



**Meeting:** Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Date/Time:** Monday, 11 March 2024 at 2.00 pm

**Location:** Sparkenhoe Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield

**Contact:** Anna Poole (tel: 0116 305 2583)

**Email:** [anna.poole@leics.gov.uk](mailto:anna.poole@leics.gov.uk)

### **Membership**

Mr. M. Frisby CC (Chairman)

Mr. G. A. Boulter CC    Mr. M. Hunt CC  
Mr. N. Chapman CC    Mrs. R. Page CC  
Mr. D. Harrison CC    Mrs B. Seaton CC

**Please note:** this meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWFpwBLs6MnUzG0WjejrQtQ>

### **AGENDA**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Report by</u>
1. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2024.	(Pages 5 - 10)
2. Question Time.	
3. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).	
4. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.	
5. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.	



6. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.
7. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 35.
8. Recycling and Household Waste Sites Consultation Outcome, Recommendations and Further Consultation. Director of Environment and Transport (Pages 11 - 86)
9. Environment and Climate Change Performance Report to December 2023. Chief Executive and Director of Environment and Transport (Pages 87 - 100)
10. Revised Approach for Charging for Construction and Demolition Waste at Household Waste Recycling Centres. Director of Environment and Transport (Pages 101 - 106)
11. Date of next meeting.  
  
The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday 13 June 2024 at 2.00pm.
12. Any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent.

## QUESTIONING BY MEMBERS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The ability to ask good, pertinent questions lies at the heart of successful and effective scrutiny. To support members with this, a range of resources, including guides to questioning, are available via the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny website [www.cfgs.org.uk](http://www.cfgs.org.uk). The following questions have been agreed by Scrutiny members as a good starting point for developing questions:

- Who was consulted and what were they consulted on? What is the process for and quality of the consultation?
- How have the voices of local people and frontline staff been heard?
- What does success look like?
- What is the history of the service and what will be different this time?
- What happens once the money is spent?
- If the service model is changing, has the previous service model been evaluated?
- What evaluation arrangements are in place – will there be an annual review?

Members are reminded that, to ensure questioning during meetings remains appropriately focused that:

- (a) they can use the officer contact details at the bottom of each report to ask questions of clarification or raise any related patch issues which might not be best addressed through the formal meeting;
- (b) they must speak only as a County Councillor and not on behalf of any other local authority when considering matters which also affect district or parish/town councils (see Articles 2.03(b) of the Council's Constitution).



This page is intentionally left blank



Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee. held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 24 January 2024.

PRESENT

Mr. M. Frisby CC (in the Chair)

Mr. G. A. Boulter CC  
Mr. N. Chapman CC  
Mr. D. Harrison CC

Mr. M. Hunt CC  
Mrs. R. Page CC  
Mrs B. Seaton CC

In attendance

Mr. B. L. Pain CC Cabinet Lead Member for the Environment and the Green Agenda, and Mr. N. J. Rushton, Leader.

36. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2023 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

37. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

38. Questions asked by members.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

39. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

40. Declarations of interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

41. Declarations of the Party Whip.

There were no declarations of the party whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

42. Presentation of Petitions.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 35.

43. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 - 2027/28.

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Environment and Transport and the Director of Corporate Resources which provided information on the proposed 2024/25 to 2027/28 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as it related to the Environment and Waste Management Services within the Council's Environment and Transport Department. The report also sought the Committee's views on proposals to recommend to the Cabinet that the Council's net zero target dates be revised from 2030 to 2035 for the Council's own emissions, and from 2045 to 2050 for the County's emissions, in light of the Council's wider financial position. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed Mr. B.L. Pain CC, Cabinet Lead Member for the Environment and the Green Agenda and Mr. N. J. Rushton CC, Leader of the Council to the meeting for this and other items.

In presenting the report, the Director explained that the environment aspects of the MTFS related to the Environment and Transport Department only and not the wider environmental activity across the Council.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

Revenue Budget

- i. The premium paid as part of the package to recruit and retain HGV drivers had helped the Council to be more competitive in the marketplace, although it could not compete with the attractive offers made by the bigger private sector operators in the area. Staffing overall was near full complement with the use of the premia and agency staff, but in such a competitive market, it was a challenge. Overall, the service was coping from a driver perspective by paying the premium and by using agency staff. However, there was a shortage of managers and frontline staff. Overall, 20% of vacancies were currently filled by agency staff. The Department preferred to keep the level of agency staff to 10%. Other amendments had been made to the recruitment package, such as changing contractual hours to a four day on/four day off contract, which reflected what was offered in the wider marketplace and enabled the Council to compete.
- ii. Regarding the free disposal of DIY waste following the change in legislation from 1 January 2024, Members expressed concern about the volume that households could now potentially deposit at RHWS which would increase the Council's costs and were informed that households were restricted to four visits in a four-week period.

Growth

- iii. Pre-existing arrangements were in place to manage the disposal of asbestos at certain Council Recycling and Household Waste Sites (RHWS), and details were available on the Council's website for the public to follow. This was not charged for

at the same rates but had been included in the new process now in place linked to the legislation for the disposal of DIY waste. All items known to include asbestos, including artex, were covered within these arrangements with a need to have a permit for removal and disposal for health and safety reasons.

#### Savings/Savings under Development

- iv. The income from the sale of items from the RHWS for reuse was included under ET9 'service approach', which was a broad description in the budget and included savings linked to reuse of items. The Director agreed to amend the descriptor for clarity.
- v. Members expressed concern that income from the disposal of trade waste could be reduced if traders used the new legislation for the disposal of DIY at RHWS to dispose of their waste. The Director assured members that trade waste services were only available at Whetstone Transfer Station and that it had a unique trade point in the market. The RHWS across the county did not accept trade waste at any of the sites. RHWS staff monitored people disposing of waste, so could identify traders using the wrong facilities. Additionally, Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) was used to provide vehicle count data and monitor service usage levels. A report would be presented to the Committee in March on the removal of charges for DIY waste and related work.

#### Other Factors Influencing MTFS Delivery/Other Funding Sources

- vi. A member expressed concern that the report proposed an extension to the net zero target dates by five years and stated that achieving the original target dates should be the Council's top priority. Other members added that, whilst they understood the concerns expressed, they recognised the importance of making savings to balance service delivery and the needs of residents within the resource envelope available to the Council.
- vii. Mr. B. L. Pain CC, Cabinet Lead Member for the Environment and the Green Agenda, highlighted the many achievements made to date in working towards the Council's net zero targets. He added, however, that despite these many achievements, it was recognised that the Council was off track in achieving the net zero targets overall. In light of the financial challenge facing the Council there was a need to extend the Council's targets to be in line with national targets. Mr. N. J. Rushton CC highlighted that the Council had achieved a great deal in working towards the Council's net zero targets. However, with a growth bid in this area of £475,000, which was not possible to meet, the targets needed to be revised. He added that, if the growth bid was met, then the money would need to be identified from another budget within the Council which would then be reduced. The Director of Corporate Resources clarified that the £475,000 related to the cost of the team working on the environmental agenda and not the cost to the Council of conversion to net zero, which could not be costed but was way beyond the Council's means and could not be met without Government legislation and funding.
- viii. Members were assured that a report on the reprioritisation of activity under the net zero targets would be brought back to the Committee, before being presented to the Cabinet and Council.

- ix. The Emissions Trading Scheme was a form of taxation on the energy from waste (EFW) sector, following on from the Government's successful use of landfill taxes to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. More detail was expected from the Government, but it was likely that the increased taxation would be passed on from the EFW treatment facilities to the County Council via an increase in the gate fee, which is a fee charged by the treatment facilities to accept waste from waste disposal authorities.
- x. The Committee commended staff for the range of activity being undertaken with waste recycling.

#### Capital Programme

- xi. Regarding the expenditure detailed in paragraph 35 table 3 for lighting, this related to the improvements to the lighting provision within RHWS and not payment for lighting/electricity use which was funded out of the revenue budget.
- xii. A Member expressed concern about the increase in traffic and the need for improvements to the road and entrance to the Kibworth RHWS should the proposal to close the Market Harborough RHWS be approved. The Director assured members that a traffic assessment had been completed for all RHWS as part of consideration of the proposals. This showed that the entrance to the Kibworth site could cope with the additional traffic flow and that there were no additional measures needed.

#### RESOLVED:

- a) That the report regarding the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25 – 2027/28 (MTFS) and information now provided be noted;
- b) That the comments now made regarding the MTFS, including proposals to revise the Council's net zero target dates, be forwarded to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration at its meeting on 29 January 2024.

#### 44. Environmental Performance Report 2022-23.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which provided information on progress made in delivering the Council's commitments to net zero and gave information on the performance of the Council's Environmental Management System for 2022-23. The report also gave an update on progress in delivering the aims and objectives of the Council's Environmental Strategy 2018-2030. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

In presenting the report, the Director explained that the report included the Council's environmental performance, progress towards achieving net zero and greenhouse gas emissions and related to the Council's progress in delivering the existing 2030 and 2045 targets.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. Regarding the increase in office mileage claimed, Members were informed that claims made were for petrol, diesel and electric vehicles (EV). When completing the claim, staff were asked to specify the type of car, so figures could be compiled



for the level claimed for journeys made by EVs if this was required. The performance figures in the report were compared to the period during the pandemic when there had been very little travel undertaken by staff, hence the increase in office mileage shown. However, the current mileage claims were less than those made pre-pandemic. Data showed that there was a rise in the number of claims made for EVs, as more staff purchased such vehicles.

- ii. A Member expressed concern that the biomass boiler had not been working recently. It was explained that it was currently running and Members were informed that this method of generating energy was well proven and was a strong contributor to the Council's renewable activities. There had been issues previously with sourcing parts for the boiler with delays experienced as parts were sourced from Germany. Additionally, it had been challenging to source parts during the pandemic, as with parts for other pieces of equipment.
- iii. In response to Members concerns about the significant decline in the number of Leicestershire rivers, from 99.6% to 0%, which were in good chemical status, the Director explained that this was due to a change in the Government's methodology for calculating the data. Members were informed that data for the county was in line with national performance. The County Council relied on other agencies, for example the Environment Agency, water companies, etc. to support achievement of the performance targets in this area. The County Council did not have a specific target on river water quality but did contribute to the achievement of the national target.
- iv. Members asked that the Environment Agency and Severn Trent be invited to attend a future committee meeting as a follow up to their previous visit to enable the Committee to understand what was happening to Leicestershire rivers and what could be done to rectify the situation. The Director agreed that this was possible but added that clarity was needed about what would be discussed with them and Members would need to collate questions for submission to these organisations in advance.
- v. Regarding the solar PVs, Members were informed that 10.9% of electricity used by the County Council had been generated from its solar PVs. The Council had considered the feasibility of installing rainwater harvesting equipment at County Hall about 10 years ago but had found that the costs of installation were exorbitant and so had not proceeded. However, the Council did consider installing solar PVs on new buildings and had installed them on the building for the Access Group, in Loughborough.
- vi. The Director explained that the actions detailed in the report for Leicestershire activity towards achieving the net zero targets would be re-prioritised should the revised targets be approved, especially in light of the Council's financial situation. Members welcomed a simplified and more accessible action plan being developed.
- vii. Mr. Pain CC added that the initial Action Plan included a large number of projects and identified where the Council had an advocacy or leadership role in delivering them. Many partners had been brought together and key stakeholders identified in order to work towards achievement of the net zero targets. He supported the Director's comments about the activities being re-prioritised in the short to medium term within the resources available.
- viii. Regarding the installation of renewable energy and rainwater harvesting on new buildings, it was up to the Local Planning Authorities and district councils to determine standards for their areas, and this could also be driven by the Government setting new legislation.

Members commended officers for presenting such a transparent and honest performance report and for the achievements made which were detailed in the report.

RESOLVED:

That the update provided on the Council's environmental performance for 2022-23 and progress made in delivering the aims and objectives of the Council's Environmental Strategy 2018-2030 be noted.

45. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday 11 March 2024 at 2.00pm.

2.00 - 3.27 pm  
24 January 2024

CHAIRMAN



**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2024**

**RECYCLING AND HOUSEHOLD WASTE SITES  
CONSULTATION OUTCOME, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER  
CONSULTATION**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to:
  - a) Inform the Committee of the outcome of public consultation on the following proposals:
    - i. Closure of three of the Council's Recycling and Household Waste Sites (RHWS): Market Harborough, Shepshed, and Somerby;
    - ii. Change to part-time opening at Bottesford RHWS;
    - iii. Reduction of summer opening hours at all RHWS; and
    - iv. Introduction of Christmas Eve closure at all RHWS.
  - b) Inform the Committee of the revised proposals to keep Market Harborough RHWS and Shepshed RHWS open part-time and reduce the opening days at Kibworth RHWS and seek its views as part of a secondary consultation exercise.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. The Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy, adopted by the Council on 24 April 2023, sets out how the Leicestershire Waste Partnership (consisting of the Council and the seven districts) intends to manage municipal waste up to 2050.
3. Since 2013, there have been a number of service reduction and efficiency changes to the operation of the RHWS service to achieve Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) savings of approximately £2.7m. The current RHWS service offer was approved by the Cabinet in November 2015.
4. The Cabinet agreed to a public consultation on RHWS summer opening hours changes in June 2019, but the changes were not taken forward at the time.
5. On 13 February 2023, the Scrutiny Commission appointed a cross-party Scrutiny Review Panel to test the assessment criteria used to identify sites for potential closure, and to consider how the closures would impact residents in the future.

The report and recommendations of the Panel were considered and supported by the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7 June 2023 and by the Cabinet on 23 June 2023.

6. On 24 October 2023, the Cabinet agreed to commence public consultation on:
  - a) Closure of three of the Council's RHWS: Market Harborough, Shepshed, and Somerby;
  - b) Change to part-time opening at Bottesford RHWS;
  - c) Reduction of summer opening hours at all RHWS; and
  - d) Introduction of Christmas Eve closure at all RHWS.
7. A report outlining the above proposals and seeking views as part of the public consultation was considered by the Committee on 2 November 2023.
8. The Cabinet at its meeting on 9 February 2024 considered a report setting out the proposed MTFS for 2024/25 to 2027/28 and inter alia recommended amended proposals in relation to the RHWS service, to be funded from the Service Investment Fund and subject to further consultation. The Cabinet agreed that, subject to the Council's approval of the MTFS, the Director of Environment and Transport be authorised to consult on the revised proposals for the RHWS service.
9. The County Council at its meeting on 21 February 2024 approved the MTFS.

### **Background**

10. The Council has a statutory duty under Section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act (EPA) 1990 to provide places at which residents in its area may deposit their household waste free of charge. The EPA requires that each place provided is open at all reasonable times including at least one period on a Saturday or Sunday. The Council has discretion to determine the number of these facilities, the location of such facilities, the opening hours to be operated and what charges if any are applied for accepting non-household waste or waste from businesses or non-residents.
11. There are 14 RHWS located across the County, all of which are directly operated by the Council. There are 70 operational staff working across the sites. A map showing the location of Leicestershire's RHWS is attached at Appendix A.
12. The total operational budget for waste management in 2022/23 was £28.9m. The current net budget for operation of the RHWS is circa £3.9m (excluding waste disposal and treatment).
13. The opening times for all RHWS are currently as follows:
  - a) 9.00am to 7.00pm, five days a week from April to September (summer hours) (Saturday to Wednesday or Thursday to Monday dependent on site);
  - b) 9.00am to 4.00pm, five days a week from October to March (winter hours); and
  - c) All sites are closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

## **Public Consultation Findings**

14. A twelve-week public consultation on the proposals at paragraph 6 above was undertaken between 1 November 2023 and 24 January 2024. The consultation consisted of an online questionnaire accessed via the 'Have your say' page on the Council's website and a series of focus groups were undertaken with members of the public.
15. A variety of other stakeholders were consulted, such as district councils, parish councils, neighbouring Waste Disposal Authorities (Leicester City Council and county councils), and the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group (LECG).

### **'Have Your Say' Online Survey Headline Findings**

16. Full findings from the 'Have your say' online survey can be found in the Consultation Survey Analysis Report (Appendix B).
17. There were 5,638 responses to the online questionnaire. The table below shows the headline demographic data for questionnaire respondents, compared to the general population of Leicestershire.

<b>Demographic Characteristics</b>	<b>Questionnaire Respondents</b>	<b>Leicestershire Population</b>
Female	53%	51%
Aged 45-75	64%	32%
White ethnicity	96%	88%
Heterosexual	93%	92%
Not Disabled	81%	83%

Population data source: 2021 Census

18. The majority of respondents strongly disagreed/tended to disagree with the proposed closure of Market Harborough RHWS (73%), Shepshed RHWS (67%), and Somerby RHWS (40%). The proportion of respondents who strongly disagreed/tended to disagree with the proposed closures increased significantly for those who either lived in the local area or were regular users of the sites. The key response themes were:
  - a) Concerns about environmental impacts such as increased fly tipping and driving further to alternative sites.
  - b) Concerns that Market Harborough RHWS and Shepshed RHWS are in areas of housing development.
  - c) Concerns about the suitability of alternative sites such as traffic safety at the A6 entrance to the Kibworth RHWS and increased usage at other already busy sites.
19. The majority of respondents (59%) neither agreed nor disagreed with part-time opening at Bottesford RHWS. The proportion of respondents who agreed with the proposal increased for those who were regular users of the site (70%). The key response themes were:

- a) Support for the proposal as part-time opening is preferable to closure.
  - b) Concerns about increased fly tipping.
20. The majority of respondents (56%) tended to agree/strongly agree with the proposal to reduce summer opening hours at all RHWS. The key response themes were:
- a) Support for the proposal as an alternative to closing sites.
  - b) Support for the proposal as it is a sensible way to save money.
  - c) Suggestions of alternative opening hours to those proposed.
21. The majority of respondents (92%) tended to agree/strongly agree with the proposal to introduce Christmas Eve closure at all RHWS. The key response themes were:
- a) Support for RHWS staff having Christmas Eve off.
  - b) Support for the proposal as people are unlikely to prioritise visiting an RHWS on Christmas Eve.
  - c) Support for the proposal as visitor numbers are lower on Christmas Eve.
22. The questionnaire asked respondents for alternative suggestions on ways of making savings. The key response themes were:
- a) Reduce hours and opening days at the sites proposed for closure and the RHWS around the County.
  - b) Reduce staffing levels at RHWS, utilise volunteers to staff sites, and greater use of automated systems at sites.
  - c) Generate income via reuse and recycling of items.
  - d) Charge to visit sites and to dispose of specific types of waste.
  - e) Improve the range and quantity of kerbside collections to reduce demand on RHWS.

### Focus Groups

23. Full findings can be found in the Focus Group Report (Appendix C) and a summary is given below.
24. Six online focus groups were held with a mixture of Leicestershire residents, and residents from the areas specifically affected by potential RHWS closures. Feedback from the participants is summarised as follows:
- a) Closure of Market Harborough, Shepshed and Somerby sites:
    - i. People who were regular visitors to the sites were the most affected and unhappy about the plans.
    - ii. The closures were considered short-sighted due to the housing development around Market Harborough and Shepshed.
    - iii. The savings were considered small especially if it will increase fly tipping.
    - iv. There were concerns regarding closing Market Harborough RHWS as it is seen as a good site with good access; participants would have

preferred closing Kibworth RHWS which is seen as having less good access.

- v. It was felt that closures should have been thought through before investing in the Kibworth site (the redevelopment of the site took place between November 2021 and March 2023).

b) Part-time opening at Bottesford RHWS:

- i. Site users were relieved that the proposal was to keep the site open part-time rather than close it.
- ii. Weekend access to the site was considered crucial.

c) Reduction of summer opening hours:

- i. This was considered to have a low impact on households.
- ii. There was a preference for more evening opening times in the summer, instead of opening early in the morning.
- iii. It was suggested that winter opening hours were reduced, and sites kept open for longer in summer instead.

d) Christmas Eve closure:

- i. No one had visited sites on Christmas Eve, some assumed sites were shut, others stated they had 'better things to do'.
- ii. Participants felt it was a very reasonable change and would have a low impact on households.

### Other Consultation Activity

25. Views on the proposals were also sought from parish councils, district councils, neighbouring local authorities, the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the LECG. Detailed feedback is given in the Consultation Survey Report (Appendix B) and summarised below.

26. A number of parish councils, district councils and neighbouring local authorities submitted responses as part of the online survey. Of those that responded via letter/email, the following concerns were raised:

- a) Harborough District Council's main concerns were the impact of closing Market Harborough RHWS on traffic safety at Kibworth RHWS, and the potential for increased fly tipping.
- b) North Northamptonshire Council's main concerns were that the closure of Market Harborough RHWS could create cross-over demand to their facilities, and the potential cost to them of implementing residents only permit system should cross-border use increase.
- c) Hathern Parish Council's main concerns were the closure of Shepshed RHWS leading to increased fly tipping, increased congestion in Loughborough due to people using the site there as an alternative, and the environmental impact of people making longer car journeys to alternative sites.

27. This Committee considered the proposals at its meeting on 2 November 2023 and its main concern was housing growth proposed for Harborough increasing visitor numbers at Kibworth RHWS and, therefore, placing increased pressure on local roads.
28. The LECG's main concerns were an increase in fly tipping, closures causing congestion in built-up areas as people travel to alternative sites, closing RHWS while population increases, queuing at alternative sites, and older people in Somerby having to travel further to an alternative RHWS.

