

# Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7 February 2024

## Warwickshire Futures – looking ahead to 2030/40

### Recommendation(s)

That the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. Notes the trends and themes highlighted in the 'Warwickshire Futures 2030/40' and 'Warwickshire in 2030 and beyond' reports and considers how they may relate to ongoing and future policy development.
2. Considers the Committee's current work programme in light of the Warwickshire Futures work.

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Warwickshire Futures introduces an exciting new capability to the County Council for 2024.
- 1.2 Conducted in Summer/Autumn 2023, the exercise brings together thinking, best practice and research from across the sector, together with the insight and intelligence from our own teams and services, to give a long-term view of some of the large-scale challenges and opportunities for Warwickshire, and Warwickshire County Council, into 2030/40 and grouped into five main themes:
  - Societal change
  - Community and health
  - Jobs, economy and technology
  - Environment, climate and infrastructure
  - Transport and travel

Five priority issues have also been identified, which are detailed in 4.4.
- 1.3 Similar exercises are conducted at national and regional level and so the intention of introducing Warwickshire Futures is to provide a specific view for the County and the Council.
- 1.4 In doing so, the aim is to build a perspective on the long term, stretching past current challenges and decisions, whilst helping to ensure these are made in the context of anticipated future trends and policy direction.

- 1.5 This allows for a consideration both of future challenges, but also opportunities, giving Members and Officers the platform to consider future policy in the context of the long term.
- 1.6 This is the first time that a document such as this has been developed within the Council and it should be emphasised that the Futures work is not a precise science and nor does it present a definitive position.
- 1.7 This exercise is intended to:
- Provide a snapshot in time, giving a flavour of some of the key issues and trends on the horizon.
  - Create a lens on the long-term future challenges and opportunities based on this snapshot in time.
  - Link these themes and make them real for the County Council in the context of Warwickshire.
  - Create a holistic resource that can be continuously updated and regularly reviewed as part of the business planning cycle.
- 1.8 There is a high level of uncertainty at the local, national and global level at the current time. Futures work is therefore indicative and open to debate and interpretation in terms of what this means for the near term as well as the longer term. As stated above, it is not a precise science and provides scenarios and options, rather than definitive outcomes.
- 1.9 In terms of actions, there are no immediate actions required, but it is hoped that the Futures work will provide the Committee with a greater insight into future trends and challenges, and the opportunity to consider this in the context of the Committee's future work programme.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this report. However, specific themes and trends discussed within the report will be likely to have their own potential financial consequences.

## **3. Environmental Implications**

- 3.1 Whilst there are no direct environmental implications arising as a result of this report, environmental changes are themselves a major theme. As such, the exercise highlights the importance of considering environmental implications when making policy decisions in the near, medium and longer term.

## **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1 The Futures exercise is made up of two main products:

- “Warwickshire in 2030 and beyond”, a report from Business Intelligence which takes a data-lead approach to examine potential future changes across the county.
- “Warwickshire Futures 2030/40”, a detailed briefing produced by the Corporate Policy team that uses national data, research, and best practice examples to provide a long-term view of the policy landscape and impacts on the work of the Council.

Each of these products are provided in **Appendices 1 and 2** to this report.

4.2 In reaching this point the material and messages have been shared and tested with Strategy Network, Senior Leadership Forum and Corporate Board to ensure they provided a rounded and balanced view across all service areas.

4.3 We have identified five priority issues that are likely to have significant impact across the organisation into 2030/40 and beyond. There is a natural synergy between these themes and with the priorities and the areas of focus set out in the Council Plan 2022-27. However, it should be noted that the Futures work extends beyond this and touches more on long term, mega-trends and therefore there is not an exact match.

4.4 These five priority issues are:

- Demographic shifts
- Global economic and political uncertainty
- Climate change
- Artificial Intelligence
- Inequalities between groups and places

4.5 The 5 themes and full list of areas of analysis are set out below:

Societal changes	Community & Health	Jobs, economy & technology	Environment, climate and infrastructure	Transport & travel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographic shifts</li> <li>• Global economic and political uncertainty</li> <li>• Deglobalisation</li> <li>• Changing footfall patterns in town centres</li> <li>• Inequalities within and between groups and places</li> <li>• Shifting urban/rural living patterns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce challenges</li> <li>• Political engagement</li> <li>• Public trust</li> <li>• Future of devolution deals and combined authorities</li> <li>• Long-term impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic</li> <li>• Emerging health issues</li> <li>• Mental health and loneliness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital connectivity</li> <li>• Local energy sources</li> <li>• Sustainable local economy</li> <li>• Artificial intelligence</li> <li>• Future skills</li> <li>• Future of workspaces</li> <li>• Skills gap, reskilling and future employment</li> <li>• Town centre regeneration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public support for environmental policies</li> <li>• Evolving national government policy</li> <li>• Climate change</li> <li>• Alternative fuels (inc. electric charging infrastructure)</li> <li>• Housing pressure (green and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel and transport demand</li> <li>• Connectivity</li> <li>• Energy vectors (power sources)</li> <li>• Autonomy</li> <li>• Transport infrastructure</li> <li>• Active travel</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing living situations</li> <li>• Ongoing impact of pandemic on educational outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance of health and social care</li> </ul>		right type)	
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The emerging themes and trends identified of being of particular significance to the Communities OSC are the following. Full descriptions can be found within the full report in Appendix 1.

- Evolving environmental policy and public support – we will need to consider how to continue the Council’s strong environmental record alongside short-term priorities and maintain flexibility to respond to national policy.
- Equipping Warwickshire residents with future skills, including considering the skills gap, reskilling and future employment e.g. in the green economy.
- Transport demand, connectivity/infrastructure, autonomy, active transport, energy sources. Considering projected increases in road traffic, infrastructure development for future travel e.g. electric vehicles, and increasing public interest in active travel.
- Urban regeneration, including town centres, urban/rural living patterns, and future workspaces. How can we make innovative uses of town centre space, supporting vibrant communities across the county?

4.6 These themes will be drawn out in more detail as a presentation to the Committee.

## 5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 Following consideration of the reports across all Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the following activity is planned:
- Integration of the Futures tool into the business planning cycle, with a 6-monthly update based on input from service leads.
  - Integration into the monthly Policy Bites publication, managed by the Graduate Management Trainees within the Corporate Policy and Strategy team.
  - Access for all staff and Members to the key products via the Intranet.

## Appendices

1. [Warwickshire Futures 2030/40](#)
2. [Warwickshire in 2030 and beyond, Business Intelligence report](#)

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Report Author	Gereint Stoneman, Sophie Kitching	<a href="mailto:gereintstoneman@warwickshire.gov.uk">gereintstoneman@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> , <a href="mailto:sophiekitching@warwickshire.gov.uk">sophiekitching@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Director	Sarah Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning and Governance	<a href="mailto:sarahduxbury@warwickshire.gov.uk">sarahduxbury@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Executive Director	Rob Powell, Executive Director for Resources	<a href="mailto:robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk">robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Portfolio Holder	Yousef Dahmash – Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation	<a href="mailto:yousefdahmash@warwickshire.gov.uk">yousefdahmash@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): N/A – county-wide matter

Other members: