

# THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION LEADERSHIP IN NORFOLK

## Isos Partnership

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**Final report**

May 2017



# Executive summary

## Key findings

In early 2017, commissioned by Norfolk County Council on behalf of the Norfolk education system, Isos Partnership facilitated a project to explore what was needed to support great education leadership in Norfolk in the future. We engaged a broad range of education leaders (teachers, middle leaders, senior leaders, headteachers, executive leaders and governors), as well as parents, pupils, and key partners. Their views and ideas have informed this report.

### Our key findings under four broad areas

- A. **Current context** – the Norfolk education system, like others across the country, is in the midst of transition. Leaders consider that the local system has achieved significant improvements in recent years, in terms of outcomes and the development of leadership, but recognise that further work is required to continue and accelerate the transition to a mature, schools-led education system. In relation to leadership specifically, views are mixed about the strength of the current pipeline of future leaders and whether there is currently the right approach to supporting them.
- B. **What leaders want to see from a future Norfolk leadership strategy** – encouragingly, the vast majority of leaders we engaged saw the need for an overarching strategy for improving leadership in Norfolk. They did not consider that an archipelago of multi-academy trusts (MATs) would necessarily achieve county-wide transformation.
- C. **What will be needed to support great education leadership in the future** – leaders identified three sets of actions that would be needed to foster great education leadership in Norfolk – (1) pro-active identification, succession planning and induction of leaders, (2) clear leadership pathways matched to a responsive offer of high-quality support, and (3) systematic opportunities for collaboration and system leadership. The cautioned, however, that these actions must be taken forward in a transformational, rather than cosy, manner, underpinned by systematic engagement with best practice in leadership development across the country and beyond.
- D. **The future of the local education system** – colleagues saw the need for a shared vision for the future of the local education system and wanted to be involved in shaping it. This is an important “tipping-point” in the development of the local system, and colleagues saw an ongoing, strategic role for the local authority (LA) in facilitating this.

## Outline of a future strategy for supporting great education leadership in Norfolk

We suggest that the overall aim of the future strategy should be to create the conditions and opportunities for a more partnership-based, collaborative approach to leadership across the Norfolk education system. We have, therefore, structured our recommendations around two levels of leadership – leadership *of*, and leadership *within*, the local system.

### Leadership *of* the Norfolk education system

A clear vision or “blueprint” for the future of the Norfolk education system is needed, in part to help individual leaders steer their institutions and partnerships through a period of change, and to provide clarity about the opportunities for leaders to contribute to leadership of the local system. We have set out an initial outline of the future local education system and roles within it, based on the feedback we have gathered, and we recommend that this is developed through further engagement with leaders and partners across Norfolk. Then, to put this into effect, we recommend that a strategic leadership board is developed to provide partnership-based strategic leadership of the system, that the teaching school alliances (TSAs) and other system leaders are convened to shape the Norfolk offer of leadership support, and that there continues to be encouragement for schools to form partnerships – both formal ones, and links to TSAs.

### Leadership *within* the Norfolk education system

We have then set out an outline strategy for supporting great education leadership within Norfolk, which comprises three core priorities or “pillars”. These are (1) pro-active identification, succession planning and induction of leaders, (2) clear leadership pathways matched to a responsive offer of high-quality support, and (3) systematic opportunities for collaboration and system leadership. We have made recommendations about how these can be put into practice, informed both by pro-active identification of the best practice within Norfolk and cutting-edge developments nationally.

### The overall role of the future Norfolk leadership strategy

The role of the strategy is not to mandate a particular approach, but rather to articulate shared principles about transforming leadership and education in Norfolk, and to set out clearly how the local system will enable schools and leaders to put those into practice in a way that will benefit them, their colleagues and peers, and pupils.

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# Introduction

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## THE AIMS OF THE PROJECT

**Norfolk, like many local areas, is exploring the way in which educational excellence and school improvement will be supported in the local education system in the future.** In particular, leaders within the local system are considering how best to enable schools to play greater roles in leading the local system, the future role of the LA, and, in this context, how to foster effective education leadership and governance across the county.

**In early 2017, Norfolk County Council commissioned Isos Partnership to lead a project to engage a wide range of current and aspiring leaders and to explore what was needed to support great education leadership (including governance) in Norfolk in the future.** The two central aims of the project were to:

1. help to define what great education leadership should look like in Norfolk; and
2. support the development of an overarching strategy for supporting great education leadership in Norfolk.

**The project has focused on the concept of leadership on two levels.** First, we have explored what is needed to support **leadership within the Norfolk education system**, focusing on the pathways leaders may take and the support they need to do so successfully. Second, we have also explored the **leadership of the system** that will be needed from school leaders collectively, as the local education system and the role of the LA within that change. As we describe in the report, these two levels of leadership are closely related – leaders need clarity about the future vision for the local system to navigate their careers and leadership opportunities, while the shape and structure of the local system will determine some of the leadership roles, particularly those at a system level, are open to leaders. The future strategy needs to cover both supporting leadership *within* and creating conditions for leadership *of* the system.

**This project has focused on ‘leadership’ in the broadest sense.** We have included within the scope of this project headteachers, those in executive leadership roles (e.g. executive headteachers or MAT chief executives), senior leaders, middle leaders, aspiring leaders, those leading areas of practice within schools, members of school governing boards and non-executive directors of MATs. Throughout this report, we use the terms ‘leadership’ and ‘leaders’ in this broad sense.



# Introduction

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## HOW WE HAVE APPROACHED THE PROJECT

**During the review, we have engaged a broad range of colleagues in various leadership roles across the county.** We have sought to offer a colleagues a wide range of ways to participate in and contribute to this project. Specifically, we have engaged colleagues through:

- an online survey, offered to all current school leaders and chairs of governing boards (167 responses);
- workshops for school leaders (including headteachers, senior leaders and aspiring leaders) and governors in four locations across the county (attended by 41 colleagues), and a specific workshop for teaching schools;
- individual visits to 15 schools to engage headteachers, senior and aspiring leaders, pupils and parents;
- in-depth 1-to-1 conversations and workshops with LA senior leaders; and
- 1-to-1 telephone interviews with other leaders, stakeholders and regional partners.

## LOOKING AHEAD

**It is intended that the findings set out in this report can be used to inform the development of a new strategy for supporting great education leadership in Norfolk.** Furthermore, it is intended that this report and the resulting strategy should not “belong” exclusively to the LA, but should be owned collectively by all education leaders across Norfolk.

**We are grateful to colleagues for the for the constructive, generous and pro-active spirit in which they contributed to this project.** This spirit of partnership and co-leadership will be vital in terms of making a reality of the ambition set out in this report. As colleagues noted during the project, the role and capacity of the LA will change in the future, with the LA playing a more strategic, facilitative role. Putting the recommendations of this project into effect will require a clear articulation of the future role of the LA, but also a willingness of school leaders individually and collectively to play an active part in shaping the future of leadership in Norfolk. In this report, we describe both the long-term vision for school leaders leading the system in Norfolk, and the role the LA can play in creating and sustaining the conditions for this.



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## Part 1: How we have structured the key findings from this project

In Part 1 of this report, we summarise the key messages we heard during our engagements with education leaders across the county. These are set out in four main areas, which are listed below. In each of these four areas, we have brought together the evidence gathered from our 1-to-1 engagements, workshops and the online survey.

A

**Context – views on the development of the local education system and the “health” of and support for leadership currently**

B

**Aims for the future – what Norfolk education leaders said they wanted to see from this review and the future leadership strategy**

C

**Priorities – what Norfolk education leaders said was needed to achieve those aims for the future**

D

**The future of the local education system – what Norfolk education leaders reflected was needed to ensure there was clarity about the local education system and roles within that to take forward this new strategy**

We illustrate certain points with reference to data we gathered through our online survey. The survey received 167 responses (74% were headteachers, executive or senior leaders, and 26% were governors). These broadly reflected the make-up of schools by phase (82% primary, 9% secondary, 5% all-through trusts, 5% special or alternative provision) and by type (45% maintained, 10% foundation, 20% voluntary aided / controlled, 25% academies) in Norfolk.





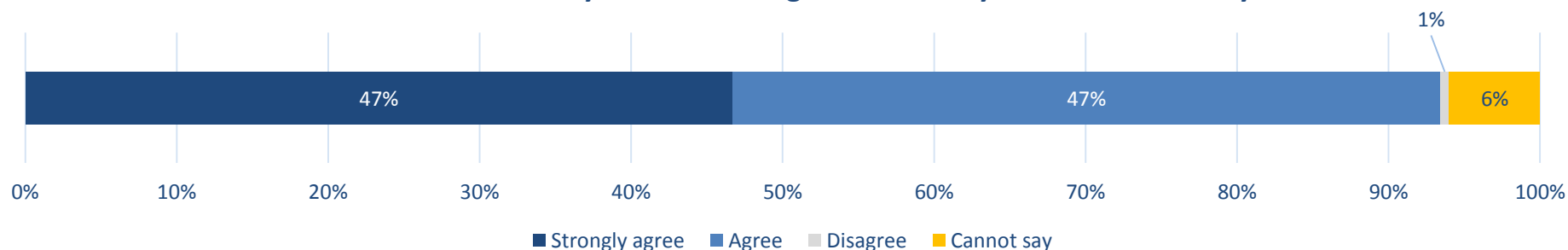
## Context: Views on the development of the local education system and the “health” of and support for leadership currently

### Characterising the development of the local education system in Norfolk currently, and future changes anticipated

**There was a strong view that the Norfolk education has made significant progress in recent years, but that there is further to go to develop a fully mature, self-improving system.** We know, from our previous work in Norfolk (2013-14), that there has been a significant emphasis on fostering a greater sense of schools taking responsibility for school improvement, which, working in partnership with schools, the LA would support. During the present project, many leaders gave the LA credit for continuing to emphasise this message, and noting how it had helped the system to move forward and improve since then. Nevertheless, leaders also noted that there was further work needed to foster a mature, self-improving system. In particular, many colleagues commented on the fact that the expectation of working collaboratively and pro-actively seeking out the best practice within Norfolk and across the country was not yet the norm – ‘insularity’ was a phrase we heard used often to describe this.