#### Kibworth RHWS Traffic Assessment

29. In December 2023, the Council's Network Data and Intelligence Team undertook work to understand the potential impact of increased traffic accessing Kibworth RHWS should Market Harborough RHWS close. The worst-case scenario was modelled to understand the impact of 100% of Market Harborough RHWS visitors using Kibworth RHWS as an alternative at peak times of day and year.
30. The data suggests that the right turn into the Kibworth RHWS on the A6 could cope with additional visits resulting from the closure of Market Harborough RHWS. However, future housing developments, and Government legislation changes have not been factored in and may increase demand on Kibworth RHWS in future.
31. The revised proposal to keep Market Harborough RHWS open part-time would mean that a smaller proportion of Market Harborough RHWS visitors would be expected to use Kibworth RHWS as an alternative.

#### Revised Proposals

32. When considering a report setting out the 2024/25 to 2027/28 MTFS on 9 February 2024, the Cabinet noted the amended proposals in relation to the RHWS service. It was agreed that, subject to the outcome of a further public consultation, the £100,000 required to fund the reduced saving from the amended proposals would come from the Service Investment Fund. In light of this, and the public and stakeholder feedback from the original consultation, it is now proposed to keep Market Harborough RHWS and Shepshed RHWS open part-time, and to reduce the number of opening days at Kibworth RHWS.
33. Market Harborough RHWS would change from opening five days to three days per week, and Shepshed RHWS would change from opening three days to two days per week. Implementing this would also require a reduction in opening days from five days to four days per week at Kibworth RHWS to make the proposal operationally viable. As these changes had not been put forward for consideration as part of the public consultation detailed above, a further, secondary, consultation exercise is now required.
34. The original proposal to close Somerby RHWS remains, due to its high operational cost per visit and low visitor numbers, as does the proposal to reduce summer opening hours for all RHWS, and close all sites on Christmas Eve and, therefore, these do not form part of the secondary consultation.



### **Resource Implications**

35. The revised proposals recommended in this report (subject to the further consultation) are estimated to achieve annual savings of £300,000, and it is anticipated that the project will deliver these savings by 2025/26. The revised savings target of £300,000 has been included in the MTFS 2024-28, approved by the Council on 21 February 2024.
36. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.
37. Work was undertaken to understand the amount of Section 106 developer contribution money that has been received but not spent for Market Harborough RHWS and Shepshed RHWS as well as monies not yet received but where a legal agreement is in place. Somerby RHWS is not affected as it does not have any Section 106 money allocated. The revised proposal to keep Market Harborough RHWS and Shepshed RHWS open part-time has now superseded this work.

### **Secondary Public Consultation**

38. A secondary four-week consultation on the proposed changes to opening days at Market Harborough RHWS, Kibworth RHWS and Shepshed RHWS started on 21 February and will end on 20 March 2024. This report forms part of this consultation and seeks the Committee's views on the proposals.
39. The consultation consists of an online questionnaire available via a link from the Council's website. In addition, a variety of other stakeholders will be consulted, such as district councils, parish councils, neighbouring Waste Disposal Authorities (Leicester City Council and county councils), and the LECG.
40. Responses to the consultation will be reviewed and their impacts considered. Feedback from the public and stakeholders will be assessed to understand if any mitigating adjustments to the proposals might be needed. It is intended that a further report would only be presented to this Committee if the proposals are further amended as a result of the secondary consultation.

### **Timetable for Decisions**

41. The timetable for decisions and potential implementation of the changes (subject to the outcome of the secondary public consultation and Cabinet approval) is set out below:

<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
Secondary consultation closes	20 March 2024
Report to the Cabinet with the outcome of the consultation and recommendations	24 May 2024

Implementation: Site closure and part-time opening – subject to operational deliverability	October 2024
Implementation: Christmas Eve Closures	24 December 2024
Implementation: Summer opening hours changes	April 2025

### **Conclusions**

42. This report informs the Committee of the results of the public consultation, sets out the revised proposals and seeks its views as part of the secondary consultation on the change to the part-time opening at Market Harborough RHWS, Shepshed RHWS, and reduced opening days at Kibworth RHWS.
43. The views of the Committee will be reported to the Cabinet in May.

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

44. A copy of this report has been circulated to all members.

### **Equality Implications**

45. The Equalities Impact Assessment has been updated (Appendix D) to take into account the revised proposals to keep Market Harborough RHWS and Shepshed RHWS open part-time and to reduce opening days at Kibworth RHWS.
46. The comments of the LECG are given at paragraph 28 above.

### **Human Rights Implications**

47. No human rights implications were identified.

### **Environmental Implications**

48. It has been noted that there could be environmental implications from residents driving further to an alternative RHWS should their current nearest site close. However, this has been largely mitigated by the revised proposal to keep Market Harborough RHWS and Shepshed RHWS open part-time. Somerby RHWS has low visitor numbers so its closure is unlikely to have significant environmental implications.

## **Background Papers**

24 April 2023 – Report to the Cabinet – ‘Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy 2022-2050’:

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s175771/Leicestershire%20Resources%20and%20Waste%20Strategy%20Cabinet%20240423.pdf>

23 June 2023 - Report to the Cabinet - ‘Final Report of the Scrutiny Review Panel on Recycling and Household Waste Sites’:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-10/RHWS-Scrutiny-Review-Panel-report-2023.pdf>

24 October 2023 - Report to the Cabinet – ‘Recycling and Household Waste Sites Proposed Consultation’:

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s179117/FINAL%20RHWS%20Savings%20Consultation%20Cabinet%20241023.pdf>

9 February 2024 - Report to the Cabinet - Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25-2027/28:

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7503>

## **Appendices**

Appendix A - Location of Recycling and Household Waste Sites in Leicestershire

Appendix B - Consultation Survey Report

Appendix C - Focus Group Report

Appendix D - Equalities Impact Assessment (second iteration)

## **Officers to Contact**

Ann Carruthers

Director of Environment and Transport

Tel: (0116) 305 7000

Email: [Ann.Carruthers@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Ann.Carruthers@leics.gov.uk)

Joanna Guyll

Assistant Director – Environment and Waste Management

Tel: (0116) 305 8101

Email: [Joanna.Guyll@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Joanna.Guyll@leics.gov.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank

## Recycling and Household Waste Site (RHWS) Locations Across Leicestershire



This page is intentionally left blank

# **Recycling and Household Waste Sites**

## **Consultation Survey Report**

**February 2024**

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Purpose of this Report .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Background .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Consultation Methods .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>About the Respondents .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Use of Recycling and Household Waste Sites .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Views on the Proposals .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Proposal 1: Recycling and Household Waste Site Closures .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Proposal 2: Changes to Opening Days.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Proposal 3: Changing Summer Opening Hours at all Recycling and Household Waste Sites .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Proposal 4: Closing Christmas Eve at all Recycling and Household Waste Sites .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Impact of Proposals .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Alternative Options .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Any Other Comments .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Additional Consultation Feedback .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Appendix – Survey Questionnaire.....</b>	<b>24</b>



## Acknowledgements

We would like to express our thanks to everyone who has taken the time to provide their views and feedback as part of the consultation process.

## Purpose of this report

This document provides a summary of the findings of the 12-week public consultation undertaken between 1 November 2023 and 24 January 2024, on proposed changes to Leicestershire County Council's Recycling and Household Waste Sites (RHWS). This report reflects the findings of the formal consultation questionnaire, and additional responses received during the consultation period.

## Background

Leicestershire County Council continues to face financial challenges, with growing demand for county council services and general price rises (inflation) increasing the cost of delivering services. As such financial savings continue to be required, and the council's recently published budget plan included a requirement to make savings from the RHWS. The following proposals were put forward for public consultation and are estimated to save approximately £420,000 per year:

- Closure of three of the Council's RHWS: Market Harborough, Shepshed, and Somerby.
- Change to part time opening at the Bottesford RHWS.
- Reduce summer opening hours at all RHWS.
- Introduce Christmas Eve closure at all RHWS.

## Consultation methods

The consultation consisted of an online questionnaire (see appendix) accessed via the 'Have your say' page on the Council's website, with an email address provided to enable residents and stakeholders to ask questions about the consultation or request the questionnaire in alternative formats. A variety of other stakeholders were also consulted, such as district councils, parish councils, neighbouring Waste Disposal Authorities, and the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group (LECG).

Additionally, six online focus groups were held which sought the views of a sample of Leicestershire residents in general and also those from areas specifically impacted by the proposed site closures. The feedback from the focus groups can be found in the separate Focus Group Report.

## About the respondents

In total, 5,638 responses were received (5,635 online and 3 paper/postal responses). Results have been reported based on those who provided a valid response, i.e. excluding the 'don't know' responses and no replies from the calculation of the percentages, where applicable. The following provides a summary of the responses. All results, including the open comments, have been passed to the service for reference and further consideration.

In reply to Q1, the majority of responses (95%) were from Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland residents. A smaller percentage (3%) were from interested members of the public and residents from another county (1%). These and other roles selected are summarised in Chart 1 below.

**Chart 1: Summary of Q1: In what capacity are you responding to this survey?<sup>1</sup>**

Response	#	%
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland resident	5,316	94.7%
Interested member of the public	149	2.7%
Resident of another county	68	1.2%
Leicestershire recycling and household waste site employee	16	0.3%
Leicestershire County Council staff member	10	0.2%
Representative from a parish, district or borough council	14	0.2%
County, district or parish councillor	12	0.2%
Representative of a voluntary sector organisation, charity or community group	6	0.1%
Representative of a business or private sector organisation	4	0.1%
Representative of another public sector organisation	2	0.0%
Other (please specify)	17	0.3%

Those who indicated they were responding as a Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland resident, resident of another county and interested member of the public were asked a series of demographic questions, of which:

- 53% were female and 46% were male, with 1% indicating that they use another term
- The highest proportion were aged 55 to 64 years (23%)
- 19% indicated that they had a long-standing illness, disability, or infirmity
- The majority identified as white (96%) and 4% identified with a Black and Minority Ethnic group
- 43% said they lived in Harborough and just over a third (34%) said they lived in Charnwood
- Over half were employed, either full-time (42%) or part-time (12%), with 10% self-employed and 29% wholly retired from work

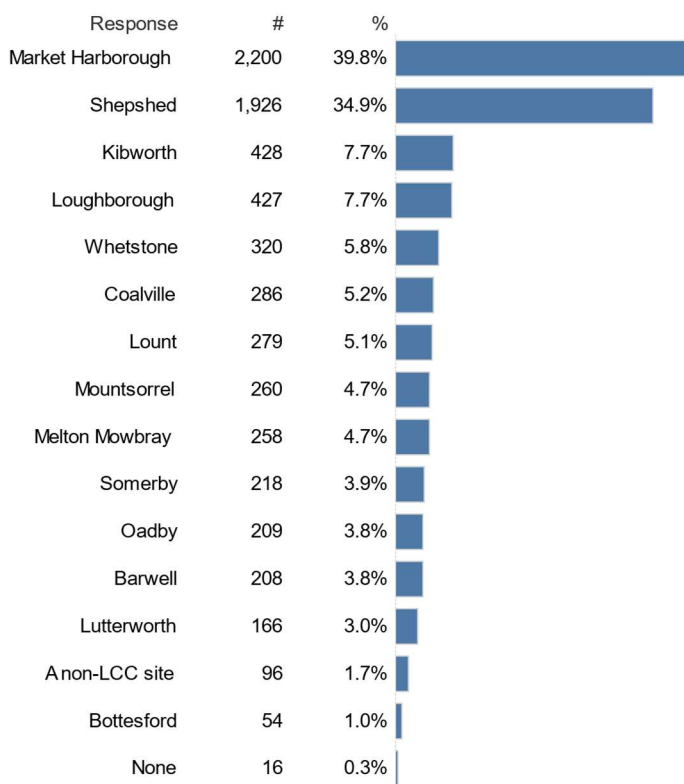
## Use of recycling and household waste sites

Residents and interested members of the public were asked which RHWS they used.

<sup>1</sup> Those who selected 'other' in response to Q1 included those indicating that they were family members of Leicestershire residents, or a homeowner, a former resident, site user, Charnwood Housing Residents' Forum member, a resident of Shepshed, and a resident in a neighbouring council area.

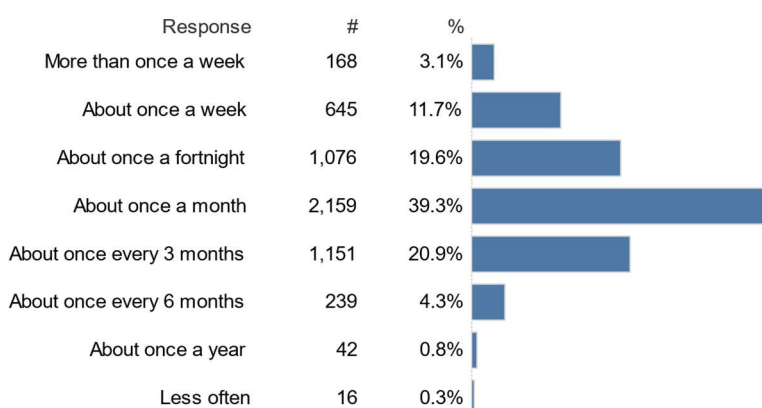
Overall, 40% of respondents indicated that they used Market Harborough and 35% indicated that they used Shepshed. Chart 2 below provides further details of all sites selected in response to this question.

**Chart 2: Summary of Q5: Which, if any, of the following sites do you use? (multiple choice)<sup>2</sup>**



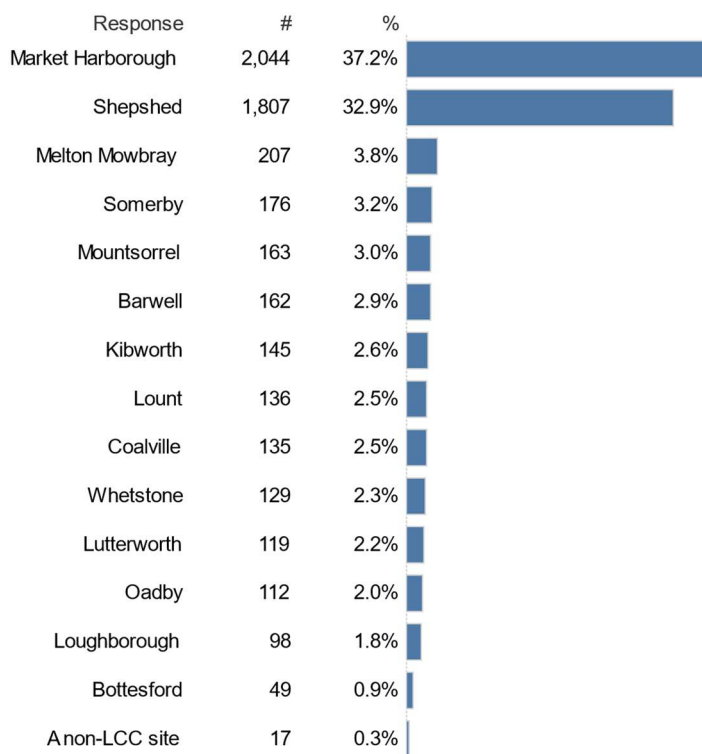
Those who said they used a RHWS were asked how often they use a site. As Chart 3 below shows, the most popular frequency selected was about once a month (39%). This pattern is broadly similar when looking at frequency of usage by specific site(s) used.

**Chart 3: Summary of Q6: On average, how often, if at all, do you use a site?**

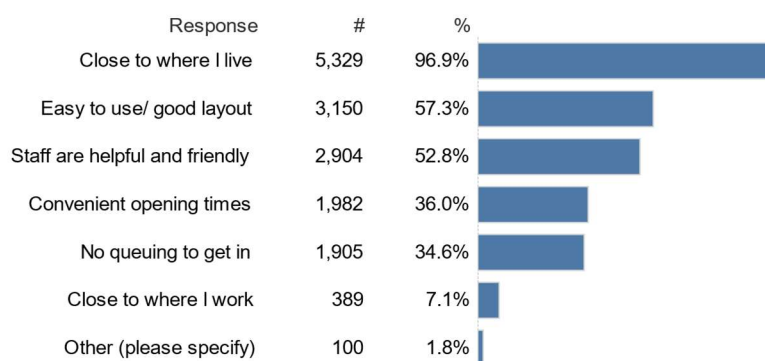


These respondents were also asked which site they used most often. Over a third (37%) said they used Market Harborough most often, with a third (33%) selecting Shepshed as the site they used most often. See chart 4 for further detail.

<sup>2</sup> Please note this question was multiple choice and respondents could choose more than one answer, so percentages do not add up to 100%.

**Chart 4: Summary of Q7: Which site you use most often?**

When asked what their main reasons were for using each site, the majority of respondents said it was close to where they live (97%). Over half said they used the site because it was easy to use/had a good layout (57%) or because staff are helpful and friendly (53%). Over a third (36%) said it was because the site had convenient opening times or that there was no queue to get in (35%). A smaller proportion of respondents said it was close to where they worked (7%) or for other reasons (2%).<sup>3</sup> See Chart 5 for more detail.

**Chart 5: Summary of Q8: What are your main reasons for using this site (multiple choice)?<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>3</sup> 'Other' reasons provided for use of the site included recycling, environmental concerns and the avoidance of landfill, convenience, safety, disposal of garden waste and opening days/times.

<sup>4</sup> Please note this question was multiple choice and respondents could choose more than one answer, so percentages do not add up to 100%.

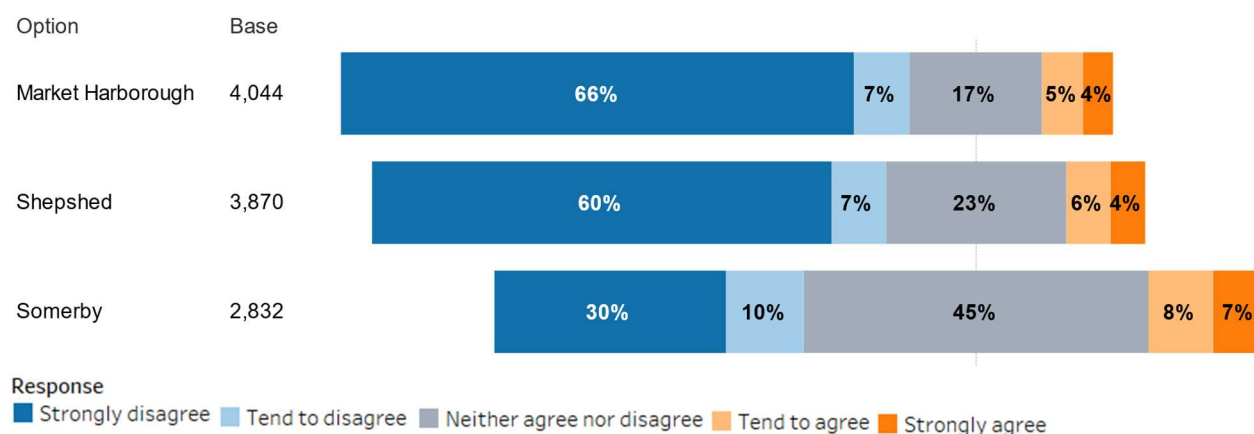
## Views on the proposals

### Proposal 1: Recycling and household waste site closures

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to close the sites in Market Harborough, Shepshed and Somerby.

As Chart 6 below shows, the majority disagreed (66% strongly disagree, 7% tend to disagree) with the proposal to close the Market Harborough site. The majority of respondents also disagreed with the proposal to close Shepshed (60% strongly disagree, 7% tend to disagree). Regarding the proposal to close Somerby, a notable proportion selected 'neither agree nor disagree' (45%) and 40% of respondents disagreed (30% strongly disagree, 10% tend to disagree).

**Chart 6: Summary of responses to Q9: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to close the following sites?**



Respondents were asked a follow-up question to Q9, 'Do you have any comments on the above? A total of 3,794 respondents (67%) provided an answer to this question. A number of key themes were identified from these comments, which are summarised below.

- Fly-tipping:** concerns about the potential impact of closures on fly-tipping was the most notable theme amongst comments. This included views of a 'false economy' and that the cost of future fly-tip removal would be greater than proposed savings. There were also concerns over 'hidden' costs and costs for landowners, farmers and local district/borough councils, including their capacity to manage this. Many also highlighted a reliance on local volunteers to clear fly-tipped waste and the impact closures would have for them. Many noted that fly-tipping was already a local issue (particularly in Market Harborough and Shepshed), that it had increased during Covid-19, since restricted opening hours and since charges were introduced. Added consequences of fly-tipping noted included the impact on wildlife, risk of fly-tippers falsely advertising waste removal services, and concern that recent years' work to reduce fly-tipping will be reversed. Related comments also raised concerns regarding policing and enforcement, signage, and education.
- Other environmental impacts:** comments under this theme included references to the impact on air pollution and carbon reduction targets, particularly if residents are required to travel further to an alternative site or cannot combine car journeys with other reasons (e.g. for work). Burning waste was also raised as a specific concern. Many were concerned that residents would use general waste bins rather than recycle or practice good waste disposal, also that residents were already receiving reduced

collections and smaller refuse bins. Concern was also raised regarding the costs to local authorities of separating waste in general waste bins. Comments highlighted the potential impact on kerbside refuse collection, including delays and capacity. Many noted that recycling was becoming more difficult (including insufficient local facilities such as bottle banks, food waste collections) when it should be encouraged and made easier.

