



Meeting: Cabinet

Date/Time: Tuesday, 18 November 2025 at 2.00 pm

Location: Sparkenhoe Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield

Contact: Miss. G. Duckworth (Tel. 0116 305 2583)

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Membership

Mr. D. Harrison CC (Chairman)

Mr. C. Abbott CC	Mr. V. Richichi CC
Mr. K. Crook CC	Mr. M. Squires CC
Mr. H. Fowler CC	Mr. A. Tilbury CC
Mr. C. Pugsley CC	Mr. C. Whitford CC

Please note: this meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's web site at Cabinet meeting webcasts

- Notices will be on display at the meeting explaining the arrangements.

AGENDA

<u>ltem</u>		Report by		<u>Key</u> Decision
1.	Minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2025.		(Pages 3 - 10)	<u> </u>
2.	To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.			
3.	Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.			
4.	School Places Strategy 2026-2031.	Director of Children and Family Services	(Pages 11 - 80)	Yes
5.	Proposed Transfer of Funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant for 2026/27.	Director of Children and Family Services	(Pages 81 - 96)	Yes

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Response to Hinckley and Bosworth (Pages 97 -6. Chief Executive Borough Council Regulation 18 Local Plan 130) and Director of Consultation 2025. **Environment and Transport** 7. Annual Delivery Report and Performance **Chief Executive** (Pages 131 -Compendium 2025. 218) 8. Annual Report of the Traded Services Director of (Pages 219 -Strategy. Corporate 228) Resources

- 9. Items referred from Overview and Scrutiny.
- 10. Any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent.
- 11. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

The press and public are likely to be excluded during the following item of business in accordance with Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972:

Expanding Locality Based Support for Early Years Children with Additional Needs.

 Expanding Locality Based Support for Early Years Children with Additional Needs. Director of Children and Family Services (Pages 229 - Yes 238)

(Exempt under Paragraphs 3 and 10.)

Agenda Item 1



Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 28 October 2025.

PRESENT

Mr. D. Harrison CC (in the Chair)

Mr. C. Abbott CC
Mr. K. Crook CC
Mr. H. Fowler CC
Mr. C. Pugsley CC
Mr. C. Whitford CC

In attendance

Mr. J. Boam CC, Mr. C. Smith CC and Mrs. D. Taylor CC.

47. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2025.

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2025 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

48. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

49. 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.

50. Investing in Leicestershire Programme Annual Performance Report 2024-25.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which presented the Investing in Leicestershire Programme Annual Performance Report 2024-25. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 4' is filed with these minutes.

Members of the Cabinet were pleased to note the progress made over the year and the resulting success of the investments made.

RESOLVED:

That the performance of the Investing in Leicestershire Programme for the period April 2024 to March 2025, as set out in the Annual Report, be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION:

In accordance with the Cabinet's decision in September 2017, this report fulfils the requirement to report annually on the performance of the portfolio to both the Cabinet and

the Scrutiny Commission, to demonstrate that the Programme is being managed professionally and prudently and in line with the Strategy approved by Council in February 2025.

51. Delivering the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2025-2040: Next Steps.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which advised of the development of the Enabling Travel Choice Strategy (ETCS), which formed part of the full Local Transport Plan 2025-2040 (LTP4), and sought approval of draft key 'policy positions' that were intended to form the basis of the ETCS for consultation. The report also advised of the work undertaken to prepare three Multi-Modal Area Investment Plans (MMAIPs) pilots, which also formed part of the full LTP4. The Cabinet's approval was sought to undertake an initial consultation exercise to inform the development of the ETCS and the MMAIPs. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 5', is filed with these minutes.

A written submission had been received from the Leicestershire Footpath Association, along with comments from Mr David Page CC and Mr Phil King CC, were circulated separately and copies are filed with these minutes.

Mr. C. Whitford CC commended the proposed delivery of the Local Transport Plan and stated that this demonstrated the commitment to ensure the needs of local residents and businesses were met. He also stated that it reflected the diverse nature of Leicestershire and would help to ensure residents were connected through all forms of transport.

Mr. M. Squires CC stated that the work being undertaken through the Local Transport Plan aimed to help people live healthier lives by making it easier and safer to walk, cycle and use public transport. It also recognised the importance of all types of transport in supporting better access to jobs, schools and healthcare. He reiterated the intention to improve physical and mental wellbeing and ensure that transport was inclusive for all.

RESOLVED

- a) That the work undertaken to date on the development of the Enabling Travel Choice Strategy (ETCS) be noted;
- b) That the draft key 'policy positions' that are intended to form the fundamental basis of the ETCS (set out in paragraphs 42 to 67 of the report) be approved for consultation;
- c) That the work undertaken on the development of three pilot draft Multi-Modal Area Investment Plans (MMAIPs) for Market Harborough, Hinckley and South-East Leicestershire be noted;
- d) That an eight week initial consultation exercise be undertaken to inform the further development of the ETCS and three pilot MMAIPs;
- e) That, subject to the outcomes of the consultation exercise, the Director of Environment and Transport:
 - following consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member, the Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance, undertakes further work to develop the ETCS, including a draft suite of policies;

- ii. following consultations with the Cabinet Lead Member, undertakes further work to develop the three draft MMAIPs;
- iii. submits further reports to the Cabinet regarding the revised draft ETCS and each pilot MMAIP.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The ETCS and the MMAIPs are being prepared as part of the Council's f8ull LTP4.

The draft 'key policy positions' are fundamental to the ETCS, to ensure that the work progresses in the right direction. Subject to the outcome of the initial consultation proposed, it is intended that these will form the basis for the ETCS.

The ETCS policy position is also important for development of the MMAIPs. The MMAIPs are not themselves policy documents but will reflect the Council's existing and emerging policies/strategies including the ETCS.

The proposed initial consultation exercise would inform the development of the draft ETCS and the MMAIPs.

Further work to be undertaken by officers following the initial consultation exercise will enable the production of a draft ETCS and three MMAIPs, to be submitted to a future Cabinet meeting for a second consultation exercise.

52. <u>Leicestershire County Council's Approach to Flooding - Spending Proposals for £2 million</u> Redistributed from Reserves.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which presented a programme of flood mitigation and climate adaptation and resilience measures. The programme would be funded using £2m previously allocated for carbon reduction initiatives. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 6' is filed with these minutes.

Mr. A. Tilbury CC commented that measures to tackle flooding in the county were a priority for this administration and the transfer of funding would ensure that work could be undertaken. As a result of the large number of housing developments across Leicestershire, there was increased pressure on drainage; the additional funding would enable work to be carried out to improve this.

Mr. D. Harrison CC commended the Lead Member on the work he had undertaken in this area within a short time and stated that the additional funding would hopefully improve the situation further.

