



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Strategic Plan

2014 - 2018

treating
people fairly

value
for money

working
together



The Strategic Plan covers the period from 2014 to 2018 and provides a clear statement of the Council's priorities, promises and values. It is designed to be concise but also to encompass key areas of service delivery, agreed Council objectives and statutory requirements. Greater detail as to what and how we plan to achieve these outcomes for each financial year will be published as part of the Council's Delivery Plan.

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Introduction

Nottinghamshire County Council has never before faced such a difficult financial outlook with reducing Government grants and rising need for our services. All of this is against a backdrop of a long period of austerity with many households facing their own financial struggles.

Despite this picture, we still have a budget in excess of £500m per year and remain a key provider of services. The County Council is committed to ensuring that we provide life enhancing services, focusing our efforts on those people who most need our support.

We have a duty to rise to the financial challenge ahead and make sure that we cut our cloth accordingly to our diminishing means. This will involve some very tough choices, considering options that would have been unthinkable just a few years ago.

Our decisions will only be made after listening to your views and we will continue to support the most vulnerable in our society. While we have to make tough decisions, we will strive to make the right ones by being guided by the right values. Within the limits of the reduced amount of money available, we want to build the best possible

future where people develop the right skills to get jobs and ensure that the county's economy gets moving again.

Ensuring that Nottinghamshire thrives is our over-riding ambition: a place where people can achieve a good life for themselves through hard work; a place where vibrant and active communities flourish; a place where public services help improve people's lives and protect the most vulnerable.

Economic Growth will be key to securing this future and we want to ensure that this Council does everything it can to kick-start the economy and give this County the future that its residents and businesses truly deserve.



Councillor Alan Rhodes
Leader of the County Council



Mick Burrows
Chief Executive

Our **vision** for
Nottinghamshire is

**To be a
better place
to live, work
and visit**

Our values

Our plans will be built on three clear values which we will use to guide our decision-making through the years ahead. In working to deliver our plan we will need to be innovative and creative. We will enable our staff, utilising their skills and experience, to find innovative and creative approaches and new ways of working.

Treating people fairly

We will create a culture which treats people fairly and where resources are targeted to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

We will make sure that we focus on improving the lives of those least able to help themselves – the most vulnerable children, young people and adults in our communities.

We also want to make sure that those who need the most support get it so that everyone gets the opportunity to fulfil their potential

We will deliver high standards of customer care and respond to what we hear from our customers.

Value for Money

We have already heard that the amount of money available to spend is reducing considerably. In order to protect front-line services as much as we can, we will need to make sure that every penny is spent wisely and effectively.

Above all though, we have to live within our means. Many of our choices will be forced upon us due to the worsening financial position that we are being placed in.

There is a cost to running any Council but we will continue to make sure that all spend is cost-effective.

Working together

The County Council acts as a community leader for Nottinghamshire and we will work with our partners and residents to ensure we prioritise our resources to get the best for our communities. We will make choices only once we have listened to what communities want and need.

One of the ways that we can also be more efficient is to work more closely with our partners across the public, business and voluntary sector. By joining forces with others we can make sure that we deliver improved outcomes.



Our funding

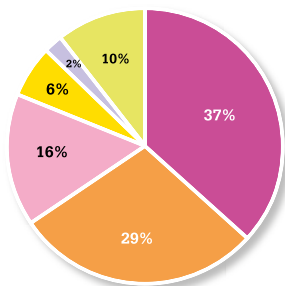
Funding from Central Government has been cut over successive years and this trend looks likely to continue into the future. In the last four years Nottinghamshire County Council has delivered over £100m of savings to deal with cuts in grant and allow for reinvestment in essential frontline services.

The latest Government spending review shows that total Government Grants have reduced from £274m in 2011/12 to £255m in 2013. It's estimated that there will be a further £79m cut to our income over the next 3 years.

The cuts come at the same time as unprecedented demand and spiralling costs for council services for the elderly and vulnerable children, due to people living longer and a substantial increase in the number of children being taken into care. Spending on Adult Social Care and Health and Children's services already accounts for two thirds of the County Council's entire budget.

Over the next 3 years we anticipate the cost for these services to increase further with £37m of pressures affecting the whole Council.

