

Leicester's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027 (draft)

Foreword

I am pleased to introduce our Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Leicester, which reflects the ambitions and priorities of the city's Health and Wellbeing Board.

Leicester is a vibrant and diverse city in which to live and work, but there are complex health challenges that need addressing. We aim to reduce health inequalities and improve the quality of life and life expectancy of residents, particularly those who are from lower socio-economic groups, and seldom heard communities.

This strategy was originally published in late 2019, before any of us had heard of COVID-19. Leicester has been hit particularly hard, being the first place to go into local lockdown in summer 2020 and having relatively high levels of coronavirus infection throughout. The coronavirus pandemic has affected people differently, with those with lower socio-economic status linked to housing and lower-paid jobs or unemployment showing higher rates of coronavirus infection, hospitalisation and deaths than the general population. These differences have been seen in levels of coronavirus infections, numbers of hospitalisations, and deaths as well as other impacts such as the economic effects. School bubbles having to close and children missing schooling has affected all children to an extent, but again children from more deprived areas have missed more school due to higher levels of coronavirus infection in the community and more frequent school bubble closures.

Many people in the city will have been personally affected by the grief of losing loved ones to coronavirus and we offer you our sincere condolences for your losses. We acknowledge that many people's lives will have been changed forever by the pandemic.

This strategy looks beyond the remit of healthcare alone and focusses on improving the health and wellbeing of Leicester's residents over the next five years. We are also looking to reduce the impact of unfair differences in health and wellbeing, known as health inequalities. These were already present in our city, as they are nationally and around the world. However the coronavirus pandemic has made many of these health inequalities more visible, and in some cases will have made these inequalities worse. In this strategy, we will set out our intention to use our local assets such as parks, waterways, leisure centres and museums and theatres to support health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities. We will also work to make the city environment, including buildings and open spaces, as advantageous to good health and wellbeing as possible.

When this strategy was initially developed it was a time of financial pressure which was being felt across all sectors and organisations. We are now faced with the complex nature of a city and country trying to recover from the effects of a pandemic as well as restoring services.

Delivering this ambitious strategy will depend on a co-ordinated and collaborative approach between all partners, including the local authority, health and social care, local businesses and the voluntary and community sector. This approach may not be without its challenges, but we believe that working together is the best way to have a long-lasting, positive impact on the health of our city's residents as we all work to move into a recovery phase whilst the pandemic remains an ever present reality. During the pandemic, the people of Leicester demonstrated enormous community spirit to support one other. It is this drive and determination that will contribute to the delivery and success of the strategy.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this strategy, a strategy which represents an important step in improving the health and wellbeing of Leicester's residents. Together, we can continue to make this city a great place to live, work and socialise as we continue the recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

Councillor Vi Dempster, Assistant City Mayor - Health

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Our approach

Our Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy was originally published in 2019 and set out the health priorities for Leicester. This updated strategy provides details of the Health and Wellbeing Board's vision until 2027 and is supported by a set of priorities which will evolve further into a delivery plan.

When the strategy was first published none of us knew that the world was about to change dramatically. The coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic was to affect our lives in ways that we could not have imagined.

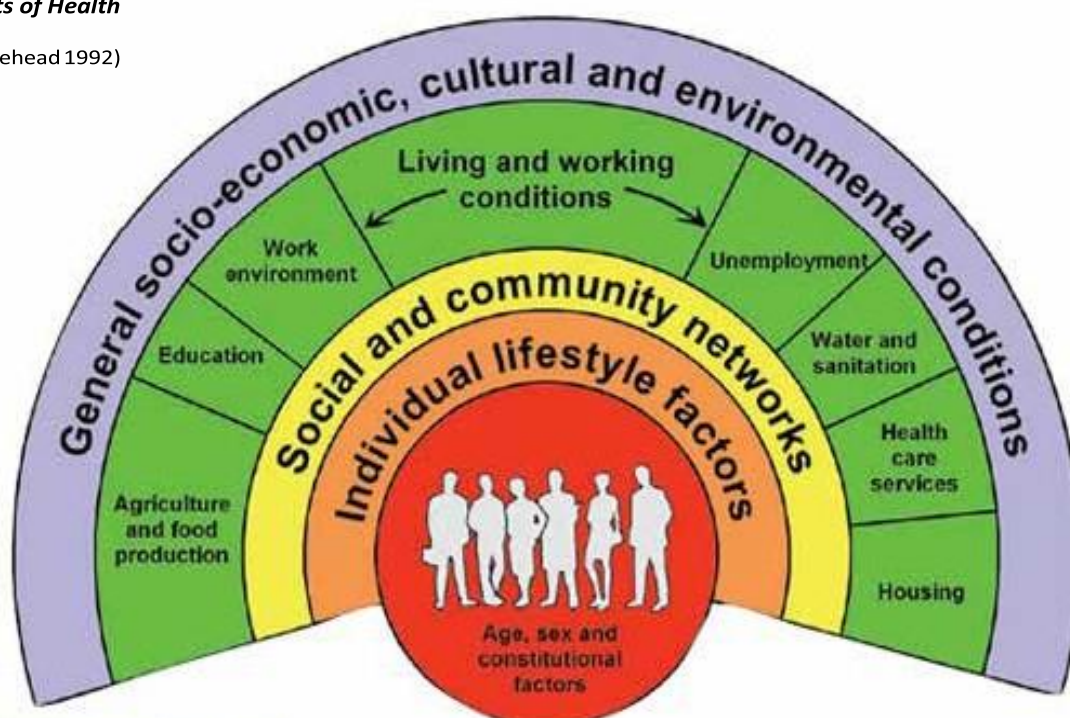
Leicester and its people have been subject to some form of coronavirus related restrictions since March 2020, with a considerable period under a local lockdown to try and curb coronavirus infection levels in the summer of 2020. The pandemic has affected people unequally, with differences seen in levels of infection, serious illness and death based on people's ethnicity, and living and working conditions. For example, some people with lower paid jobs were unable to work from home and therefore at greater risk of acquiring and dying from the infection. Another example of those disproportionately affected include those living in overcrowded and poor-quality housing. These factors are beyond people's individual control, and Covid has further exacerbated the struggles that people face due to them.

The issues identified as important by the people of Leicester in 2019 have not gone away. There will have been differences in people's experiences of life during the coronavirus pandemic. This updated strategy is a 'call to action' to tackle the origins of ill health in our city alongside our recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, by fostering a shared approach to protecting health and wellbeing with local organisations and communities.

Evidence shows that simply increasing access to health, care and wellbeing services will not adequately address health needs or improve the wellbeing of Leicester's residents. We need to have a more rounded approach to addressing health challenges, by considering the broad factors that determine a person's health and wellbeing, such as people's unique characteristics, their environment, communities and relationships. The image below illustrates how general socio-economic, cultural and environmental factors can interact to determine a person's health and wellbeing.

The Determinants of Health

(Dahlgren and Whitehead 1992)



A range of community and faith groups have been integral parts of Leicester's response to the pandemic, supporting local residents with practical support such as delivering food or medicines, and working to support vaccination pop-up clinics in community venues. By drawing on the existing resources of partners and communities and building on the relationships that have developed over the course of the pandemic, we can work together to provide innovative and wide-ranging solutions to the city's complex health and wellbeing needs.

Local organisations are working together on these solutions. We have a new Health Inequalities Framework, which sets out the ways that the NHS, local government and community and voluntary sector organisations will work together to reduce unfair and avoidable differences in wellbeing experienced by people in Leicester. There will be a new delivery plan that will be developed together with different communities across Leicester to come up with local solutions for issues that affect the physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of our residents.

Overview

Our vision: To give everyone in Leicester the opportunity to achieve and maintain good mental and physical health throughout their whole life.

Our joint health and wellbeing strategy sets out the plan of Leicester's Health and Wellbeing Board, which consists of a range of organisations working in partnership to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Leicester. The health and wellbeing strategy is supported by a new delivery plan for Leicester. The strategy and delivery plan together make up the place-led plans for Leicester, which sit within Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland's Integrated Care System. Integrated Care Systems are a partnership of health, care and wellbeing organisations working over a larger area. The delivery plan identifies priorities and actions to help achieve the overarching ambitions of Leicester's health and wellbeing strategy. Examples of actions are highlighted throughout the strategy. Other strategies and plans across the city have been considered within this process, with recognition given to their contributions to progressing specific objectives.

Why does Leicester need a Health and Wellbeing Strategy?

There are significant health inequalities between different areas within Leicester. The city has many areas of deprivation, and the difference in health outcomes between the most and least deprived areas of the city is stark. These differences have also been seen in the levels of coronavirus infection and deaths in different areas, as well as the wider impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

There is a seven-year difference in life expectancy between men living in the most and least deprived areas of the city. Those living in the most deprived areas of Leicester will live more years in poor health than those in the least deprived. Reducing this inequality within our city can only be achieved by focusing on those in greatest need and working with them to reduce the many different factors that may have a negative influence on their health and wellbeing.

The coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has and continues to have a major impact on people. Food poverty increased in 2020. People in lower paid roles or with zero hours contracts were facing greater financial instability. Those whose employers could not fund time off work for self-isolation or those who were not eligible for financial support to isolate may have found themselves having to work regardless to be able to feed their family. Children from disadvantaged families, and children of black and minority ethnicities lost more learning time due to lockdowns and self-isolation than those

from wealthier areas. Carers of all ages will have found themselves under greater strain as a result of lockdowns.

One of the main aims of this strategy and its delivery plan is to reduce health inequalities. These are unfair and avoidable differences in health due to a range of factors as set out in the diagram on The Determinants of Health.

No matter where we live, our health behaviours are influenced by our wider environment. Behaviours such as smoking, excessive drinking, drug use, poor diet and inactivity are greater in many parts of our city than they should be. This leads to a poorer quality of life, a shorter life expectancy overall and to an increase in rates of heart disease, cancer and respiratory disease, the leading causes of death in the city.

Around 48,500 people in Leicester are living with more than one long term physical or mental health condition. In Leicester, 25% of people living with diabetes have five or more additional health conditions, and 35% of those living with depression have three or more additional health conditions.

There is a clear link between people's mental and physical health. When a person is struggling with poor mental health, their physical health is likely to suffer too, and vice versa. People with poor mental health are more likely to engage with unhealthy behaviours and poor lifestyle choices, contributing to premature death. In Leicester it is estimated that between 34,000 and 38,000 people live with a common mental health problem such as depression or anxiety, and around 3,400 people live with an enduring mental health condition, such as schizophrenia or bi-polar disorder.

Approximately 30,000 people are socially isolated in the city. Social isolation and loneliness have a direct negative impact on mental and physical health and can make existing health problems worse. This impacts on people of all ages, particularly older people, but this is becoming increasingly common amongst younger people aged 16 -24 years.

These key issues affecting the health of people in Leicester will be some of the core themes of this strategy.

[Our ambition for Leicester](#)

We have grouped our ambitions for Leicester under five themes, which are shown in the diagram below. For each theme, we describe the challenges and the work we are already doing to tackle the issues and set out what we are planning to do.

These themes align with the priorities of the wider Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care System. Integrated care systems are partnerships that bring together the NHS services with local authorities (councils) and other local partners to collectively plan health and care services to meet the needs of their population.



THEME 1: HEALTHY PLACES

Ambition: To make Leicester the healthiest possible environment in which to live and work

A healthy place promotes good health and alleviates and prevents health inequalities. It has green and open spaces, leisure facilities, libraries and museums. The air is clean, fit to breathe, there are low levels of unemployment and insecure work, and homes are of a decent standard. There are good choices with easy access to healthy food and opportunities to exercise regularly and travel by bike or on foot. A healthy place offers a sense of community, safety and inclusiveness.

Our environment has an impact on our quality of life, our health and our life expectancy. People living in environments with increased air and noise pollution with little to no green space, or who are working in low-paid, insecure occupations with few opportunities for social mobility, are those who generally have poorer health and lower than average life expectancy.

Key issues affecting the local environment in Leicester:

Air quality and transport	Half of Leicester residents are concerned about air quality. Motor vehicles are the greatest contributor to air pollution in the city. With less people driving during the pandemic, the air quality in Leicester improved.
Health and Care Services	Leicester's people often have to tell their story more than once to different health and care agencies. Covid-19 has impacted access to health and care services, and waiting lists for diagnosis and treatment have increased.
Housing and the built environment	One in five households in Leicester are overcrowded, rising to two in five if they have children. With people spending more time working from home, it is even more important that housing is of good quality. Further, the fuel poverty rate in Leicester is among the highest in England
Mental Health	It is estimated that between 34,000-38,0000 people in Leicester live with a common mental health problem such as depression or anxiety. Covid-19 has further exacerbated mental health and wellbeing problems in our population.

Key things we are doing to make Leicester a healthy place:

Air quality

We are promoting the health benefits of sustainable transport, such as cycling and walking, and improving air quality by working with transport sectors to reduce their impact on the environment. We are endeavouring to keep the clean air levels that were reached when fewer vehicles on the road during the pandemic, through supporting work towards our city being carbon neutral.

Improving access to health and care services

We are improving digital access to care and optimising function through new models of integrated care.

Housing and the built environment

We are ensuring all local authority housing meets decent home standards. By maintaining and improving housing in the public and private sectors we are helping to ensure all properties are safe, healthy places to live in.

Creating mental health friendly communities

We are offering facilities where communities can come together to take part in a wide range of social and cultural activities to benefit their mental and physical wellbeing.

From our Delivery plan:

- Improve air quality by supporting the move towards Leicester becoming a Carbon Neutral city
- Develop shared records across health and social care providers
- Investment into reducing fuel poverty and reviewing housing adaptations for those with the most complex needs
- Create community touch points (businesses, clubs, societies, faith groups, schools and organisations) where local people can reach out for help

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THEME 2: HEALTHY MINDS

Ambition: To promote positive mental health within Leicester across the life course

Good mental health and wellbeing is vital for quality of life and life expectancy. Many people in Leicester experience mental health problems which can contribute to problems loneliness, isolation, and poor physical health. Adverse life experiences such as relationship problems, debt, or bereavement can contribute to poor mental health.

Our mental wellbeing is shaped by childhood experiences. Learning to cope with problems from an early age can prevent mental health problems in later life. It's important to ensure children have emotional support at home and school.

People with poor mental health report the stigma they face from others can exacerbate their problems. In Leicester, we need to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination and work to ensure that mental health is viewed with the same importance as physical health.

Suicide is sometimes linked to poor mental health. It is for us to acknowledge and prevent suicide whenever possible. Deaths by suicide can trigger complex emotions in people who have been bereaved. Offering timely support to those who have been affected is key to our approach. Mental health services in Leicester are widely used. Sometimes people have difficulty accessing timely treatment. Our aim is to ensure wider approaches can be used to support the resilience of people in need.

Key issues affecting mental health in Leicester

Preventing deaths by suicide	Around 30 people die by suicide in Leicester each year. Suicide can be influenced by a complex mix of adverse life experiences, such as relationship breakdown, bereavement, debt, or unemployment
Mental health of children and young people	One in ten children report having a mental health problem; many more say they feel stressed or overwhelmed. Promoting resilience to the stresses of daily life is key to improving children's mental health, as well as having more honest conversations about mental health and wellbeing, free of stigma

Engagement with the local environment

People experiencing poor mental health are less satisfied with their local area and the green space in the city. This impacts on social isolation and happiness

Key things we are doing to encourage healthy minds:

Suicide prevention and support

We are working to prevent death by suicide and supporting people affected by suicide with our Start a Conversation: Suicide is Preventable campaign which focusses on how small actions can save lives.

Mental health of children and young people

We are supporting the mental health of children and young people in the city by providing emotional resilience training in Leicester.

Engagement with the local environment

We are encouraging people to use our parks, open spaces, leisure centres and waterways and supporting their mental wellbeing, by promoting outdoor gyms and encouraging walking and cycling.

Reducing stigmatising behaviour and attitudes around mental health

We are encouraging a wider awareness of mental health by encouraging people to speak out about their experiences of mental health problems.

Examples from our Delivery Plan:

- work with organisations who support young people in their families, schools, and communities to promote positive mental health and combat bullying and loneliness.
- Improve access to mental health and emotional wellbeing services for children and young people
- improve resilience to mental health problems among working age adults and reduce stigma and discrimination by encouraging people to speak out about their experiences of mental health problems.
- Improve access to neighbourhood level mental health services for adults
- promote zero suicides in Leicester through ongoing suicide prevention campaigns across the city.
- improve support for people bereaved or affected by a death by suicide.
- reducing social isolation in older people and adults

THEME 3: HEALTHY START

Ambition:

To give Leicester's children the best start in life.

Having the healthiest possible start in life increases the prospects of positive mental and physical health in the future. There are many factors that influence the health and wellbeing of our children and young people, from the health and lifestyle choices of mothers during pregnancy, the environment in which a child grows up and the education that child receives.

Actions that can be taken in the first few months and years of life to increase a child's likelihood of good health include supporting the mother to breastfeed, ensuring the child is immunised, and supporting the child to develop good communication skills and healthy behaviours such as practising good oral hygiene and exercising regularly. Activities that instil confidence and resilience in children are the key to supporting positive mental health. We also recognise the possible impact of emerging issues such as new technologies, including social media, on the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Key issues affecting children and young people in Leicester:

Early years health	Infant mortality in Leicester is higher than the national average. Risk factors include poor maternal/family lifestyle choices, not breastfeeding and not immunising infants.
Mental health	One in ten children between five and 15 years suffers from poor mental health. This rate has increased through the Covid pandemic. One in four children has a parent at risk of developing a common mental health problem
Healthy eating and exercise	Childhood obesity in Leicester is higher than it is nationally, due to a number of different reasons
Communication	Many children across Leicester have poor communication skills compared to other areas of the country.
Oral health	Leicester has one of the worst rates of children's oral health in the country. This is particularly the case amongst under fives.

Key things we are doing to give children and young people a healthy start:

Reducing infant mortality

We are reducing the risk factors of infant mortality in the city by providing new mothers and families with information and support

Communication skills

Supporting families to improve early communication and use of home language. We are enabling professionals across the wider workforce and the community to promote good communication skills from 0-25.

Physical activity

We are encouraging more school-age children to be physically active by encouraging each school in Leicester to take part in the Daily Mile initiative.

Oral health

We are supporting children and families to develop good oral hygiene from an early age by signing up nurseries and other early year settings to the Healthy Teeth, Happy Smiles programme.

Mental health

We are working with education settings and workplaces to raise awareness and encourage early identification and support for mental health. This approach will support children to remain included within their education setting. Programmes from universal to specialist actively engage children and young people and those who work with them.

From our Delivery plan:

- Give every child the best start in life by focusing on the first 1001 days (from conception to 2 years of age), which is crucial in providing a strong foundation for longer term wellbeing
- Children being ready to play and learn, including supporting early language development
- Reducing the impacts of poverty on children and young people
- Empowering health self-care in families with young children

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THEME 4: HEALTHY LIVES

Ambition:

To encourage people to make sustainable and healthy lifestyle choices

A healthy lifestyle reduces the risk factors linked to developing long term mental and physical health conditions. People with chronic health conditions can manage these risks and prevent their health from becoming worse by making healthy choices.

Some people experience unfair and unjust differences in health and wellbeing due to factors such as ethnicity, poverty, employment. People with a learning disability experience worse health than people without learning disabilities. People with mental health problems also tend to experience worse physical health. Many of these differences in health are avoidable, or things can be done to reduce the impact of these differences; this is something that we wish to work on together for the people of Leicester.

Lifestyle choices such as smoking, excess drinking of alcohol, poor diet and a lack of exercise contribute to around 40% of premature deaths in the city. Poor health choices made in adulthood may also have a negative impact on health in later life.

Environmental factors such as secure employment, a sense of purpose and having meaningful social connections also contribute towards positive health.

Having access to cultural activities, such as museums and theatre and opportunities for learning outside of work, helps overall health and wellbeing throughout our lives, as does feeling part of the local community by having strong relationships with friends, family and faith groups.

Key issues affecting people in Leicester

Chronic conditions

Rates of diabetes are significantly higher in Leicester compared to England, with an estimated 31,000 adults living with diabetes in the city. The number of people living with more than one chronic condition is increasing.

Lifestyle choices

Half of adults in Leicester are overweight or obese. One in ten adults drinks alcohol above the recommended weekly units. One in five adults in Leicester eats the recommended five fruit and vegetables a day and two in five do less than the recommended 150 minutes of exercise a week. Our most vulnerable groups, such as those living in the most deprived areas, are at risk of making poor lifestyle choices.

Mental and physical health

There is a clear link between mental and physical health. People with poor mental health may neglect their physical health and people who are physically unwell may develop poor mental health.

Key things we are doing to help people live healthy lives:

Reducing risk factors for heart disease, lung disease, chronic illnesses and cancer

We are encouraging more people to take up or increase their levels of physical activity through initiatives like Active Leicester and we are supporting people to walk and cycle more. We are encouraging people to eat more healthily through the delivery of the Food Plan and are supporting people to reduce smoking and alcohol consumption.

Reducing diabetes in the city

we are raising awareness of the condition and the importance of early diagnosis, and improving care and timely access to diagnosis, by working as part of Cities Changing Diabetes.

From our Delivery plan:

- Reduce levels of unhealthy weight across all ages
- Increase early detection of heart disease, lung disease and cancer in adults
- Promote independent living for people with long term conditions
- Improving support for carers

THEME 5: HEALTHY AGEING

Ambition: To enable the people of Leicester to age comfortably and confidently

In modern society 'age' can be less about years lived and more to do with subjective health and wellbeing - how we feel inside.

With people living longer, supporting people in retirement is even more important. Protecting our residents' continued health and wellbeing into older age requires them to have a continued sense of purpose. This may be through sharing their expertise, trying something new or giving back to society. Older residents at risk of poverty and those who are frail may need more practical support with healthcare and housing.

Healthy ageing is also about equality. As we age, discrimination can increase. Many older people in Leicester also suffer multiple discrimination, for example being both older and a woman, or older and a person from a minority group.

About 40% of people aged over 65 have a limiting long-term health condition and have a higher risk of developing sensory impairments such as loss of vision. There needs to be early diagnosis of, and effective support for, people with dementia. Older people need appropriate, timely access to the support they need to stay independent for as long as possible.

Supporting older people to manage their wellbeing can involve promoting good lifestyle choices such as a healthy diet, fluid intake exercise, oral health, flu (and other) vaccinations and regular NHS, or other, health checks. Maintaining good mental health in older age is also of key importance, particularly in helping people to cope with social isolation and loneliness.

Key Issues affecting older people in Leicester:

Lifestyle factors	The onset or progress of some health-related conditions can be influenced by lifestyle factors, with those aged 65+ being less likely to undertake the recommended amount of exercise, and more likely to be overweight or obese, and drink above recommendations.
Environmental factors	For some older people living in Leicester it is more difficult to travel independently and/ or access facilities. They are more likely to experience social isolation and loneliness, and may find online communication more difficult.

Mental health

An increasing number of people aged 65+ feel socially isolated and lonely. However, those aged 65+ generally report a higher state of mental wellbeing than people under 65.

Key things we are doing to promote healthy ageing

Managing dementia in the community

We are creating 'dementia friendly' public spaces throughout the city by working with public, private and voluntary sector age-friendly partners

Working towards managing the health of older people living with several long-term conditions

We are encouraging people to make positive changes that will improve their mental and physical health by working with partners to signpost and refer people to relevant lifestyle services.

Empowering older people to live independent lives for longer

We are encouraging older people to practice self-care and independence and improve their own wellbeing by working with partners to implement a model of support.

Examples from our Delivery Plan:

- Enabling the people of Leicester to age comfortably and confidently
- Promoting independence for frail older people
- Reducing the number of falls for people aged 65+ in Leicester City

Engagement and consultation

A variety of sources have informed our ambitions for Leicester's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Initial engagement, consultation and research for the strategy took place in 2019 when the original strategy was published. This was done in three ways:

1. We ran a series of workshops to inform the development of the strategy themes. Stakeholders, partners, and professionals from a range of organisations were invited to make suggestions for improving health and wellbeing in each area.
2. We consulted with authors of existing strategies and plans (including Leicester's Joint Specific Needs Assessments, Leicester's Health and Wellbeing Surveys and Health Needs Neighbourhood Profiles).
3. We carried out an engagement roadshow with several partners to raise the awareness of the strategy, and to give the opportunity for them to comment and input on this draft version.

This strategy has also been through an eight-week public consultation period in 2019, which has given organisations and members of the public a further opportunity to engage with the document and make comments. The revised delivery plan has also been the focus of an engagement process to ensure that our priorities reflect those of the people of Leicester. The delivery plan has been considered in a series of engagement events and opportunities in 2021.

Delivery and monitoring

Leicester's Health and Wellbeing Board is responsible for ensuring that there is a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the city. This strategy will provide focus and direction for the work of the board and of other boards and groups in Leicester. The details of how our objectives will be delivered and measured are set out in our delivery plan and progress will be reviewed and monitored by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Monitoring and delivery of the strategy and delivery plan will be supported by subgroups reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board.