RESOLVED:

a) That the extent and impact of flooding events in Leicestershire over the last two years and the work undertaken to date by the County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and the Local Highway Authority (LHA), including progress since February 2025 to support communities, be noted;

- b) That the proposed use of £2m, reallocated from the earmarked reserve for carbon reduction, towards flood related activities and adapting services to help mitigate the impacts of severe weather and to increase future resilience as set out in paragraphs 27 to 29 of the report, be approved;
- c) That the requirement for £0.64m of additional permanent resource to enable the delivery of the proposed initiatives and a continued, more resilient, business as usual resource to manage flood risk impacts, building on the previous one-off resource funding allocated in February 2025, to be put forward for prioritisation as part of the 2026-30 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) be noted and approved;
- d) That the Director of Environment and Transport, following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Lead Member and the Director of Corporate Resources, be authorised to make decisions and finalise the details of use of these funds and adjust priorities within the key focus for this funding.

(KEY DECISION)

REASONS FOR DECISION

In July 2025, the Cabinet decided to reallocate £2m from carbon reduction work to flooding mitigation initiatives and to adapting services to mitigate the impacts of severe weather events.

Recent flood events over the past two years, as outlined previously, have had a significant impact on many communities across Leicestershire and this in turn has placed substantial pressure on the resources of the County Council in its capacity as the LLFA and the LHA in trying to support those communities.

The LLFA's and the LHA's resource is focused on statutory requirements. Whilst the LLFA will endeavour to do everything it can to support communities in the management of local flood risk, it should be emphasised that the LLFA is not responsible for, not is it required by law to, resolve all flooding matters. The LLFA does not receive funding for this purpose. Likewise, the LHA applies a risk-based approach to gulley cleansing to the best of its capabilities within the available resource levels.

Additional one-off funding for temporary resource, allocated as part of the 2025-29 MTFS, as set out in paragraphs 22 to 24 of the report, has helped to manage some of this pressure. However, it is recognised that the higher level of demand in this area, including work as a statutory consultee in planning, projects and investigatory work, as well as work with communities, has become business as usual. In order to sustain this work and deliver the proposed £2m programme, it will be necessary to make the one-off funding permanent. Therefore £0.64m of permanent resource is proposed for consideration as part of the 2026-30 MTFS process.

Previously, the Authority has been unable to resource work to carry out a detailed review of the Council's climate risk register, which will be critical to assess the impacts of climate change and consider appropriate mitigations, particularly in relation to the Council's own services. The reallocation of part of this funding to this task will provide the Authority with necessary resource to progress this.

53. Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) 2025-2035.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport which advised of the outcome of the public consultation on the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) 2025-2035 and sought approval of the Plan and associated action plan. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 7' is filed with these minutes.

A written submission from the Leicestershire Footpath Association had been received and circulated separately and a copy is filed with these minutes. The Director of Environment and Transport gave assurance that the sites listed by the Footpath Association would be assessed to see what work could be carried out. However, it would not be possible for everything to be undertaken due to resources.

Mr. C. Whitford CC stated that this was a forward looking plan, which had been shaped by extensive public consultation and engagement and he thanked all who had taken part in this process.

Mr. V. Richichi CC also welcomed the report and was pleased to note that the Plan had been developed with local communities. He noted that there was a lack of awareness of public Rights of Way due to neglected footpaths and stiles not being replaced, but it was hoped that the RoWIP would help and the investment made in this area would assist in connecting people within and to rural areas.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the outcome of the 12 week public consultation exercise on the draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) 2025-2035, including the comments of the Highways and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be noted;
- b) That the RoWIP 2025-2035 and its Action Plan be approved.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

The Government's statutory RoWIP guidance recommends that authorities undertake a 12 week public consultation on a draft RoWIP to allow for representations to be made.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 requires relevant authorities to assess and review a RoWIP every 10 years. Approval of the RoWIP will also enable completion of the action 'S12', set out in the County Council's Cycling and Walking Strategy (CaWS) Action Plan, to prepare a revised RoWIP be 2026.

To ensure the Action Plan remains current, effective, informative and deliverable over the 10 year period of the RoWIP.

54. Melton Local Plan Partial Update Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive which advised on the progress of Melton Borough Council's Local Plan and sought approval for the County Council to become a signatory to a Statement of Common Ground with Melton Borough Council regarding the two authorities' 'Duty to Cooperate'. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

Comments had been received from Mr. A. Innes CC which were circulated separately and a copy is attached to these minutes.

The Statement of Common Ground confirmed that Melton Borough Council and the County Council had effectively cooperated ahead of the examination of the Melton Local Plan Partial Update. It confirmed the consensus for the Melton Local Plan Partial Update period to mirror the period in the adopted Local Plan to 2036 and the Borough Council's commitment to start a new Local Plan immediately after the adoption of the Local Plan Partial Update.

Mr. D. Harrison CC reiterated the importance of continuing to cooperate to ensure progress with the Local Plan.

RESOLVED:

That the County Council becomes a signatory to the Melton Local Plan Partial Update Statement of Common Ground.

REASON FOR DECISION

The Duty to Cooperate (DtC) is a legal duty for local planning authorities, county councils and relevant bodies to 'engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in any process' including the preparation of development plan documents. This Statement of Common Ground has been jointly produced by Melton Borough Council and the County Council to confirm that the parties have effectively and regularly cooperated to address matters associated with the production of the Melton Local Plan Partial Update.

55. Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood Statement of Common Ground.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Environment and Transport which sought approval for the County Council to become a signatory to the Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood Statement of Common Ground. Copies of the report and supplementary report, both marked 'Agenda Item 9', are filed with these minutes.

The Statement of Common Ground related to the Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood and Southern Melton Mowbray Distributor Road and had been prepared jointly by the County Council, Melton Borough Council, Davidsons Developments Limited and Bloor Homes to support the Melton Local Plan Partial Update examination.

Comments had been received from Mr. A. Innes CC which had been circulated separately and a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Members of the Cabinet agreed that the Statement of Common Ground was appropriate to ensure that work continued to develop and progress and remained within the required legal duties.

RESOLVED:

 a) That the County Council becomes a signatory to a Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood Statement of Common Ground, subject to the actions and principles set out in Part B of the report; b) That delegation be given to the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader, for the signing of the Statement of Common Ground to enable minor amendments to be made which accord with these principles.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The Duty to Cooperate (DtC) is a legal duty for local planning authorities, county councils and relevant bodies to 'engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in any process' including the preparation of development plan documents. This Statement of Common Ground seeks to set out the ongoing commitment of the parties towards the joint working and delivery of the Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood and Southern Melton Mowbray Distributor Road.

To enable minor amendments to be made in a timely manner which accord with the principles set out in Part B of the report, delegation to the Chief Executive following consultation with the Leader is sought. Proposed significant change in content which does not accord with the principles would be presented to the Cabinet for consideration.

56. <u>Leicestershire County Council Museum Policy Revision and Accreditation.</u>

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which presented the revised Museum Access Policy 2025-2030 and Collections Development Policy 2025-2030 and provided details on the Museum Accreditation returns which had been submitted to Arts Council England. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

Members of the Cabinet agreed that the policies were key to ensuring a good service was delivered and in assisting with the sharing of Leicestershire's heritage.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Museum Access Policy 2025-2030 and Collections Development Policy 2025-2030 be approved;
- b) That, subject to Cabinet approval, the Museum Access Policy 2025-2030 and Collections Development Policy 2025-2030 be submitted to Arts Council England, as per accreditation guidelines.

REASONS FOR DECISION

The current Museum Access and Collections Development policies expire in November 2025. The policies are a key requirement of the UK Museum Accreditation Standard.

The UK Museum Accreditation Scheme is administered by Arts Council England. The scheme encompasses the nationally agreed standards for UK museums. The standards ensure all museums are sustainable, focused and trusted and inspire the confidence of the public, funding organisations and governing bodies.

57. Items referred from Overview and Scrutiny.

There were no items referred from Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

58. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

RESOLVED:

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 3 and 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information:

• Efficiency Review – Appointment of Consultant.

59. <u>Efficiency Review - Appointment of Consultant.</u>

The Cabinet considered an exempt report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the outcome of the procurement process to commission an external efficiency review and sought approval to award to the most advantageous tender following the completion of the evaluation process. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 14' is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the outcome of the procurement process for external support to undertake an efficiency review and put arrangements in place for optional implementation support be noted;
- b) That approval be given to award to the most advantageous tender, as outlined at paragraph 27 of the report;
- c) That the Director of Corporate Resources be authorised to put in place the appropriate contractual arrangements and commence mobilisation of the efficiency review as soon as practically possible.

REASON FOR DECISION

The Council needs to continue to make progress in closing the current gap in its finances to allow a balanced budget position to be presented to the County Council for approval in February 2026 and future financial years.

2.00 - 2.57 pm 28 October 2025 **CHAIRMAN**

CABINET – 18 NOVEMBER 2025 SCHOOL PLACES STRATEGY 2026–2031 REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to consult on Leicestershire County Council's draft School Places Strategy 2026–2031.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet approves a consultation to be undertaken on the Leicestershire County Council's draft School Places Strategy 2026-2031, which is attached as an appendix to this report.

(KEY DECISION)

Reasons for Recommendation

- 3. The School Places Strategy sets out how the Council will meet its statutory duties to ensure that there are sufficient high quality school places in Leicestershire which are in the right place, at the right time. It outlines the background, principles and challenges of delivering school places in Leicestershire and how the Council will work with stakeholders to fund and deliver places between 2026 and 2031.
- 4. A public consultation on the draft Strategy will seek to confirm that the final Strategy reflects local needs and will enable stakeholder feedback to be considered before adoption.

<u>Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)</u>

- 5. It is proposed to hold a six-week consultation on the draft School Places Strategy. Subject to the Cabinet's approval, the consultation will commence on 20th November 2025 and run until 4th January 2026.
- 6. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee will receive a report as part of the consultation exercise at its meeting on 20th January 2025.

7. It is intended that the Cabinet will receive a further report at its meeting on 3rd February 2026 summarising consultation feedback and presenting the final Strategy for approval.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

- 8. Local authorities have a legal obligation to ensure that sufficient, high-quality school places are available for all children and young people in their area. This duty applies to both mainstream education and provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- 9. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 requires that local authorities ensure that sufficient school places are available to provide primary and secondary education for children within the area. This includes planning for future demand, commissioning new provisions, and working with maintained schools and academies to ensure capacity and quality. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006 further reinforce the requirement to promote high standards, fair access, and parental choice.
- 10. For children and young people with SEND, the statutory framework is provided by Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014. This legislation requires local authorities to identify, assess, and secure appropriate provision for those aged 0–25 with SEND. The accompanying SEND Code of Practice emphasises the need for strategic planning to ensure sufficiency of specialist places and inclusive mainstream educational provision.
- 11. Together, these duties require local authorities to act as strategic commissioners, forecasting demand, planning capacity, and working collaboratively with schools, academy trusts, and other partners to ensure that every child and young person can access suitable, high-quality education.
- 12. The Academies Act of 2010 moved the education provision for children towards a more autonomous and diverse system rather than the traditional structure of schools under the direct control of the local authority.
- 13. In November 2014, the Cabinet agreed the previous strategy for the organisation of school and other educational places, "In the right place".
- 14. At its meeting on 7 February 2025, the Cabinet considered a report on the Council's Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which set out the Capital Programme for 2025-29. A number of schemes to expand existing schools and academies or establish new schools are included within the Capital Programme, along with funding for strategic capital maintenance of maintained schools.

- 15. The Cabinet agreed the SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2025-2028 at its meeting on 17th June 2025. Section 4 of the Strategy sets out the Leicestershire SEND and Inclusion Partnership's strategy for ensuring sufficient appropriate educational places for children and young people with SEND. These proposals have been further developed within the draft School Places Strategy.
- 16. The draft School Places Strategy is aligned with the ambitions set out in the Children and Family Services Department Plan 2024-26 and the County Council's Strategic Plan 2022-26.

Resource Implications

- 17. In order to deliver the school places set out in the Strategy, funding streams including Basic Need and High Needs capital grant funding from the Department for Education (DfE), developer contributions (through Section 106 agreements), and growth funding will be used. Schemes will be included within the Council's Capital Programme.
- 18. The capital requirements to support the increased need for school places through Basic Need funding are not fully met through existing grant allocations following changes to DfE methodology. Discussions are ongoing with DfE representatives to consider how this can be managed.
- 19. Developer contributions through Section 106 agreements are a key source of funding to meet growth needs for new school places. Historic agreements may not be sufficient for the actual cost of schemes which have experienced significant cost inflation in recent years and are reliant on the speed of building schemes to trigger funding from developers. The Strategy notes that close partnership working with Leicestershire's district councils, as the Local Planning Authorities, will be needed to ensure continued robustness of negotiations around future developments and consideration given to Deeds of Variation for existing Section 106 funding where this is needed.
- 20. A refresh of the Planning Obligations Policy will strengthen the need for school places to support new housing developments along with requests for full funding at the application stage to mitigate cost and delivery risks for future schemes.
- 21. Phased delivery of school builds will support cash flow and certainty of need, making more school places available in the right place at the right time while minimising additional pressure on available capital.
- 22. The Director of Corporate Resources and Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

23. This report has been circulated to all Members of the County Council.

Officer(s) to Contact

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PART B

Background

A changing educational landscape

- 24. Since the publication of the previous strategy 'In the Right Place Strategy for the Provision of School and Other Learning Places in Leicestershire' in 2014, significant changes to the Leicestershire educational landscape have been experienced which have shaped the draft School Places Strategy for 2026-2031.
- 25. The increase in the number of schools within the County managed through Academy Trusts or Multi-Academy Trusts, and a subsequent reduction in the number of maintained schools managed by the Council, has changed the Council's primary role from a direct provider of school places to a commissioner. Currently, 77% of schools in Leicestershire are academies.
- 26. Reductions in birth rates across the County after a period of significant increased births and inward migration has led to an increased need for Secondary School places as a bulge in the number of pupils moves from Primary into Secondary schools. The effect on primary school occupancy has been inconsistent. Some schools in popular areas are oversubscribed, whereas some small primary schools, typically in rural areas, are significantly below capacity. In such schools the continuing effect of a low birth rate and consequently small numbers of children in catchment, means an increasing risk to ongoing sustainability.
- 27. To meet expected population growth, major housing development is proposed in all districts of Leicestershire which is anticipated to increase the pupil population by over 26,000 across all phases of education by 2036. Patterns of population change will also affect Leicestershire's local communities; in some areas inward migration is a major factor, particularly where new development is planned.
- 28. During recent years, an increasing number of children and young people in Leicestershire with SEND have been supported by Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), with significant numbers attending special school places or through enhanced resource bases or SEN units. Sufficiency of places has struggled to keep up with demand, and a proportion of children and young people needing a special school have been placed in Independent Specialist Placements (ISPs). These placements are generally more expensive than those in Leicestershire's maintained Area Special Schools.

The draft School Places Strategy 2026-2031

29. The Council aims to provide high quality school places for children and young people within their communities, close to where they live and to meet parental preferences as far as possible.

- 30. The draft School Places Strategy will ensure Leicestershire meets its statutory duties by delivering the right number of school places, in the right place, at the right time, with sufficient funding and resources in place to deliver future growth needs. The Strategy sets out the Council's approach to planning, commissioning, and funding school places across all phases, including mainstream, SEND, and alternative provision. It is informed by robust data analysis incorporating demographic trends and predicted housing growth.
- 31. The Strategy provides an assessment of current school place provision across all phases of education in Leicestershire and forecasts what will be needed over the period to 2031. It sets out how these forecasts have been developed and the roles of the Council, stakeholders and partners in planning and delivering sufficient school places for the future.
- 32. With the scale of changes that have occurred in the educational landscape within Leicestershire since the last Strategy was written, and taking into account current forecasts in pupil numbers and place requirements, the draft Strategy also sets out the Council's approach to the reorganisation of schools where this may be required to ensure ongoing sustainability.

SEND Market Position Sufficiency Statement (MPSS)

33. The Council has developed an MPSS which will build upon the School Places Strategy and consider the role of and opportunities for the external market to support the County Council to meet its SEND sufficiency needs.

Consultation

34. A public consultation on the draft Strategy will seek to confirm that the final Strategy reflects local needs and will enable stakeholder feedback to be considered before adoption. This will be carried out primarily using an online survey, which will also be available in accessible print versions on request.

Equality Implications

35. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be completed as part of the consultation process. The Strategy aims to ensure equal access to high-quality education for all children and young people. There are no adverse 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.

Other Implications and Impact Assessments

- 37. Health implications: The Strategy supports access to education, which is a key determinant of health and wellbeing.
- 38. Environmental implications: The Strategy considers the location of new schools and travel arrangements to minimise environmental impact.
- 39. Partnership working: The Strategy has been developed in partnership with schools, academies, District councils, and other stakeholders.
- 40. Risk assessment: Risks associated with school place planning, funding, and delivery are identified and mitigated within the Strategy.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 17 June 2025 "Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) And Inclusion Strategy 2025-2028"

https://cexmodgov01/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=135&Mld=7877

Report to the Cabinet on 7 February 2025 "Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2028/29"

https://cexmodgov01/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=135&Mld=7873

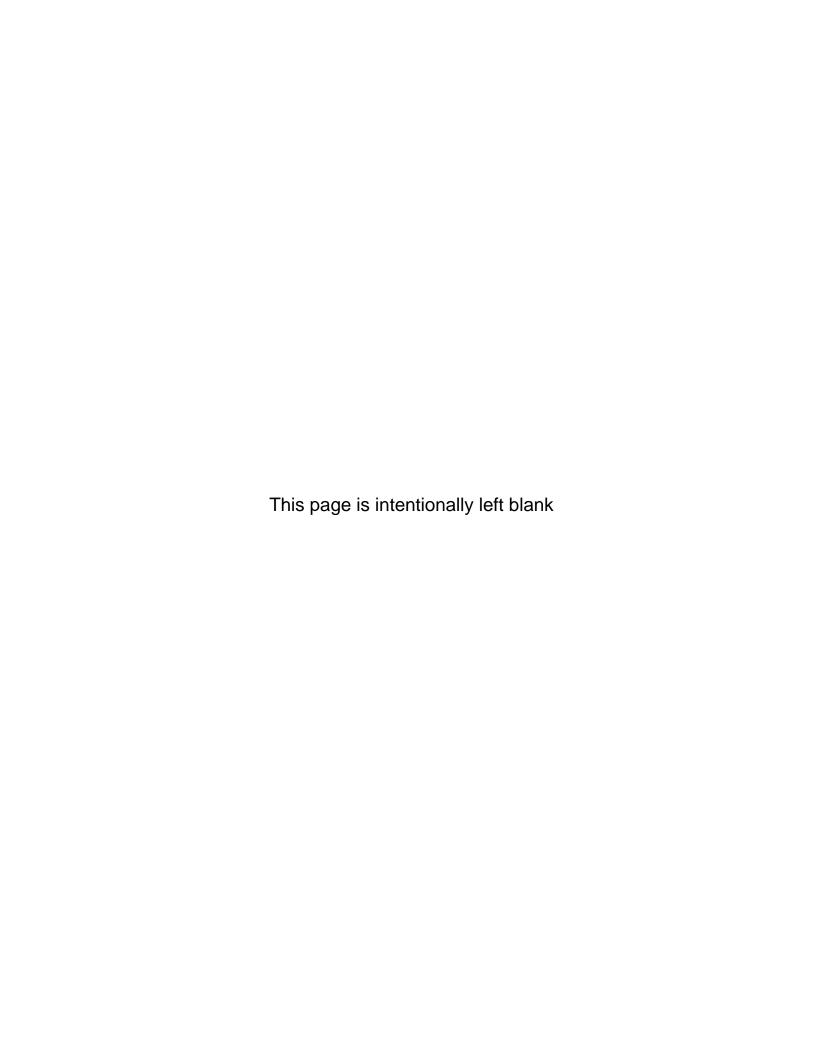
Report to the County Council on 18 May 2022 "Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026"

https://cexmodgov01/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=134&Mld=6482

Report to the Cabinet on 19 November 2014 "In the right place – A strategy for the organisation of school and other learning places in Leicestershire 2014 / 2018" https://cexmodgov01/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=135&Mld=3995&Ver=4

<u>Appendices</u>

Appendix A: Draft School Places Strategy 2026–2031





School Places Strategy 2026 - 2031

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Welcome to the Leicestershire School Places Strategy 2026 to 2031.