By 2017 the County Council expects to receive in the region of £480m through Council Tax and Government Grants. However it is estimated it will need approximately £634m to deliver all of the services that it currently provides, leaving a funding gap of £154m.



Breakdown of the Council's budget:-

For 2013/14

Care for vulnerable adults and the elderly	£217m
Care and support for young people	£171m
Roads, waste and the environment	£92m
Public Health	£35m
Cultural services, including libraries	£14m
Other services	£61m
Total	£590m

Reducing our costs

We are committed to maximising spend on front-line services to ensure that local people have access to good, value for money services that they want and need. To do this we will strive to be as efficient as possible and minimise our running costs, wherever possible exploiting opportunities to share services with other organisations.

We will get best value from our assets, maximise use of technology and ensure our workforce has the right skills, is empowered to make decisions and actively contributes to the continuous improvement of services.

Specifically we will:

- Review the way we work to ensure that our processes are centred on the customer and are as streamlined as possible
- Improve integration between our services and with other service providers to maximise the use of resources and share costs
- Learn from the expertise of others and be creative in adopting a more commercial approach
- Make use of new technology in order to improve services, increase efficiencies and help our customers access our services in the way that most meets their needs including services on-line
- Develop digital communication channels and platforms which are designed around customer needs and which support the delivery of key transformation programmes
- Continue to maximise value with our suppliers through improved procurement and contract management
- Fully explore the potential to share services with partner organisations in order to maximise value for money
- Actively manage recruitment to ensure that only the most essential posts are filled
- Continue to reduce our office accommodation, freeing up surplus buildings and reducing costs
- Introduce modern working environments and practices to enable our staff to be as effective and efficient as possible whilst reducing costs.
- Explore opportunities to develop the income generating potential of our assets, such as through advertising
- Adopt a more integrated and rigorous performance management system to enable managers to make timely decisions and improve service outcomes

Our priorities

This Strategic Plan sets out what the County Council is planning to achieve, how we will measure our progress and the role we will take to help achieve each outcome. We feel that if we do the right things in the right way, we can prioritise our resources to make a real difference for all our residents.

We have proposed the five Strategic Priorities below; these priorities will be consulted on as part of the wider 'Budget Challenge' consultation process during September and October 2013, before a formal decision is made. We are aware there are key services that our residents really value; we will work to transform these services to ensure they make the most from the available budget.

- Supporting safe and thriving communities
- Protecting the environment
- Supporting economic growth and employment
- Providing care and promoting health
- Investing in our future

These priorities represent what we plan to do, with each service we provide making a contribution to achieving our planned outcomes and through the work we will do in partnership with others.

Priority one

Supporting safe and thriving communities

Having strong communities that are safe and thriving is one of the County Council's top priorities. We can only achieve this by working in partnership with local communities, the police and voluntary sector. We recognise the important contribution made by the voluntary and community sector in Nottinghamshire, both in providing valuable services and ensuring that local communities have a voice. We will continue to provide grant aid to voluntary groups to support the provision of non statutory services which complement our strategic priorities.

Protecting vulnerable children, young people and adults accounts for a large proportion of our budget and is one of our most important areas of work. We will change the ways in which we operate to improve the coordination and effectiveness of our Safeguarding arrangements. Protecting the health of all local people is also a priority, making sure our communities are resilient and any emergency response is coordinated to help keep people safe.

As demands on the road network continue to grow, it is increasingly important to manage the network effectively to enable improved connectivity and ensure the efficient movement of people and goods. We will undertake a thorough review of the condition of our roads and pavements. We will assist more children to be able to walk and cycle to and from school in a safer environment, by reducing the speed limit outside schools to 20 mph.

The safety of wider communities is also a priority and we will ensure that we work closely with the Police & Crime Commissioner to introduce measures that will help reduce crime and the fear of crime.

Finally a safer trading environment and the protection of rights of the consumer and legitimate businesses will continue to be championed. We will innovate and adopt new ways of working, which promote working in partnership with businesses to make Nottinghamshire a fair and safe place to do business.



What we will deliver

outcome

how we will measure progress

role of the Council

The most vulnerable children and adults will be effectively protected and supported

Improve the quality and robustness of our Safeguarding Plans

We will work with our partners from the Police, Health, Education and other agencies to ensure our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub is a success

The public are confident that Nottinghamshire is a safe and secure place to live and work

Improve the perception of how safe people feel in their local area

Work with the Police and Crime Commissioner to reduce crime and the fear of crime

Casualties on Nottinghamshire's roads continue to reduce

Reduce the number killed or seriously injured on Nottinghamshire's roads

We will maintain roads in a serviceable condition and seek to change behaviour through engineering measures, awareness raising and enforcement.

Nottinghamshire is a fair and safe place to do business

Increase the number of partnerships with businesses to support the local economy and help them to trade lawfully

We will champion the rights of the consumer and target our support to protect the vulnerable

The health and safety of local people are protected by organisations working together

A multi-agency plan is agreed to lead a response across partners to health emergencies from infectious diseases, environmental, and chemical hazards.

Through the Director of Public Health, we will provide leadership across partner organisations to protect the health and safety of local people.

Priority two

Protecting the environment

Nottinghamshire is a unique county with a heritage and countryside that we all want to protect and promote. We will ensure our environment is well managed and our countryside is protected. We need road and transport systems that are fit for purpose and help companies to invest in Nottinghamshire. We will provide a reliable transport system which supports a growing economy whilst encouraging sustainable and healthy travel. We will ensure we are well prepared during severe weather by gritting major roads and bus routes to help both residents and businesses carry on as normal.

Looking after the environment is the responsibility of us all. We can influence some key aspects of this environmental protection through determining major planning permissions for new developments such as schools, libraries, elderly person's homes and roads. We will also seek to deliver our services in new ways that limit the environmental impact of our properties, vehicles and resources. We will continue to invest in sustainable technology that helps to reduce our carbon footprint. We aim to minimise the impacts of transport on people's lives, maximise opportunities to improve the environment and help tackle carbon emissions.

We want to ensure that the county's heritage is preserved and can be enjoyed by all. Our country parks and open spaces provide an attractive environment that we will promote for both residents and visitors.

However some protection is best provided by working in partnership with other agencies. For example, by ensuring our Emergency Plans are robust and we respond well to help communities recover from the effects of emergencies, such as flooding. Delivering this protection involves ensuring that we provide leadership but act in partnership with other agencies.

We are committed to helping ensure that all residents of Nottinghamshire have the opportunity and means to protect and enjoy the environment. We will work with our partners and residents to reduce the amount of household waste generated and increase the percentage that we recycle. We will encourage people to get involved and help to protect, restore and improve our countryside by volunteering with a local wildlife group or conservation organisation.

What we will deliver

outcome

how we will measure progress

role of the Council

Our countryside is protected and attracts more visitors

Increase satisfaction levels with our Country Parks and most visited sites (Rufford and Sherwood)

Work with partners to act as a champion protecting the environment within Nottinghamshire

People in Nottinghamshire are encouraged to help protect the environment

The amount of household waste that is recycled will increase and the amount sent to landfill will reduce

More people in local communities will work to improve the environment

Work in partnership with district councils and the private sector to provide waste management facilities and encourage changes in behaviour

The environmental impact of providing County Council services is reduced

Reduce our level of carbon dioxide emissions, especially from the use of energy in our buildings and street lighting

Act as a community leader, by using the resources and expertise of the council to reduce our environmental impact

The roads and transport infrastructure in Nottinghamshire is fit for purpose

Maintain the condition of roads and footways

Deliver a road and transport infrastructure that seeks to meet the needs of our residents and businesses

Connectivity across the county and into the region will be improved

Work to improve bus punctuality and ease congestion on key routes within the county

Proportion of people walking or cycling for short journeys

Work in partnership with bus companies and community transport providers to improve usage of public transport

Priority three

Supporting economic growth and employment

Economic prosperity has a crucial impact on people's quality of life, health and wellbeing. The County's economy has experienced major restructuring over the last 20 years presenting challenges to businesses, communities and individuals alike. Economic performance is now broadly comparable to the East Midlands and United Kingdom however there are significant differentials in economic performance in parts of the county and issues that require attention. Income levels across the county are lower than the UK average; business failures recently have been higher than business start ups; low skill levels remain a significant concern in some areas and access to training and employment is a particular challenge for young people.