- **Wider environmental impacts:** some were concerned about waste building up on or around properties, leading to health and safety issues. References were made to the potential social and/or wellbeing impacts if closures affect the ability to keep areas clean and tidy. Also mentioned was the potential impact on road surfaces due to increased travel and the cost of repairs. Others raised concerns or questions regarding the future of the land of the sites that are proposed to close, and whether there would be opportunity to buy it.
- **Population and housing growth:** one of the most frequently noted concerns amongst comments was that the proposed closures were in areas of housing growth, particularly Market Harborough and Shepshed. Many felt that the population size and scale of local housing developments highlighted the need for a local site. Respondents also suggested that the increase in use and Council Tax income from new housing would reduce the cost per visit to sites and queried the use of these funds. Concern was also raised regarding a reduction in green land for housing, and the recycling and waste needs of new householders, those living in apartments or high-density housing.
- **Suitability of alternatives:** respondents raised concerns about the Kibworth site, namely the location of the site near a busy road (known locally as an accident 'blackspot'). Many expressed strong concerns about accessing and exiting the Kibworth site, both in terms of traffic levels and safety. The need for additional traffic safety/control improvements (e.g. traffic lights, road layout) around the Kibworth site was noted by a number of respondents. Concerns were also raised about traffic levels and queuing at other alternative sites, including Loughborough, Melton, and Kettering.

Comments raised doubts about capacity and increased usage at alternative sites, including the fact that these were already busy (in particular Shepshed and Loughborough). Reduced opening was already seen as an issue and some questioned whether alternative sites would have increased opening hours. A number of comments raised concerns about the impact on staff workloads at alternative sites. Several comments highlighted how existing sites complement each other, for example in opening hours. Other more general concerns about alternative sites included the quality of service, accessibility, inconvenience and travel time, inability to recycle certain items and the potential impact on neighbouring council areas (including whether they had been involved in the consultation that may potentially impact their sites). The potential for future expansion at alternative sites (specifically Loughborough) was also questioned.

- **Positive feedback regarding sites proposed to close** (particularly Market Harborough and Shepshed): these comments included positive feedback about the staff, location, convenience, accessibility, general running of the site and confidence that waste would be recycled.
- **Economic impact:** concerns about additional costs during the current economic climate were raised, including transport/fuel. Other respondents were concerned that the proposals would affect those who struggle the most, including lower income households. Some noted that they were already paying increased charges for garden waste collections, whilst others were not because they felt that it was not cost-effective. Some residents also feared that they may need to pay private companies to remove waste or were worried that local businesses may increase charges to reflect increased waste transport costs. Concerns were raised regarding the economic impact on businesses (including those using or located near the sites), the local economy (e.g. shopping habits and footfall), countryside tourism (due to fly-tipping) and those looking to move to areas impacted by the proposals. Others mentioned costs associated with removing the sites and the impact on local employment and/or existing staff.

- **Disproportionate impact on certain groups:** these concerns included reference to older people, those with mobility or health issues, and families. Some mentioned issues with how accessible and user-friendly alternative sites were (particularly Kibworth) and the relative ease of using other sites (particularly Market Harborough). Impacts on other groups highlighted included carers, those with no transport or those that owned specific vehicles (e.g. vans). Many felt that their area, including rural areas, were being underserved, damaged, and these residents felt overlooked. This was particularly notable amongst comments related to Shepshed and Market Harborough. Concerns raised regarding Somerby include the potential impact on local horse riders and lack of public transport.
- **Council decision-making concerns:** many questioned existing decisions made to refurbish and update existing sites prior to the consultation, including Kibworth, Shepshed and Market Harborough (including the view that the Harborough site should have been upgraded instead of Kibworth). A number of respondents also questioned other local decisions, notably the development of the marketplace in Shepshed and the decision to install a waste incinerator in Shepshed. Other decisions that were criticised include housing (particularly in Market Harborough), flood prevention, and the lack and/or withdrawal of infrastructure and core facilities (which was particularly notable in comments related to Shepshed).

There was general disapproval of council management and decision-making processes, including priorities and the perceived lack of common sense, lack of joined-up thinking, not listening to or being 'out of touch' with residents and questioning whether planning rules had been fairly applied. There was some general criticism of specific councils including Leicestershire County Council, Harborough District Council, Charnwood Borough Council and elected members, including reference to the impact of decisions on future local votes.

Some queried money received from housing developers, how Council Tax monies were being spent, with others questioning whether they were getting value for money for the Council Tax they pay or of the view that recycling was generating income for the council. Many highlighted the amount of Council Tax paid and were against any further cuts. General strong feelings of disagreement with the proposed closures were noted.

- **Concerns about the proposal details:** a number of questions were raised regarding the rationale presented for some site closures. Some reasoned that data presented in the supporting information did not reflect a true picture, for example they presented reasons for the decrease in site usage not being linked to demand (e.g. closures and restrictions during Covid-19, permit requirements introduced, lack of information on opening times). Others questioned the figures including trip count, comparisons made, and that the data presented did not include or mention the impact of brown bins. Some respondents felt that the map and seven-mile radius provided did not sufficiently reflect the travel impact on residents who would need to use an alternative site. Respondents also questioned the distance calculations and actual travel time. Others felt that there was no overlap in site locations.

There were also questions regarding the financial rationale, the costs to run sites, and how much or whether the proposals would save money. Some also felt that the proposed savings were relatively small. As mentioned above, many queried whether the increased cost of managing fly-tipping had been considered and more information (including financial detail) was requested by respondents, some of whom felt there was a lack of detail (including costs and how waste would be disposed of). Whilst many said they understood the council's financial situation and the need for savings, they did not feel that the proposals were the right approach. Respondents questioned the wider rationale presented (such as comparisons with other council areas) and disagreed with the view that fly-tipping would not increase or that there would be negligible impact on residents.

Many felt that the proposals were short-sighted and had not been thought through. A number of respondents also noted that the proposals did not account for other factors, such as an ageing

population, population/housing growth, equality analysis, travel/highways assessment, increased costs at other sites, analysis of how levels of recycling may change and concern that the longer-term costs would outweigh any short-term benefits. There was also the view that the proposals did not tackle the problem from source and focus on reducing packaging.

Several comments questioned what the land would or could be used for, whether the real reasons for the proposals had been outlined (including the balance between political and budgetary reasoning). Others were concerned about the future of other sites, particularly Lutterworth. A number queried whether/what other options had been considered and were concerned that a decision had already been made or doubted the validity of the consultation survey.

- **Positive comments regarding the proposals:** although the majority of comments reflected disagreement and/or concern about the proposals, some did indicate support for the proposed closures. Reasons included proximity/access to alternative sites, the need for savings, low usage, size of the site and limited opening times. A number of comments in support of the proposals did so with conditions (e.g. improved opening hours at other sites) or suggested that it was the least worst option.
- **Suggestions:** many respondents urged the council to reconsider the proposals, particularly site closures. A number of suggestions and/or alternative approaches were put forward and are summarised below.

Suggestions regarding savings and/or alternative approaches to the proposals included:

- Reduce/change opening days/times (e.g. open nearby sites on different days, rotate staff)
- Make efficiencies at sites (e.g. reduce staff, use volunteers, fewer sites with better recycling options or reduce range of accepted items), make energy efficiencies (e.g. solar panels), reduce costs (including the use of private businesses), online appointment booking, CCTV for smaller sites (unmanned)
- Make savings elsewhere, for example council offices, use of contractors, other council projects, discretionary spending, staffing levels, expenses
- Consider closure of another site (e.g. Kibworth, Loughborough) or relocate sites instead
- Consider use of the current incinerator site for Shepshed residents to dispose of/recycle waste
- Review charging approach, with some respondents indicating that they would be willing to pay (either to use a site or in their Council Tax bill) to keep their local site open
- Generate income (e.g. by selling unwanted items). Reference was also made to co-operatives and partnerships (e.g. with Freegle) or to explore sponsorship and/or developer contributions
- Reduce frequency of kerbside collections during winter months
- Consider other areas' examples, including piloting larger or more bins
- Listen to residents that are local to each site and ask for views on other ways to save money, including the creation of an independent panel
- Lobby central government/MPs for more funding
- Delay the decision until after key events, such as the general election and A606 works
- Free permits for residents (to prevent cost of/use by residents from outside the council area)
- Pilot the proposals first (in particular the closure of the Market Harborough site)

Suggestions if the proposals were to be implemented included:

- Review traffic management for the Kibworth site
- Use the land of the proposed closed sites to provide facilities for local residents
- Change kerbside collections (e.g. provide a mobile service or allow kerbside collect of certain items/provide garden waste bins for free or a reduced cost). Include garden waste collection in Council Tax bill or combine reduced opening with a brown bin collection
- Consider whether residents could use the neighbouring council sites if their local Leicestershire site were to close
- Provide more information on alternatives and ensure alternatives accept various types of waste



- Continue to promote benefits of using the sites and provide clear guidance on how and where residents should dispose of household waste
- Consider mothballing site(s) for potential future re-opening
- Increase opening hours of alternative sites nearby those proposed to close
- Do not charge for the disposal of DIY waste
- Greater deterrents for fly-tipping, including education and increased fines
- Provide details to residents on how savings will be used and/or pass savings back to residents (e.g. reduce Council Tax if closing a site, with reference also made to students paying reduced Council Tax if only resident for part of the year), provide fuel vouchers and an air purification service.
- Avoid redundancies and move staff from closed sites to sites with the highest usage
- Review planning permissions/stop further developments (or keep sites open)

Other suggestions included:

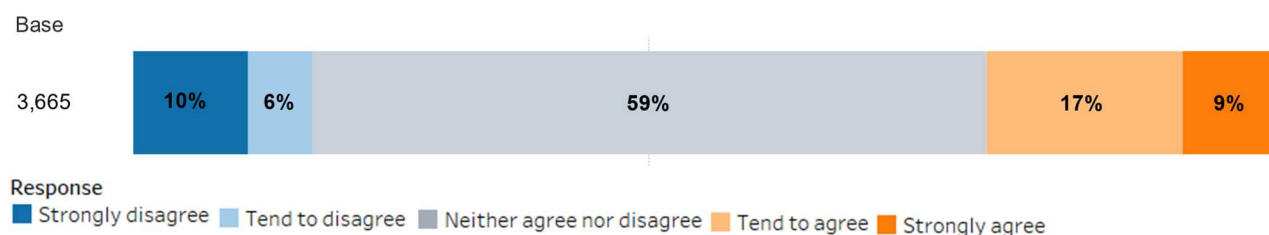
- Focus more on protecting communities
  - Only allow certain waste (e.g. that which can generate income)
  - Focus on recycling and appropriate disposal of non-recyclable waste
  - Allow long-term permits
  - Do not close Oadby or Lutterworth sites
  - Open more sites, or sites should be open more and not less
  - Site staff should help older people and those with disabilities or mobility issues
  - More checks should be made on trades people using the sites (e.g. to check licences)
- **Other comments:** various other comments were provided, including those with no opinion, or those that felt the proposals would not impact them (e.g. not nearby or did not use sites). References were made to other local issues, for example traveller sites, poorly maintained roads, and the inability to use neighbouring councils' sites. Some felt that residents deserve or have a right to such services locally and that they were a necessity. Several comments also suggested some misunderstanding about who was responsible for the proposals, with references to specific district councils. Reference was made to the impact of the rise in online shopping and home deliveries, the role of sites in emergency waste disposal during unforeseen events and their role in raising awareness/educating around environmental awareness and responsibility. Another view noted was that once sites are gone, they are then lost, and the cost of any future sites would mean investment (whereas existing sites only required maintenance).

## Proposal 2: Changes to opening days

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to continue the current 3 day opening pattern at the Bottesford site.

Overall, over a quarter (26%) of respondents agreed with the proposal (9% strongly agree and 17% tend to agree) and over a tenth (16%) disagreed with the proposal (10% strongly disagree and 6% tend to disagree). Over half (59%) responded 'neither agree nor disagree' (see Chart 7).

**Chart 7: Summary of responses to Q10: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue the current 3 day opening pattern at the Bottesford site?**



Following Q10, respondents were asked the follow up question 'Why do you say this?' A total of 1,843 respondents (33%) provided an answer to this question. A number of key themes were identified from these comments, many of which are similar to those referenced previously in comments following Q9:

- **Fly-tipping:** concerns were raised about the potential impact of this proposal on fly-tipping. Many felt that greater convenience, such as increased opening and flexibility, would help stop fly-tipping, whereas closing at busy times (such as on Sundays) would encourage fly-tipping. There was concern that confusion over opening times could cause an increase in fly-tipping, and that this was already an issue since the opening days had been reduced. Other related concerns included the financial impact of fly-tipping on district/borough councils and farmers, who are already under significant pressure.
- **Opening times:** some comments reflected the view that the Bottesford site needs to be open for more than 3 days a week or every day. Others also felt that the Bottesford site needs to be open when it is convenient for residents, especially at the weekends (including on a Sunday).
- **Agreement with the proposal:** a number of positive comments did indicate agreement with the proposal to continue the 3 day opening pattern at the Bottesford site, alongside an understanding of council budgets and the need to save money.
- **Suggestions:** respondents made various suggestions regarding the proposal, particularly suggestions regarding opening times. These included:
  - Stagger opening to match highest usage
  - Weekend opening (particularly Sunday)
  - Close/open all sites on the same day
  - Open on Monday instead of Thursday (to enable post-weekend waste disposal)
  - Ensure that opening times are widely publicised
  - Summer opening hours are too long so should open 9am-5.30pm
  - All sites should be open less days and for less time (or open part-time during weekdays)
  - Consider joint working with Nottinghamshire/Lincolnshire, if they have a site nearby, which might enable closure of the Bottesford site
  - Approach the Government for funding
  - Open other sites more frequently (if closing sites)
  - Offer paint recycling at Bottesford
- **Other comments:** these included references to no opinion, or no impact (for example not nearby or do not use the Bottesford site). There was some concern around the impact of this proposal on increased queuing times at the Bottesford site, pressure on other sites and increased travel and emissions, and the impact on staff. Reference was made to the impact of new homes in the area, concerns over reduction in relation to value for money/service and the view that all sites should be easily accessible.

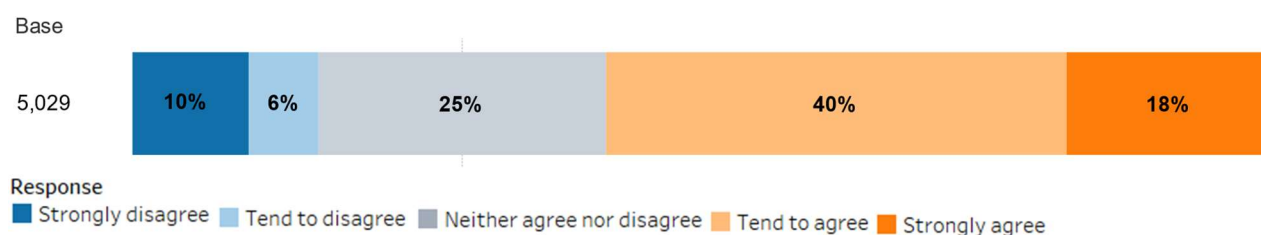
A number of comments referred to other sites. For example, regarding Melton, comments included concern or disagreement with changing opening times and concern regarding capacity if other sites are closed. Regarding Market Harborough, comments included support for retaining the site, the suggestion to reduce the opening times rather than closing, fly-tipping concerns, and reference to the suitability and/or safety of using and accessing the site at Kibworth. Regarding Shepshed, comments included concerns over the impact of closing the local site, including fly-tipping concerns. The justification for retaining another site for a small population was also questioned.

### Proposal 3: Changing summer opening hours at all recycling and household waste sites

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to change the summer hours at all sites (except Bottesford).

Chart 8 shows that over half of respondents (58%) agreed with the proposal (18% strongly agree, 40% tend to agree). A quarter (25%) said they neither agree nor disagree with the proposal and over a tenth (16%) disagreed with the proposal (10% strongly disagree and 6% tend to disagree).

**Chart 8: Summary of responses to Q11: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to change the summer hours?**



Following Q11 the follow-up question 'Why do you say this?' was asked and 1,907 respondents (34%) commented in response to this question. Key themes noted are summarised below.

- Positive comments regarding proposed opening hours:** many respondents supported or felt that the proposed changes to opening hours were acceptable. They felt that the proposed hours would allow most residents to access the sites and that they would be able to plan or work around the proposed hours. There was support for weekend and late-night opening during the week, with the view that two late nights are sufficient. Others noted that a good level of service was currently provided and felt that sites did not need to be open until 7pm every day. Some respondents also appreciated that views from the previous consultation had been considered. Comments included the suggestion that the proposal would improve staff work-life balance and wellbeing.
- Negative comments regarding proposed opening hours:** some respondents raised concerns about the proposed opening hours which included concerns about access for those who work, particularly shift workers and those who work weekends. Others felt that sites were not open enough currently or that the proposals were inconvenient, not sufficiently flexible or impractical. There was also the view that life had changed since the previous consultation in 2019.
- Changes to opening hours preferable to site closures:** a significant number of respondents felt that changes to opening hours were preferable or should be considered as an alternative to site closures, and that changes to opening hours were a pragmatic alternative to closures. Comments under this theme included agreement with the proposal for shorter opening hours to other sites on the condition that the Market Harborough, Shepshed or Somerby sites remain open.
- Council's financial position and decision-making:** some felt that the proposals seemed fair and reasonable. Others felt that although the proposals were less than ideal, they made sense to achieve savings. Respondents also referred to Council Tax in their comments. These included concerns about service levels, expectations and the amount of Council Tax paid. Whilst some comments indicated a preference for a small increase in Council Tax to retain current levels of service, others did not want an increase in Council Tax and/or expected a discount should the proposals be implemented. Other comments under this theme included concern that the service had already been reduced and that if the proposal was implemented, they would not want any further service reductions for a number of years.

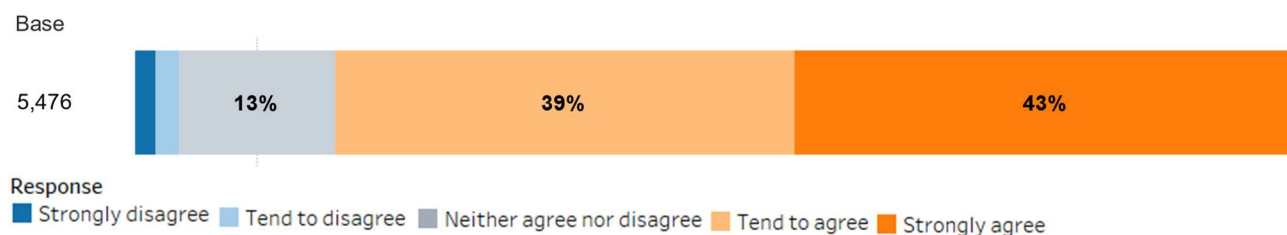
There was also the view that the proposals did not generate significant savings compared to the overall budget, and that the council should manage its budget better, making savings elsewhere (with suggestions including staffing efficiencies and street lighting savings). Some were concerned that the decision regarding site closures had already been made.

- **Suggestions regarding alternative opening hours/days:** respondents suggested a wide variety of alternative opening patterns. These are summarised below.
  - Enable those completing DIY/gardening work to visit at the end of the day (e.g. open later in the evening, including weekends, or increased opening during the summer and on bank holidays). On the other hand, some comments included the view that longer opening hours in the summer were not needed, or that sites were not used much after 5pm
  - Other suggestions included opening later than 9am, opening Bottesford 4 days per week and opening one weekday and/or weekend day until 7pm
  - Whilst some felt that site should be open seven days a week or that current opening hours should be retained, there were some suggestions to reduce opening times. These included the suggestion to close all sites on Sunday, close on Easter Sunday, or shorten winter opening hours to allow for increased opening during the summer
  - A trial and review of the new hours was proposed, along with the view that some sites should be open more to compensate for those proposed for closure
  - There was also the view that changes to opening hours should be implemented immediately rather than waiting until April 2025
- **Negative impacts of proposals:** a number of comments highlighted concerns regarding potential negative impacts of the proposals. These included fly-tipping (and associated costs), staffing concerns, queuing (including air pollution/carbon emissions), site capacity and traffic concerns (including those specifically related to Kibworth). Respondents were also concerned about the impact on recycling rates and the use of residual (black) bins, also noting that not all could afford to pay for garden waste collection bins.
- **Other comments:** some respondents, particularly those that were retired, felt that the proposals had no impact on them. Others felt that the proposals regarding opening hours were confusing and noted that it was already hard to remember which days sites were open. With this in mind, suggestions included the need to communicate well to minimise wasted journeys, and to ensure sites close at the advertised closing time. Some respondents felt frustrated by the lack of data supplied as part of the consultation and noted the importance of using data to support decisions. There was also disagreement with the proposed change to opening times at Melton, or the view that a question on this should have been included in the survey. There was some general criticism and wider concerns amongst comments, for example the view that sites are run inefficiently, the permit system is too complex, and concerns around new housebuilding in areas where sites are proposed to close. Other suggestions include sharing staff between sites, allowing foot traffic at sites for those without a car, and improving technology at sites to increase recycling.

### Proposal 4: Closing Christmas Eve at all recycling and household waste sites

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to close all sites on Christmas Eve. The majority (83%) of respondents agreed with the proposal (43% strongly agree and 39% tend to agree). A small proportion (4%) of respondents disagreed with the proposal (2% strongly disagree and 2% tend to disagree). Under a fifth (13%) selected 'neither agree nor disagree' in response to this question (see Chart 9).

**Chart 9: Summary of responses to Q12: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to close on Christmas Eve?**



Following Q12, respondents were asked 'Why do you say this?' and 1,720 respondents (31%) provided an answer to this question. The key themes are summarised below.

- **Support for the proposal:** many comments showed support for the proposal and outlined several reasons, including support for staff having leave prior to Christmas, low usage, minimal impact and low demand on Christmas Eve, a positive alternative to site closures and financial savings. Some respondents felt that this was the least worst proposal of the consultation as a whole. Others suggested closing on other days to make further savings, for example New Year's Eve and Good Friday.
- **Disagreement with the proposal:** whilst many comments reflected support, there were some comments against the proposal. Reasons included the view that Christmas Eve is a working day for many residents, the need to open as kerbside collections are reduced over Christmas and concern that the proposal to close on Christmas Eve would increase fly-tipping. Comments included the suggestion to close earlier rather than for the entire day.

### Impact of proposals

Respondents were asked 'Do you have any comments on the potential impact of these proposals?' In total, 3,098 respondents (55%) answered this question. Overall, the majority of respondents were not supportive of the proposals and many expressed anger and disbelief that the proposals were being considered, particularly site closures. Many comments were in support of keeping the sites at Market Harborough or Shepshed open, with several comments in support of retaining the site at Somerby. Key themes noted amongst comments are summarised below.

- **Fly-tipping concerns:** an increase in fly-tipping was the main concern noted amongst respondents, along with concerns over the associated increase in costs to clear additional fly-tipping and the view that costs would outweigh any savings. Some believed that the council were 'passing on' the cost and responsibility of clearing fly-tipping to district and borough councils. An increased risk of fly-tipping in rural areas was frequently mentioned, with this being considered unfair on private landowners. Other comments included the view that fly-tipping was damaging town areas and that rogue waste traders would be responsible for a large proportion of any fly-tipping increase. Other related concerns were that the proposals would encourage an increase in illegal waste collection and the use of bonfires to dispose of rubbish.

- **Increased use of household waste bins:** people felt that the council should be making it easier for people to recycle, not more difficult. If closures went ahead, respondents felt that this would result in an increase in the amount of waste being disposed of in the residual (black) bin or fly-tipped.
- **Safety and suitability of Kibworth as an alternative site:** respondents felt that access to Kibworth was a serious accident risk. They mentioned that the area was already dangerous and busy, the site was located on a fast road and on a bend, along with the risk of increased queues and traffic congestion, with some questioning whether a risk assessment had been carried out. Concern was also raised over traffic on Leicester Road where the new prison, housing and industrial units are to be built.
- **Housing growth:** the scale of housing growth in both Shepshed and Market Harborough areas was highlighted and many questioned how the council could consider closing sites in areas of rapid growth.
- **Impact of increased traffic:** increased traffic pollution was another key theme and respondents associated this with the additional environmental impact, which they felt contradicted the council's green messaging. Traffic congestion was a key concern and often linked to accident risk, pollution, wear and tear on roads and general environmental impact.
- **Travel time:** extra travel time and additional fuel costs were mentioned, with many saying that people would not be prepared to travel extra distances. Respondents from Shepshed highlighted the additional distance to Loughborough, adding to road congestion, pollution and fuel costs which would be very unfair in a cost of living crisis. Respondents also commented that Mountsorrel and Loughborough sites are both very busy (with Loughborough already difficult to access) and redirecting from Shepshed would cause traffic congestion and queues at alternative sites.
- **Concerns regarding Shepshed:** respondents felt strongly that Shepshed was being overlooked or unfairly affected by another local service reduction, along with the view that the area was solely attracting new housing, which in itself provided a reason to keep the site open.
- **Support for proposals:** although the majority of responses expressed concern or dissatisfaction with the proposals, there were some supportive comments. Some of these respondents suggested that they understood the financial constraints of the council and accepted the proposals if the closures and other changes were necessary to save money. A few respondents that said the proposed changes did not directly impact them, and a few felt that the proposals were well thought out or seemed sensible. Additional comments acknowledged that people do not like change, but that they would soon get used to it, and although it is a cost saving measure with a service reduction, residents would still receive a local recycling and household waste service. Another view accepted the proposed changes based on the provision that sites would be open in the evenings and at weekends.
- **Suggestions:** various suggestions were made, many similar to those mentioned in earlier questions:
  - Reduce hours/days instead of closures, or pilot extending all opening hours at all sites first to see if this reduced fly-tipping
  - If sites close, then other sites should be open every day to compensate
  - Making savings/efficiencies elsewhere, including reclaiming unpaid Council Tax and reducing other council services
  - Lobby Government for more funding, or change of central government
  - Ensure that any changes made are well publicised and clear for the public
  - Generate income (e.g. sell items and use money raised to support running of the site and assist people on low incomes)
  - Introduce a booking system (Birmingham cited as an example) to alleviate queues
- **Other comments:** Other comments included concerns and criticism of council decision-making. Respondents fed back that proposals were short-sighted in the context of growing towns and environmental messaging (e.g. promoting public transport or less car use), and that those living in rural

areas or villages already received less services. There was also the view that closure would be a short-term gain and could be impossible to reverse. Others questioned the money spent on the refurbishment of the site at Kibworth.

Other various impacts of the proposals were highlighted, which included the impact on those without transport, those with mobility problems or older people. Some were worried about the impact the proposals could have on jobs. Concern was raised about the need to store items for longer before being able to dispose of them and the need for traffic management near sites. It was felt that reducing summer opening hours at the weekends would reduce time available for people to complete work and visit sites during weekends. The need for Christmas opening to cater for residents' waste needs was also noted.

There were some references to Council Tax, including the view that a service should be provided based on the amount of Council Tax that residents pay, or that there should be a reduction in Council Tax if the proposals were implemented. Some respondents already experienced reduced collections and additional waste charges, with some confusion noted over which sites people were allowed to use. Comments featured a number of negative comments about the council, including staff, budgets and the wider council agenda.

## Alternative options

Respondents were asked 'Are there other options for significantly reducing the running costs of the recycling and household waste sites that you think we could consider?' A total of 2,505 respondents (44%) answered this question and key themes echo a number already mentioned in response to previous questions. These key themes are summarised below.

- **Reducing operating hours and opening days at the sites proposed for closure and at other sites in the county:** many respondents felt that this could make further savings. Some said that restricted opening was preferable to complete closure, and it was suggested that this approach must lead to further savings based on the rationale provided for the proposed closures. Alternative opening hours and days were suggested such as weekends only, one day per week and restricted hours (e.g., two hours in the morning and two in the afternoon). References were made to accommodate people who were working and needed evening or weekend opening times. Lots of support was shown for the sites being open at the weekend, even if restricted during the week. There was some support for alternating the days open between sites which were closer together (e.g. Shepshed and Loughborough). Many respondents felt that further savings could be made by restricting the opening hours and days at sites not proposed to close, which could also help retain the three sites proposed to close.
- **Staffing:** changes to staffing were suggested, as concerns were expressed about the high number of staff and whether this could be reduced as a way to make savings (although some respondents did recognise potential health and safety considerations related to staffing reductions). Lack of engagement by some staff was noted and questions were raised around the necessity of some staff roles. Whilst some felt that staff directing residents to disposal containers seemed unnecessary and costs could be reduced if this were to stop, others raised concerns about whether 'meet and greet' was necessary at sites. Suggestions were made as to whether staff could rotate around all sites, especially if opening times were reduced. Others suggested that if staff were currently employed using external providers or agency, then to consider direct employment instead. The use of volunteers, community and other groups was also suggested. Technological suggestions to reduce staffing included the use of automated systems at sites, such as self-service arrangements and automated number plate recognition.
- **Reuse and recycling of materials:** many respondents suggested it would be good to be able to purchase items from the sites or have more areas for the reuse and refurbishment of items. Some respondents

felt that many of the items being thrown away could have a second lease of life, and this could be an effective way to generate income, with bikes and furniture frequently mentioned. Several said they supported the idea of having a shop or store at the sites, whilst others felt the creation of online shops or using existing platforms (such as eBay) would be a good idea. It was suggested that working in partnership with local registered charities and community groups to allow the removal and resale of good quality items could reduce costs. Many referenced examples of other sites with a shop or store for buying second hand items. Suggestions were also made for volunteers to support these activities. Along with the sale of useable second-hand items, many respondents wanted the sale of compost at sites to be reinstated and saw this as an opportunity to generate income. There was some concern about whether maximum value was being sought for high-value items, such as scrap metal. Respondents also suggested negotiating contracts with businesses to ensure the best costs were being achieved.

- **Charging/fees and income generation:** suggestions were made around charging a standard fee for visiting sites, either in the form of a charge per visit (suggested amounts varied between 0.50p to £3.00 per visit) or an annual fee through a chargeable permit. Allocating an annual allowance and charging for visits that exceed the allowance was offered as a solution. Also, respondents suggested charging based on vehicle type (e.g. paying more for using a van rather than a car) and charging residents that live outside of the county, or in another district to where the site is based. References were made to automating payments where possible and the potential use of QR codes for entry. Respondents suggested charging for specific types of waste to generate income (e.g. TVs, mattresses and paint), whilst others requested that current charges be removed. Some suggested that the council should charge businesses and traders to use sites, whilst others highlighted misconceptions around permits and business use of the sites. Other suggestions under this theme included lobbying Government for fair funding, increasing Council Tax, increasing fines for environmental crimes (e.g., fly-tipping), and seeking contributions from housing developers to support local infrastructure (including recycling facilities).
- **Kerbside collections:** suggestions were provided around improving the frequency, quantity and range of kerbside collections (e.g. electrical products, bulky items), which would mean less demand for disposal of waste at sites. Respondents proposed a reduction in the current charges for chargeable kerbside services, especially garden waste. Some requested the removal of charges for garden waste and bulky waste collection, noting that if residents had to pay for this waste to be collected then this may increase demand at specific sites. Some suggested improving the availability of recycling banks, especially for small electrical items and the placement of large skips for communities to use rather than visiting a site.
- **General efficiency savings:** overall efficiency of councils in Leicestershire was questioned along with financial planning and spend on projects, with some seen as unwanted or unnecessary. Respondents queried council structures and upper-tier management, and asked whether proposed savings could be met by reducing senior officers and councillors as part of a restructuring exercise. Questions were also raised regarding the use of money to support equality and diversity activities. Respondents highlighted a need for general contract efficiency and wanted assurance that contracts were being managed effectively, to ensure that it was the best value, whilst others queried whether there was a competitive tendering process in place.
- **Site-based efficiencies:** suggestions included investment in innovative technologies to improve waste sorting and recycling, whilst reducing costs at sites, such as an online appointment system and energy saving measures (e.g. solar, wind power, LED lighting). Suggestions also included outsourcing the running of the service to private contractors.
- **Other suggestions:** respondents made various other suggestions, including:
  - Move the Shephed site closer to the Newhurst Energy from Waste plant to reduce travel
  - Provide an out-of-hours service with skips outside the site when closed
  - Pressure producers and manufactures to take responsibility, including packaging quality



- Promote waste reduction (e.g. through education, reuse, and repurposing items), raise public awareness of recycling and environmental responsibility, especially in regard to what can be recycled at home. Involve businesses, schools, and local community groups to help raise awareness about the RHWS service.
  - Effective communication with residents about when sites are open
  - **Concerns raised:** further to the suggestions, concerns were also raised on the impact of the proposals. Overall, the main concern noted was fly-tipping and the potential increase of this if the proposals were to go ahead. Many of these respondents felt that the cost of clearing increased fly-tipping would negate any potential savings. Requests were made for the council to continue monitoring fly-tipping. It was also noted by respondents that some measures to increase income, such as introducing a fee, could also potentially increase fly-tipping.
- Other concerns were raised regarding new housing developments and respondents felt that if these developments were prevented there would be less waste. Many respondents felt that they were unable to answer the question due to a lack of supporting information, including the breakdown of the running costs of the affected service. There were several concerns from residents about increased use of the Kibworth site due to the proposed closure of Market Harborough, who felt that the access to the Kibworth site was dangerous.
- **Positive comments:** some comments noted that respondents felt the proposals seemed sensible and did not have further suggestions.

## Any other comments

The consultation survey also asked for any other comments about the proposals. In total, 1,668 respondents (30%) answered this question. A large proportion of respondents expressed disagreement with the proposals. Many were of the opinion that the current proposals were short-sighted and would result in more money being spent on managing the adverse impacts the proposals would have (primarily the proposal to close three sites). A small number of respondents agreed with the proposals, stating that although the proposed changes were not ideal, they understood the current financial position the council was in, and that savings have to be made. Whilst many acknowledged the need for the council to make savings, some respondents were opposed to any reductions that would impact recycling and household waste sites. It was felt that these sites are an essential service used by many and that the impact of the proposals for all communities would be serious. Key themes noted amongst the responses align with many concerns mentioned in comments to earlier questions and are summarised below:

- **Environmental impacts:** a repeated theme throughout the comments centred around fly-tipping. There were a large number of concerns about the increase in fly-tipping if the proposed sites were to close and the costs that the council would incur as a result. Another concern was distance, as travelling to alternative sites would increase the carbon footprint, thus impacting the environment. The proposals were deemed contradictory to the council's Net Zero aims and some felt that anything that conflicts with this agenda should not be actioned.

A lot of concerns were noted regarding household refuse bins. Respondents felt that household refuse bins were being filled with waste that should be disposed of at the recycling and household waste sites. Although people who pay for garden waste bins advised that they may not be as impacted by site closures and reduced opening times, they commented that those who cannot afford to pay for a garden waste bin may be negatively impacted by the proposals. Some questioned where people's garden waste would go if they did not have a garden waste bin.

- **Suitability of alternative sites:** a lot of respondents expressed concerns about the safety element of travelling and accessing the Kibworth site due to the entrance of the site being located on the busy A6. Traffic concerns resulting from long queues and the high risk of road traffic accidents were a repeated theme throughout these comments. The need to travel to an alternative site was a common theme, with many feeling that the additional travel was inconvenient, time-consuming and that residents would not be willing to do this. Some felt that centralising services in this instance would not work.
- **Housing developments and local growth:** related to the proposal to close three of the sites, there were a lot of comments surrounding housing developments and growing communities in the areas of Market Harborough and Shepshed. There was a level of distrust from some respondents, who believed that a deal would be broken between the council and local housing developers if the proposals were approved. Questions were raised about what would happen to the unused sites/land, how the money would be used if the land were to be sold and whether the infrastructure levy on developers could be used to offset the costs of running these sites. Some respondents wanted more transparency from the council surrounding the long-term plans. Alongside this was an overall fear of growing towns losing valuable services, such as local waste sites, when there were already limited resources in certain areas.
- **Efficiencies in council buildings and staffing:** some comments focussed on the need for efficiencies in council buildings and staffing structures. These focussed on management-level jobs, the number of councillors and the costs of running County Hall. Those that mentioned County Hall felt that the office space was not being used the same as it was before Covid-19 but was generating the same costs, if not more, with energy bills. A few respondents were concerned about the job losses that would result from the proposals to close three sites. Some shared positive feedback about the staff at some of the sites and were concerned about the impact job losses would have on them/their families in the current financial climate. Some respondents queried why Leicestershire County Council was the lowest-funded council and suggested more effort should be made to lobby the Government for more funding.
- **Other comments:** a range of other comments were noted, including concerns regarding council decisions and Council Tax. A lot of comments focussed on the money spent on remodelling the Kibworth site and felt that this money could have been saved to avoid the proposal to close sites. Council Tax charges were mentioned throughout the responses. Most of these respondents felt that residents were paying increased Council Tax for reduced services. Many expressed that they did not trust the council, felt that the proposals had already been decided and that resident and stakeholder views were not being taken into consideration. A request was also made for a face-to-face meeting to discuss the proposals with officers.

Regarding the consultation specifically, some felt that the consultation had not been well publicised and were unaware of the consultation had it not been for a neighbour/friend who had signposted it to them. A lot of comments were made about the demographic details collected at the end of the survey. Some felt that this was intrusive, unrelated to the actual consultation, added no value and represented another tick-box exercise carried out by the council.

- **Other suggestions:** a number of other suggestions were made, most of which have been highlighted in previous responses but are included below for reference:
  - Use discretionary funding to help with the council's current financial struggles and aim to stop making cuts to core services
  - Tackle accessibility issues, including making information about recycling and household waste sites and how to dispose of waste easy to find on the council's website
  - Generate income, including use of re-use shops, sale of green waste and compost, annual access fees for all sites, skip trailer rental service, and adopt income-generation ideas from other councils (e.g. King's Lynn council and Norfolk who send recyclable items to Holland for processing)
  - Reducing opening times at all sites to avoid any closures.

## **Additional consultation feedback**

In addition to feedback provided via the online consultation survey, views on the proposals were also provided via email/letter/meetings from district councils, parish councils, neighbouring waste disposal authorities, the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group (LECG).

### **LECG – Feedback from the meeting on 10 November 2023:**

- If the Shepshed tip closes then 20,000 households will have to travel to the other side of Loughborough, to Coalville or Mountsorrel, these sites will experience long queues.
- Closure of sites may lead to an increase in fly tipping in both urban and rural areas.
- Costs can be significant to clear up illegal dumping of waste/fly tipping, and may lead to rises in council tax, so is it worth closing three sites which may impact on costs even further?
- Need to back up online consultation with focus groups to get views from groups the council may find hard to reach, particularly older people and the digitally excluded.
- Review which languages require translation for communications, as it may not be essential for some.
- Distance and travel times to alternate waste sites is not straight forward, congestion and built-up areas can be an issue.
- Those with cars will travel further and queue, creating a negative impact on communities and wildlife.
- Those without cars, will be further impacted as they will need to store the waste material until it can be collected by the recycling and waste management system. Another eco nightmare.
- False economy for the Leicestershire County Council to propose the closure of some waste sites as the population is increasing.
- More public communication on the proposals needed such as putting posters in local libraries and leisure centres, providing a full year of information on opening times, and providing clear information on which sites 'do what'.
- Concerns about older people in the Somerby area having to travel further to the next nearest RHWS in Melton Mowbray.
- Suggestions for the county council to consider; provide more 'mini' accessible local waste sites, provide small electrical drop off points in the centre of towns or community neighbourhoods (like bottle banks), continue using Leicestershire Matters to communicate changes, and promote the council's bulk waste collection service.

### **Harborough District Council email feedback:**

- There needs to be a full analysis of the impacts of decisions.
- Within Harborough District the Environmental Services Team have successfully changed the national trend of increased fly tipping for 4 years running. This has taken significant resources and was achieved despite the initial charging for certain DIY items by the county council which saw fly tipping increase within the area and across Leicestershire, especially around locations of RHWS.
- Concerns about the additional vehicle movements at Kibworth if the Market Harborough site were to close. Kibworth sits on the main A6 and at a crash site where only recently someone lost their life. Concerns over queueing on this road posing a significant health and safety hazard. Would like to know how traffic movements have been mapped and the view of the Highways Department at the county council.
- Concerns over fly tipping in laybys and around entrances to sites. If the proposals go ahead, will the collection authority be compensated for additional clear ups of these offences?

- Proposed changes to opening times at all sites will exacerbate the frustration if sites were to close. Therefore, additional opening hours will probably be required to negate the closures and additional vehicle movements.

**North Northamptonshire Council email feedback:**

- North Northamptonshire Council (NCC) are concerned about the closure of Market Harborough, whereby the closure could lead to some cross over to their facilities.
- While Kibworth, in Leicestershire, is Market Harborough residents' closest site, NNC sites are then the next closest before other Leicestershire sites.
- Kibworth is closed on Tuesday and Wednesday meaning that on those days Corby or Kettering could be the closest open waste site. Furthermore, Kibworth closes at 4pm when it is open while North Northants site open until 6pm which may mean previous users of the Market Harborough facility may look to use these sites instead.
- NNC will be undertaking postcode checks to assess the current scale of any cross-boundary use of the NNC waste site network to allow them to assess the potential scale/cost of the issue. This may lead to NNC having to implement a residents only permit system, at a cost to the authority.
- Somerby and Shepshed proposed closures and proposed permanent changes to opening hours at Bottesford pose no concern to NNC.
- NNC has no comments on proposed changes to summer opening hours and proposed Christmas Eve closures.

**Hathern Parish Council email feedback:**

- Closing the Shepshed site will further exacerbate fly tipping as a result of people not traveling to sites in Loughborough or Mountsorrel.
- New houses on the Garendon estate will increase the demand for a nearby waste site. Such a large development would benefit from a waste site located nearby in Shepshed. Concerned the increase in houses could increase fly tipping issues.
- Traffic congestion in Loughborough is already a problem. Adding further trips to Loughborough RHWS site will make this worse.
- Should people travel to sites located some distance from Hathern (Loughborough being the closest) this will inevitably increase air pollution due to greater travel. With so many campaigns around reducing air pollution this is a contradictory measure.

**Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee - points raised at the meeting on 2 November 2023:**

- The Kibworth site had been redesigned to draw traffic away from the main road to reduce congestion. A traffic assessment would be carried out to assess whether the Kibworth site would cope with potential increased usage should the Market Harborough site be closed. This would be made available to Members as part of the consultation. A member expressed concern that the housing growth proposed for Harborough would increase visitor numbers to the RHWS, and would therefore, increase use of the Kibworth site and place increased pressure on local roads. They were advised that future housing growth was one of the criteria in determining the proposals and that there was not a direct correlation between increased housing and a growth in waste as there had been a change in recycling behaviour post Covid 19. County councillor Mr. Boulter asked that his reservations to the proposals related to traffic assessment and management around the RHWS site in Kibworth be noted in the minutes.
- A report would be brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2024, setting out the outcome of the consultation and presenting revised proposals should they be changed following the consultation, prior to submission of a report to the Cabinet for a decision on the future of RHWS.