In Leicestershire, we believe that children and their education should come first. We want our children and young people to enjoy learning, make good progress, and achieve high standards. This will provide them with a strong foundation to build their lives on. To do this, we want to ensure that Leicestershire offers a good choice and diversity of school places, providing excellent opportunities for all learners at schools within their own communities.

We are proud that children thrive in Leicestershire's schools and academies, and this strategy is about supporting their ongoing success. Our aim is to ensure that schools are the right size for their community, safe, accessible and inclusive, well maintained and provide a high-quality learning environment and facilities.

The School Places Strategy examines the duties placed upon the County Council by the Department for Education and provides an analysis of current school provision across all phases of education that exist across Leicestershire so that stakeholders and partners understand how places are planned and developed. The role of the Council is set within a legal framework of statutory duties to ensure that there are sufficient school places in its area. The Council's primary role is now a commissioner of school places rather than a direct provider.

Our statutory duty remains clear – to ensure that there are sufficient good school places. This strategy is about ensuring that we meet that duty by having the right number of school places in the right place, at the right time and secure sufficient funding and resources to this.

We will achieve this by working closely in partnership with our many stakeholders.

The strategy covers the background, principles and challenges of delivering school places in Leicestershire and how we will work collaboratively to fund and deliver places.

It is hoped that all stakeholders with an interest in the planning of school places will find this document useful, take the time to become familiar with its content, and actively engage and support the delivery of our vision to ensure that Leicestershire is the best place for all children, young people and families.

Jane Moore	Councillor Charles Pugsley	
Director	Cabinet Lead Member	
Children and Family Services	Children and Family Services	

Pupil Forecasting

Leicestershire County Council has a strong record of actively planning school places to meet its statutory duty using forecast data to analyse need and inform solutions.



2025 ONS Live Birth rates in Leicestershire

From 2007 to 2018 the birth rate peaked several times to around 7,000 per year and has since fallen in line with a fall in birth rate seen across the UK, despite population growth in some parts of Leicestershire. The larger cohorts, which have also increased because of inward migration, are now progressing through secondary schools and Post 16.

Trend-based pupil projections for individual schools across both primary and secondary phases are produced annually. The County Council provides detailed pupil forecasts for every school and academy. Leicestershire is experiencing high levels of new housing growth from the seven district councils. Housing gains from developments that have received planning permission are included in our forecasts. Health data is used to track the numbers of births and location of preschool age children. In addition to this, like all County Councils, we complete a statutory annual return for the Department for Education of the net capacity of each school and academy in the county. Schools must inform the Council of any physical change to the buildings that might change building layout and capacity. This information is then reported through the annual statutory data collection which captures school capacities, pupil forecasts and details of future school places delivery.

The quality of data available for mainstream forecasting means the County Council can accurately predict need. The forecasting of SEND place

requirements is less predictable. Recently, detailed analysis of current and forecast will enable us to better understand and plan for SEND needs so that we can strategically plan the delivery of places.

Planning School Places

The County Council has a good record of actively planning school places so that parents are given the best possible chance of securing one of their preferences. Admissions and School Organisation services work closely together to achieve a high proportion of parents gaining one of their preferences at First Time Admissions (FTA) and Secondary Transfer. Where necessary they work with secondary schools to provide additional capacity in bulge years ahead of permanent provision.

Each autumn, the School Organisation Service analyses forecast data to decide what actions are needed to provide more school places for future years.

Key projects are added to the Capital Programme, and officers work with schools and academies to consider options for creating extra pupil places, undertaking site visits and feasibility studies to scope projects. Once a scheme is developed and briefed approval is sought from the Children and Family Services Capital Programme Board (CPB). Plans are developed in consultation with stakeholders and progressed in accordance with the timescales required, usually the start of academic year.

A review of admission applications is undertaken to identify the need for any unplanned need for expansions.

Statutory process must be followed when a school or academy is enlarged. For maintained schools a Statutory Notice must be published and for Academy Trusts a Significant Enlargement application must be submitted to the Regional Directorate of the Department for Education. Permanent increases in SEND provision at a maintained school or Academy also require a statutory process to be followed.

Places required because of housing developments are usually funded by developer contributions. The County Council works closely with all seven district councils, the Local Planning Authorities (LPA), in relation to Section106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions, sought on an individual development basis to meet CIL tests. Where it is forecast that local schools cannot meet increased demand education infrastructure contributions are based on the pupil yield from the housing development multiplied by the cost multiplier in the County Council's Planning Obligations Policy (LPOP).

Primary School Places

In response to housing growth and population increase over the past 10 years Leicestershire has delivered several new primary schools and expanded others. As the birth rate has now fallen some primary schools are experiencing falling rolls, especially in rural locations where no significant housing growth is planned.

In 2025/26 academic year there was a capacity of 61,064 places with a number on roll of 56,213 pupils resulting in a primary surplus of 4,831 places which equals 7.91% of the available capacity across Leicestershire.

- Some rural primary schools have a significant number of surplus places due to their location away from urban areas and housing development.
- There are pockets of localised pressure on primary places in the large urban centres throughout Leicestershire.
- The demand for additional places in high birth rate years has now moved into the secondary with the 2025/6 Year 6 cohort being the final year of the increased birth rate passing through.

The latest forecast suggests that further expansion of primary schools in areas with housing growth is needed. In addition, a number of new primary schools on housing developments are named on Section 106 agreements and Local Plan developments imply additional schools will be needed. The County Council is working with developers to secure contributions for school places at new and existing primary and secondary schools.

Increasing numbers of mid-term applications continue to prove difficult to address, especially at secondary schools. In 2024/25 22,624 mid-term applications were received with 18,646 children being allocated a place. This equates to 82% of all in-year applications that year. 49.4% of all applications are for primary school places and 50.6% for secondary school places. The County Council's statutory duty only applies to First Time Admissions (FTA), infant to junior and Year 7 for secondary transfer.

The 2022 Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) for Leicestershire indicated that 52,160 homes will be required for Leicestershire by 2036. If Local Plans deliver this the pupil capacity needed in Leicestershire schools could see an increase from 110,485 school places to 136,963 school places. This is an increase of 26,478 (23.9%) school places across all phases and types of education. Whilst smaller pockets of development could be accommodated at existing schools through expansion, new primary schools and secondary schools will be needed.

Housing development in the towns of Oadby, Hinckley, Loughborough, Melton Mowbray, Coalville, Ashby and Market Harborough will increase the need for local primary places. Proposed developments of more than 4,000 homes in North West Leicestershire and Hinckley will require several new schools with multiple new forms of entry for primary.