We want to see a county where jobs are created, skills are developed, young people have a better chance of employment and wage levels are lifted. As one of the largest employers in the county we will pay the Living Wage and encourage other employers, including our suppliers, to adopt good working practices. In areas where councils have implemented the Living Wage it has provided an important boost to the local economy. It increases the spending power of people and as lower paid workers tend to spend a greater proportion of their income on necessities locally, this all helps our economy.

Whilst economic growth is largely generated through business creation and expansion the County Council will work with the Local Enterprise Partnerships (D2N2 and Sheffield City Region) to create the right conditions for growth. We will provide improved road and broadband infrastructure; unlock physical redevelopment such as new employment and housing sites; encourage investment opportunities; support local businesses to take advantage of the support and finance available to grow and create an environment for new business start ups. We will ensure Nottinghamshire receives its fair share of government and European funding to support economic growth.

Youth unemployment has been growing since 2005 and the transition from learning to work has become increasingly difficult. Ensuring our young people have the right skills and are prepared for the world of work is a key priority and we will create more apprenticeships and training opportunities and work with schools to ensure young people are 'work ready' and can make the right career choices for them.



What we will deliver

outcome

how we will measure progress

role of the Council

Economic growth is stimulated by unlocking employment sites

Increase the number of employment sites

To lead on securing additional investment from the government, D2N2 and Europe to unlock physical redevelopment and invest council resources in key capital investments that deliver growth

We have attractive and economically vibrant towns

The number of new physical redevelopment schemes in town centres

To identify relevant towns and work in partnership with town centre groups to co-ordinate activities

Barriers to growth are minimised by improving countywide infrastructure

Increase the % of people with access to high speed broadband

The number of major local transport schemes

Champion for growth in the county – influencing the government, business community and partners to create the best conditions for sustainable growth

To ensure all council employees are paid a fair rate of pay and increase the spending power of local communities

All centrally employed staff to be paid the living wage with effect from April 2014

To be a good employer and encourage other employers in the county to adopt good employment practices including payment of the living wage

Training and apprenticeship opportunities for the local workforce are provided that reflect the needs of businesses

An increase in the number of apprenticeships and training opportunities

The council will use its procurement of goods and services to drive sustainable business, improved local supply chains and more opportunities for a skilled workforce

More young people will be in work, education or training.

Reduce the % of children not in education, employment or training (NEET)

We will work with partners to increase the competitiveness of Nottinghamshire by creating the conditions to grow an increasingly skilled and productive workforce. We will provide additional apprenticeship places for young people.

Closer working between schools, higher education, further education and employers to develop young people for early identifiable career pathways

Priority four

Providing care and promoting health

The health of people in Nottinghamshire is improving but not at the same rate for everyone. Some groups have worse health outcomes that are a consequence of where they are born, live, work and age. This health inequalities gap between advantaged and disadvantaged groups will continue to widen unless action is taken with partners to address differences in local need. Working with the Health and Well-Being Board we will improve integration between health and social care providers.

The provision of quality social care and health services for children, adults and the vulnerable has always been a priority for the County Council. However the provision of these services is facing the new challenge of increasing demand due to an ageing population with the positive expectation of people being supported to live longer, healthier and more independent lives. Demand is also increasing in terms of services for Younger Adults, due to positive advances in medical care for those with disabilities and complex needs.

This means we have unprecedented demand for services at a time of significant financial constraints. We will always consider the needs and preferences of the individual, but we have a responsibility to balance this against the effective and efficient use of resources.

We will develop individual and community resources to prevent, delay and reduce the need for care and support. We will support more people to live at home and encourage and stimulate an efficient, diverse, affordable and high quality social care and health market. Providing services in a different way means working in partnership with NHS, private and voluntary colleagues to integrate care and health services. It also requires increased prioritisation of our limited resources to the areas of greatest demand and inequality across the county.