- There were significant funding gaps across the council and all departments were being asked to make significant savings to enable other services, for example Adult Social Care, to be supported. The Scrutiny Review Panel had explored various factors to determine which sites would reduce opening hours, or would be proposed for closure, which included usage numbers and cost of operating, for example. The Director recommended that Members looked at the Scrutiny Review Panel report which was now available on the Council's website.
- The council did not currently have a policy on usage of RHWS by people living outside of the Leicestershire border, although this had been considered by the Scrutiny Review Panel. Data showed that usage of RHWS was reciprocated across boundaries and was usually determined by people's commute to work. Members recognised that policing cross boundary usage would be a challenge. The consultation questionnaire allowed for people to identify their location, so cross boundary usage would be evident.
- For sites proposed for closure, the land occupied would be 'mothballed'. Members were assured decisions about what would happen to vacated sites would be made in the future once final decisions had been made about the RHWS.
- Leicestershire had 14 RHWS, which was more than in other neighbouring counties. The statutory duty placed on councils was to provide the ability for householders to dispose of their rubbish and the offer had to include the weekend period. The location and number of sites was discretionary and based on need and locality.
- The level of fly tipping in an area was linked to the level of enforcement carried out by district councils, and not linked to the availability of RHWS in the locality. Levels of deprivation in the area was also a contributing factor to the levels of fly tipping.
- The Scrutiny Review Panel was keen for the consultation questions to be succinct and direct rather than include wider information for residents to consider. Members said that it would be useful to include information in the consultation on the Council's statutory obligations to enable people to be fully informed when responding to the consultation.

## Appendix – Survey questionnaire

### Have your say on proposed changes to recycling and household waste sites

Leicestershire County Council remains the lowest funded county in the country and continues to face financial challenges. Growing demand for county council services and general price rises (inflation) are increasing the cost of delivering services. This means we are going to have to find more savings in the future, despite having made £250m of savings since 2010.

The council's recently published budget plan includes a requirement to make savings from the recycling and household waste sites (often referred to as the 'tips'). We estimate the changes proposed below would make savings of £420,000 per year.

The proposals being put forward below are those seen as being able to offer the best balance between how much money can be saved and the impact on our residents and site users. The proposals include:

- Closing Market Harborough, Shepshed and Somerby recycling and household waste sites
- Changing the opening days at Bottesford and Melton Mowbray recycling and household waste sites
- Changing summer opening hours at all recycling and household waste sites
- Closing on Christmas Eve at all recycling and household waste sites

Please read the supporting information provided before completing the questionnaire.

View our informative map on Social Pinpoint for more information about our Recycling and Household Waste Sites

Thank you for your assistance. Your views are important to us.

**Please note: Do not use the back button on your browser/device as you may lose your response.**

---

Please note: Your responses to the main part of the survey (including your comments) may be released to the general public in full under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Any responses to the questions in the 'About you' section of the questionnaire will be held securely and will not be subject to release under Freedom of Information legislation, nor passed on to any third party.

Q1 In what capacity are you responding to this survey? Please select one option only.

- ☐ Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland resident
- ☐ Resident of another county
- ☐ Interested member of the public
- ☐ Leicestershire recycling and household waste site employee
- ☐ Leicestershire County Council staff member
- ☐ Representative of a business or private sector organisation
- ☐ Representative of a voluntary sector organisation, charity or community group
- ☐ Representative from a parish, district or borough council
- ☐ Representative of another public sector organisation
- ☐ County, district or parish councillor
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Please specify 'other'

Q2 If you indicated that you represent an organisation, business, community group or council, please provide your details.

Name:

Role:

Organisation:

Q3 Are you providing your organisation's official response to the consultation?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q4 Which area do you live in?

- ☐ Blaby
- ☐ Charnwood
- ☐ Harborough
- ☐ Hinckley & Bosworth
- ☐ Melton
- ☐ North West Leicestershire
- ☐ Oadby & Wigston
- ☐ Leicester City
- ☐ Rutland

## Use of recycling and household waste sites

Q5 Which, if any, of the following sites do you use? Please tick all that apply.

- ☐ Barwell
- ☐ Bottesford
- ☐ Coalville
- ☐ Kibworth
- ☐ Loughborough
- ☐ Lount
- ☐ Lutterworth
- ☐ Market Harborough
- ☐ Melton Mowbray
- ☐ Mountsorrel
- ☐ Oadby
- ☐ Shepshed
- ☐ Somerby
- ☐ Whetstone
- ☐ A non-Leicestershire County Council site
- ☐ None



Q6 On average, how often, if at all, do you use a site?

- ☐ More than once a week
- ☐ About once a week
- ☐ About once a fortnight
- ☐ About once a month
- ☐ About once every 3 months
- ☐ About once every 6 months
- ☐ About once a year
- ☐ Less often

Q7 Which site do you use most often?

- ☐ Barwell
- ☐ Bottesford
- ☐ Coalville
- ☐ Kibworth
- ☐ Loughborough
- ☐ Lount
- ☐ Lutterworth
- ☐ Market Harborough
- ☐ Melton Mowbray
- ☐ Mountsorrel
- ☐ Oadby
- ☐ Shepshed
- ☐ Somerby
- ☐ Whetstone
- ☐ A non-Leicestershire County Council site

Q8 What are your main reasons for using this site? Please tick all that apply.

- ☐ Close to where I live
- ☐ Close to where I work
- ☐ Convenient opening times
- ☐ Easy to use/ good layout
- ☐ No queuing to get in
- ☐ Staff are helpful and friendly
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Please specify 'other'

## Our proposals

### **Proposal 1: Recycling and household waste site closures**

We are proposing to close the Market Harborough, Shepshed and Somerby recycling and household waste sites from October 2024. We estimate that by closing these three sites we will save approximately £270,000 a year.

Market Harborough, Shepshed and Somerby recycling and household waste sites are proposed for closure as they have significant overlap with other sites or are a lot more expensive per visit than other sites.

Please refer to the supporting information for more detail on why these sites have been selected for closure.

Q9 To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to close the following sites?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Market Harborough	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shepshed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Somerby	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any comments on the above? Please be specific around the site(s) you are referring to.

### **Proposal 2: Changes to opening days**

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the Bottesford recycling and household waste site was open 5 days a week Saturday to Wednesday (closed Thursday and Friday). More recently, the site has been open 3 days a week on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. We propose to make this change permanent.

For information, we also intend to amend the Melton Mowbray recycling and household waste site days of opening. The Melton site is currently open Thursday to Monday (closed Tuesday and Wednesday). We are proposing to change the opening days to Saturday to Wednesday (closed Thursday and Friday). The site will continue to be open 5 days a week.

For a table of our proposed site opening days, please refer to the supporting information.

Q10 To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to continue the current 3 day opening pattern at the Bottesford site?

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why do you say this?

### **Proposal 3: Changing summer opening hours at all recycling and household waste sites**

Throughout the year, with the exception of Bottesford, all sites will continue to be open on Saturday, Sunday and Monday and **either** Tuesday and Wednesday or Thursday and Friday.

We propose to change the summer hours at ALL sites as follows from April 2025:

- Saturday, Sunday and Monday 9am to 5pm
- All other days will remain as 9am to 7pm

The last time we consulted about the waste site opening times (in 2019), residents and site users told us that they wanted to be able to visit the sites after work on weekdays. The proposed changes will therefore leave all sites open until 7pm on two weekdays in the summer months to cater for those working during the day. These proposals would equate to a saving of £150,000 a year.

Q11 To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to change the summer hours?

Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Why do you say this?

**Proposal 4: Closing Christmas Eve at all recycling and household waste sites**

At the moment the recycling and household waste sites are all closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. We are also proposing to close ALL sites on Christmas Eve from 2024 onwards. We experience low numbers of visits on Christmas Eve compared to other days in December so believe the impact would be limited.

Q12 To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to close on Christmas Eve?

Strongly  
agree

☐

Tend to  
agree

☐

Neither  
agree nor  
disagree

☐

Tend to  
disagree

☐

Strongly  
disagree

☐

Don't know

☐

Why do you say this?

## Impact of the proposals

Q13 Do you have any comments on the potential impact of these proposals?

## Alternative options

Q14 Are there other options for significantly reducing the running costs of the recycling and household waste sites that you think we could consider?

## Any other comments

Q15 Do you have any other comments about our proposals?

## About you

Leicestershire County Council is committed to ensuring that its services, policies, and practices are free from discrimination and prejudice, address the needs of all sections of the community and promote and advance equality of opportunity.

Many people face discrimination in society because of their personal circumstances and for this reason we have decided to ask these monitoring questions.

We would therefore be grateful if you would answer the following questions. You are under no obligation to provide the information requested, but it would help us greatly if you did.

Q16 What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ I use another term

Q17 Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q18 What was your age on your last birthday? (Please enter your age in numbers not words)

Q19 What is your full postcode?

This will allow us to see how far people live from one of our sites. It will not identify your house.

Q20 Do you have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q21 What is your ethnic group? Please tick one box only.

- ☐ White
- ☐ Mixed
- ☐ Asian or Asian British
- ☐ Black or Black British
- ☐ Other ethnic group

Q22 Which of these activities best describes what you are doing at present?

- ☐ Employee in full-time job (30 hours plus per week)
- ☐ Employee in part-time job (less than 30 hours per week)
- ☐ Self employed full or part-time
- ☐ On a government supported training programme
- ☐ Full-time education at school, college or university.
- ☐ Unemployed and available for work
- ☐ Permanently sick / disabled
- ☐ Wholly retired from work
- ☐ Looking after the home
- ☐ Doing something else

Q23 What is your sexual orientation?

- ☐ Bi
- ☐ Gay or Lesbian
- ☐ Heterosexual / straight
- ☐ I use another term

**Please click the 'Submit' button to send us your response.**

Thank you for your assistance. Your views are important to us.

When the consultation closes on Wednesday 24th January 2024, we intend to report the results back to Cabinet in April 2024.

Data Protection: Personal data supplied on this form will be held on computer and will be used in accordance with current Data Protection Legislation. The information you provide will be used for statistical analysis, management, planning and the provision of services by the county council and its partners. Leicestershire County Council will not share any personal information collected in this survey with its partners. The information will be held in accordance with the council's records management and retention policy. Information which is not in the 'About you' section of the questionnaire may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

This page is intentionally left blank





**Resident Focus Groups on  
Proposed Changes to  
Recycling and Household  
Waste Sites**

**Leicestershire County Council**

**Final Report**

**February 2024**

Project details and acknowledgements.....	2
Introduction .....	3
Background .....	3
Context.....	3
Methodology.....	4
Findings.....	6
Understanding the context .....	6
Proposed change 1 .....	9
Proposed change 2 .....	11
Proposed change 3 .....	12
Proposed change 4 .....	13
Conclusions and recommendations .....	14
Income generation .....	15
Education & awareness raising .....	15
Communication .....	16
Appendix A: Data shared during focus groups.....	17

## Project details and acknowledgements

<b>Title</b>	Resident Focus Groups on Proposed Changes to Recycling and Household Waste Sites
<b>Client</b>	Leicestershire County Council
<b>Project number</b>	23276
<b>Client reference</b>	
<b>Author</b>	Dr Claire Bennett and Ben Thatcher
<b>Research Manager</b>	Dr Claire Bennett

This project has been delivered to ISO 9001:2015, 20252:2019 and 27001:2013 standards.



Certificate No:340192020



Certificate No:340202020



Certificate No:374882021

### M·E·L Research Ltd

Somerset House, 37 Temple Street, Birmingham, B2 5DP

Email: [info@melresearch.co.uk](mailto:info@melresearch.co.uk)

Web: [www.melresearch.co.uk](http://www.melresearch.co.uk)

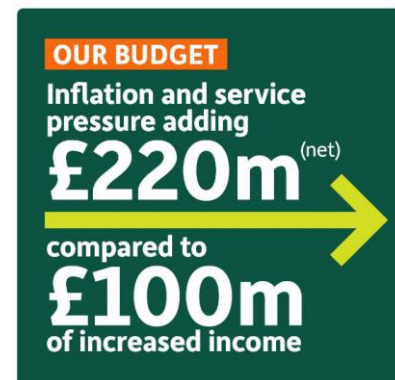
Tel: 0121 604 4664



# Introduction

## Background

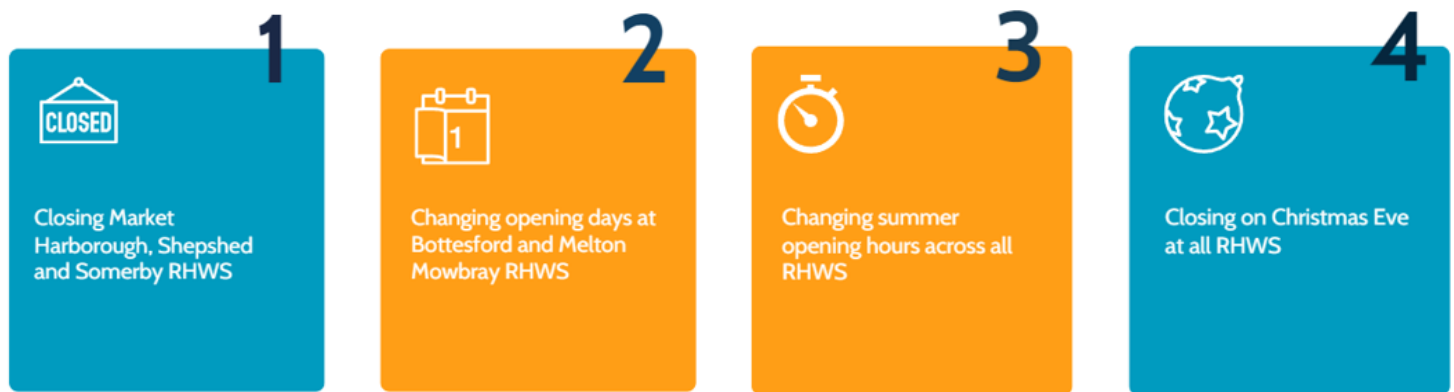
This research is contextualised within wider changes and budgetary constraints faced by Leicestershire County Council (LCC). LCC faces unprecedented financial challenge. The rising cost of service delivery fuelled by high inflation, growing demand for services and being the lowest funded county in England has resulted in significant financial pressures. LCC are not alone as all Local Authorities across the country are struggling. For example, nearby councils such as Nottingham and Birmingham have recently issued a section 114 notice, illustrating that they do not have adequate resources to deliver services. Whilst LCC is not in this immediate situation, significant budget gaps exist between the resources needed for services and income received. It is estimated that LCC will face an £85m budget shortfall by 2028. These circumstances are forcing efficiency savings changes across all LCC departments. This research focuses specifically on proposed changes to Leicestershire's Recycling and Household Waste Sites (RHWS).



## Context

LCC's recently published budget proposal (2024-2028) includes a requirement to make savings from RHWS. On 13 February 2023 LCC appointed a Scrutiny Review Panel (SRP) to review proposed changes regarding RHWS closures (a total of five potential site closures were put forward). Whilst not all of the closures were approved, the proposed changes, and data which sits behind the options presented in a recent RHWS public consultation, were informed by the SRP report.

The current proposed changes are estimated to save LCC in the region of £420,000 per year. There are four key changes which LCC have sought residents' views on, and which form the basis for the current research:

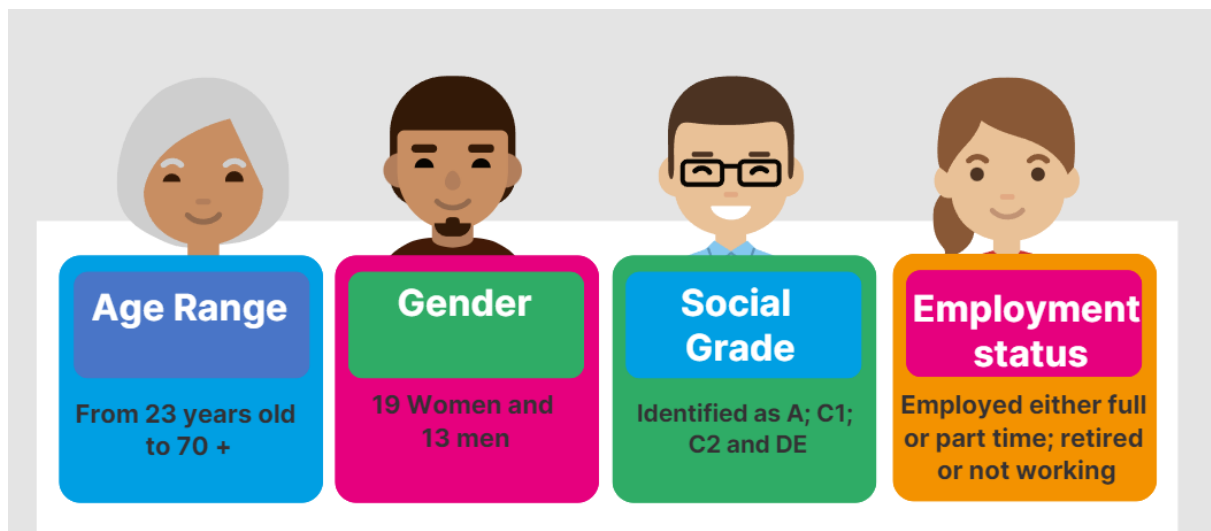
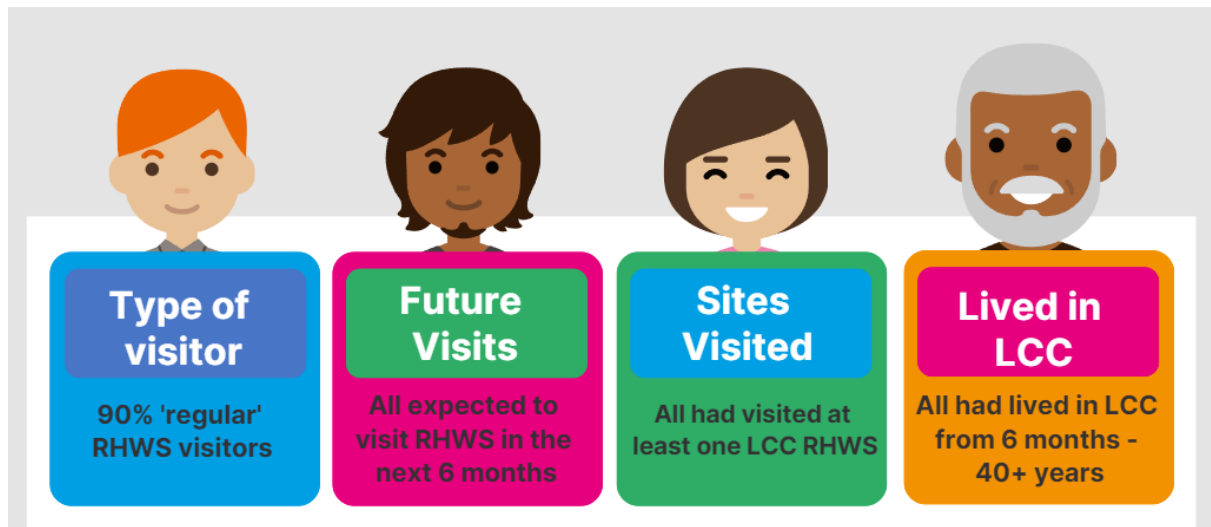


## Methodology

We facilitated six remote, online video focus groups with residents across Leicestershire between 18 and 25 January 2024. All participants were recruited by our market research recruitment partner, Discovery Research, had used at least one RHWS in recent months, and the majority described themselves as regular visitors. RHWS visits were mainly used to dispose of items from home renovations, broken toys, excess cardboard, other recyclable products and bulky items (not collected at the kerbside).

The focus groups were designed to explore participants' thoughts and views on the four proposed changes to RHWS. Each proposed change was discussed in turn after key data and statistics were shared with the groups (see **Appendix A**), which helped to contextualise LCC's decision making process and set the foundation for the proposed changes. Focus groups lasted between 75 and 90 minutes and all were recorded and later transcribed. We paid particular attention to personal reflections and any perceived impact (positive or negative) that might result from the proposed changes. In addition, participants were asked to make any further recommendations or suggestions they felt LCC might consider in refining their proposals and changes to RHWS.

Given that there are specific proposed changes which would affect users of Market Harborough and Shepshed RHWS, and that these are well populated areas, two focus groups were designed just for users of these two sites. The remaining four focus groups were made up of participants who use a mixture of the other RHWS across the county. In total we spoke to 32 participants; see below for sample breakdown.



## Findings

### Understanding the context

Initial discussions focused on what residents knew and understood about the current financial situation faced by LCC. There was little surprise that *'things were tough'* as people were aware of the crises in other Local Authorities (Birmingham and Nottingham) as this was on the mainstream news. There was a general understanding that inflation (cost of living), increased local population and Local Authority funding have and will result in a wave of cuts and council tax rises.



I'm aware of the other councils being in the news that are, you know, in dire financial situations. I hadn't actually looked into Leicestershire, but it's obviously not surprising."

Male, (aged 35-44), Market Harborough



I didn't know that, but I'm surprised either."