**Leaders are also anticipating significant further changes in the local (and indeed national) education system.** As the chart below shows, over 9 in 10 (94%) were of this view. They were anticipating a reduction in the role of the LA, the increasing prominence of MATs, and the risks of fragmentation of the education system in Norfolk. Many voiced concerns about a loss of a sense of common purpose across the county, but also the break-up of county-wide arrangements for special educational needs funding and commissioning of alternative provision.

**The Norfolk education system will change considerably over the next five years**



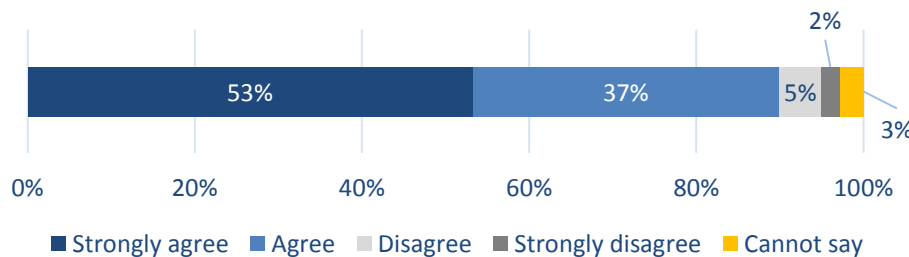
## Context: Views on the development of the local education system and the “health” of and support for leadership currently

### The development of school partnerships within the Norfolk education system

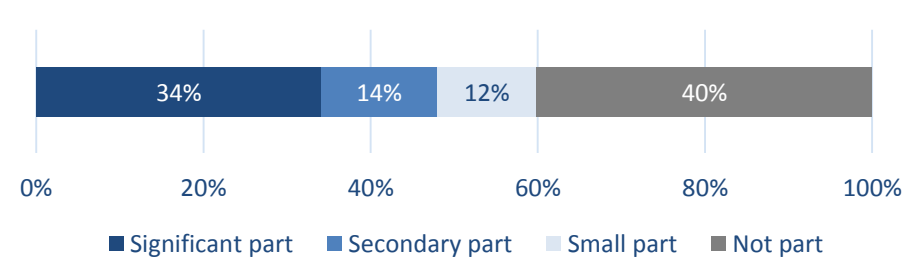
**The majority of education leaders saw an increasingly important role for formal partnerships in the local education system.** As the left-hand chart (below) shows, 90% of education leaders strongly agreed or agreed with a statement to this effect. Not shown below, but a similar proportion (92%) strongly agreed or agreed that, for partnerships to be successful, leaders needed to be responsible collectively for all pupils in the partnership. It is encouraging not only that there such strong agreement with the principle of partnership, but recognition of the importance of *formal* partnerships. The right-hand chart shows, however, a more mixed picture in terms of the extent to which current school leaders and governors see being a leader within a formal partnership as part of their role currently – we suggest that this is likely to reflect the different stages their schools are at in terms of forming formal partnerships.

**The MAT agenda was particularly predominant in discussions about partnerships.** The majority of leaders saw MATs as a key factor that would shape the future of the local education system and of leadership. The “MAT question” appeared to be more pronounced in Norfolk than in other local areas, which is surprising as the majority of Norfolk schools are not in MATs. There appeared to be a perception that larger MATs were taking over smaller schools, and some leaders were concerned about how this would affect their professional autonomy. Others, however, saw MATs in a more positive light, citing opportunities for leadership progression, staff development, and reshaping governance.

**Increasing importance of formal partnerships over the next five years**



**Extent to which being a leader of a formal partnership is part of my role**



## **Context:** Views on the development of the local education system and the “health” of and support for leadership currently

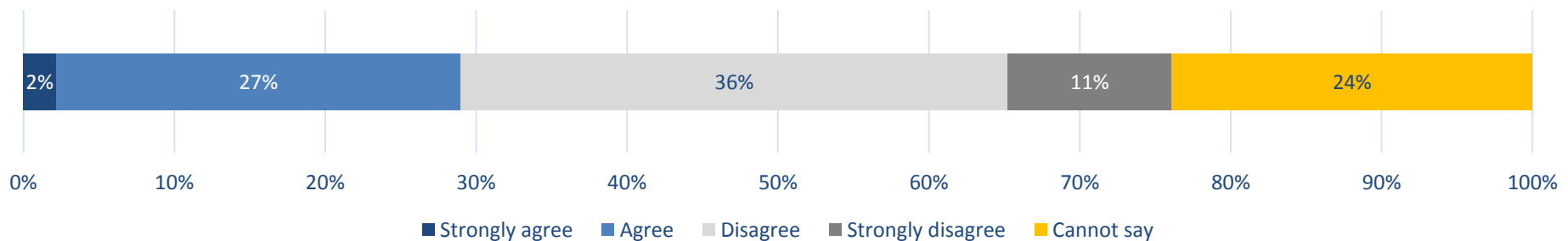
### The “health” of leadership within the system currently and the current pipeline of education leaders in Norfolk

**Leaders were not confident that there was a strong pipeline of education leaders in Norfolk.** In response to our survey, fewer than one in three (29%) strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that there was a strong pipeline of future leaders. Almost half (47%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, while almost a quarter (24%) could not say.

**There were two main reasons given for these responses.** First, many current headteachers described a shortage of senior and middle leaders willing to step up to headship, given the demands of the role. This was echoed by some, but not all, senior leaders, who described how they saw stepping into headship as a step away from a hands-on involvement in teaching and learning. Second, many current and aspiring leaders commented on changes to traditional leadership pathways – some saw the potential leadership development opportunities offered by working within new forms of school partnerships, but it was not clear to many how to access these opportunities. Aspiring leaders also noted the extent to which their access to leadership opportunities and support depended on the approach of their school’s headteacher. Succession planning in small, rural (mostly primary) schools was also highlighted as a challenge in parts of the county.

**Colleagues noted a similar set of issues in relation to the pipeline of future governors** – both the increased demands on governors (responsibilities, skills), and the challenges of recruiting governors with the right set of skills and forming governing bodies with the capacity to become MAT boards. Some did, however, cite positive examples.

**Confident that there is a strong pipeline of aspiring leaders in Norfolk**



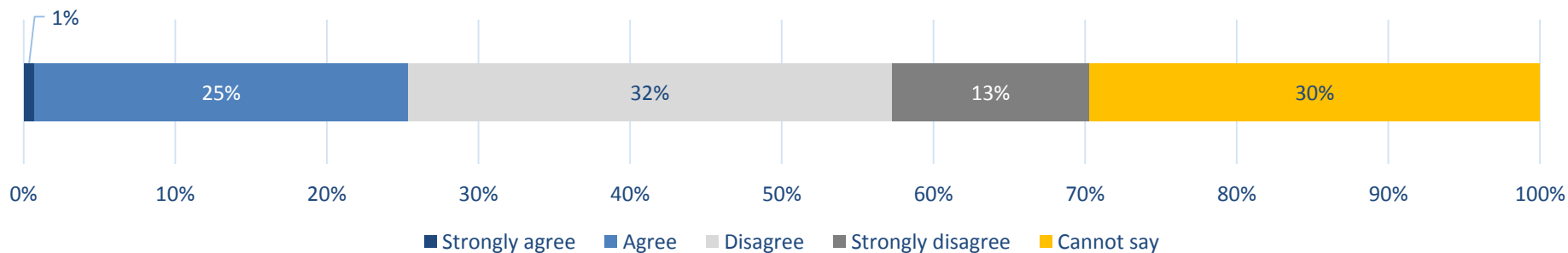
## **Context: Views on the development of the local education system and the “health” of and support for leadership currently**

### **The current approach to supporting aspiring and serving education leaders within the Norfolk education system**

**Leaders said what they valued most in terms of leadership support were opportunities to work collaboratively with peers in other schools and to reflect on their practice.** Several commented positively on the Lead Teacher Support Programme and Headteacher Support Programme, offered through the Sheringham TSA. Leaders considered, however, that there was not a joined-up offer of secondment, shadowing and peer-to-peer opportunities. There was also very positive feedback on the availability and quality of governance support, although some governors commented that they would like to see more systematic, pro-active engagement with governors, particularly new chairs of governing boards.

**The survey results suggest that, overall, leaders are not confident that there is the right approach to supporting leadership in Norfolk.** Just over a quarter (26%) strongly agreed or agreed with the statement below, almost half (45%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, and almost a third (30%) could not say. Overall, they commented on a lack of leadership support specifically for aspiring, middle and executive leaders, and pro-active support for new chairs of governors. Colleagues also commented that the current offer was not joined-up, co-ordinated or sufficiently accessible, with certain parts of the county, particularly the west, poorly served. The lack shortage of teaching schools, but also the lack of engagement with those that exist currently, was highlighted. Overall, leaders wanted to see a more joined-up and responsive offer of support, based on and matched to the skills needed for modern, transformative education leadership.

#### **There is currently the right approach to supporting serving and aspiring leaders**



## **Context: Views on the development of the local education system and the “health” of and support for leadership currently**

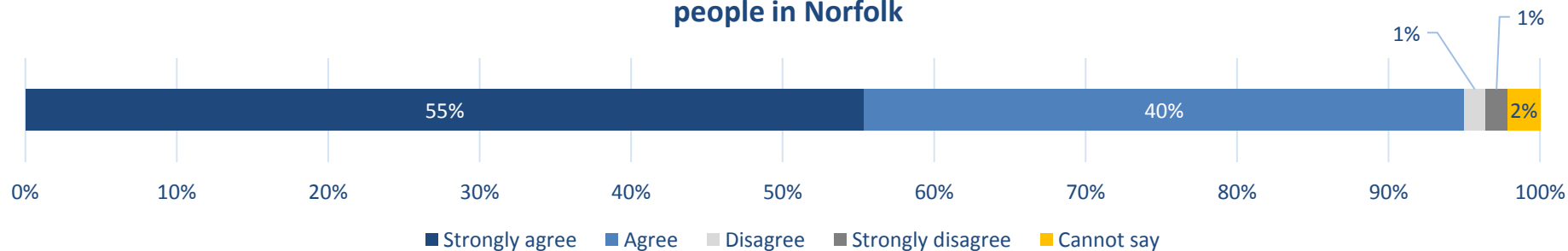
### **The development of collective leadership of the system by education leaders in Norfolk**

**There appears to be a strong belief in the need for collective leadership by Norfolk’s education leaders** – 95% of those who responded to our survey strongly agreed (55%) or agreed (40%) about this. They highlighted the need for county-wide collective leadership as well as a focus on locality priorities – e.g. maximising the impact of the Norwich opportunity area, tackling the isolation of west Norfolk, linking education and employment opportunities in the coastal areas.

**Colleagues noted, however, that there is a lack of systematic opportunities for leaders to be involved in inclusive, strategic conversations about leadership of the system.** This is not to ignore the contribution of the headteacher associations, Norfolk Governance Network, and other strategic bodies. What colleagues reflected was that not all leaders are part of these conversations, and that the broader conversations with leaders are not always pitched at the strategic level of, for example, tackling attainment gaps, improving teaching and learning in maths, or strengthening leadership.

**Leaders highlighted that there was not yet a well-developed strategic partnership of Norfolk’s system leaders.** Colleagues felt there was the need to bring together and create a degree of strategic coherence and coordination in the work of, for example, the National Leaders of Education (NLEs), teaching schools, chief executives of MATs and other system leaders. Some commented on the under-utilisation of current Norfolk system leaders, and issues around accessibility and quality-assurance of offers of school-to-school support within the local system.

#### **Leaders need to work collectively for a strong and effective education system for all young people in Norfolk**



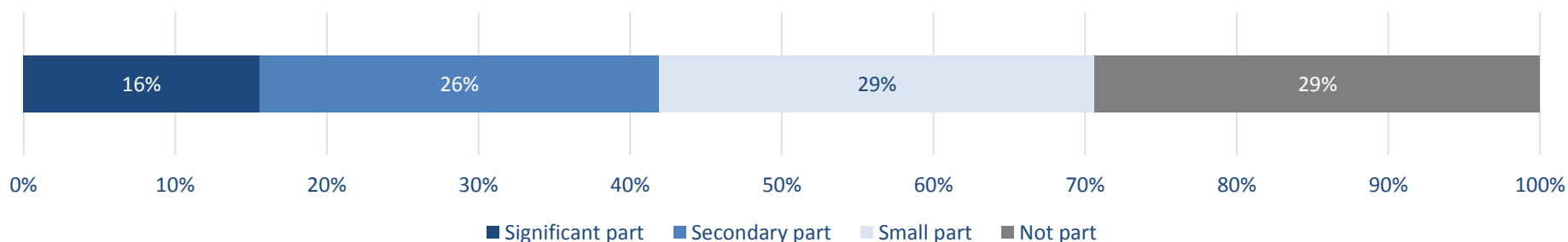
## Aims for the future: What Norfolk education leaders said they wanted to see from this review and the future leadership strategy

### The need for a strategic approach to supporting great education leadership in Norfolk

The vast majority of colleagues whom we engaged argued that there needed to be an overarching strategy to support transformational leadership and education across Norfolk. The majority of colleagues did not consider that an archipelago of small and medium-sized MATs, working independently, would sustain the county-wide transformation colleagues wanted to see. As one leader put it, 'who will take responsibility for education transformation in Norfolk?'. Several executive leaders and MAT chief executives we engaged saw an important role to be played in convening the MATs and other system leaders to ensure a coherent and effective approach could be taken to addressing county-wide priorities. Colleagues also argued, however, that a new Norfolk leadership strategy needed to be owned and led by education leaders, working in partnership with the LA and other stakeholders. It appears encouraging, therefore, that 71% of leaders said that being a co-leader of the Norfolk education system was part of their role (see chart below).

Colleagues also cautioned that, while celebrating the best Norfolk had to offer, it was vital that the Norfolk leadership strategy was inherently outward-facing and informed by the best practice in leadership development nationally. While several colleagues spoke positively about their involvement with collaborative activities regionally and nationally, for example through the London Leadership Strategy, many considered that this form of outward-facing, collaborative working was not embedded across the county and that there were pockets characterised by, in their words, 'insularity'.

Extent to which being a co-leader of the Norfolk education system is part of my role



## Aims for the future: What Norfolk education leaders said they wanted to see from this review and the future leadership strategy

### The future hallmarks of great education leadership in Norfolk

**There was a strong consensus among the colleagues we engaged about what being an education leader in Norfolk should stand for.** There was a strong belief that Norfolk should aspire to be seen as hotbed of educational excellence and innovation, and consequently a great place to aspire to be an education leader. There was also a strong consensus on what colleagues would like to be seen as the hallmarks of great leadership in Norfolk in the future – these are captured in the left-hand box below. These chimed with the views we gathered from young people themselves about what makes a great education leader – a selection of these views are captured in the right-hand box below.

**There are some key strengths on which a future Norfolk leadership strategy could be built** – (a) these aspirations, (b) the consensus about what should be the hallmarks of education leadership in Norfolk, (c) the recognition of the need to continue to challenge Norfolk leaders by drawing on the best across the country, and (d) the reported willingness of leaders to play a greater role in the strategic leadership of the system.

#### Six proposed hallmarks of great leadership in Norfolk

- ① Moral purpose, focus on holistic outcomes
- ② Bravery and independence
- ③ Commitment to collaboration
- ④ Invests in leadership and staff development
- ⑤ Adaptable and resilient
- ⑥ Outward-facing

#### What young people said makes a great education leader

‘Wants the best for you.’

‘Encourages us to do our best.’

‘Hands on ... not on the side-lines.’

‘Understands students, what makes them tick.’

‘Don’t settle to be average – always aspire to be greater and better.’

‘Experience of what it is like to lead people – to have children and adults depending on you.’

‘The right mix of authority and approachability.’

## **Priorities: What Norfolk education leaders said was needed to achieve those aims for the future**

Leaders suggested three broad priority areas for supporting great education leadership in Norfolk in the future

1. **Pro-active identification, succession planning and induction** – ensuring that potential leaders are spotted early, their development supported pro-actively, and effective support is offered at key transition points during their progression. This applies equally to, for example, aspiring leaders taking their first into leadership positions, those taking up senior leadership and headship roles, and those becoming chairs of governing boards. Leaders noted that this was currently somewhat variable and piecemeal, and was particularly challenging in small, rural schools.
2. **Clear leadership pathways matched by a coherent offer of continuing professional development (CPD) and support** – leaders considered that, owing to changes in local education systems and school partnerships, there was the need to understand more clearly the leadership pathways and opportunities that might exist in the future. They saw the need for some kind of framework to help leaders plan their progression and leadership development, based around the skills they would need in the future. These included (a) leadership of great teaching and learning, (b) strategic leadership and change management, (c) collaborative leadership, and (d) technical management skills to create an environment in which great education can take place – financial, project, staff and personnel management.
3. **Systematic collaborative opportunities, within and beyond Norfolk** – there was a strong view about the potential benefits (to individuals, schools and the system) of such opportunities. Colleagues argued that this would require the (a) development of systematic opportunities for leaders to work collaboratively, and (b) inclusive, strategic groups of leaders focusing on locality or thematic priorities to create the “hub” or “hive” mentality common in some high-performing urban areas. They noted this would need to be underpinned by creative ways of connecting leaders, particularly in smaller, more sparse and isolated parts of the county, through innovative use of IT. This would also require leaders to be pro-active in taking part and enabling their staff to take part in such opportunities.

Leaders cautioned that, while they did not disagree with these three priorities, what was needed was to ensure they were implemented and the activities within each undertaken in a transformational, rather than a cosy and comfortable, manner. They must, therefore, be underpinned by systematic engagement with best practice in leadership development across the country and beyond. We explore these pillars in greater detail in Part 2 of this report.



## The future of the local education system: What Norfolk education leaders reflected was needed to ensure there was clarity about the local education system in future

### The need for a clear vision or “blueprint” about the future of the local education system

Leaders argued strongly that an important pre-requisite for a future leadership strategy was the need for a clear and shared vision or “blueprint” about how the Norfolk education system would look in the future. There is a practical aspect of this, not least the need to be clear on who will play what roles in supporting the implementation of a new leadership strategy. In addition, having clarity on the way the local education system will evolve will help to provide clarity about the leadership pathways and opportunities that will be available to current and aspiring leaders. The fact that leaders are asking this question about how the Norfolk education system will look in the future is positive, but also suggests that they do not perceive themselves to be part of an inclusive, strategic set of conversations looking at this issue in the way that leaders in other, similar counties with whom we have worked are. As we noted earlier, while many are aware of the development of MATs, there is not yet clarity about what this means in terms of leadership development opportunities, and other forms of partnership working, such as the special educational needs and disability (SEND) clusters.

### An important, yet changed, facilitative role for the LA

The vast majority of leaders and partners saw an important ongoing role for the LA, albeit one with a greater emphasis on building leadership capacity locally and creating the conditions for greater leadership in Norfolk.

**A vital, ongoing strategic “champion” role** – challenging partners to ensure that the local education system works in the interests of all young people in Norfolk and to address county-wide issues, connected closely to the LA’s ongoing statutory duties around vulnerable children, place-planning and quality.

**An ever-more vital “convening” and “commissioning” role** – acting strategically as an honest broker to identify best practice in leadership development, teaching and learning in Norfolk and across the country, and pro-actively bringing together groups of leaders at all levels to work collaboratively on specific areas of practice or county-wide strategic issues. This would be a strategic role, and would need to be kept distinct from any role in providing services on a traded basis to schools. Equally, the role would not be about mandating a particular approach to leadership development or practice, but rather the role would be to facilitate access to the most effective practice within and beyond Norfolk, and to maintain systematic opportunities to convene leaders to work collaboratively on cross-cutting issues.

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## Part 2: An outline of the future strategy – introduction

### In Part 1 of this report, we provided an overview of leadership within the Norfolk education system

In Part 1, we described a local education system in the midst of significant transition. Strong views were expressed to us – and are supported by the evidence – of improvements in Norfolk’s education system, not only in terms of schools judged good or better or pupil outcomes, but also the sense of leadership and responsibility for improvement across the system. Nevertheless, colleagues also identified areas where further work is required to continue and accelerate this transition to a mature education system in which school leaders, working in partnership, are able to lead the system at all levels. During the project, there was broad recognition that the aim of this work should not be to set out what the LA will do, but rather what leaders will need to do for themselves, individually and collectively, and how the system can enable and support them to do that. The role of the future strategy, therefore, is not to mandate a particular model of leadership or programme of leadership development, but rather to create the conditions and opportunities for a more partnership-based, collaborative approach to leadership across the Norfolk education system.

### How we have structured Part 2 of this report – two levels of leadership

We have, therefore, structured this section around the two levels of leadership described at the outset of the report:

- A. leadership of the system** – by which we mean opportunities for leaders collectively to contribute to the leadership of the local system; and
- B. leadership within the system** – by which we mean the pathways leaders may choose to take as they progress in their careers and the support they need to do so successfully.

We suggest that the two are related closely, and that the future strategy needs to cover both in order to provide clarity about the overall direction of the local education system, how this will be led, and the implications for the development of leadership pathways and capacity within the system.



## Part 2: An outline of the future strategy – introduction (continued)

### A word about how we have set out our recommendations

The role of this review has been to facilitate broad engagements with a wide range of colleagues across the Norfolk education system, and to present their feedback in order to inform the development of a future Norfolk leadership strategy. Our role has not been to bring these engagements to a definitive conclusion, but rather to provide a clear direction that could be pursued through ongoing engagement between key partners within the local system. As we have noted, much of what has been suggested to us in terms of future aims and actions will require a partnership-based approach to achieve. This in turn will depend on how the roles of key players within the local system are configured now (and how these might evolve in the future). We have, therefore, framed the recommendations of this project in two ways. First, we have described the long-term aim in terms of what is required, and, second, we have then set out the immediate next steps needed in order to begin the discussions with partners needed to put this into effect. We hope this helps to enable some of the inclusive, strategic conversations we described the need for in Part 1.

### A word about how the future Norfolk leadership strategy is taken forward

In Part 2, we suggest an outline of a future strategy for supporting great education leadership in Norfolk. The leaders we engaged during this process were clear with us that the strategy must not be a “wish-list” of things the LA should do. There was broad recognition that leaders would not signing up to the strategy to *receive* an offer of support from the LA, but, instead, leaders would being asked to sign up to helping to shape leadership *of* and *within* the Norfolk education system. The role of the future strategy would be, therefore, to articulate shared principles about transforming leadership and education in Norfolk, and to set out clearly how the local system will *enable* leaders, acting individually within their own institutions and partnerships and collectively across the system, to put those into practice in a way that will benefit them, their colleagues, and pupils. Securing their engagement will, however, require not only clarity about vision and roles, but also a clear, responsive and high-quality offer of leadership support. We have also set some of the actions that were suggested to us as priorities for developing a more coherent and accessible offer of leadership support in Norfolk.



## Leadership of the system: Why it matters for the future strategy

### The importance of leadership of the system for the future Norfolk leadership strategy

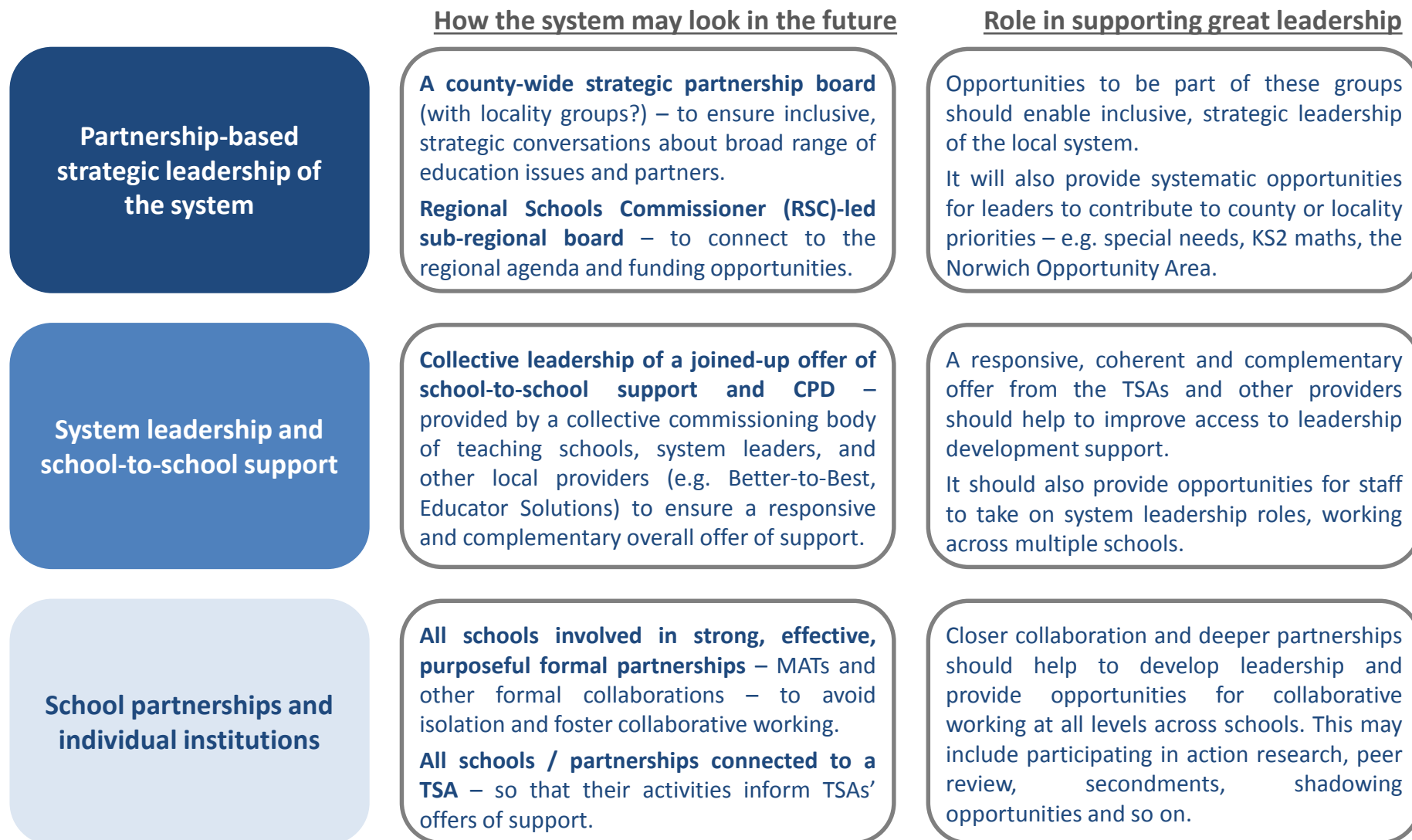
Education leaders in Norfolk highlighted three reasons why the future strategy needed to focus on leadership *of*, as well as *within*, the system. First, on a practical level, they have highlighted the need for individual institutions to have clarity about the how the local education system may develop so as to inform their decisions about, for example, partnerships. Second, they have argued there needs to be clarity about who will play what role within the local system and how the future strategy will be taken forward. Third, and perhaps most importantly, they have argued that there needs to be clarity about what leadership of the system is for and the overall vision it is seeking to achieve.

### Developing a long-term vision about the future of the local education system in Norfolk

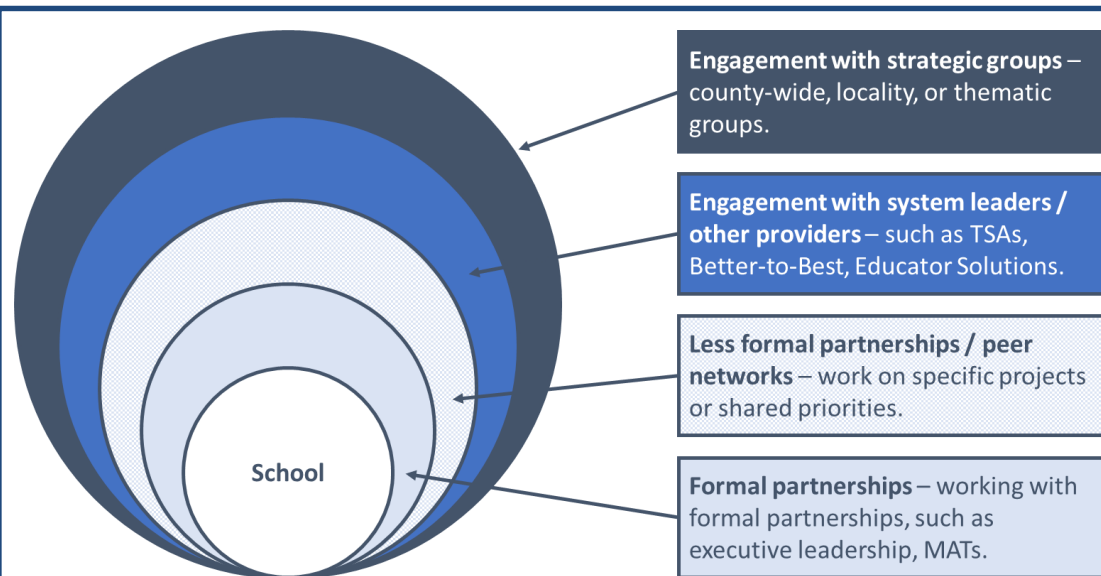
**As noted in Part 1, leaders also emphasised the need for clarity about the long-term vision for the Norfolk education system** – the importance of a vision of this nature is a theme in our research in other local systems. We know that work to develop a vision or “blueprint” for Norfolk is ongoing, and may be influenced by anticipated national policy announcements on the role of the LA. We suggest that it will important to continue the work to develop this vision, and that this should be done in conjunction with a broad range of Norfolk education leaders – another theme from our wider research. We do not seek to short-cut those discussions here, but instead we present some of the feedback we gathered during the review in order to inform those discussions about the future shape of the Norfolk education system.

**The feedback we gathered suggests that a central pillar of the future vision should be education leaders across Norfolk leading the system collectively and collaboratively, in partnership with the LA and other key strategic partners.** The fact that leaders are articulating this ambition suggests that Norfolk is approaching a “tipping-point” in the transition to a more mature, schools-led education system. Reaching and moving beyond this tipping-point will not require the LA withdrawing from its previous role and expecting schools to fill the vacuum – a further theme from our research is how damaging and counter-productive such a move can be. Instead, it will require a partnership-based approach that seeks to create the conditions and structures through which leaders can contribute to leadership of the system. On the next two pages, we set out how the Norfolk education system may look in the future, focusing on three levels (strategic leadership, system leadership, and partnerships), and how each may contribute to great education leadership in the future.

## Leadership of the system: How the system may look in the future



## Leadership of the system: Implications for schools in Norfolk



On the previous page, we set out an outline of how the Norfolk education system may look in future. This is based around three levels – strategic leadership of the system, system leadership and school-to-school support, and school partnerships. On this page, we have used those three levels to show what this may mean from the perspective of an individual school.

Below, we highlight two important points from this diagram – about the nature of overlapping partnerships, and the importance of these linking to an overall strategic.

In the future, schools may be part of multiple, overlapping partnerships and networks – these may include formal partnerships, including MATs (shown in light blue); working through networks and other, less formal school partnerships (shown in dotted light blue); accessing specific support, CPD or school-to-school support (shown in azure blue), as well as contributing to the strategic leadership of the system through locality, county or thematic groups (shown in dark blue). Schools may use different partnerships for different purposes (e.g. middle leadership development, improving inclusion support, peer review, subject-specific CPD), and the shape and purpose of these connections may shift over time.

These partnerships should be broadly aligned to an overall strategic vision for the Norfolk education system – the need for there to be coherence within what is a multi-faceted offer of local school improvement support has been a strong message in our work in Norfolk, and echoes what we have heard in other local areas. This is not to deny that individual institutions will not have their own ethos and approaches, based on the needs of their local communities, but rather to emphasise the need for the links at partnership, system leadership and strategic level to be clearly articulated and mutually supportive. The work within individual partnerships should inform the offers made by TSAs and other providers, and both should be informed by and contribute to achieving shared, locality- and county-wide strategic priorities.



## Leadership of the system: Possible roles within the future system

*The previous two pages sets out how the future education system in Norfolk might look. Here, we set out some of the implications for the roles of key players in leadership roles within the local system.*

### LA

A more strategic role, focused on championing all children in Norfolk (linked to elected members' democratic mandate and the LA's statutory duties around place-planning and vulnerable children), commissioning and facilitating access to the most effective practice within and beyond, and convening leaders and partners on key cross-cutting issues. Consideration of the future role should take account of anticipated DfE guidance, but the feedback we gathered suggests that, overall, the role should focus on creating the conditions and building the capacity for effective, inclusive, partnership-based leadership of the local system.

### RSC

The RSC is a key partner in the leadership of the education system in Norfolk, and the transition to a more mature, schools-led education system. The feedback we gathered indicated that there was a consensus about the importance of continuing to strengthen the partnership between the RSC, LA and Norfolk education leaders. The proposed sub-regional board provides an important opportunity to convene strategic leaders within Norfolk, co-ordinate school improvement activities, engage with national priorities and regional developments, and ensure that available resources for school improvement can be used in a way that is informed by Norfolk priorities.

### System leaders

As one leader put it, the role of system leaders collectively should be to ensure the local system in Norfolk sees the benefits of diverse system, rather than the challenges of a fragmented one. There was recognition that this would require the leaders of teaching schools, along with and other providers, to convene and seek to lead and shape the offer of leadership support in a coherent and pro-active manner. The offer of support should not just include CPD, but colleagues argued that teaching schools and other providers should also act to facilitate and connect leaders to effective practice across and beyond the system, and build capacity by developing the next cadre of system leaders.

### Schools and partnerships

Colleagues argued that, in the future system, leaders would need to take a more pro-active role in contributing to as well as benefitting from collaborative activities. One leader described this as ensuring that all schools and partnerships are 'active learning communities', with leaders helping to foster a culture in which all staff are positively encouraged to take part in collaborative activities that develop their professional practice and leadership skills, such as peer reviews and action research. Furthermore, there should be an explicit link between school partnerships and TSAs, so that the offers developed by the latter are informed by the priorities of the former.



## Leadership of the system: Recommendations

### **Recommendation: Developing a shared long-term vision or “blueprint” for the future of the Norfolk education system.**

**Recommendation:** we recommend developing a vision or “blueprint” for the Norfolk education system to underscore shared ambition and provide clarity about strategic leadership, system leaders and partnerships within the local system.

**Next steps:** we suggest that the LA facilitate further engagements with a broad range of leaders across the county to develop this shared vision, as well as with the key partners working within and with the local system.

### **Recommendation: Establishing partnership-based strategic leadership of the Norfolk education system.**

**Recommendation:** we recommend the establishment of a partnership-based strategic board to provide strategic leadership of the local system, supported by locality leadership boards to convene leaders across the county.

**Next steps:** we suggest further discussions take place with the existing leadership associations and boards to determine how to build on and, where necessary (e.g. locality groups, groups for middle leaders or NQTs) adapt existing bodies.

### **Recommendation: Convening system leaders to develop a coherent, complementary, responsive offer of support.**

**Recommendation:** we recommend that teaching school leaders and other providers work together strategically to shape an effective, dynamic and well co-ordinated offer of leadership support, that is accessible to all schools across the county.

**Next steps:** convene teaching schools and other providers to continue to map out the current offer, identify priorities, and develop a coherent offer. Continue to encourage the establishment of more TSAs to increase capacity and coverage..

### **Recommendation: Supporting all schools to form strong partnerships across the local system and beyond.**

**Recommendation:** we recommend that there continues to be encouragement and support for schools to form formal partnerships (with information about the different types of partnerships and their benefits) as well as to connect TSAs.

**Next steps:** we suggest re-articulating the roles and benefits of different forms of partnerships (MAT, TSAs, clusters), and continuing to encourage the development of new TSAs to enhance coverage and build capacity across Norfolk.

### An outline of how the local system will support and foster great education leadership in the local system

As noted at the outset of Part 2 of this report, a future Norfolk leadership strategy will not be a “wish-list” of things that the LA should do, nor will it be solely a menu of leadership development CPD available for schools to access. Instead, it should be an attempt to articulate the respective roles of individual school leaders and staff, school leaders working collectively, the LA and other partners in fostering great education leadership within the local system.

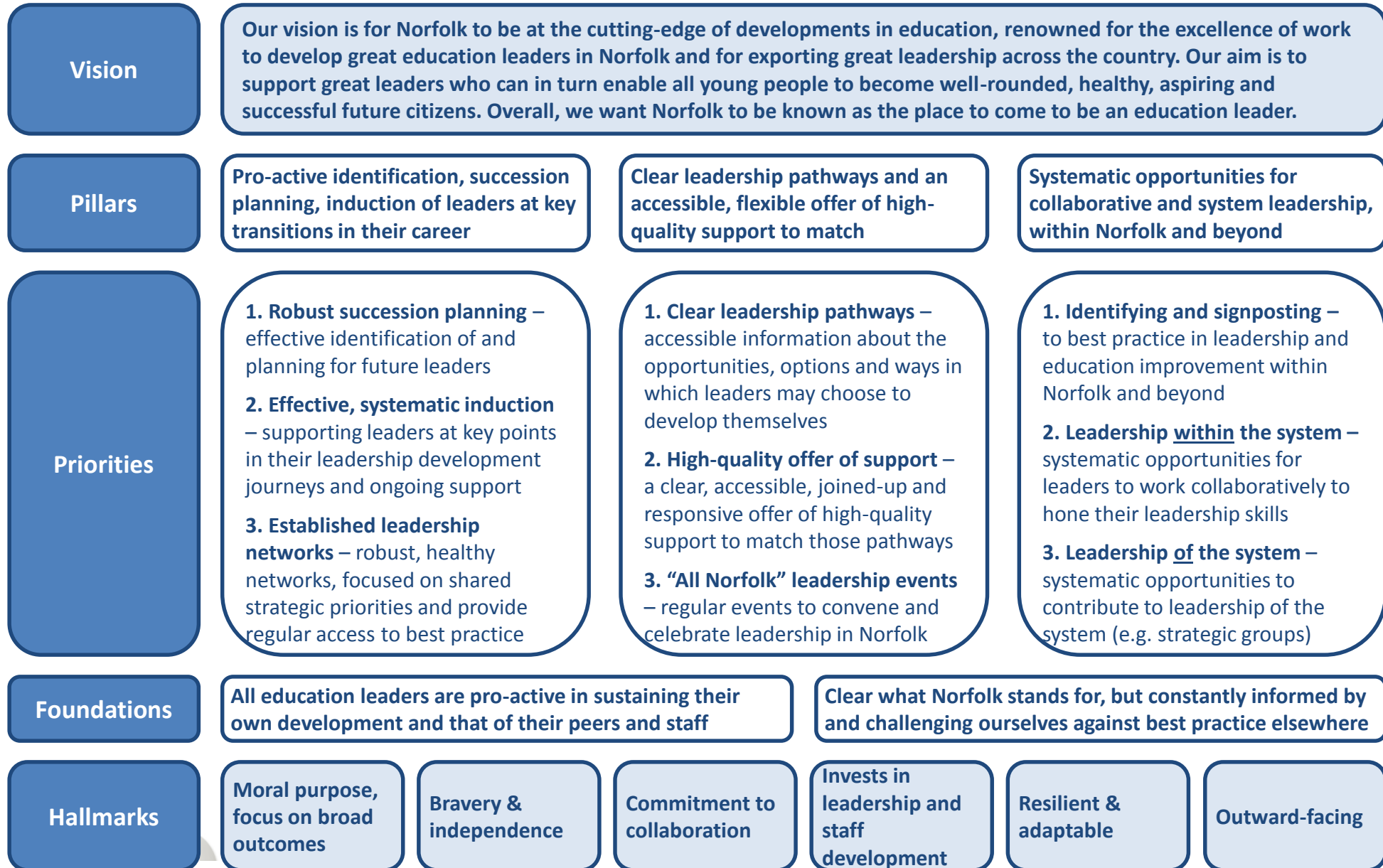
On the following page, we have summarised some of the key messages we heard during this project about how the Norfolk education system could, as a whole, support and foster great education leadership in the future. We have collated the feedback we gathered during the project and used this to set out:

- an overall vision for great education leadership in Norfolk;
- three pillars through which this can be fostered and supported;
- two fundamental foundations on which the future strategy should rest; and
- a set of six hallmarks that colleagues said they would want to be associated with being a Norfolk education leader.

We envisage that this outline could form the basis of the future Norfolk leadership strategy. In the remainder of this section, we describe in further detail what colleagues considered was needed under each of the three pillars, and set out our recommendations for putting those into practice.

The actions summarised here represent, so to speak, the “tip of the iceberg”. They do not represent the sum total of activities to support leadership across schools in Norfolk, nor are they a set of actions that the LA will mandate. We recognise that the vast majority of the work to foster great education leadership in Norfolk will take place within individual schools and partnerships. The actions described here represent, therefore, some of the core principles that colleagues argued all teachers, staff and leaders working in schools across Norfolk should expect to be available to them as they develop themselves as educators and leaders. These actions are, therefore, fundamentally about *enabling* leaders across Norfolk to develop their own leadership and that of their staff, colleagues and peers. As one leader put it, ‘implementing this strategy requires us, as school leaders, to take on responsibility for putting it into practice.’

# An outline of the future Norfolk leadership strategy



## Hallmarks of great education leadership: What it means to be a Norfolk leader

*On the previous page, we have highlighted six proposed hallmarks of great education leadership in Norfolk – these are the characteristics that the education leaders we engaged during the project said that they wished to be associated with being an education leader in Norfolk. We explain here what those leaders wanted each hallmark to signify, and what, overall it will mean to be a Norfolk education leader in the future, taking into account the opportunities and challenges across the county and in specific localities.*

### Six proposed hallmarks of great education leadership in Norfolk

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | <b>Moral purpose</b>                        | An unrelenting focus on enabling <u>all</u> young people in Norfolk to achieve great educational outcomes and equipping them to be upstanding future citizens. |
| 2 | <b>Bravery &amp; independence</b>           | Being willing to confront issues, challenge received orthodoxies, and develop new, cutting-edge approaches rooted in Norfolk's communities and context.        |
| 3 | <b>Commitment to collaboration</b>          | Fostering collaboration between practitioners, across institutions and with partners in the wider Norfolk community for the benefit of pupils and staff.       |
| 4 | <b>Investment in leadership development</b> | Taking a pro-active approach to sustaining one's own development, and to the development and progression of all staff in one's school and partnership(s).      |
| 5 | <b>Resilient &amp; adaptable</b>            | Demonstrates both determination and a willingness to think afresh about new, promising ideas. Takes care of one's own wellbeing and that of peers and staff.   |
| 6 | <b>Outward-facing</b>                       | Foster connections and is pro-active in seeking out new ideas and approaches, engaging with the best practice in Norfolk and beyond.                           |



## Leadership within the system

### Pillar 1: Identification, succession planning and induction – Key actions

#### Robust succession planning

The aim here is to ensure that there is consistently excellent, pro-active succession planning taking place in schools and partnerships across Norfolk. We heard examples of where this was working well in established partnerships, but also that some, particularly smaller, schools were finding this more challenging. The key here is not to mandate a particular approach, but to encourage regular conversations about succession planning between senior leaders and governors, and link those conversations to leadership development opportunities. The aim is also to encourage more joined-up work, within partnerships and across the county, to attract the best current and aspiring leaders to come to work in Norfolk.

#### Effective, systematic induction and orientation

Leaders and governors described a mixed picture in terms of the induction and ongoing “orientation” and advice they received upon taking up a senior leadership role or as chair of a governing board. They argued that there needed to be a more systematic approach to induction, with pro-active, practical support being provided at key points during their progression. Colleagues argued that this needed to be differentiated for those (a) new to the role, (b) new to Norfolk, or (c) both, but that an effective induction would include an introduction to the local system, signposting to information and sources of support, and a mentor or local “connector” to provide initial, informal peer support and advice.

#### Established leadership networks

Leaders described a wide range of peer networks that they drew upon. Again, the aim of a Norfolk leadership strategy should not be to dictate how these networks operate, but rather to ensure all leaders and educators across Norfolk are able to access the benefits of peer networks. This should involve, first, developing networks for practitioners and aspiring leaders, not just for headteachers – there was the desire to see networks for NQTs and RQTs, middle and subject leaders, and other groups. Second, this should involve ensuring that time spent in network meetings was focused on developing practice, informed by cutting-edge ideas from across and beyond Norfolk, not simply for disseminating information.



## Leadership within the system

### Pillar 1: Identification, succession planning and induction – Recommendations

#### Recommendation: Encouraging robust succession planning

**Recommendation**: we recommend that senior leaders and governors engage in regular discussions about succession planning within their institutions and across wider partnerships. This could be encouraged through strategic discussions between senior leaders, governors / directors and the LA, where such conversations take place, linked to a clear offer of support for those identified as leaders of the future.

**Next steps**: we suggest discussions take place between the LA, TSAs, and headteacher / governor associations about the best routes through which to encourage conversations about succession planning.

#### Recommendation: Providing systematic induction and advice to new leaders

**Recommendation**: we recommend that a new, systematic process for inducting new leaders (both leaders within schools and governors) is put in place to provide practical information and advice about the role and the local system, along with the allocation of a mentor or local co-ordinator. There was a strong suggestion during the project that this could be led by the existing headteacher / governor associations, but they would require a small amount of co-ordinating capacity. It may be necessary to configure these so that all leaders are automatically members of the relevant association.

**Next steps**: we suggest further discussions with the relevant associations about establishing such a scheme.

#### Recommendation: Maintaining practice-focused leadership networks

**Recommendation**: we recommend that leadership networks are developed for wider sets of educators and leaders, not just headteachers and governors. This may include NQTs and RQTs, middle and subject leaders, SEND leads and so on. Members of these groups should be able to shape these discussions, with some co-ordinating capacity to support them, to focus on enhancing their practice and draw on cutting-edge ideas from across and beyond Norfolk.

**Next steps**: we suggest discussions take place with the existing headteacher / governor associations to consider how existing leadership networks can be adapted to provide peer-to-peer networking for a wider group of leaders.



**Pillar 2: Clear leadership pathways and responsive support – Key actions****Clear leadership development pathways**

Drawing on the feedback we gathered, we have attempted to capture some of the pathways and opportunities open to current and aspiring leaders and governors in the current education landscape (see pp.39-40). The intention here is not to suggest that becoming a headteacher or MAT CEO should be the aspiration of all school staff, nor to underplay the importance of great leadership of classroom practice, but rather to recognise the different pathways and destinations educators and aspiring leaders may wish to take. We suggest that these pathways could be used in a practical way to inform discussions about progression and development opportunities, and exemplified in the new strategy.

**Linking these pathways to a high-quality offer of support**

A strong message throughout this review has been the need to ensure that leadership support is geared towards developing the skills for modern, transformative leadership and governance of schools, such as leading great pedagogy, strategic leadership in times of change, collaborative leadership, and technical management skills (finance, HR, project management). As such, the leadership development pathways need to be matched to an offer of support through which leaders can develop these skills. This offer needs to be responsive to changing needs, but during the review some initial priorities were suggested to us – executive leadership, new models of governance, middle and subject leadership, and NQTs / RQTs. We suggest that, having convened the TSAs and other providers, further work is undertaken to test these priorities and develop an offer of support to address these gaps.

**Facilitating “all Norfolk” events to reinforce the vision and celebrate great education leadership**

Colleagues also saw the need for events that brought together leaders to celebrate great education leadership across Norfolk, as well as providing opportunities to revisit the overall vision, reinforce shared principles, and provide opportunities for leaders to engage with cutting-edge developments and practice from across Norfolk and beyond. Many colleagues also highlighted points in their careers where it had first been suggested to them that they should consider leadership. On a smaller scale, therefore, colleagues also saw the need for local convenings of educators to introduce them to leadership and connect them to opportunities to start to develop their leadership skills.



**Recommendation: Developing practical leadership development pathways**

**Recommendation:** we recommend that leaders across Norfolk work collectively to describe (and continue to keep updated) the leadership roles, pathways and opportunities that are open to school staff and governors in the new education landscape. Furthermore, we recommend that these pathways are used to prompt reflection on individuals' progression and development needs, to support pro-active succession planning and leadership development.

**Next steps:** we suggest that, as the new Norfolk leadership strategy is developed, the pathways developed through this project are tested and refined further, and used to continue to gather feedback about potential gaps in support.

**Recommendation: Developing a joined-up, responsive offer of high-quality leadership development support**

**Recommendation:** as noted earlier (p.25), we recommend that TSA leaders and other providers convene regularly in order to take the lead on developing a joined-up, responsive offer of high-quality leadership support. This should be based initially on the skills, support and priorities colleagues have identified through this project, which should be tested and kept updated on a regular basis. It should be noted that this offer should not be limited to support available within Norfolk, but should also draw on the best support available regionally and nationally.

**Next steps:** as noted earlier, we suggest an initial step is to convene the TSAs and other providers to map out this offer.

**Recommendation: Bringing together leaders across Norfolk to celebrate and foster great education leadership**

**Recommendation:** we recommend regular "all Norfolk" leadership events are organised to celebrate and foster great education leadership across the county, at county or locality level. We also recommend that leadership associations, TSAs and/or other system leaders consider how their peer networks might offer opportunities to convene prospective future leaders to help them think about leadership, their future pathways and the support they may wish to access.

**Next steps:** we suggest that discussions take place between the TSAs, leadership associations and LA about how and when such events may be organised (e.g. launch of the new strategy), and who is best placed to lead now and in future.





**Identifying and signposting to effective leadership development within and beyond Norfolk**

Colleagues argued that one of the future hallmarks of great education leadership should be remaining outward-facing and engaged with the best practice across both the county and the country and use that to reflect on and develop practice in Norfolk. They argued that there was a crucial *enabling* role to be played in terms of using data, intelligence and wider regional and national networks to identify the most effective practice and make this accessible to leaders in local schools and partnerships – e.g. if a partnership is looking to develop support for their middle leaders, or a cluster wants to develop its maths provision, the system should enable them to engage with best practice locally and nationally.

**Opportunities for collaborative and system leadership *within* the Norfolk education system**

Several colleagues we engaged described the powerful effect that working with leaders from other local areas or being part of regional and national networks had had on their leadership development. Leaders also argued, however, that such collaborative working was developing, but was not yet consistently embedded as the norm in Norfolk. They argued that there was the need to develop more systematic opportunities for leaders at all levels to engage in collaborative working, through convening action research projects, triads, peer reviews, shadowing and secondments. They also argued that there was the need to grow the next cadre of system leaders, encouraging colleagues to become designated as specialist / local / national leaders of education. Furthermore, they argued that there was the need to improve the transparency, accessibility and quality-assurance, as well as the utilisation of existing system leaders.

**Opportunities for leadership *of* the Norfolk education system**

Colleagues described the impact that contributing to strategic leadership groups, within Norfolk and beyond, had had in preparing them for executive leadership and governance roles. They considered that the aim in Norfolk should be to create a wider range of opportunities for leaders at all levels to shape aspects of the local system. We have described how this may be done, such as through county and locality strategic leadership groups, or thematic groups around issues such as SEND or alternative provision. Overall, the aspiration must be to create the expectation that Norfolk education leaders can and will contribute to the leadership of all strategic questions within the local system.

**Recommendation: Identifying and signposting to effective leadership development within and beyond Norfolk**

**Recommendation:** we recommend that, in future, the local education system in Norfolk should enable leaders at all levels to access information about and be signposted to best practice in great education leadership across the county and beyond.

**Next steps:** as noted earlier in this report, the leaders we engaged through this review identified some initial areas where they felt further leadership support was required (executive leadership, middle leadership, governance). We suggest there may be some quick wins to identify best practice in these areas and make this available to leaders in Norfolk.

**Recommendation: Providing systematic opportunities for collaborative and system leadership *within* Norfolk**

**Recommendation:** we recommend that the future offer of leadership development support is not only an offer of CPD, but also includes systematic opportunities for leaders to work together with peers from other schools on developing practice and leadership. This may involve convening action research groups, shadowing schemes, secondments, and also extends to growing future cadres of system leaders and making it as easy as possible for them to be access and deployed.

**Next steps:** we suggest piloting some small action research projects or triads, and an accessible secondment pool. We also suggest discussions take place about who should oversee these – whether that is TSAs, associations, the LA.

**Recommendation: Providing systematic opportunities for leadership *of* the Norfolk education system**

**Recommendation:** we recommend that the overall aspiration is for there to be systematic opportunities for Norfolk leaders to contribute to the strategic leadership of the local education system.

**Next steps:** we suggest establishing a partnership-based strategic leadership board. This will need to be considered carefully alongside existing boards to ensure that governance of the system remains streamline, purposeful and effective. We have also recommended that there should be consideration of other locality or thematic groups for leaders at different levels to contribute to leadership of the system. It will be necessary to consider what co-ordinating capacity or release time might be needed to support leaders to take up these opportunities.

## Contents of this report

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### **Introduction**

**Introductions – aims of, approach to and background on the project**

### **Part 1**

**Key findings and evidence gathered from education leaders in Norfolk during this review**

### **Part 2**

**An outline of the future strategy for supporting great education leadership in Norfolk**

### **Conclusion**

**Summary of recommendations and next steps**

# Summary of recommendations and next steps

We suggest that there are four immediate next steps in order to move forward with developing the new strategy.

In this report, we have set out a series of recommendations, framed as both long-term goals and immediate next steps. In total, we have set out 13 recommendations – four relate to leadership *of* the system, while nine relate to leadership *within* the system (three recommendations for each of the three suggested pillars of the new strategy). In this concluding section, we suggest four immediate next steps that should be taken to start to put these recommendations into effect.

1. **Identifying some immediate priorities and “quick wins” in terms of the offer of support to go alongside the launch of the strategy** – we suggest these discussions at a strategic and system leadership level should seek to identify some “quick wins” in terms of the offer of leadership support (e.g. a new induction programme, projects for middle leaders, a NQT and RQT network) that can be rolled out at the same time as the new strategy is launched. Engaging leaders in these activities may help both to make the new strategy feel more “concrete” and to foster the collaborative culture that leaders have suggested needs to be engendered more consistently across the county.
2. **Convening the TSA leaders and other providers** – we suggest convening the TSA leaders and other providers in a strategic conversation to map out the existing leadership development offer(s) against the pathways and priorities highlighted through this review. This would be separate from, but linked to, the overall strategic partnership board.
3. **Developing a shared vision or “blueprint” for the local education system** – we suggest that work is undertaken to gather feedback from a wide range of leaders, governors and educators across the county, and secure broad consensus on how the Norfolk education system may look in the future and the roles to be played within it.
4. **Developing the strategic group(s) to provide collective leadership of the education system and this strategy** – we suggest a key initial step is to agree the arrangements whereby school leaders, the LA and key partners can form what one leader called ‘the strategic echelon’ of the local education system, which will provide partnership-based leadership of the system and oversight of the new Norfolk leadership strategy. We should stress, however, that we are not necessarily advocating for the creation of an additional board – discussions should take place about how this could fit with existing system governance arrangements and planned sub-regional structures.

## Summary of recommendations and next steps

We would also suggest that consideration is given to how and by whom the new strategy is lead.

Throughout this report, we have emphasised that the overall aim of the future strategy should be to foster and facilitate Norfolk education leaders collectively to contribute to partnership-based leadership of the local system. We noted earlier in the report that Norfolk appears to be approaching the “tipping-point” in this transition, with evidence suggesting school leaders see the necessity of and are prepared to contribute to leadership of the system.

In the short term, we suggest that the LA may play an important role in facilitating this transition, convening and co-ordinating leaders within the system and helping to create the structures that should, in the future, enable Norfolk education leaders to lead the local system in partnership with the LA and other partners. We have suggested, however, that an important structure to put in place quickly is a partnership-based strategic leadership board, which could play a key role in overseeing the new Norfolk leadership strategy.

In terms of the three pillars we have suggested make up the strategy, they may be led as follows.

1. **Identification, succession planning and induction** – the strong view during the course of the project was that this could be led by the leadership associations (provided there was some co-ordinating capacity to help them to do so). We agree that the associations are well placed to take on this role, although consideration should be given about whether membership of the associations should be reconfigured so all leaders automatically become members.
2. **Leadership pathways and responsive support** – we have suggested in this report that the TSAs and other providers could, collectively, play an important role in shaping the leadership development offer in Norfolk in the future. This will require some co-ordination and facilitation, but the TSAs reported that they are willing to take on this role.
3. **Opportunities or collaborative and system leadership** – the strong view expressed during the project was that the LA could play a key role in identifying effective practice, signposting colleagues to it, and maintaining opportunities for system leadership within and of the system. There was, however, also some willingness for TSAs to play a greater role in facilitating and connecting leaders across the system. We suggest this should be explored in the future.

Overall, we would envisage the strategic board playing an oversight and periodic review / quality-assurance role.

## Summary of recommendations and next steps

Lastly, it will be vital to consider how leaders will know if this strategy is proving effective.

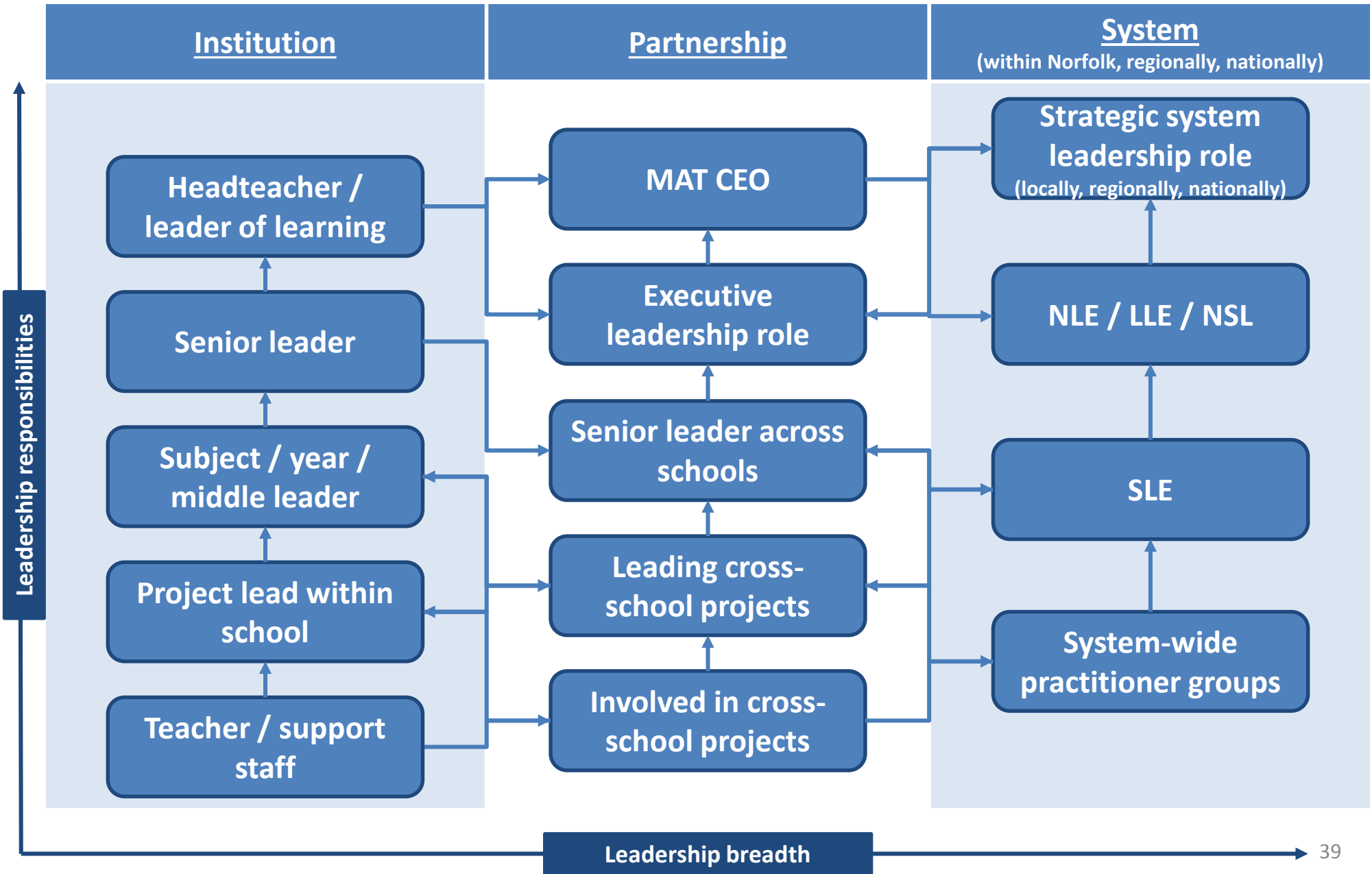
**The role of leadership in improving outcomes, accelerating progress and supporting pupils to become well-rounded future citizens is well established.** As such, it is a sensible approach for Norfolk leaders to develop a shared strategy for fostering great education leadership. There is, however, a challenge in keeping track of whether the strategy is proving effective in improving leadership and transforming education outcome for young people in Norfolk, not least because part of what the new strategy is seeking to achieve is a shift in the culture of leadership within Norfolk.

**We suggest that there may be three broad ways for strategic leaders to monitor the impact of the new strategy.**

1. **Outputs** – this could involve checking that there is a coherent set of pathways and offer of support in place, and monitoring and analysing the take-up of this offer.
2. **Tracking activity** – this could involve tracking involvement of Norfolk leaders in county and locality strategic groups, access and utilisation of designated system leaders, the pipeline of future leaders and governors – for example, is there confidence that there is a strong cadre of MAT chief executives, strong governors and MAT directors, headteachers and leaders of learning, middle leaders, and aspiring future leaders?
3. **Quality-assurance** – this could involve gathering feedback of and commissioning reviews of aspects of the strategy (e.g. induction of new leaders or chairs of governors, gathering feedback on the quality of middle leadership support). We suggest this may also involve triangulating feedback gathered on the strength of leadership within Norfolk with other relevant data on the quality of education across Norfolk schools, and on pupil outcomes and long-term destinations.

Individual leaders will have a vital role to play in implementing the future Norfolk leadership strategy. A central theme throughout this project has been the need to avoid conflating “leaders” with “headteachers”, and to ensure the discussions about leadership in Norfolk involve not just headteachers, but also aspiring leaders, middle leaders, executive leaders and governors. Taking a pro-active approach to engaging these broad constituencies of leaders, encouraging them to ask questions about leadership, leadership standards and leadership development, and gathering their feedback, will be crucial to maximising the impact of future work to foster great education leadership in Norfolk.

# ANNEX: Outline leadership development pathway for educators and leaders of learning



# ANNEX: Outline leadership development pathway for governors