For many older people, traditional residential care does not meet their needs. We need to find alternative solutions, such as building additional **Extra Care Housing** across the County that will offer independent living with added security of health and assistance on hand when required. With an ageing population, where Alzheimers and Dementia are becoming an increasing problem, we need to develop a strategy that ensures all our services are delivered with **care and compassion**.

We will expect to share responsibility with individuals, families and communities for their health and well-being. The formal provision of services by council and health employees is often underpinned by informal support provided by Carers. The variety of people who act as Carers in Nottinghamshire is broad and ranges from the very young to older people with their own health concerns. The type of support a Carer requires can also vary dramatically; we therefore need to ensure we work with partners to provide appropriate support – especially for young carers. The role and reliance on Carers will only increase with an ageing population and an emphasis on enabling people to continue to live at home.

What we will deliver

outcome

how we will measure progress

role of the Council

People with health and social care needs are able to maintain a satisfactory quality of life

Improved feedback from service users and use of surveys.

We will provide leadership, with an emphasis on developing individual and community resources, designed to prevent, delay or reduce the need for care and support

Enable people to live independently and reduce their need for care and support

Gradual reduction in the number of people in long-term residential care

We will work together with partners to develop the social care market in Nottinghamshire, offering more affordable and high-quality choices in the types of care available to enable people to live independently in their own homes for longer.

People have a positive experience of care and health support

More people living independently in their own home for longer

We will regularly consult and involve local people to ensure that they have more say in the type of care and how they receive it

Improved integration within health care delivers improved services focussed on those with the greatest need

Improve the satisfaction of people using services and carers

We will use our influence and set an example to encourage people to change their behaviour and positively affect their health and well-being

The health inequalities gap is narrowed improving both health and well-being

Effective health and well being interventions are targeted to where they are most needed

We will work in partnership to maximise the use of resources to target the areas of greatest need, highest demand and tackle inequality

Priority five

Investing in our future

We want Nottinghamshire to be a place where everyone is able to enjoy a good quality of life. Ensuring that children, young people and families are supported is an investment in our future, for all residents in Nottinghamshire. This investment needs to ensure that services that support attainment and achievement are primarily focussed toward those young people, families and communities in greatest need.

Educational attainment has been a priority for Nottinghamshire for many years and exam results are progressively improving for all age groups. However, there are still inequalities and the outcomes for some groups of pupils are not as high as they could be. We are committed to securing excellence in education for all and we want to enable all young people in Nottinghamshire to fulfil their potential. We also want to support young people to choose the right learning pathway for them – whether this is, further education, higher education, apprenticeship or employment.

We will work with all schools to encourage strong partnership working and a focus on outcomes. We will prioritise significant funding to invest in schools to ensure the provision of school places where they are most needed. We will continue to fund the refurbishment and renovation of our school buildings to ensure they provide a safe and suitable learning environment.

We aim to tackle child poverty and social exclusion by working with parents-to-be, parents, carers and children to promote physical, intellectual and social development of babies and young children so they have the best start in life. Youth services enable young people to have a voice and a positive place in their communities and society and provide young people in Nottinghamshire with something to do, somewhere to go and someone to talk to in the form of young groups, mobile youth projects and events.



What we will deliver

outcome	how we will measure progress	role of the Council
Our children and young people will attain higher educational standards than the national average in good and outstanding schools	Increase the % of children achieving 5 or more A* to C grades at GCSE - including both maths and english	We will work with schools to challenge poor standards and provide support to help deliver improvements
The attainment gap in education continues to close for all ages	Narrow the attainment gap at ages 11 and 16 between pupils eligible for free school meals and the rest	We will ensure that support is targeted where there are the most profound gaps in educational attainment
Additional school places will be available where they are most needed	Increase the number of children getting their first choice primary school	We will identify areas with the greatest pressure and demand for school places and prioritise these schools for future investment
Children and young people receive the help and support they require to be safe and thrive	Increase the proportion of children achieving a 'good level of development' in the Early Years Foundation Stage	We will target our resources to provide services that help children and young people to thrive to areas of greatest need
Young people are supported to reach their potential	Reduce the % of children not in education, employment or training (NEET)	We will ensure that effective advice and guidance is available to support children in choosing the most appropriate career pathway



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