Female, (aged 23-35), Twyford

There was, however, little knowledge of the specific predicted budget deficit. In addition, there was minimal knowledge of LCC being the lowest funded county in the country, which surprised and shocked many. Participants were unsure why this is the case and were not aware of the associated fair funding campaign. Despite information being available on LCC's website, participants rarely visited the site and when they did, it was primarily for some specific task (e.g. paying council tax, reporting missed refuse collections etc.) rather than simply browsing for information. In addition, there is little distinguishing between LA departments amongst residents. For example, people would struggle to differentiate responsibilities between Waste Services and RHWS responsibilities. There were a few exceptions to this view from



I didn't realise [LCC] we are the lowest funded in the country. That's quite surprising. We're a big county!

Male, (age 23-34), Lutterworth

participants who worked in the voluntary and public sectors; these individuals had sought professional funding from LCC and had greater knowledge of resource constraints and departmental roles.

Data was then shared with the groups regarding the number of RHWS in Leicestershire in comparison to neighbouring council (see **Appendix A**). On the whole, residents did not know the number of RHWS available and felt fortunate that LCC had been providing this number of facilities. Some questioned whether residents in neighbouring councils felt they had a sufficient RHWS services given the number of sites per household.

“

So really it seems that, at the minute, we have a very healthy provision when you compare it to other counties as far as the number of sites, and the number of households each site is there to serve."

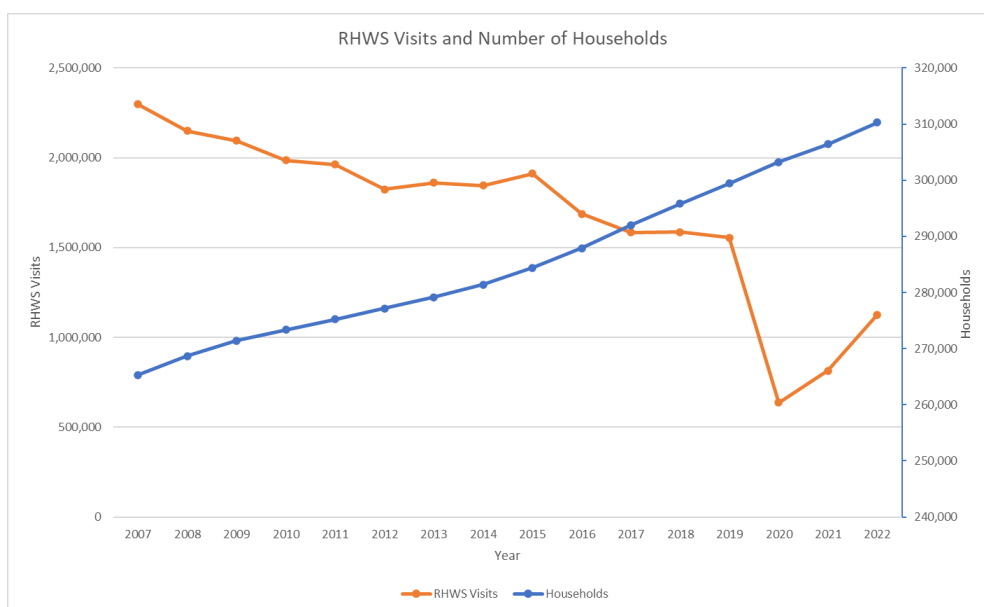
Female, (age 35-44), Bottesford

“

If you look at the data then it's obvious that other councils have got away with providing less tips, but it doesn't tell you the wait time and that kind of thing. Obviously if there's a one-hour or two-hour queue all the way outside then that's not good."

Male, (age 45-54), Market Harborough

A graph (see below) was then shared with the group which illustrates LCC site visits (across all RHWS) plotted against the growing number of households within the LA area. This graph raised questions and prompted several discussions amongst participants.





Participants were unaware that RHWS visits were down in comparison to pre-Covid levels. A few suggestions were put forward as to why this might be. This included people fly-tipping, which was raised as an increasing concern for many residents. In addition, people felt families might be looking for alternatives to disposal and perhaps selling or taking unwanted goods to charities or reusing and upcycling items themselves. Residents also noted that there had been an improvement in kerbside collections, especially around bulky cardboard, potentially explaining a reduction in RHWS visits. Others questioned interpretations and assumptions regarding the data. For example, people cited that in the current cost of living crisis residents are waiting longer and doing 'bigger trips' to reduce fuel cost or delaying household renovations, meaning fewer trips are needed. A small number of participants also expressed that they felt the upward trajectory of visits indicated that residents are becoming more aware of post-Covid opening days and times and that household visits will increase over time.

““

From my perspective, our local tip has restricted opening hours. So, because it's only open three days out of seven in the week, we don't visit as much as we would have before. So, I think having restricted opening hours is probably affecting [the number of site visits] as well. " Male, (age 45-54), Bottesford

““

I suppose people's vehicles are bigger, so they haven't got to come as many times."

Female, (age 35-44), Shepshed

““

There could be a whole range of things going on with the cost of living. People might be a bit more cautious about when they do a trip."

Female, (age 45-54), Melton Mowbray

““

Well, that's what the graph would indicate to me; it's not flattening out, is it? It's on a steady increase and certainly not dropping; it's increasing rather than decreasing."

Male, (age 55-64), Market Harborough

## Proposed change 1

### Closing Market Harborough, Shepshed and Somerby RHWS

Information was shared regarding the proposed closures of the three RHWS. Residents were not surprised that site closures were an option given the financial constraints presented earlier. Participants who used the three sites were obviously more vocal and personally impacted by these changes than those living further from these locations. Emotions ranged from being angry, aggrieved, disappointed and a feeling of 'reluctant acceptance' given the context presented earlier.

Users of the Market Harborough site raised specific issues and expressed concerns regarding why this site was selected for closure rather than the nearby site of Kibworth, which was considered more difficult to access with congested roads. In addition, the recent funding at the Kibworth site created an overt cynicism regarding the decision-making process. Participants felt that as this site had received funding it could not be closed and therefore the decision to close Market

Harborough was not based on usage and convenience to residents. Compounding this, residents felt the choice of closing Market Harborough was 'short sighted' and whilst it may help the financial situation in the short term, given the population growth in the town, would create more long-term problems.



That route to the tip [Kibworth] is notoriously congested as well."

Female, (age 35-54), Market Harborough



It [closure of RHWS] will mean increased and longer journeys. What's the carbon footprint of people now having to drive from Market Harborough to Kibworth? It doesn't make sense."

Male, (age 55-64), Shepshed



It doesn't make sense to close Market Harborough 'cause we've got a population of about 25,000 people. So why would you close a tip that, that serves that amount of people? The only reason I can think of is because they've just refurbished Kibworth and they can't close that one."

Male, (age 65+), Market Harborough

Similar concerns were raised by Shepshed RHWS users especially regarding expected increases to the population. They also felt aggrieved that additional costs and inconvenience associated with the proposed closure would be placed on households. This issue is particularly heightened given residents' wider views on the cost-of-living crisis and the perception that people are 'paying more and getting less'. One participant expressed confusion about Shepshed being earmarked for closure given the recent installation of a new incinerator in the area. This point also illustrates a general lack of understanding amongst residents about what the council funds and what is installed or funded by private enterprises and LCC contractors. From the group discussions, there was a view that the council are responsible and thus funding 'everything'.

“

You look at the difference. The ten-minute round trip is now a forty-minute round trip. What's the benefit to the Council saving the money when everyone else living in these areas is wasting a lot more on fuel? It seems out of touch.”

Female, (age 35-44), Shepshed

“

I think it's quite shortsighted because, actually, there's a lot of development. There's always planning applications going in for more houses and it's just going to increase the load on those other sites outside of Shepshed. So, closing the site seems a bit ridiculous to myself.”

Male, (age 55-64), Shepshed

Both Shepshed and Market Harborough groups were also concerned the nearby sites which they would need to access would be busier post-closure. The added road congestion and wait times at sites would also add to households' inconvenience. Across all groups there were fears that this would inevitably lead to an increase in fly-tipping across the county. Some residents cited specific areas where this is already problematic and feared the situation would only get worse. For some, this anticipated negative impact and the associated cost of cleaning up fly tipping, countered the cost saving that might be realised by closing sites.

“

The saving will be lost to clear up the fly-tipping, which could be more expensive than keeping the tip open!

Female, (age 45-54), Melton Mowbray

## Proposed change 2

### Changing opening days at Bottesford and Melton Mowbray

#### RHWS

These proposed changes were less controversial across all groups, including residents who use the Bottesford and Melton Mowbray RHWS themselves. It should be noted, however, that the proposed changes were presented in the same order to all groups, so there was perhaps relief amongst users of these sites that their local facility was not getting closed altogether. This also sparked discussions in the Market Harborough and Shepshed groups as to why those sites could not have reduced opening hours introduced, rather than being closed entirely. Participants in other groups also questioned whether savings could still be made by reducing opening days/hours across all sites instead of closing sites.

Newer residents to Bottesford and Melton Mowbray were largely unaware of pre-Covid opening times and individuals who had used the RHWS prior to 2020 assumed restricted days would stay. The main points of discussion were largely around how the opening days had been decided and whether it was based on usage and site visit data. For Bottesford RHWS users, weekend access was considered crucial especially for people working Monday to Friday. There were some calls to change the proposed opening days to include Saturday and Sunday (for example to be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday or Saturday, Sunday, and Monday). Overall, the specific impact of these proposed changes to households was considered minimal. Whilst it may require residents to check opening

“

So, are the savings just in terms of manpower? It might be fairer to have alternate closing days so that all sites stay open, but on fewer days, and the personnel can be moved around.”

Male, (age 45-54), Melton Mowbray

“

But I think people will just get used to those hours as they are made aware; we'll just get used to it. And to be honest, I always forget when it's open and always Google it before I go.”

Male, (age 23-34), Barwell

“

I don't think I would have anything that pressing that couldn't wait a couple of days.”

Female, (age 35-44), Whetstone

days prior to visiting and may create some initial confusion, proposed changes to opening days were not regarded as unreasonable.

## Proposed change 3

### Changing summer opening hours across all RHWS

Conversations regarding changing summer opening hours raised similar points to above. Generally, people understood the rationale behind this and felt the proposed changes were very reasonable. The main impact on residents was seen as being needing to check opening times and days prior to a visit.

Some participants did, however, make suggestions regarding alternative times. For example, discussions took place regarding whether having sites open less in the winter to allow for more summertime openings was possible. People expressed that evening opening times in the summer would be invaluable (especially for people who work '9 to 5') and therefore asked whether sites could remain open an hour later in the evening. Moreover, given that many sites will have reduced opening days, participants felt it would be a good idea to ensure that RHWS were open later the night before any consecutive day closures. Some participants also felt that having late opening hours in the summer on weekends specifically would be helpful for residents.



I don't think they've [LCC] been unreasonable. They're giving people different options".

Female, (age 35-44), Bottesford



I think it should be open later on the weekend days more so than 2 random days in the week."

Male, (age 23-34), Lutterworth

## Proposed change 4

### Closing on Christmas Eve at all RHWS

All groups were of a unanimous opinion that closing RHWS on Christmas Eve was unproblematic. For many, there was an assumption that the sites were closed on Christmas Eve in any case. Other participants felt it was not unreasonable to ask people to wait a few days over the Christmas period to visit. Participants did not expect any opposition to this. There was very little discussion on this point as there was a consensus this was a good cost saving proposal.

“

I don't think there'll be many people that will be bothered by it being closed on Christmas Eve. Generally, the rubbish is generated at Christmas, so yeah, I don't see any problem with that proposal.”

Female, (age 35-44), Twyford

“

I would have thought most people have other things on their mind rather than going to a tip on Christmas Eve. I don't think the impact of that would be too great.”

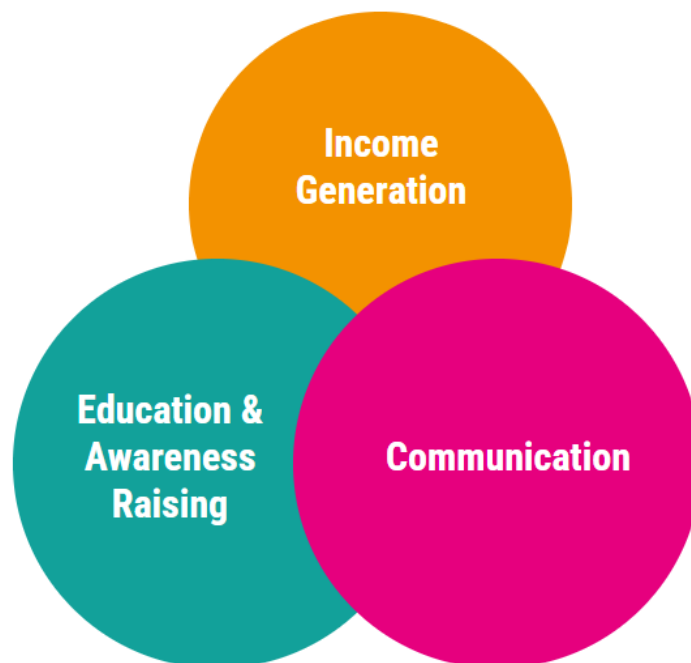
Male, (age 55-64), Melton Mowbray

## Conclusions and recommendations

The most controversial of the four proposed changes was the closure of RHWS, especially Market Harborough and Shepshed given the population in these areas. The users of these sites are likely to provide the most vocal opposition. Rationales for these closures will need to be clearly articulated and disseminated to residents. The data provided during these focus group was considered too general and thus, on its own, an insufficient justification for closure. For example, the use of statistics on site visits did not satisfy participants and was seen as a simplistic benchmark. Sharing additional information regarding the decision-making process may help how these proposals land. We would also recommend providing reassurance that fly-tipping is addressed and that these proposed changes will not exacerbate this issue thanks to proactive management on the part of LCC.

In contrast, proposed changes two, three and four were considered very reasonable by most, especially given RHWS provisions by neighbouring councils and LCC's budget deficit. Ultimately, people would rather have reduced opening hours than site closures. There was a sense of reassurance that LCC had carefully considered these three proposed changes.

Based on the findings from this research, there are three key areas in which we would recommend further thought and reflection:



## Income generation

A notable gap in the proposals that participants noted was a lack of income generation activities at RHWS. Across numerous groups, people expressed that more could be done to make money rather than solely looking at cutting costs. Residents spoke of initiatives they've seen or heard about at other RHWS in other areas, including:

- Ability to buy goods including unwanted/broken furniture, slate, bricks, wood – for the growing upcycling and recycling market.
- Investing in technology to turn green and garden waste into compost for resale.
- Developing partnerships with local businesses or charities to buy broken furniture to recycle/upcycle goods for profit.



They [LCC] can actually generate some money, rather than just making cuts."

Male, (age 65+), Somerby

## Education & awareness raising

In addition, residents talked about the need for more local education, not just on the use of RHWS but also wider issues such as household waste, landfill and recycling. This is partly due to a perceived lack of understanding and awareness about how people use RHWS, what can and can't go in general waste bins and what can be recycled.

Such an initiative would ensure residents are disposing of items correctly. This could also fit into wider environmental and net zero campaigns and ambitions. Targeting younger people, possibly through school visits, could also help encourage better waste management amongst younger generations and in future years.



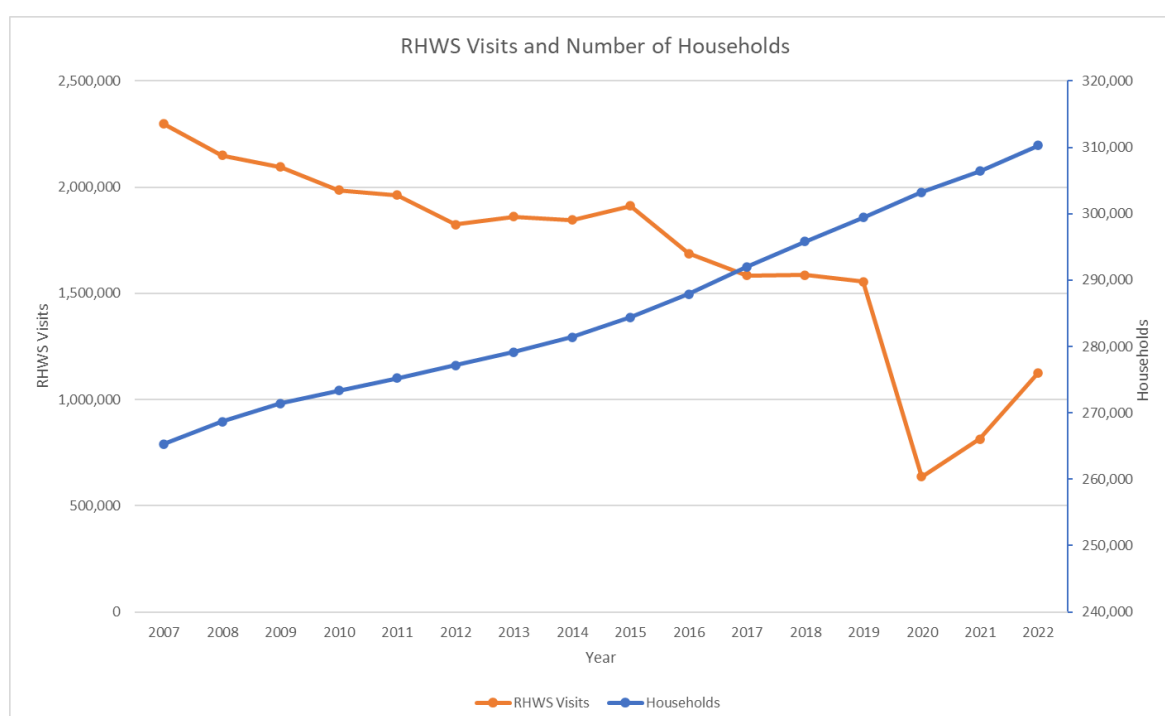
## Communication

Moreover, whilst participants were pleased to learn that there was an ongoing public consultation on this issue, few were aware of it prior to the focus groups. This raises several questions regarding how residents are accessing key information which impact upon them and how LCC is communicating changes, or proposed changes, to services. We recommend the development of a wider communications strategy, targeting the platforms that resident's access for news and information, potentially broadening your preferred channels as dictated by a 'digital by default' approach. This will help people feel more informed and included when it comes to changes. It was clear that the residents we spoke to were interested in understanding more about the future of services and LCC's financial situation; they were keen to be involved but had little awareness or understanding of how to do so.

## Appendix A: Data shared during focus groups.

The following data tables were shared with the participants during the focus group discussions.

Authority	Number of Waste Sites	Geographical Area Served (km <sup>2</sup> )	Households per Site	Hours per Week (averaged across sites)	
				Summer	Winter
<b>Leicestershire County Council</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>22,000</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>35</b>
Warwickshire County Council	9	219	29,000	40	37
Staffordshire County Council	14	187	28,000	48	45
Nottinghamshire County Council	12	174	31,000	81	66
Derbyshire County Council	9	283	41,000	66	66
Lincolnshire County Council	11	538	32,000	37	37
Former Northamptonshire County Council	10	236	33,000	40	40



## Recycling and household waste sites





m.e.l  
research



# Equality Impact Assessment Form

Before completing this form, please refer to [the supporting guidance document](#)

The purpose of this form is to aid the Council in meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in the Equality Act 2010. This requires the Council to have “due regard” of the impact of its actions on the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

The assessment is used to identify and record any concerns and potential risks. The following actions can then be taken to address these issues.

- Remove risks: abandon the proposed policy or practice
- Mitigate risks – amend the proposed policy or practice so that risks are reduced
- Justify policy or practice in terms of other objectives

<b>1- Policy details</b>	
<b>Name of policy</b>	Recycling and Household Waste Service Reduction Project
<b>Department and service</b>	Dept: Environment and Transport Service: Environment and Waste
<b>Who has been involved in completing the Equality Impact Assessment?</b>	Vicky Cormie – Head of Service; Environment and Waste Commissioning
<b>Contact numbers</b>	N/A
<b>Date of Completion</b>	Version 2: February 2024

## **2- Objectives and background of policy or practice change**

Use this section to describe the policy or practice change  
 What is the purpose, expected outcomes and rationale?  
 Include the background information and context

<p><b>What is the proposal?</b></p> <p><b>What change and impact is intended by the proposal?</b></p>	<p>Proposed changes to the Recycling and Household Waste service taken forward for public consultation, which ran from 1 November 2023 to 25 January 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• *Reduce the number of Recycling and Household Waste Sites (RHWS) from 14 to 11. The three sites selected for potential closure are Somerby, Shepshed, and Market Harborough.</li> <li>• Part-time opening to be adopted at the Bottesford RHWS, reducing from five to three opening days per week.</li> <li>• Reduce summer opening hours at the 11 remaining RHWS sites. Sites are currently open five days per week, 9am-7pm from April to September. The proposal is to reduce this to 9am-5pm on three of the five opening days (one of three opening days at Bottesford, due to part-time opening).</li> <li>• Christmas Eve closure to be adopted at all RHWS.</li> </ul> <p>*Five RHWS closures were originally proposed (Somerby, Shepshed, Market Harborough, Lutterworth and Bottesford). In March 2023 a cross-party Scrutiny Review Panel reviewed the rationale for the proposed closures, which resulted in the proposals being changed to three RHWS closures and part-time opening at Bottesford. This was due to concerns about rural isolation at Bottesford and planned housing development at Lutterworth.</p> <p>After consideration of the consultation feedback, it was decided to run a secondary four-week consultation on the alternative option of keeping Market Harborough RHWS and Shepshed RHWS open part-time, and for operational viability reasons reducing the number of opening days at Kibworth RHWS from five days to four days per week. This consultation is taking place between 21 February 2024 and 20 March 2024.</p>
<p>What is the rationale for this proposal?</p>	<p>The key driver for the change is to deliver the savings target for the service agreed in the 2023-2027 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Sites were assessed for potential closure against a number of criteria, including; finance, ongoing operational deliverability, site catchment areas, site usage patterns, housing growth, site infrastructure / suitability etc.</p>

### 3- Evidence gathered on equality implications - Data and engagement

What evidence about potential equality impacts is already available?

This could come from research, service analysis, questionnaires, and engagement with protected characteristics groups

**What equalities information or data has been gathered so far?**

**What does it show?**

**Population Demographic Data**

Data has been collated (at ward/parish level) for each of the areas affected by potential closures. Headline findings as follows (source: 2021 Census - ONS Website):

- **Age Profile:**

The table below shows that Market Harborough and Shepshed have a relatively even spread across the age ranges up to 80, comparable with Leicestershire as a whole. Somerby has a significantly higher percentage of its population in the 50 to 80 age range than Leicestershire as a whole.

Age Range	M'Harborough (%)	Shepshed (%)	Somerby (%)	Leicestershire (%)
0 to 9	9.9	10.8	7.9	10.7
10 to 19	11.7	9.8	10.8	11.6
20 to 29	9.5	12.2	6.4	11.5
30 to 39	12.0	13.2	8.7	12.4
40 to 49	13.4	12.1	10.7	12.4
50 to 59	14.8	14.1	20.4	14.4
60 to 69	11.2	12.2	16.3	11.6
70 to 79	10.6	10.4	13.3	9.9
80+	6.9	5.4	5.6	5.4

- **Gender:** Each area has roughly a 51% female, 49% male population split.
- **Legal Partnership Status:** the majority of the adult population in each area is classified as married/in a registered civil partnership or never married and never registered a civil partnership.
- **Ethnicity:** approximately 94-98% of the population in each area is White British.



- **Religion:** approximately 91-93% of the population in each area is Christian or no religion.
- **Disability:** approximately 81-85% of population in each area is classified as not disabled.
- **Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity:** data on sexual orientation and gender identity was only available at district level. In each of the districts with sites earmarked for closure/reduced opening hours (Charnwood, Harborough, and Melton) approximately 90% of the population are straight or heterosexual, and approximately 94% have the gender identity the same as that registered at birth.
- **Deprivation:** approximately 50-55% of households in each area are classed as not deprived in any dimension. Approximately 31-34% of households in each area are classed as deprived in one dimension. Note: there are four dimensions of deprivation - employment, education, health and disability, and household overcrowding.

#### **Service User Data**

Equalities data collected from respondents to the 2017 RHWS customer survey give a sample of the demographic characteristics of service users across Leicestershire. It indicates that the majority of services users are aged 35-75, male, white British, not classified as disabled, and either in employment or retired.

#### **Rural Isolation Data**

The table below contains drive time data (source: Google Maps) showing the distance and travel time by car to the nearest alternative RHWS for each of the areas affected by potential closures.

Start point	Nearest Alternative RHWS	*Distance (miles)	*Drive Time (minutes)
Shepshed (Centre)	Coalville RHWS	5.7	15
Market Harborough (Centre)	Kibworth RHWS	5	13
Somerby (RHWS)	Melton RHWS	7.9	16

	*Distance and drive times were taken from google maps at approximately 11:45am on Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
<p><b>What engagement has been undertaken so far?</b></p> <p><b>What does it show?</b></p>	<p>A 12-week public consultation on the proposals was undertaken from 1 November 2023 to 24 January 2024, which included an online questionnaire (made available in alternative formats) and focus groups.</p> <p>The main equalities related issues raised in the online questionnaire and focus groups was the disproportionate impact on older people and those with mobility issues, with particular reference to the proposed closure of the Market Harborough and Shepshed sites. There were some concerns raised regarding rural areas being underserved and that residents felt overlooked.</p> <p>The proposals were presented to the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group (LECG) on 10 November 2023 as part of the consultation. The main equalities related issue raised by the LECG was concern about the older population in Somerby having to travel 8 miles to the nearest alternative RHWS at Melton Mowbray. A summary of the outcome of the consultation, including LECG feedback, can be found in the Consultation Survey Report.</p> <p>After consideration of the consultation feedback, it was decided to run a secondary four-week consultation on revised proposals to keep Market Harborough RHWS and Shepshed RHWS open part-time, and for operational viability reasons, reduce the number of opening days at Kibworth RHWS from five days to four days per week. This consultation is taking place between 21 February 2024 and 20 March 2024. The other proposals in the original consultation to close Somerby RHWS, reduce summer opening hours at all RHWS, retain part-time opening at Bottesford RHWS, and introduce Christmas Eve closures at the RHWS, remain unchanged.</p> <p>There are no additional equalities issues arising from the revised proposals.</p>

#### 4- Benefits, concerns and mitigating action

Please specify if any individuals or community groups who identify with any of the '[protected characteristics](#)' may **potentially** be affected by the policy and describe any benefits and concerns including any barriers.

Use this section to demonstrate how risks would be mitigated for each affected group			
<b>Group</b>	<b>What are the benefits of the proposal for those from the following groups?</b>	<b>What are the concerns identified and how will these affect those from the following groups?</b>	<b>How will the known concerns be mitigated?</b>
<b>Age</b>	None	It has been identified that Somerby has a higher percentage of residents in the 50-80 age range than Leicestershire as a whole.  However, this is not considered to be a significant factor in relation to the proposals.	None
<b>Disability</b>	None	If consultation and service changes are not communicated in a way that caters for the needs of those with disabilities such as visual impairment, then this group could be considered to have been discriminated against.	Consultation and service change communication to the public will be offered in different formats (e.g. Braille, easy read etc) on request.
<b>Race</b>	None	If consultation and service changes are not communicated in appropriate languages, then some communities/races could be considered to have been discriminated against.	Consultation and service change communication to the public will be offered in different languages on request.
<b>Sex</b>	None	It has been identified through customer satisfaction surveys that the majority of site users are male. Therefore, men are more likely to be impacted by site closures than women. However, no specific concerns	None

		have been identified in relation to the proposals.	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	None	None	None
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	None	None	None
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	None	None	None
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	None	None	None
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	None	None	None
<b>Other groups: e.g., rural isolation, deprivation, health inequality, carers, asylum seeker and refugee communities, looked after children, deprived, armed forced, or disadvantaged communities</b>	None	<b>Rural isolation:</b> The original proposal to close five sites included the closure of Bottesford RHWS. It was identified that rural isolation is an issue here, with the nearest alternative RHWS at Melton which being 16 miles away (30 Minute drive). The issue is further exacerbated for low-income households as they would have to spend more to travel the extra distance.	As a result of concerns raised by the Scrutiny Review Panel in March 2023, the decision was taken to look at options for keeping Bottesford RHWS open part-time.

## 5- Action Plan and Recommendations

Use this section to describe concerns further

Produce a framework to outline how identified risks/concerns will be mitigated.

What concerns were identified?	What action is planned?	Who is responsible for the action?	Timescale
Consultation documents and communications about service changes need to cater for different languages and those with disabilities such as visual impairment.	<p>Ensure public consultation documents are offered in different languages and formats, on request.</p> <p>Ensure communications about service changes are offered in different languages and formats, on request.</p>	Vicky Cormie: consultation and public comms.	<p>Consultation: November 2023 - January 2024</p> <p>Secondary consultation: February 2024 - March 2024.</p> <p>Implementation of service changes (subject to further consultation and final decision by the Cabinet): October 2024 - April 2025.</p>

<b>6- Way forward</b>	
<b>How will the action plan and recommendations of this assessment be built into decision making and implementation of this proposal?</b>	Requirements will be built into the project/communications plan.
<b>How would you monitor the impact of your proposal and keep the EIA refreshed?</b>	The EIA will be reviewed and updated periodically throughout the project.
<b>Sign off by DEG Chair/Director or Head of Services</b>	



**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 11 MARCH 2024**

**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PERFORMANCE  
REPORT TO DECEMBER 2023**

**JOINT REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTOR OF  
ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the latest performance update on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that the Council is responsible for delivering against the Council's Strategic Plan (2022-26). The Committee is asked to note this update.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. The updates in this report reflect progress against the Council's Strategic Outcomes Framework within the Strategic Plan up to 2026, as well as the Environment and Waste performance framework and related high-level plans and strategies across the Council which inform the current performance framework and indicators in this report.

**Background**

3. This report highlights how a variety of Environment and Climate Change performance indicators are performing against the Council's key outcomes: 'Clean and Green' and 'Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure'.
4. The performance dashboards, appended to this report, include several indicators where the Council does not have direct control of delivery, such as air quality and river quality. The latter examples are within the scope of the Environment Strategy but are not directly delivered by the Council. They have been included to provide a greater oversight of the environment, inform policy making and help understand what life is like in Leicestershire. They include a mix of national and locally developed performance indicators. Measuring these may highlight areas for scrutiny of delivery by other Council departments, other agencies or the need for lobbying to influence Government policy and funding. It is expected that action by a range of agencies will improve a number of these metrics over time. Internal indicators, where the Council has the most control, are identified with an 'L' within the performance dashboards.

5. The Council monitors and assesses its performance by mainly considering its Direction of Travel (DOT), the Red Amber Green (RAG) rating, and quartile position when compared to other English county councils (where applicable).
6. The DOT arrows indicate an improvement or deterioration in performance compared to the previous result in the performance dashboards in the Appendix. Up arrows show an improvement in performance, down arrows show a decline in performance and horizontal arrows show no change. Grey empty circles mean that there is no update available. This may be due to the time taken to obtain data from third parties and calculate the results or because some indicators are updated less frequently, for example, annually.
7. The performance dashboards include information on the latest data against target (where relevant) which generates a RAG rating if applicable. Red indicates that close monitoring or significant action is required as the target is not or may not be achieved. Amber indicates that light touch monitoring is required as performance is currently not meeting the target or is set to miss the target by a narrow margin. Green indicates no additional action is required as the indicator is currently meeting the target or is on track to meet the target.
8. The Council's performance is benchmarked against 32 English county authorities which covers large, principally non-urban geographical areas. Where it is available, the performance dashboards within the Appendix indicate which quartile Leicestershire's performance falls into. The first quartile is defined as performance that falls within the top 25% of county councils. The fourth quartile is defined as performance that falls within the bottom 25% of county councils. The comparison quartiles are updated annually.
9. The frequency in which the indicators are reported varies as some are quarterly, others are annual, and some less frequent. Quarterly updates tend to have a data lag of one quarter or more. For clarity, the time-periods the data covers are contained in the performance dashboards in the Appendix.

### **Performance Update – latest data to December 2023**

10. The quarterly performance dashboard shows Environment and Climate Change performance up to December 2023. Overall, there are 25 performance indicators included in this report which are aligned with the Council's Strategic Plan outcomes. They are presented in the Environment and Climate Change performance dashboards within the Appendix. Where a DOT is available: seven show performance improvement, four had declined in performance and five remained the same as the previous update.
11. The latest position shows that seven KPIs are green (they have met the target or are on track), three are amber (performance is currently not meeting the target or is set to miss the target by a narrow margin) and two are rated red (where performance is currently not meeting the target or is set to miss the target).



12. When compared to other English county councils, the Council has three indicators which are in the top quartile which include the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance rating C+ (new homes)', the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance rating C+ (existing homes)', and the 'Total fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 population' (listed in the Appendix with a green first quartile position). The Council performs below average for nine indicators, within the third and fourth quartiles, listed in the Appendix.
13. The following updates focus on the 16 indicators that have been updated by the end of December 2023 (Quarter Three).

## **Clean and Green**

### **People act now to tackle climate change**

14. The Council monitors the energy efficiency of new and existing homes within the County in the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+' indicators. There are separate indicators for new build properties and existing properties.
15. The latest data shows that 99% of new homes are energy efficient (energy performance certificate rating C+) in Quarter Two (2023/24), compared to existing homes of which only 55% were rated as energy efficient. The energy efficiency performance for new homes had remained static since the previous quarter compared to existing homes that had seen a very minor improvement in performance (1.2 percentage points). Comparisons with other English county councils for 2022/23 show that both the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance certificate rating C+' for new and existing homes fall within the first (top) quartile, showing better comparative performance.
16. The improvement from the third quartile (2021/22) to the first quartile (2022/23) for existing homes is likely to have been affected by a myriad of factors, including the significant rise in the cost-of-living and energy bills which is likely to have been a factor for people to improve their homes insulation. The Council's Warm Homes initiatives such as the Green Living Leicestershire scheme may have also contributed to this improvement. The latter helps prioritise Leicestershire residents with low incomes to go green, reduce costs and tackle climate change through fully funded home improvements, including loft and wall insulation, solar panels, heat pumps and new efficient windows and doors. Working alongside other types of incentives from other agencies, such as Age UK, Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL) and district councils, are also likely to have played a role in supporting people to better insulate their homes through information and advice on grants and initiatives available.
17. The latest results for the 'Percentage of staff who say the Council is doing enough to reduce its environmental impact (post-training survey)', remained relatively static at 90% for Quarter Four 2022/23.

### **Nature and local environment are valued, protected, and enhanced**

18. The 'Hectares of LCC land in better management for nature' was updated in 2022/23 and has seen an additional 10 hectares of land in better management for nature since 2021/22. This indicator was calculated for the first time in 2021/22 and is based on the best available data of the amount of Council land that is in better management for nature. Namely, there is a conscious decision to manage the land with nature in mind.
19. The percentage of suitable Council land in better management for nature remained the same as the previous update at 97% for 2022/23. This is the above figure presented as a percentage of the total amount of suitable Council land.
20. Leicestershire is one of the least wooded areas of the country, currently with only around 6% woodland, which is well below the national average of 10% for England. As a major landowner in Leicestershire, the Council has identified areas of its own landholdings where trees, woodlands and hedgerows can be planted to increase overall tree coverage. The Council made a pledge for an 'ambitious project to plant 700,000 trees' by 2032, which is the equivalent of one for every resident of Leicestershire. This equates to 70,000 trees planted each year. To help achieve this pledge, the Tree Management Strategy and Planting Action Plan was updated in 2021 to ensure delivery of the pledge over a 10-year period. The latest tree planting provisional update shows that 356,011 trees have been planted by the Council and its partners up to December 2023 (for 2023/24), since July 2021, and has greatly exceeded its cumulative target of 140,000 for 2023/24. This is just over half of its 2032 target, showing excellent performance. A detailed Tree Management Strategy Annual update was provided to this Committee in November 2023.

### **Resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way**

21. The 'Percentage of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling or composting' remained similar to the previous quarter at 42% for Quarter One 2023/24 (data is two quarters in arrears) and missed its 45% target, resulting in an amber rating. It lies within the third quartile position (2021/22) compared to other English county councils. This indicator has had relatively static performance over the past year at 42%. It is likely this was affected by the summer 2022 heatwave and reduced green waste tonnages. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, this typically tended to hover around 48% from January 2015 to December 2019 (the quarterly position was 46% in December 2019). Results in Quarter One perform worse than the pre-pandemic position. The Council adopted the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy in April 2023 which includes a pledge to put in place collection systems to contribute towards the future national target of 65% recycling by 2035.

22. The 'Annual percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill (former NI 193)' met its target of 30% (rated green). There was a slight decrease (2.4%) in waste landfilled from 24% in Quarter Four 2022/23 to 21% in Quarter One 2023/24 showing an improvement in performance. Since the same time last year (24%), there has been a steady decline in waste sent to landfill (and an increase in waste sent to energy from waste) resulting in an improvement in performance. When compared to other English county councils, this indicator remained in the fourth (bottom) quartile in 2021/22. In order to achieve an average position when compared to the other English county councils, performance would have to meet a more challenging 7% landfill rate. Through the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy, the Council is committed to reducing waste to landfill to less than 5% by 2025, well in advance of the national target of 10% by 2030. The new energy from waste contract started in April 2023 and it is expected that this will result in the amount of municipal waste being sent to landfill falling significantly further in 2023/24.
23. The 'Total household waste per household (kg)' declined in performance slightly as waste increased from 939kg in Quarter Four 2022/23 to 954kg in Quarter One 2023/24 (data is two quarters in arrears), a 1.6% decrease in performance. Although since the same time last year performance had improved by 4.2% (from 996kg in Quarter One 2022/23 and met its target (that required a year-on-year decrease)). In comparison to other English county councils, Leicestershire's performance was slightly below average as it is in the third quartile for 2021/22.
24. The 'Tonnes of waste produced from LCC sites' saw a 5% improvement in performance as waste decreased from 263 tonnes in Quarter Three 2022/23 to 250 tonnes in Quarter Four 2022/23. This indicator has met its 387 tonnes target and performs better than its pre-Covid-19 pandemic rate, which was typically 482 tonnes between January 2015 and December 2019. This might reflect the building occupancy levels settling down during this period.
25. The 'Percentage of waste recycled from LCC sites (non-operational)' declined in performance (4%) from 55% in Quarter Three 2022/23 to 51% in Quarter Four 2022/23 and missed its target of 64% resulting in a red RAG rating. Recycling peaked in Quarter One 2022/23 but has been declining since. The latest data performs worse than the pre-pandemic rate which was typically 58% between January 2015 and December 2019. This may be due to changes in occupancy, lighter packaging materials, less paper use, and the removal of office composting at County Hall.

### **The economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environmentally friendly**

26. Following the Government's decision to ban sales of new and diesel cars nationally by 2035, as part of its UK Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (published in March 2022), the Government predicts that a minimum of 300,000 public charging points will be needed nationally by 2030 to meet expected demand. In order to help decarbonise transport and contribute to the Council's own net zero ambitions for the County, the Council continues to support residents in switching to electric vehicles. The 'Electric vehicle

charging locations per 100,000 population' improved in performance by 10%, from 42/100,000 in Quarter One 2023/24 to 47/100,000 in Quarter Two 2023/24. This represents a 24% increase since the same period last year when the figure was 38/100,000 which indicates an improvement in the sectors infrastructure supporting more sustainable alternatives over the year. In terms of comparison with other counties, Leicestershire is in the fourth quartile (bottom) for 2023 (the same as in 2022).

27. So far, the Council has:

- a) Installed electric vehicle (EV) charge points at Council's Park and Ride sites.
- b) Secured almost £1m of the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Pilot funding along with four other local authorities and Midlands Connect. It is expected that this support from the Government will attract additional private sector investment, with cumulative funds being used to deliver up to 100 new public on-street charge points across the County, with rollout from Autumn 2024.
- c) Carried out a countywide EV consultation survey between the start of October and the end of November 2023, providing an opportunity for current and future EV owners to tell the Council about their charging habits and potential charging concerns.

28. Future Council plans regarding EV involve:

- a) Analysing the results of the Council's countywide EV survey. Feedback from the survey will provide the Council with a better understanding of the demand for EV charging across the County and this will help the Council start to plan a network of public charge points that works for Leicestershire's communities.
- b) Providing further opportunities for residents to provide feedback on future charge point locations.
- c) Continuing to work with Midlands Connect and other local authorities to bid for further LEVI funding, which would bring hundreds more public EV charge points to Leicestershire and help meet the needs of the growing EV market.
- d) Continuing to consider opportunities to introduce public charge points within the Council's Country Parks and additional charge points at the Council's Park and Ride sites.
- e) Working with the district councils, businesses, and other parties to help develop a countywide EV infrastructure strategy. This will define the role of the County Council and evaluate options for a public charging point network, in on- and off-street locations; for example, in residential areas, supermarkets, shopping centres and public car parks.
- f) Carrying out a review of the Council's own fleet vehicles identifying opportunities to transition to low emission vehicles and provide the necessary charging infrastructure, where this is practicable and cost effective.
- g) Reviewing the EV schemes that other authorities have introduced, or are currently piloting, to learn from their experiences.

- h) Taking opportunities to press the Government to set out a national approach and standards for EV charging infrastructure, which is appropriately funded.
29. The 'Electric vehicle ownership – Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) rate/10,000 population' improved in performance by 8% as ownership increased from 170/10,000 in Quarter One 2023/24 to 183/10,000 in Quarter Two 2023/24. This has increased by 51% since the same period last year, which was 121/10,000. It continues to demonstrate a notable shift of people moving from fossil-fuelled vehicles to more sustainable electric alternatives. However, Leicestershire remains in the third quartile (below average) when compared to other counties for 2023. The percentage of licensed ULEVs of all licensed vehicles in the County is approximately 2.5% in Quarter Two 2023/24, which is just above the East Midlands rate of 2.4% for the same period.
  30. The 'Amount of renewable energy generated as a % of consumption' declined in performance slightly (4%) from 15% in Quarter Three 2022/23 to 11% in Quarter Four 2022/23. This internal KPI has not yet met its target of 28% resulting in a red RAG rating. Solar photovoltaic output increased in 2022/23 due to new arrays coming on stream. However, biomass heat output was limited by works to install upgrades, and there were some mechanical and supply chain issues. Gas consumption was also relatively high, further decreasing the percentage of energy from renewable sources.
  31. The 'Total LCC greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (gross)' has decreased during 2022/23 by 7% since the previous year, down to 9,395 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (tonnes (t)) of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) equivalent (e) in 2022/23, showing an improvement in performance over the year (internal indicator). It has met its refreshed target as the latest results are fewer than 11,690 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, resulting in a green RAG rating. Emission reductions were seen across all major sources, except business travel which continues to see some bounce back in emissions. Emissions remain lower than pre Covid-19 pandemic levels, which were on average 21,010 tCO<sub>2</sub>e from January 2015 to December 2019 (and 12,366 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in December 2019). Recent performance is an improvement on this. The Council's Greenhouse Gas Report 2021-22, presented to this Committee in January 2024, provided a comprehensive update on emissions, progress against the Council's net zero targets and identified positive actions to sustain improvements.
  32. The 'Total business miles claimed ('000s of miles)' declined in performance due to a 3% increase in claims since the previous quarter as business miles increased from 4,220,000 miles in Quarter Three 2022/23 to 4,340,000 miles in Quarter Four 2022/23. This internal indicator has met its 5,518,000 target, resulting in a green RAG rating. There was a 9% rise in mileage claims compared to the same time last year (Quarter Four 2021/22) as services continued to adjust after the pandemic. Mileage has continued to rise steadily by small amounts throughout 2022/23. However, compared to the pre-pandemic levels (6,172,100 miles on average between January 2015 to December 2019), recent performance is much better.

## **Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure**

### **Leicestershire has the infrastructure for sustainable growth**

33. The 'NO<sub>2</sub> exceedances for Leicestershire' indicator includes the number of times nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) has exceeded the annual mean air quality objective of 40 micrograms per cubic metre. NO<sub>2</sub> is a gas that is mainly produced during the combustion of fossil fuels. It is published by district councils in their Air Quality Annual Status Reports. There are no new updates to this indicator for Quarter One as these are only updated annually. The reported four exceedances for 2022 had shown worse performance than in 2021 when there had been no NO<sub>2</sub> exceedances.

### **Background Papers**

Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Outcomes Framework and Strategic Plan 2022-2026

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2022/7/13/LCC-Strategic-Plan-2022-26.pdf>

Environment Strategy 2018-30

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2020/7/13/Environment-Strategy-2018-2030-delivering-a-better-future.pdf>

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report 2022-23

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s180731/Appendix%20B%20-%20LCC%20Greenhouse%20Gas%20Report.pdf>

Tree Management Strategy 2020-2025

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2021/2/16/Tree-Management-Strategy-2020-2025.pdf>

Tree Management Strategy Annual Update 2023

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s179317/Tree%20Management%20Strategy%20Annual%20Update.pdf>

Improving Air Quality and Health across Leicestershire 2020- 2024: a multiagency partnership for joint action

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s157169/Appendix%20A%20Air%20Quality%20and%20Health%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

### **Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure**

None.

### **Equality Implications**

34. There are no specific equality implications to note as part of this performance report.

**Human Rights Implications**

35. There are no human rights implications arising from this performance report.

**Appendix**

Strategic Plan Performance Dashboards by Outcomes covering Environment and Climate Change Performance to December 2023

**Officers to Contact**

Ann Carruthers  
Director, Environment and Transport Department  
Tel: (0116) 305 7000  
Email: [Ann.Carruthers@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Ann.Carruthers@leics.gov.uk)

Nicola Truslove  
Business Partner, Business Intelligence Service  
Tel: (0116) 305 8302  
Email: [Nicola.Truslove@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Nicola.Truslove@leics.gov.uk)

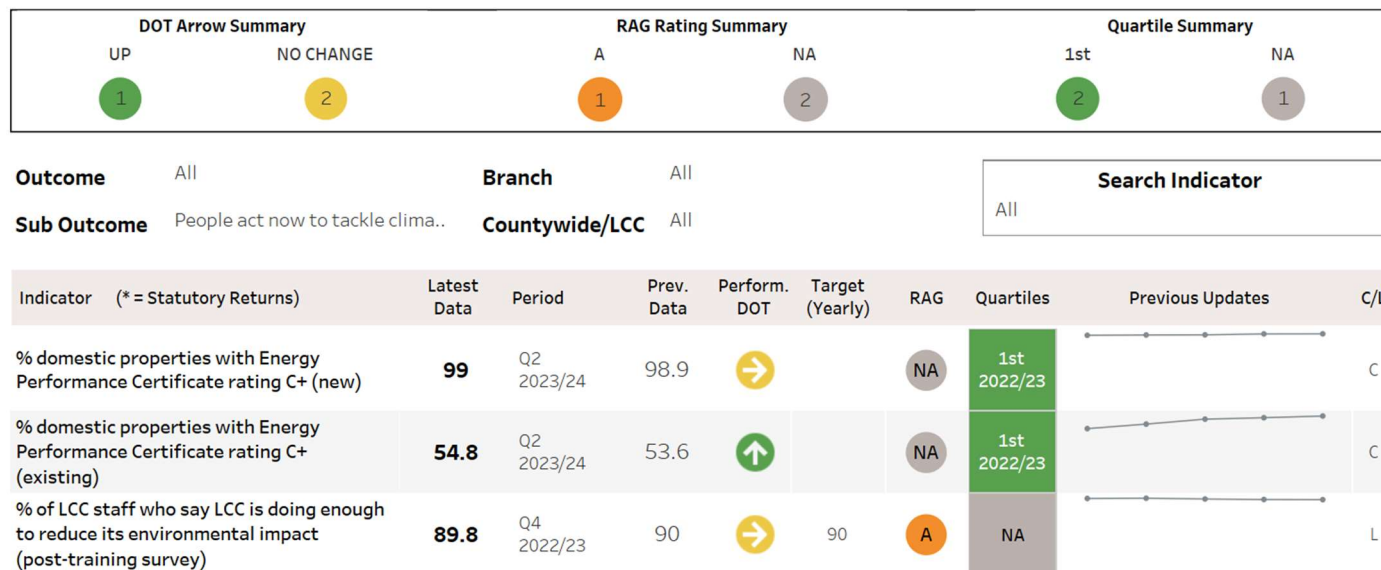
This page is intentionally left blank



## Clean &amp; Green

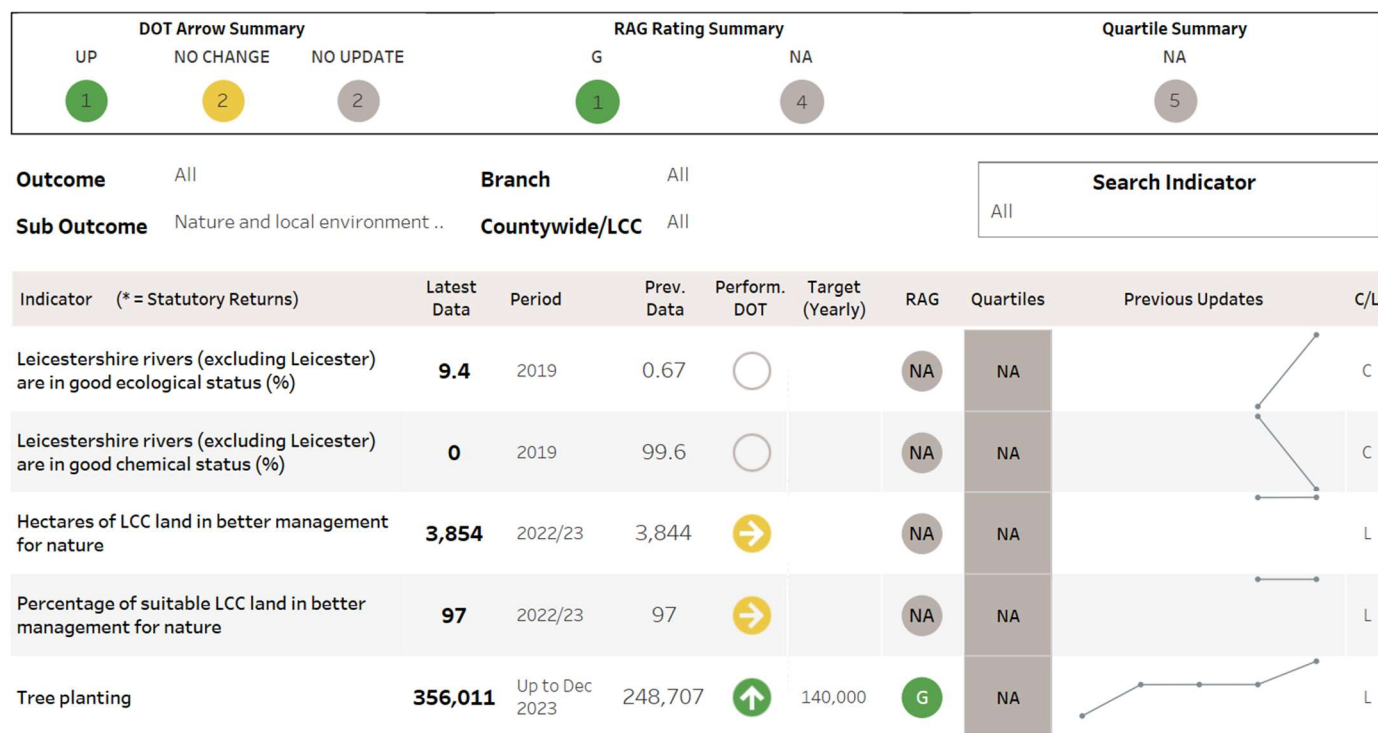
## Environment &amp; Transport KPI Performance Dashboard

Info



## Environment &amp; Transport KPI Performance Dashboard

Info










## Environment &amp; Transport KPI Performance Dashboard

Info

DOT Arrow Summary				RAG Rating Summary				Quartile Summary			
UP	NO CHANGE	DOWN	NO UPDATE	G	A	R	NA	1st	3rd	4th	NA
2	1	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	3

Outcome	All	Branch	All	Search Indicator	
Sub Outcome	Resources are used in an envir..	Countywide/LCC	All	All	

Indicator (* = Statutory Returns)	Latest Data	Period	Prev. Data	Perform. DOT	Target (Yearly)	RAG	Quartiles	Previous Updates	C/L
* % of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling, composting etc. (former NI192)	42.4	Q1 2023/24	41.56	➡	45	A	3rd 2021/22		C
* Annual percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill (former NI 193)	21.3	Q1 2023/24	23.68	⬆	30	G	4th 2021/22		C
* Total household waste per household (kg)	954.1	Q1 2023/24	939.4	⬇		G	3rd 2021/22		C
Tonnes of waste produced from LCC sites	250	Q4 2022/23	262.9	⬆	387.3	G	NA		L
% waste recycled from LCC sites (non-operational)	51.2	Q4 2022/23	54.8	⬇	64	R	NA		L
Total fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 population	5.6	2021/22	8.6	○		NA	1st 2021/22		C
LCC Environmental risks managed	2	2022/23	3	○	0	A	NA		L

## Environment &amp; Transport KPI Performance Dashboard



DOT Arrow Summary			RAG Rating Summary			Quartile Summary		
UP	DOWN	NO UPDATE	G	R	NA	3rd	4th	NA
3	2	4	3	1	5	4	2	3

Outcome	All	Branch	Environment & Waste	Search Indicator				
Sub Outcome	The economy and infrastrucur..	Countywide/LCC	All	All				

Indicator	(* = Statutory Returns)	Latest Data	Period	Prev. Data	Perform. DOT	Target (Yearly)	RAG	Quartiles	Previous Updates	C/L
Electric vehicle charging location per 100,000 population		46.5	Q2 2023/24	42.2	↑		NA	4th 2023		C
Electric vehicle ownership - Ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) rate/10,000 population		183.4	Q2 2023/24	169.8	↑		NA	3rd 2023		C
Renewable electricity generated in the area (MWh)		355,263	2022	326,582	○		NA	3rd 2022		C
Renewable electricity capacity in the area (MW)		340.2	2022	333.4	○		NA	3rd 2022		C
Amount of renewable energy generated as a % of consumption		10.9	Q4 2022/23	14.5	↓	27.8	R	NA		L
PM2.5 Air pollution fine particulate matter (µg/m³)		7.7	2022	7.7	○		NA	4th 2021		C
Carbon emissions per capita (in LA influence)		4.6	2021	4.3	○	4.7	G	3rd 2021		C
Total LCC GHG emissions		9,395	2022/23	10,089	↑	11,690	G	NA		L
Total Business miles claimed ('000s of miles)		4,340	Q4 2022/23	4,220	↓	5,518	G	NA		L

## Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure

## Environment &amp; Transport KPI Performance Dashboard



DOT Arrow Summary			RAG Rating Summary			Quartile Summary		
NO UPDATE			NA			NA		
1			1			1		

Outcome	Strong Economy, Transport an..	Branch	Environment & Waste	Search Indicator				
Sub Outcome	All	Countywide/LCC	All	All				

Indicator	(* = Statutory Returns)	Latest Data	Period	Prev. Data	Perform. DOT	Target (Yearly)	RAG	Quartiles	Previous Updates	C/L
NO2 exceedances for Leicestershire		4	2022	0	○		NA	NA		C

#### Data notes

In order to ensure comparisons are unbiased and insightful the following indicators are used in deriving annual quartile positions as part of the Council's corporate benchmarking approach. These indicators use published statistics from the relevant government departmental (e.g., Department for Energy Security and Net Zero) and the Office of National Statistics population data.

Renewable electricity generated within LA area (MWh per 1000 households)

Renewable electricity capacity within LA area (MW per 10k households)



**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE - 11 MARCH 2024**

**REVISED APPROACH FOR CHARGING FOR CONSTRUCTION AND  
DEMOLITION WASTE AT HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRES**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the revised approach to accepting construction and demolition waste from households at the Council's Recycling and Household Waste Sites following the Government's recent legislative change.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. Charging for the majority of non-household material types from 1 April 2016 was approved by the Cabinet on 18 November 2015.
3. The Government launched a consultation on Preventing Charges for DIY Waste at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) on 11 April 2022 and published its response on 18 June 2023. The Council's HWRC are termed locally Recycling and Household Waste Sites but will be referred to as HWRC throughout this report.
4. A report was presented to the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 14 September 2023 to inform the Committee of the Government's response to the consultation and the potential implications for the Council.
5. The Government amended the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 and laid them to parliament in November 2023.
6. The updated Controlled Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023 came into force on 31 December 2023.

**Background**

7. As a waste disposal authority, the County Council is required, under Section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, to provide places for residents to deposit household waste and to dispose of the waste deposited. The Council is also required to arrange for the disposal of waste collected by the waste collection authorities (i.e., district authorities).

8. The Government passed The Local Government (Prohibition of Charges at Household Waste Recycling Centres) (England) Order 2015 on 9 March 2015 and it came into force on 6 April 2015. This order disapplies section 93(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 which enabled local authorities to charge for discretionary services, so this legislation can no longer be used to permit charging for use of 'discretionary' HWRC.
9. The Government also passed The Local Authorities (Prohibition of Charging Residents to Deposit Household Waste) Order 2015 on 26 March 2015 and this came into force on 23 April 2015. This order prohibits local authorities from using their General Power of Competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2012 to charge their residents to enter into or exit from HWRC or to deposit household waste or recycling at such centres.
10. Both 2015 orders state household waste has the same meaning as in section 75 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 as read with regulation 3 of, and Schedule 1 to the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 (2012 Regulations).
11. The Controlled Waste Regulations (2012) classify 'waste from construction or demolition works, including preparatory works' as industrial waste.
12. The Council is not required under legislation to provide places for residents to dispose of industrial waste. Additionally, on a wider basis, the Council may select which household waste types it accepts at which HWRC.
13. In November 1999, the Council introduced limits for construction and demolition waste of six bags per six months. As well as limits on specified items, for example, doors, fitted units, worktops and others.
14. The Council removed these limits and introduced charges in May 2016 for some types of non-household waste (agreed by the Cabinet on 18 November 2015) including concrete, rubble/hardcore, ceramics (including bathroom suites), glass windows, plasterboard, cement bonded asbestos etc.
15. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) published their Resources and Waste Strategy in 2018 which committed to ensuring that charging arrangements in the Controlled Waste Regulations 2012 were clear, especially in relation to waste arising from small scale DIY construction activities carried out by householders with no specialist skills.
16. DEFRA undertook a technical consultation on preventing charges for DIY waste at HWRC for 12 weeks between 11 April and 4 July 2022. The consultation received a total of 2,238 responses (of which the Council was one).
17. DEFRA published their response to the consultation on 18 June 2023.
18. The Government amended the Controlled Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 and laid them to parliament in November 2023. The updated Controlled Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023 came into force on 31 December 2023. In these regulations the specific term 'DIY' was not used.

19. The volume of construction and demolition waste that can be deposited free of charge by a household (that has undertaken the work themselves) at the HWRC is now restricted to two 50 litre rubble bags or one large item. A large item is defined as no larger than 2,000mm by 750mm by 700mm, the approximate size of a bathtub or shower screen per visit. A household is limited to four visits over a four-week period. Charges can be applied for construction and demolition waste that exceeds these limits that is brought in to the HWRC.

### **Changes now in effect locally from 1 January 2024**

20. Each household is allowed one visit per week to deposit construction and demolition waste up to their free allowance from work they have undertaken, on a rolling seven days across all HWRC. In alignment with the limits stated in paragraph 19 above, for materials that the Council previously charged for.
21. The previous charging rates for material in excess of this free allowance remain as before, for example, £3 per bag of rubble, tiles, ceramics, plasterboard, bricks, sheet glass etc. and £10 per sheet of asbestos. The Waste Management service has budgeted to receive £30,000 of income in 2024/25, down from £150,000 in 2023/24.
22. The Council's website has been updated to reflect the revised policy and the asbestos permit process has also been adjusted to reflect the inclusion of the free allowance detailed in paragraph 19 above. The revised policy allows cement bonded asbestos to be accepted at Coalville, Kibworth, Mountsorrel and Whetstone HWRC with an asbestos waste permit. A charge of £10 per sheet (240cm x 120cm) or 3 metre length of guttering/pipe, or £10 per bag (equivalent to tub size) is levied over the free allowance. There is a reference bucket at accepting sites to determine the size of a tub.
23. The service is continuing to accept for free construction and demolition waste not previously charged for, including but not limited to, timber fence panels, kitchen or other fitted units, chipboard work tops, insulation, roofing felt, metal radiators, window frames, plastic pipes/guttering etc.
24. Charges at HWRC are levied in accordance with the previously approved non-household waste policy. If the range of materials the Council charges for were to be expanded, a full public consultation would be required followed by Cabinet approval.
25. A large increase in bricks and rubble etc. has yet to be seen coming onto the sites. However, tonnages of these types of materials are usually low in the winter and the full impact is unlikely to be understood until after the summer period.
26. The free allowance in construction and demolition waste is likely to result in higher tonnages, reduced income and increased haulage costs. The Council will be required to absorb any additional costs as the Government has been clear there is no additional funding available under the New Burdens Doctrine for this.

### **Forecast Impact**

27. A growth bid has been submitted as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2024-28 based on the Council trying to monitor and manage service demand. The forecast growth required is shown in the table below.

<b>MTFS Growth (£,000)</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>	<b>2027/28</b>
Construction and Demolition Waste	380	510	615	615

28. The growth bid assumes tonnage will rise as follows:

- a) to 50% of 2015/16 levels in 2024/25,
- b) to 75% of 2015/16 levels in 2025/26, and
- c) to 100% of 2015/16 levels in 2026/27.

29. 2015/16 is used as the baseline year as it was the year immediately prior to charges being introduced in May 2016; this represents the potential level of tonnages that could reasonably be expected, now there is a free allowance for non-household waste that the Council charged for prior to 1 January 2024.

30. The limit is per household but a resident with access to two vehicles or two sites could attempt to bring more than their free allowance. As before the free allowance, site staff will continue to manage and monitor the frequency of visits, undertaking visual assessments whilst in the presence of CCTV and using body worn cameras. There is always a risk of non-compliance when there is only monitoring on site. Also, it is assumed there will be no increase in construction and demolition waste types that are currently accepted for free, as detailed in paragraph 23.

### **Next Steps**

31. The impact on tonnages will be monitored. As more of these types of wastes are received in the summer, it is not yet possible to gauge the impact until autumn 2024. Once the impacts are better understood, the Council will be able to consider whether additional measures are required, for example, using the existing permit scheme or considering whether other types of waste should be brought into the limit and excesses charged for. Such wastes include, wooden doors, fence panels, insulation, roofing felt etc.

### **Resource Implications**

32. The report sets out the potential forecast impacts in respect to the free allowance for small volumes of construction and demolition waste and continuing to charge for excess waste above the free allowance, that was historically charged for.

33. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on the content of this report.

### **Conclusions**

34. Members are asked to note the revised approach to accepting construction and demolition waste from households at the Council's Recycling and Household Waste sites following the Government's recent legislative change.



## **Background Papers**

Report to Cabinet, 18 November 2015, Recycling and Household Waste Sites in Leicestershire – Proposed Changes and Third Sector Recycling Credits  
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=4232&Ver=4> (item 355)

Report to Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 14 September 2023, Government response to consultation on preventing charges for DIY waste at household waste recycling centres  
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s178461/Government%20Responses%20to%20Removal%20of%20DIY%20Charging%20at%20HWRCs%20E%20Scrutiny%20140923.pdf> (item 23)

The Controlled Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023:  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2023/1243/regulation/2/made>

## **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

A copy of this report will be circulated to all members.

## **Equality Implications**

35. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **Human Rights Implications**

36. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **Officers to Contact**

Ann Carruthers  
 Director, Environment and Transport  
 Tel: 0116 305 7000  
 Email: [ann.carruthers@leics.gov.uk](mailto:ann.carruthers@leics.gov.uk)

Joanna Gyll  
 Assistant Director, Environment and Waste Management  
 Tel: 0116 305 8101  
 Email: [joanna.gyll@leics.gov.uk](mailto:joanna.gyll@leics.gov.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank