delivers better services and improves longer-term outcomes for people.



Transforming for the future

Warwickshire has a strong record of ambitious reform focused on early intervention, prevention and integration. As a national pathfinder for Families First for Children, the Council is reshaping children's social care, in addition to improving SEND provision, strengthening education and skills, and working with partners to deliver integrated, community-based approaches that support resilient communities and sustainable economic growth.

However, rising demand, limited resources and growing complexity mean public services must work differently. National reforms and local government reorganisation present a strong opportunity to strengthen collaboration and create integrated, preventative services that put residents at their heart - improving outcomes, strengthening communities, and expanding life opportunities across Warwickshire.

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Our areas of focus

We have distilled our priorities for improvement into six Areas of Focus, focused on People and Places, which bring greater focus and direction to our work and allow us, through the Council Delivery Plan, to drill down into the actions we will take to improve services.

Our Areas of Focus are:



People

- Happy, healthy and safe children.
- Healthy, happy and independent lives.
- Educational opportunities, sufficient places and SEND services.



Places

- Economy, growth, jobs and skills
- Highways and transport.
- Vibrant places, safe communities and environment.



Our Areas of Focus are underpinned by four common goals which support our transformation for the future:

- Improving value for money.
- Optimising technology & innovation.
- Driving Community Power.
- Being a great employer.

The Areas of Focus sit alongside our commitment to ensuring a smooth transition to a new form of local government for Warwickshire and wider Public Service Reform to deliver better outcomes for people and places over the longer-term.

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Our Outcomes 2026-30



People



Happy, healthy and safe children

The outcome we want to achieve: Warwickshire is a great place to grow up, where children and young people, especially the most vulnerable are kept safe and supported to stay with their families or live close to home in high quality care. All children and young people will have access to the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing support they need to thrive, and children will achieve a good level of development by the time they start school.

The key strategies that will address this outcome:

Child Friendly Warwickshire 2030, Best Start in Life Plan, Youth Justice Plan, Children in Care Placement Sufficiency Plan, Child Poverty Strategy.

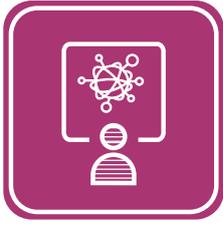


Healthy, happy and independent lives

The outcome we want to achieve: Adults in Warwickshire are enabled to live independently and in good health for longer, with reduced health inequalities and improved life expectancy. Through an integrated social care service residents are supported by preventive mental and physical health services, strong safeguarding and recovery support, financial and digital inclusion, effective carer support, and accessible services for the most vulnerable.

The key strategies that will address this outcome:

Adult Social Care Strategy 2029, Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2026-31 Autism and ADHD Transformation Plan.



Educational opportunities, sufficient places and SEND

The outcome we want to achieve: Children and young people in Warwickshire are supported from early years through to adulthood to attend and thrive in education. They will achieve their potential; developing skills for life and work; and fulfil their aspirations regardless of background. Children's special educational needs are met within a high quality and financially sustainable system that meets the County's current and future needs.

The key strategies that will address this outcome:

Education Strategy 2029, Education Sufficiency Plan, SEND Strategy.



Economic growth, jobs and skills

The outcome we want to achieve: Warwickshire has a strong and competitive economy where priority sectors are growing, innovation is increasing and inward investment is rising. More residents are supported into better paid employment and the county has a skilled workforce that is aligned to future needs. This in turn continues to drive a world-class visitor economy that maximises the county's heritage, culture and tourism assets.

The key strategies that will address this outcome:

Economic Growth Strategy, Employment & Skills Strategy.



Highways and Transport

The outcome we want to achieve: Warwickshire is connected by a modern and resilient transport network that supports economic vitality, improves journey reliability and road safety, and enhances quality of life for all residents. Infrastructure and assets are optimised for the benefit of residents and business.

The key strategies that will address this outcome:

Local Transport Plan, Highways Asset Management Strategy.



Vibrant places, safe communities and environment

The outcome we want to achieve: Warwickshire's places and communities are safe, well connected and prosperous. Crime and harm are reduced, supported by strong prevention and emergency services. Regeneration and infrastructure activities focus on the areas that need them most. Integrated planning, digital connectivity and targeted investment support sustained growth and opportunity across the county. Warwickshire's communities have access to green spaces and are protected from the impact of flooding.

The key strategies that will address this outcome:

Community Safety Agreement, Community Risk Management Plan, Road Safety Partnership Strategy Sustainable Futures Strategy.



Fit for the future



Improving value for money

We know that how we spend Council money and making sure that every penny counts is important to our residents. The Value for Money programme covers procurement, digital and innovation, workforce, high cost services, optimising use of our assets, public service reform and getting the basics right.

The key strategies that will address this outcome:

Medium Term Financial Strategy, Procurement Strategy, Our People Strategy, Digital & Data Strategy.



Optimising technology & innovation

Technology and innovation is the way forward, and we are making the most of new opportunities in digital innovation, artificial intelligence and predictive analytics to improve service delivery, reduce costs and strengthen resilience. This approach enhances the Council's value for money and helps address the growing gap between rising demand for statutory services and the resources available to meet that demand.

The key strategies that will address this outcome:

Digital and Data Strategy, Customer Experience.



Driving Community Power

We believe that communities, with their knowledge, skills, and assets, are best placed to respond to the challenges they face. The Council will involve communities in decision-making, work alongside them to take practical action, and empower them to lead. Our library network will sit at the heart of a community-powered Warwickshire, putting this approach into action.

The key strategies that will address this outcome:
Creating Opportunities in Warwickshire, Voluntary & Community Sector.



Being a great employer

We want to create a high-performance culture for our workforce, ensuring we have the right people, in the right place, and with the right skills to deliver for Warwickshire. Our talented people are enabled to deliver, develop and thrive.

The key strategies that will address this outcome:
Our People Strategy.

Our Key Objectives 2026-30



People



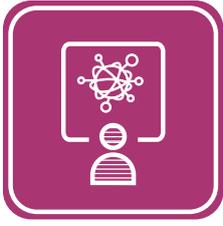
Happy, healthy and safe children

- Restore trust and confidence by embedding a proactive, multiagency approach, integrating the pathfinder model, early help, voluntary and community sector engagement, and strong advocacy for our children and families.
- Evolve family support hubs by creating a multifaceted outreach offer that supports families across all areas of Warwickshire.
- Support children and young people's emotional wellbeing by ensuring access to timely physical and mental health support that helps them stay happy, healthy and resilient.
- Deliver better outcomes and improve placement stability for children by increasing allowances for mainstream foster carers to recognise their contribution and incentivise more foster carers to work with WCC.
- Deliver better outcomes for children in care, improve value for money and focus resource where it can make the most difference by embedding and expanding the number of Council-run children's homes.
- Support adolescents who are at the greatest risk of exploitation or entering the youth justice system or disengaged from education by targeting support and intensive, multiagency help.
- Grow a skilled and experienced workforce by investing in internal development pathways, including apprenticeships for social workers and youth workers, to ensure families receive the support they need.
- All children and young people will have access to the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing support they need to thrive, and children will achieve a good level of development by the time they start school.



Healthy, happy and independent lives

- Embed prevention, health and wellbeing across the Council to achieve better outcomes for residents, by integrating these principles into every aspect of policy, planning and service delivery.
- Promote healthier lifestyles, for all ages, including increased physical activity, healthy diets, reduced smoking and lower alcohol use.
- Reduce inequalities in health outcomes and improve life expectancy and healthy life expectancy by acting on the wider determinants of health and by targeting and prioritising actions where gaps are the greatest.
- Reduce the need for hospital or long-term care by supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged adults to live independently and in good health by building on their strengths.
- Improve wellbeing for those most in need by ensuring they have access to essential services and support, including targeted action to address food poverty through the Warwickshire Food Forum.
- Deliver an integrated approach to mental and physical health across the county by working with partners to develop integrated neighbourhood teams.
- Support the most economically vulnerable by targeting help and support and promoting financial and digital equality.
- Help people's recovery and access to services by supporting and safeguarding those in receipt of care
- Improve the wellbeing of informal carers by ensuring they are reached and supported effectively, through carers support and by services working in partnership to provide tailored information, advice, guidance and support



Educational opportunities, sufficient places and SEND

- Enable all young children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, to be school ready and able to reach their full potential by supporting early years providers.
- Enable children to have skills for life and be well prepared for the workplace by supporting them to attend school and achieve at all levels of learning.
- Ensure provision of sufficient early years and school places to meet the demographic needs of the county.
- Improve educational achievement and social mobility, with a particular focus on improving outcomes in areas of the county where attainment is lower by working with local universities and other partners.
- Deliver better outcomes for children with special educational needs and disabilities by building on relationships with parents, carers and learners and transforming our SEND provision.
- Deliver long term financial sustainability by reviewing Home to School Transport eligibility to align with statutory requirements.
- Creating opportunities for young people by improving access to apprenticeships, skills and trades.



Place



Economic growth, jobs and skills

- Increase employment opportunities and raise salary levels by supporting business growth and investing in priority economic sectors, including through the Warwickshire Investment Fund.
- Improve life opportunities, by supporting residents from vulnerable groups, including those with learning disabilities and autism, into fulfilling employment
- Grow high value sectors by creating the conditions for innovation and inward investment and promoting Warwickshire nationally and internationally as a great place to do business
- Create well paid jobs and develop the future skills needed by our businesses and priority economic sectors, by using funding devolved to Warwickshire to support growth and deliver a new skills strategy.
- Grow Warwickshire's visitor and tourism economy by strengthening the benefits of the county's heritage and cultural assets and legacy.



