

Front cover

Full page image wraparound with back cover, including Council logo and header

**COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN
2014/15**

Inside front cover – Full page image and text quote

Text:

We are very fortunate to live in an area full of character, thanks to our busy market towns, close-knit rural villages, rolling farmland and wooded countryside.

Introduction

Welcome to our Council Delivery Plan for 2014/15, which sets out how we intend to improve North West Leicestershire in the year ahead.

We are working harder than ever to provide value for money in these challenging financial times and, while this sometimes means taking tough decisions, our focus for 2014/15 remains on providing high quality frontline services for our customers. While we are reducing our overall expenditure, we will still ensure that some funding is available to maintain, invest and make essential improvements in services for the communities in our district.

Despite significant financial challenges, we're proud of our achievements during the past year:

- As part of our £35m Decent Homes Improvement Programme, we completed our 1,000th home. Around 2,000 tenants are now benefiting from these improvement works which have improved their standard of living and will reduce their heating bills. The tenant living at the 1,000th home to have works completed commented "I am absolutely thrilled with all of the works done in my house and could not be more pleased with the quality and workmanship carried out".
- Our commitment to tackling local litter hotspots during 2013/14 has resulted in the Council's roadside litter campaign being declared the overall winner at the Keep Britain Tidy 2013 awards. Our campaign focused on reducing litter from vehicles, working with local haulage and distribution firms and their drivers such as Pall-Ex and United Biscuits. This is a great recognition for the Council and means that our roadside verges are cleaner and greener for residents and visitors.
- In partnership with local businesses and Leicestershire County Council we have secured £4 million to boost sustainable transport around Coalville and Loughborough. We will use this money to provide more local opportunities for cycling, cutting congestion and reducing carbon emissions, and leading to improved air quality, less time spent commuting and an enhanced quality of life for residents.
- During the year, we worked with 85 volunteer litter pickers to help keep the district clean for all our residents. This has resulted in an incredible collection of over 5 tonnes of other people's rubbish, the weight of a large elephant, and helped ensure that the district is a tidier and cleaner place for residents to live in.
- We have developed a new council website which will make it easier for customers to access council services. Customers will be able to interact with us at a time and place that suits them.
- We have improved the facilities on offer to customers at our leisure centres in Whitwick and Ashby which now offer some of the latest gym equipment, refurbished changing rooms and new air conditioning. More people are using our leisure centres, meaning increased levels of fitness and general wellbeing, and customers are happier.
- 117 new affordable homes were built between April 2013 and the end of December 2013. Our residents have benefitted by the increased availability and choice of affordable homes which have been allocated through our Choice Based Lettings Scheme.
- We continue to support the 'Better Business for All' programme, a local partnership between businesses and regulators to promote business growth. A support pack has been developed for all new businesses to help them understand their legal responsibilities and giving guidance and contacts which will support them to start up compliantly. We are also working to reduce the impact of regulation on small businesses who have a track record of regularly complying with the law to enable them to spend less time on paperwork and more on growing their business.

Looking forward, a key area of investment for us in the years ahead will be our continued work on improving the quality of tenants' homes to meet the Decent Homes Standard. The council

plans to invest over £10 million between April 2014 and March 2015 which will improve more than 1,500 homes.

We would like to thank those who have worked with us over the last year to improve the services we provide. Special thanks are deserved by Leicestershire Police, the Homes and Communities Agency, Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, Leicestershire County Council, Stephenson College, The National Forest Company and of course our staff. We look forward to building on our successes during 2014/15 and beyond.

Signatures and photos of Cllr Richard Blunt and Christine Fisher

What we plan to do in 2014/15

Our vision for the future

'North West Leicestershire will be a place where people and businesses feel they belong and are proud to call home'.

Delivering this vision is the focus of our four priorities and ensures that we concentrate on using our resources to provide services that really matter to local people and businesses.

The council's priorities for 2014/15

• **Value for money**

We aim to provide council services that people feel provide good value for money

• **Business and jobs**

We aim to make the district a better place to invest, work and visit

• **Homes and communities**

We aim to improve the wellbeing of people living in North West Leicestershire

• **Green Footprints Challenge**

We aim to make people feel proud to be part of a greener district

Our people

At North West Leicestershire District Council we know our staff are our biggest asset. Providing excellent service for our customers means developing and supporting our staff to be their best; we measure success not only by delivering great results, but also in the way we achieve them. The council promotes five core values for its employees as part of its Best Employee Experience (BEE) programme:

- **Spend our money wisely** – Our staff ensure they deliver value for money in everything they do
- **Support what is possible** – Our staff identify, agree and provide the best possible outcomes for all customers
- **Be fair and proud** – Our staff show pride in their work and take individual responsibility for delivering what is agreed
- **Listen carefully** – Our staff listen and respond to the needs of customers and colleagues – both internally and externally
- **Deliver agreed quality** – Our staff ensure they deliver within agreed timescales and to the expected quality

During 2014/15 our staff will continue to deliver on our core values through regular appraisals, monitoring of feedback from customers and training and development. We will celebrate the achievements of staff who consistently demonstrate outstanding service, and will use feedback from our customers to identify staff providing exceptional customer experiences.

VALUE FOR MONEY

People feel council services provide good value for money

What we want to achieve

- Customers are happier with key services provided
- People feel the council is spending money well

How we will achieve it

Providing high quality frontline services

To provide a fair and supportive Revenues and Benefits service for our customers through the following actions:

Outcome	Action
Customers of the Revenues and Benefits service receive a more efficient service	Implement the recommendations resulting from an external review of the Revenues and Benefits service
Customers migrating to Universal Credit feel that the transition is managed effectively	Produce a plan for the introduction of Universal Credit including resource implications and timescales
Customers are happier with methods of accessing the Revenues and Benefits service	Make services available on the web for Revenues and Benefits customers to self-serve

Delivering high priority corporate projects

Outcome	Action
Customers are happier with methods of accessing council services	To deliver a change programme which Improves our Customer Experience
Customers can interact with the council at a time and place that suits them	
The Councils' savings targets are met	To deliver a comprehensive 'Planning for the Future' programme which reduces net expenditure and ensures that services meet the Council's future needs

Other 'Value for money' measures we will monitor and report to Cabinet

- Quarterly updates on managing our finances
- Quarterly updates on managing sickness absence

BUSINESS AND JOBS

Our district is a better place to invest, work and visit

What we want to achieve

- Businesses choose to locate and remain in our district
- People find suitable employment within the district
- The council supports sustainable development and growth

How we will achieve it

Providing high quality frontline services

To provide a fair and timely Planning and Development service through the following actions:

Outcome	Action
Customers are happier with service provided and can co-design the Council service	Review and refresh the Agents Forum which will help improve the working relationship with agents
Customers are happier with Planning & Development service and will be more involved with the planning process locally so that local views are fully taken into account as part of the planning process.	Engage with and deliver Planning related training to the Parish and Town Councils

To provide a robust and supportive Environmental Health service through the following actions:

Outcome	Action
People attending large public events feel safe	Advise, guide and support organisers of music events and residents to prevent crime and disorder, public nuisance, ensure public safety and protect children from harm
Residents living nearby large public events feel supported by the Council	
Food produced or sold in the District is safe to eat	Undertake a programme of interventions at food establishments in accordance with the Statutory Food Law Code of Practice
Consumers have the information and understanding to make informed choices about where and what they eat	Inform consumers of hygiene standards at food establishments
Businesses view the Environmental Health service as an effective and efficient service that supports business growth	Contribute to the work of the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Regulatory Services Partnership and Better Business for All work programme

Delivering high priority corporate projects

Outcome	Action
Coalville market is more attractive to traders and customers leading to greater use of the market.	To undertake physical improvements and implement a strategy for promotion and advertising of Coalville market
Sustainable growth of the district is promoted through an up to date Local Plan, enabling residents to access good quality housing and job opportunities	To engage elected members, town and parish councils in the Local Plan preparation process

HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

The wellbeing of people in North West Leicestershire is improved

What we want to achieve

- People feel proud of their homes and communities
- People feel safe in their community
- Families in need are supported by the council

How we will achieve it

Providing high quality frontline services

To provide a fair and supportive Housing service through the following actions:

