

Leading Better Lives: The Future of Early Action



Health & Wellbeing Board

Date of meeting: 1 October 2026

Lead Director: Kate Galoppi

- Ward(s) affected: All
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1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To provide an update on the Leading Better Lives programme as Leicester's corporate approach to early action and prevention, including setting out the next phase for scaling the programme and taking forward a shared framework focused on improving outcomes, reducing inequalities and supporting people to lead the lives they want to live.
- 1.2. The report outlines the proposed governance arrangements through the Leading Better Lives Programme Board that will ensure co-ownership across the council, NHS partners, the voluntary and community sector and people with lived experience. This will provide strategic leadership and oversight of delivery with the intention of regularly reporting into the Health and Wellbeing Board.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:
 - (a) Note the agreement to adopt Leading Better Lives as Leicester's corporate approach to early action and prevention that will be embedded through a framework comprising of four pillars.
 - (b) Support the ambition to develop Leading Better Lives as a system approach that brings together the Council, NHS, voluntary and community sector and local communities around a shared vision for prevention, wellbeing and independence.
 - (c) Endorse the proposed governance arrangements whereby the Leading Better Lives Programme Board provides strategic leadership and regular reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board for oversight and assurance of the programme delivery.
 - (d) Support the development of a shared Leading Better Lives brand, communications and engagement approach to create a clear and accessible early action offer for residents.
 - (e) Support a system-wide mapping exercise to identify existing services, programmes and initiatives that contribute to early action and prevention and determine how these can align under the Leading Better Lives framework.
 - (f) Encourage partner organisations to identify opportunities for collaborative working, integrated delivery and shared investment in prevention through neighbourhood and place-based approaches.

3. Report

- 3.1 The Leading Better Lives programme has been endorsed as Leicester's overarching approach to early action and prevention, providing a framework in which partners can work collaboratively to improve wellbeing, reduce inequalities and manage future demand on statutory services to support long-term sustainability of public services.
- 3.2 We know in Leicester, levels of deprivation, health inequalities and wider social determinants contribute to people requiring health and care interventions earlier in their life and for longer periods. Addressing these challenges requires a stronger focus on prevention, community resilience and earlier support.
- 3.3 The programme is founded on the principle that by working together we can achieve better outcomes for people. By building stronger communities, improving access to support and focusing on prevention, we can help more people lead the lives they want to live, in good homes and caring communities.
- 3.4 Achieving the ambitions of our early action agenda for Leicester requires a whole system approach. Leading Better Lives provides an opportunity to align activity across the Council, NHS, voluntary and community sector and local communities, recognising that improving outcomes and reducing inequalities is a shared responsibility.
- 3.5 This work also dovetails with the NHS ten-year- plan the development of neighbourhood working. Both place a strong emphasis on prevention, community-based support and integration which create opportunities to coordinate services more effectively around the needs of residents and communities.

Governance

- 3.6 The Leading Better Lives Programme Board has been established to provide strategic leadership across the Council, NHS, VCSE sector and people with lived experience for taking this work forward. It has been agreed that the programme will be delivered under a framework that members of the programme board will co-sponsor and co-produce to make up our early action approach in Leicester. Workstreams will therefore align with the following pillars of the programme framework:
- Community Offer
 - Partnerships
 - Digital Offer and Self-Service
 - Ways of Working
- 3.7 The programme board will look at opportunities to align priorities, commissioning and delivery across the Council as well as system partners to embed prevention and early action as a core principle in how we work together. In doing so, the board will take a holistic view to identify opportunities for alignment, rationalisation and streamlining, ensuring resources are used effectively and duplication is minimised.
- 3.8 Priorities and delivery plans as part of the programme will be aligned with the health, care and wellbeing agenda to ensure early action and prevention is focussed on improving outcomes and reducing inequalities. It is proposed that the Leading Better Lives programme board will report into the Health and Wellbeing Board, ensuring system-wide oversight and accountability of the programme delivery.

Next Steps

- 3.9 The next phase of the programme will focus on undertaking a comprehensive exercise across the Council and wider system to identify existing projects, programmes and initiatives. This will include activity already established through the programme alongside wider activity across Leicester to develop a clearer understanding of current provision and how it aligns with the four pillars of the framework.
- 3.10 Existing initiatives within the programme will continue to be developed and aligned under the agreed framework. This includes monthly community drop-ins which help residents access support and advice closer to home by bringing together council services, health partners and the voluntary and community sector; the Leicester Communities Together information and advice festival becoming a regular annual feature at the Leicester Riverside Festival, and the implementation of our Local Area Coordination scheme to align with neighbourhood health.
- 3.11 Consideration will also be given to opportunities emerging through the programme to date, including strengthening co-production, supporting community-led approaches, increasing use of community assets and spaces, expanding digital inclusion initiatives, developing intergenerational activity, and exploring new opportunities for collaborative working across the Council, health partners and the voluntary and community sector.
- 3.12 The findings will help align activity and strengthen collaboration and integration, reduce duplication, build on existing good practice and identify gaps or opportunities for further development. As part of this work, existing boards, forums, partnerships and governance arrangements will also be reviewed to determine how they can support delivery of the Leading Better Lives agenda and whether opportunities exist to better align existing structures and workstreams.
- 3.13 This exercise will provide the evidence for the next phase to develop the programme, including an implementation plan setting out priorities, actions, delivery arrangements and measures of success. Emerging priorities and delivery plans will be reported through the Health and Wellbeing Board, providing strategic oversight of collaborative working and supporting the embedding of prevention and early action for our city.
- 3.14 The next phase will also inform the development of a clear Leading Better Lives brand and communications approach, creating a recognisable umbrella identity for services, programmes and initiatives that contribute to prevention, wellbeing, independence and community resilience across Leicester.
- 3.15 A clear recognisable brand and communications approach will help residents better understand and access available support, whilst providing a common identity under which existing and future activity can align. This will support greater visibility of Leicester's early action offer, strengthen partnership working, promote consistent messaging across organisations, and create opportunities for coordinated engagement, communications and promotion.

3.16 Support for the programme and consideration of resource implications is required across the Council and wider system to enable programme leadership and development of an implementation plan. This would ensure dedicated resource and infrastructure to take the programme from concept to business as usual whilst also ensuring strong partnership with people and our VCSE is at the heart of the work we do.

4. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

4.1 The leading better lives programme has been co-produced from the outset. An engagement exercise was conducted across the city. A series of workshops were held to analyse the data that was gathered from the engagement exercise which included a proportional split across professionals from statutory organisations, the voluntary and community sector as well as people with lived experience. This has shaped the themes and priorities for developing the programme. All workstreams include representation from system partners, the voluntary and community sector and people with lived experience. This is also reflective at all levels of decision making including the Programme Board.

5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

This is an update report about the Leading Better Lives Programme. The report refers to resource implications that will be required from across the Council for the programme to deliver its objectives. Funding contributions should be brought back in a future update report once they have been confirmed with departments or external partners.

Signed: Mohammed Irfan, Head of Finance

Dated: 16 September 2026

5.2 Legal implications

The report sets out the delivery of the Leading Better Lives Programme, which aims to improve wellbeing, reduce inequalities and support people to lead the lives they want to live.

The programme provides an opportunity to align activity across the Council, NHS, voluntary and community sector and local communities. This recognises that improving outcomes and reducing inequalities is a shared responsibility.

Any future commissioning, procurement, employment, grant funding or partnership arrangements arising from the programme will require appropriate legal advice and support and shall be subject to the Council's governance and decision-making processes.

All commissioned activity must comply with the Public Contract Regulations 2015, the Procurement Act 2023, where applicable, and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Consideration may also need to be given to employment law, subsidy control, governance, data protection and intellectual property requirements.

Legal advice should be sought as and when necessary to ensure that all activities and arrangements arising from the programme are legally compliant.

Signed: M. Nansi

Dated: 22.9.2026

5.3 Equalities implications

Our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires us to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 (sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, age) and those who do not. The Council also has an obligation to treat people in accordance with their Convention rights under The Human Rights Act, 1998.

The Leading Better Lives programme aims to improve wellbeing, independence and outcomes for Leicester residents through a greater focus on early action and prevention. The programme has the potential to deliver positive equalities outcomes by reducing inequalities, improving access to support and promoting inclusive, community-based approaches to service delivery.

The programme has been developed through engagement and co-production with the voluntary and community sectors, partners and people with lived experience. Equality considerations should continue to be embedded as the programme develops, including through the proposed mapping exercise and future implementation plans, to ensure the needs of people with protected characteristics are considered and any potential impacts identified and addressed.

It is recommended that where appropriate, equality impact assessments be undertaken for any future initiatives, service changes or commissioning proposals arising from the programme, to identify any potential adverse impacts and ensure that services are accessible and inclusive to the needs of Leicester's diverse communities. It is important that attention is given to issues such as accessibility, language, digital exclusion and the needs of people who may be less likely to engage with mainstream provision.

Signed: Sukhi Biring, Equalities Officer

Dated: 17 September 2026

5.4 Climate Emergency implications

There are no significant direct climate emergency implications arising from this report. The programme promotes neighbourhood and community-based approaches that can support access to services closer to where people live, helping to minimise travel demand and enabling the use of active and sustainable travel options where journeys are required.

Signed: Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer, Ext 372246

Dated: 18th September 2026

5.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