Highways and Transport

- Enhance the quality of life for all residents and support the county's economic vitality through the delivery of a modern and resilient transport network.
- Improve the condition of the county's roads through delivery of the road renewal programme and long term highways asset management strategy, supported by the latest technologies.
- Reduce the impact of winter weather on our roads through strong winter services.
- Ensure maintenance and investment decisions around our highway network support the needs of all users, including motorists.
- Reduce peak-time congestion on key corridors across Warwickshire and improve journey reliability for commuters, freight and public transport users through the implementation of innovative solutions and the delivery of the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan.
- Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Warwickshire's roads by prioritising road safety.
- Use our influence to improve and expand the public bus network and services to better serve rural communities across the county.
- Improve rural connectivity between our towns and villages with appropriate cycling infrastructure, that in is in keeping with the existing natural environment.
- Improve access for all users by maintaining the public rights of way and bridleway networks.



Vibrant places and safe communities and environment

- Create safer communities by reducing crime, domestic abuse, child exploitation and youth violence across the county, through our Crime Awareness and Prevention Programme which strengthens transparency and supports residents to stay safe.
- Tackle domestic abuse by building on existing work with survivors and perpetrators and including fathers in creating safe family environments.
- Create prosperity and expand opportunities for growth in places with the lowest social mobility, by promoting and supporting regeneration and delivering key regeneration programmes in the county's main towns.
- Strengthen community safety and resilience through effective delivery of Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service's Community Risk Management Plan via prevention, protection and response activity, and supporting staff by minimising contamination risk and providing a robust wellbeing offer.
- Support housing and employment growth by ensuring new developments are fully integrated with essential infrastructure, services and transport links, informed by detailed infrastructure plans and the timely delivery of transport modelling.
- Improve access to digital connectivity by rolling out full fibre and 5G coverage, prioritising hard to reach and rural areas.
- Increase the availability of new homes, commercial space and supporting infrastructure across the county by creating opportunities for investment through the Warwickshire Property and Development Group and Develop Warwickshire joint venture.
- Protect our green spaces, by enhancing biodiversity and nature recovery and developing environmental infrastructure.
- Increase the number of properties better protected from the impact of flooding through environmental improvements and support for energy costs.
- Improve waste recycling rates.
- Promote and protect the county's waterways as a desirable setting for residents, visitors and businesses.

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Fit for the future



Improving value for money

- Improve financial efficiency and strengthen commercial performance by delivering our Value for Money Programme which involves reviewing high value contracts, expanding income opportunities, delivering efficiency savings and optimising use of our assets
- Increase productivity and reduce costs across the Council by modernising and digitising operations through a refreshed Digital & Data Strategy, with clear investment and delivery priorities, reduced agency spend and targeted workforce development.
- Achieve major service transformation and long-term public service reform by delivering key transformation programmes.
- Maximising the potential of our assets including strengthening the commercial contribution of our country parks.



Optimising technology & innovation

- Improve services, manage demand more effectively, boost staff productivity and wellbeing, and achieve savings by exploiting digital technologies.
- Improve outcomes, strengthen prevention and reduce costs by redesigning services using evidence, data and insight to predict and target where they can make the greatest difference.
- Provide a consistently positive customer experience by making it easy to access our information and services.
- Improve service delivery by using simple, clear and integrated technologies and digital innovation.



Driving Community Power

- Improve social infrastructure and outcomes in the most deprived parts of the county by working with communities to expand the Creating Opportunities programme.
- Strengthen community voice and leadership by embedding Community Powered Warwickshire; enabling communities to shape decisions; lead local initiatives; and work alongside the Council to take practical action that creates an interactive social fabric map of community assets including libraries, cultural and heritage services.
- Align and embed Creating Opportunities, Community Power and Public Service Reform within the Council and with partners through a cross-cutting programme of activity.



Being a great employer

- Ensure the Council has the talent and future skills it needs, while reducing agency spend and adapting to the impact of Artificial Intelligence, by embedding strategic workforce planning across the organisation.
- Grow and develop local talent across all services by increasing apprenticeships and expanding development pathways, working in partnership with schools, colleges and other local organisations.
- Attract and retain the very best talent by being a great employer with a positive culture, engaging leadership and modern and efficient HR processes,
- Reduce sickness absence by supporting staff wellbeing, managing performance effectively, and providing the right support for colleagues.

How we get things done

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We will ensure delivery through our:



Council Delivery Plan



LGR Implementation Plan



Value for money programme



Performance Management framework

We will measure impact through the:

Medium Term Financial Strategy -The Council Plan sits alongside our rolling five-year Medium Financial Strategy (MTFS), ensuring the Council's funding supports our Recalibrating Warwickshire priorities.

Strategy framework -The Council Plan is supported by a number of core strategies, which set out the strategic direction for our key service areas, alongside plans for specific places and communities.

Council Delivery Plan - This Plan should be read alongside the Council Delivery Plan. This rolling two-year plan sets out the key actions and deliverables for us to achieve the ambitions in this Recalibrating Warwickshire plan.

This plan will bring together in one place, the LGR implementation, Value for Money and Public Service Reform activity.

Performance management framework (PMF) - Performance against the objectives and deliverables within the Council Plan and CDP will be measured both through the Council's performance framework which will be updated to reflect the Government's new Local Outcomes Framework for local government. For our main programmes and projects, we will set baseline benefits and track their impact.