Outcome	Action
Vulnerable people are provided with vibrant and safe places to live	Determine the long term future of sheltered housing schemes with low occupancy/demand
Customers are satisfied with the Housing Management Service and feel listened to	Feedback from customers is used to inform future service delivery and service improvements
Tenants have safe and decent places to live	Deliver effective contract management for all responsive, planned and cyclical contracts (not DHIP or IRT)
Tenants are satisfied with the Repairs and Investment Service and feel listened to	Feedback from Scrutiny panel and tenants in general is used to inform future service delivery and service improvements
Customers are happier with key services provided as they have web access to tailored 24/7 housing advice enabling them to make informed decisions	Implement HomeGuide self service housing advice service by end June 2014
Vulnerable people have better access to Housing advisors	
People feel proud of their homes and communities	110 affordable housing units will be delivered across the district by March 2015

To provide a dynamic and customer-focused Leisure service through the following actions:

Outcome	Action
People feel the Council is spending money well	Deliver a programme of efficiency savings in the leisure centres
Improved levels of customer satisfaction in leisure centres and with the grounds maintenance service	Measure Customer Service levels in Leisure Services

Delivering high priority corporate projects

Outcome	Action
Tenants have safe and decent places to live	To significantly improve the condition of our housing stock through the Decent Homes Improvement Programme

GREEN FOOTPRINTS CHALLENGE

People feel proud to be part of a greener district

What we want to achieve

- Residents and businesses are motivated to be greener

How we will achieve it

Providing high quality frontline services

To deliver a reliable and efficient Waste collection, recycling and cleansing service through the following actions:

Outcome	Action
Residents receive better value for money for their recycling efforts	Procure sorting technology to maximise the value of plastics bottles, pots, tubs, and trays; and steel and aluminium cans
Customers are satisfied with the level of waste services provision	Establish how satisfied the residents of the district are with the waste collection and street cleansing service

Delivering high priority corporate projects

Outcome	Action
Residents feel that the Council is spending money wisely	To fully implement waste management software that will increase the reliability and efficiency of our refuse and recycling collections
Residents are motivated to become involved in making their community greener	To empower community groups to develop a series of projects that make a difference to residents' quality of life and the environment

Managing the council's finances – 2014/15 to 2017/18

Continuing to ensure that we provide value for money in our services is more important than ever in the current economic climate as the Government moves forward with its deficit reduction programme. The Government has reviewed the funding of local authorities and provided opportunities to reward business growth and increases in housing stock, but it is clear that the overall level of national funding will continue to fall.

The Council is doing all it can to maximise its locally determined income including New Homes Bonus and Retained Business Rates.

For 2014/15 our mainstream Government grant allocation was reduced by more than 12% compared with 2013/14. Through our medium term financial planning, the council anticipated such a reduction and has continued to identify and deliver savings to meet overall expected funding reductions up to the end of 2017/18. This has allowed the Council to freeze its Council Tax again in 2014/15.

The council will continue its drive for efficiency, economy and effectiveness in everything it does and will also continue with the regular monitoring of income and expenditure and recording efficiency savings made. Savings of £400,000 have been approved for 2014/15 and a further £300,000 is expected to be found in 2015/16. The Council will update its four year Medium Term Financial Strategy in the summer in anticipation of further reductions in Government funding.

Building confidence in the council's performance

Our performance was very strong across the council during 2013/14, but we continue to strive for performance improvements across all services.

At the heart of our work to further improve the services that people value will be a performance programme focusing on:

- Robust monthly meetings of the Corporate Leadership Team to manage the Council's performance
- Quarterly reports to Cabinet, which will include performance on the council's priorities and frontline services
- Actively engaging our customers and communities in shaping our services
- Investing in and supporting our local councillors in undertaking their duties
- Valuing the views of our partners and customers to improve our performance
- Engaging external best practice and benchmarking to challenge what we do and how we do it
- Working as one council and one team to be the best we can
- Releasing talent, growing capacity and expertise within the staff of the council

Each of the actions set out in this Plan will be monitored quarterly by members of the council's Cabinet to make sure we are achieving the high standards we have set.

You can check our progress by visiting the performance page of the council's website www.nwleics.gov.uk/performance.

Inside back cover – full page image with text quote

Text:

Local people are at the heart of our services, and during 2014/15 we will continue to work closely with you to improve the services you value.

Back cover

Full page wraparound image from front cover and useful information text box as per 2013/14 CDP:

Useful Information

If you would like more information about the Council Delivery Plan or any council service, please use the contact details below:

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