Secondary school forecasts show an increasing number of places required from 2027 to manage growth caused by the historic higher birth rate and housing development. The 2025/26 capacity of 48,276 will be exceeded in 2027/28. Secondary school expansions are planned in the main urban centres to manage the demand for places. There will be pressure on places resulting from rising numbers in specific localities and in some areas current supply levels will not be sufficient. In-year applications across secondary schools are particularly difficult to manage in some areas and do result in some children having to travel outside their community to be educated. This pressure will ease as additional places come on board.

Secondary School Places

The County Council continues to explore options to increase capacity in the secondary sector, working closely with secondary schools (now all academies). Academy Trusts have been willing to take on bulge years to help manage demand until permanent places can be created. Expansion has helped grow some schools to a sustainable size, including former 11 – 14 high schools.

Several secondary schools have been or will be expanded to meet expected demand. Some former high schools have also needed significant investment to address shortfalls in infrastructure, such as sporting and dining facilities, to ensure they are fit for purpose and able to manage public examinations for large cohorts. If all of proposed housing development is delivered a range of 6FE to 9FE secondary schools in Blaby, Harborough, Hinckley and North-West Leicestershire will be needed.

Post 16 Places

Post 16 places are predominantly within local academy sixth forms or Further Education (FE) college provision. The number of Post 16 places being taken up has been low for several years but with the recent increased birth rate now passing through secondary schools and predicted housing growth, the numbers are rising again. Demand for Post 16 SEND places is also rising.

The demand for SEND provision continues to grow through increases in EHCPs and demand for specialist school places, which continues to rise faster than capacity. The number of children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) has grown annually at a national and local level since the

introduction of the SEN Code of Practice changes in 2014. Based on the latest SEN2 published data, the number of EHCPs in England rose 149% between 2016 and 2025; Leicestershire saw a 140% increase from 2,995 to 7,196 EHCPs over the same time period.

SEND Places

Leicestershire has 9 state funded special schools and academies offering 1,856 places as of September 2025. There are also 786 places in SEND Units and Enhanced Resource Bases attached to mainstream schools. Demand for Special School places is exceeding capacity despite additional places being created.

Work to develop SEND provisions across the county is ongoing, including converting surplus primary capacity to Enhanced Resource Bases (ERB). Bowman Academy, a new SEMH provision opened in September 2024. In March 2023 Leicestershire was successful in a DfE bid for a new Communication and interaction school in Quorn., which is currently in development. Feasibility work is also in progress for an area special school in Market Harborough.

Reorganisation of School Places

Reorganisation of school places to ensure all schools are sustainable will need to be a key strategic focus for the County Council. Consistent secondary transfer age, the removal of a two-tier secondary phase and some infant and junior amalgamations have historically been achieved. A number of small schools are not able to balance their budgets and have low pupil numbers projected. This strategy discusses Leicestershire's approach to the reorganisation of schools in greater detail and how it will be achieved.

Risks associated with the delivery of school places have increased since the Covid-19 pandemic. The County Council has experienced significant cost increases due to inflation, global events and shortage of construction workers. Legacy Section 106 agreements, based on lower pupil yield rates and construction costs at the time have led to a significant shortfall in funding to deliver school places. Changes in DfE Basic Need funding methodology has reduced funding to address this. To avoid this the County Council now makes a full monetary ask from the developer at the time of consultation which is reviewed immediately prior to construction of a development. Leicestershire's primary school designs have been carefully value engineered to reduce costs whilst ensuring there is no negative impact on the learning environment and pupil outcomes.

In summary, over the next five years the County Council expects to see a slow increase in primary places needed, predominantly in urban areas, whilst demand

for primary school places will fall where there is no planned housing. There will be a continuing rise in secondary places needed and the Local Authority will continue to monitor pupil forecasts each year and increase availability of places at existing or new schools.

1 - Our Statutory Duty

Local Authorities have a legal obligation under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that sufficient school places are available to provide primary and secondary education for children within the area. Effective school place planning is a fundamental element of the Local Authority's role as strategic commissioner of good school places across all phases and types of statutory education.

A core ambition is for all children and young people living in Leicestershire is that they have access to the highest quality education so that they can fulfil their potential. Through the commissioning of school places we will ensure we have the right supply of high-quality school places, in buildings that are fit for purpose and allow children to achieve the best outcomes possible. This strategy is about ensuring that we meet that duty by having the right number of school places in the right locations, at the time they are needed, and having sufficient capital and revenue funding in place to achieve this.

The Academies Act of 2010 moved the education provision for children towards a more autonomous and diverse system rather than the traditional structure of schools under the direct control of the Local Authority. In terms of educational provision, the Local Authority has embraced this change and has supported schools converting to academies, setting up of Multi Academy Trusts and seeking age range changes. Most Leicestershire children, across all phases and types of provision, are now taught within an academy.

This has meant that the Local Authority's role has moved significantly from provider to commissioner. We now work in a very different way by working with a diverse range of providers and models of delivery. The range of Leicestershire education providers offers parents choices when applying for school places. Providing for children with additional needs is at the forefront of national policy and a key driver in ensuring that Leicestershire children can be educated, thrive and belong within their own community.

In terms of schools, regardless of being Local Authority maintained or an academy, we have responsibility to:

- Help develop and promote a sustainable system of education.
- Ensure that all schools offer good choice for children and young people of all abilities, safe and secure environments, delivered through local solutions wherever possible.

- Ensure in respect of the above that we have effective admission arrangements, and fair access protocols in place.
- Ensuring the school estate is fit for purpose.

Under Section 14 of the 1996 Education Act, when planning for school places, we must, as the Local Authority, take into consideration a range of factors, including:

- Forecast pupil numbers.
- School capacity.
- Impact of housing growth.
- The need to promote diversity and increase parental choice.

The schools available within a Local Authority Planning area shall not be regarded as sufficient for the purposes of meeting need unless they are sufficient in number, character and equipment to provide for all pupils the opportunity of appropriate education that leads to positive outcomes for young people.

To meet our statutory duty, the Local Authority will consider:

- · Expanding existing schools.
- · Building new schools.
- Working with maintained schools and academy trusts to ensure sufficient places.
- Reducing capacity though a reduction in published admission numbers or closure
- Reorganising existing schools.
- Considering alternative solutions such as transporting children outside of their community.

As a Local Authority we will continue to adopt a flexible and innovative approach to delivering our statutory responsibilities and are confident that we can meet the challenges that lie ahead.

2 - Government Policy and Direction

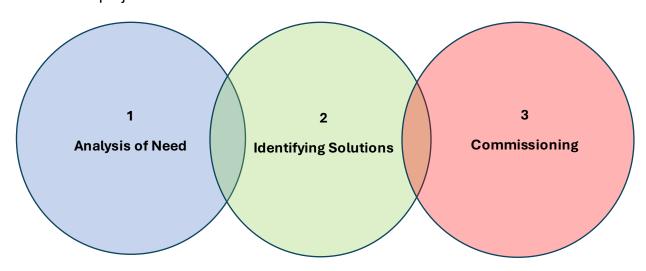
The Government has introduced the Schools' Bill and although it has not come into law yet and is working through due process. At this stage the implications for School Place Planning are unknown.

3 - Our Commissioning Role

To deliver school places we follow a three-step process that effectively and efficiently delivers places and allows the Local Authority to meet need. Our key commissioning activities involve:

Analysis of the need for places using various sources of data identifying
the number of places required and where they will be provided. Working
with internal and external partners and stakeholders to negotiate the best
possible solution to provide high quality places that support high quality
education; Commissioning new providers and existing maintained schools
and Academy Trusts to deliver additional school places through CFS's
Capital Programme.

The diagram below captures the process behind the County Council's statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient good school places. Although the process appears to be quite simple the work involved is often complex and relies on the knowledge and expertise of officers to ensure the final solution is successfully achieved. There can be significant overlap between each stage of the process, and no two projects are the same.



Leicestershire's Statutory Process

The School Organisation Service delivers school places by following a three-step process to deliver places where needed:

- Analysis of the need for school places using a range of information to identify the number and location of places required.
- Working with internal and external stakeholders to develop the best possible solution to provide high quality school places.
- Commissioning providers to deliver additional school places.

4 - Stakeholder Engagement

The Local Authority works collaboratively to ensure that its statutory responsibilities are met. The information below shows who the County Council's partners are and their involvement in delivering school places:

Schools and Academies: The School Organisation Service meets on a regular basis with Local Authority Maintained Schools, Single Academy Trusts (SATs) and Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) to discuss sufficiency to create opportunities for the commissioning of pupil places. The Local Authority works positively in partnership with all providers to ensure there are sufficient high-quality places for children across the county. Regular sufficiency meetings are held to consider the current position and strategy for growth and reorganisation.

County Council Partners: The County Council's structure of its departments has evolved to continue to meet the needs of the people of Leicestershire. Changes in government legislation and the need for additional pupil places due to an increased birth rate and a significant increase in housing development has meant that work with colleagues has become broader, more complex and detailed. Strategy delivery is reliant on positive relationships with departments across the Council at the strategic planning and delivery stage. Key departments are:

- Elected Members: Regular briefings are provided to elected members regarding developments in the provision of school places across Leicestershire and within their own ward.
- Property Services: Support the work of the service through every stage of our process. They provide information to support analysis and input into the Section 106 process when requesting land for new schools. Property Services also support with providing technical advice prior to commissioning. Their main input into school places comes through the actual construction of additional places and the

- maintenance of schools. Our work with them also includes framework contractors who we work closely with as part of the delivery of places.
- School Admissions Service: Both Admissions and School
 Organisation services rely on each other to be effective in their own
 service delivery. The provision and delivery of additional places,
 coupled with required changes in admission arrangements and school
 catchments, ensures that the County Councils' statutory responsibility
 is met.
- Legal Services: Work with Legal Services has increased due to the increase and complexity of Section 106 agreements. Since the academies agenda started there has also been a new area of legal work involving the passporting of capital funding to Trusts requiring a legal agreement.
- Planning Obligations Team: Education developer contributions are complex. The role of the team is to ensure that all requests for developer contributions are in line with the County Council's Planning Obligations Policy which ensures we meet planning legislation.
- **Business Intelligence Team:** The Business Intelligence Team are responsible with providing pupil forecast information to support the planning of pupil places and Section 106 contribution requests.
- CFS Finance: The service's work with this team involves the
 monitoring of income and expenditure for the Capital Programme and
 support for schools where Growth Funding may be required to
 supplement revenue budgets when additional pupil places are
 needed.
- Planning and Highways: Early discussions take place with planning and highway colleagues to ensure that the delivery of places is acceptable in planning terms and highways challenges with sites are understood. This is of particular importance when housing developers are offering new school sites and thorough due diligence takes place to ensure the site is suitable.

The School Organisation Service's work with partners, including colleagues in LCC teams, has become more complex, especially with district councils and Housing Developers. The School Organisation Service collaborates on Local Plans across all districts to ensure additional school places are provided where needed. Changes to planning legislation over the past ten years have made the work more detailed and challenging but has increased capital funding from Section 106 agreements, leading to the provision of several new schools built by housing developers.

- District Councils: The increase in housing developments has made the School Organisation Service's work with second tier councils more complex. They rely on the School Organisation Service's education provision knowledge when developing their Local Plans and responding to developer contribution requests.
- Church of England and Catholic Dioceses: The School Organisation Service meets regularly with the Dioceses regarding the provision of places at their schools and academy Trusts.
- Department for Education: The School Organisation Service meets regularly with the DfE Regional Director's Office on matters regarding pupil places, academy conversions, and the implementation of government education legislation.
- **Housing Developers:** The School Organisation Service's work with housing developers has increased dramatically and often involves the provision of new schools, requiring innovative solutions.
- Education Building Development Officers Group (EBDOG): This group, made up of School Place Planning officers from across the UK, provides useful benchmarking information that the School Organisation Service contributes to and uses for various purposes.
- Neighbouring Local Authorities: The School Organisation Service
 works with neighbouring local authorities on schools and education
 providers near the county border that receive pupils from more than one
 local authority.

5 - Population and Demographics

Leicestershire County Council covers an area of 202,880 hectares and contains a diverse range of communities living within several large urban settlements in the main market towns, or around the periphery of Leicester, and interspersed by many rural villages. The County of Leicestershire is currently a two-tier council. Within the County boundary there are seven District Council areas. Each district has its own unique demography and geography. Leicester City is in the centre of the County and is its own authority. The city is the largest settlement with a population of approximately half a million.



Leicestershire - Leicester City and District Councils

The 2021 Census records 712,300_people living within the County Council area, of which an estimated 143,063 are children and young people aged up to 19 years (including 36,154 0 to 5 year olds). There were 296,400 households within the county.

It indicates the usual resident population figure for Leicestershire increased by 9.5% since 2011. A further 10.2% growth is projected by 2031.

The table below shows expected growth in each of the second-tier councils based on the Office of National Statistics data.

District	2022 Population	2032 Projection	Population Change since 2022	Percentage Population Change since 2022
North-West	107,666	124,628	16,982	15.8
Harborough	100,550	115,044	14,494	14.4
Charnwood	185,266	204,246	18,980	10.2
Melton	52,404	55,116	2,712	5.2
Blaby	104,732	113,732	9,000	9.1
Oadby & Wigston	58,456	62,348	3,892	6.7
Hinckley & Bosworth	114,315	122,350	8,035	7.0
Total:	723,389	797,484	74,095	10.2

ONS Expected growth by District Across Leicestershire

An increase in the birth rate in Leicestershire led to an increase in the intake into primary schools over recent years and that birthrate is now passing through into our secondary schools. The changing dynamics of Leicestershire's population, influenced by changes in birth rate births, immigration, housing developments and economic migration, mean that the pattern of provision of school places must also change in order to keep pace with demand, whether through provision of additional places or through the reorganisation of existing places within the county.

6 - Local Authority Structure

The Government has made it clear it wants to move away from two-tier local government. The County Council is having constructive discussions with the City Council and there is joint agreement that the best option for Leicester and Leicestershire is a two unitary model, one City, one County, that both authorities must be financially sustainable with the capacity to enable strategic land use planning across City and County, providing the optimum structure for devolution of powers, responsibilities and funding.

Although proposals for local government reorganisation are being considered, at this stage, they do not impact on the County Council's School Places Strategy.

7 - Leicestershire's Education History

Prior to 2010, when the Academies Act was passed, Leicestershire was a three-tier education system with primary/infant/junior schools covering 4-11 years old, high schools covering 11-14 years old and upper schools covering 11-16/11-19 years old. Over the subsequent ten years high schools and upper schools converted to academy status and changed their age range, and Leicestershire established a consistent model of primary/infant/junior and secondary schools.

In addition to this some primary schools were 10+ where pupils left at the end of year 5 and then went up to high school. This was changed from 2008 as pupils who transferred to secondary a year early often had a detrimental impact on Key Stage 2 SAT outcomes. 8 high schools then changed their age range from 4-11 years old in a move to regularise secondary transfer across Leicestershire and improve Key Stage 2 outcomes for children.

8: Our Schools and Education Performance

There are 285 state-funded schools in Leicestershire, including:

- 231 primary schools
- 44 secondary schools
- 1 Post 16 school
- 9 special schools

The Local Authority has actively supported many schools to convert to academy status. There are 133 academies (44 secondary, 1 Post 16 school, 83 primary and 3 special schools) and further schools planning to convert.

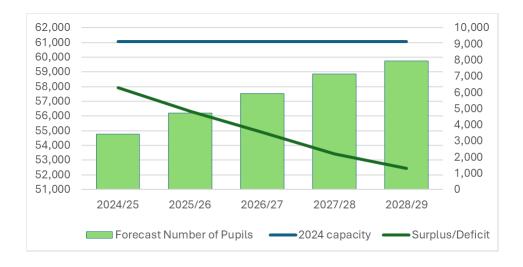
The details of the provision in Leicestershire schools can be found at www.leics.gov.uk/yourguides.htm

In total the 285 schools in Leicestershire have a collective capacity for 110,485 children and young people, comprising 61,064 in primary schools, 47,131 in secondary schools and 2,290 in special schools, units or Enhanced Resource Bases

In addition, there are approximately 27,759 young people in post-16 education.

Leicestershire schools vary in size, from primary schools with little more than 25 pupils on roll to secondary schools with large numbers on roll, the largest being 2,454 pupils.

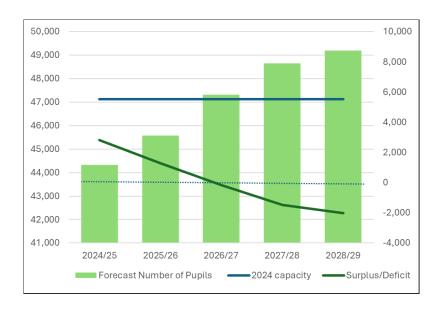
Primary Schools: Leicestershire's birthrate in 2024 had fallen to 1.41 children born per woman which was equal to the national average at the same time in England and Wales, which is the UK's lowest rate ever recorded. The usual replacement birth rate in the UK is 2.1 children per woman to sustain the population. The recent bulge in birth rate has almost worked its way through primary schools with the current Year 6 pupils being the final year of the bulge. The table below is the 2025 Primary DfE SCAP in full Forecast position which shows a rise in numbers over the coming years across all primary schools.



2025 Primary DfE SCAP Forecast (Leicestershire)

The effect on primary school occupancy is inconsistent. Some schools in popular areas are oversubscribed, whereas some small primary schools, typically in rural areas, are significantly below capacity. Some LA maintained schools and academies have consulted to reduce their Pupil Admission Numbers (PAN) and/or reorganised classes to reduce staffing costs. In such schools the continuing effect of a low birth rate and consequently small numbers of children in catchment, means the risk of not remaining sustainable is increasing.

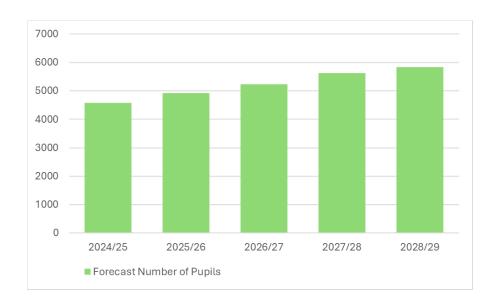
Secondary Schools: The County Council has seen the bulge in birth rate passing through into primary. Most of our expansion projects in secondary schools are connected to birth rate and housing growth. The table below is the 2025 Secondary DfE SCAP Forecast position which shows a rise in numbers over the coming years across all secondary schools.



2025 Secondary DfE SCAP Forecast (Leicestershire)

Although there are currently enough places within the County, the distribution of those places can make it difficult for mid-term applications throughout the year in some areas. Some schools have introduced operational capacities in some secondary year groups to help them manage pupil numbers within the resources they have to ensure they can meet the needs of their pupils.

Post 16: numbers are increasing due to the higher birth rate cohort moving from secondary into Post 16 and inward migration. All Leicestershire school-based Post 16 providers are showing an increase in forecast numbers, sometimes as a result of housing gains. We are expecting an increase in Post 16 places from 4,859 in 2025 to 5,891 in 2030, an increase of 28.4%. Post 16 provision and future requirements is underway. At Post 16 students are more likely to attend provision outside of their local community, including FE colleges outside Leicestershire.



2025 Forecast Pupils in School Sixth Forms and Sixth Form Colleges (Leicestershire)

SEND: The 2025 School Census, which includes all pupils on roll at a school within Leicestershire (aged 4 to 16 years), records 13,983 pupils at SEN Support and 7,196 with an Education, Health and Care Plan. SEND pupils account for 17.2% of the Leicestershire school population.

During recent years Leicestershire has faced significant challenges in responding to the increasing demand for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNAs) like many Local Authorities nationally. We know that within Leicestershire there is an increasing trend for requests for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNAs) resulting in Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs) which increased 18% between 2022 and 2023 and a further 12% between 2023 and 2024. Growth in EHCPs issued slowed somewhat in comparison to national and regional trends over the last 5 years, however the number of EHCPs in January 2025 increased 13% on the previous year, with a further increase of 15% to the end of September 2025.

Area		Percentage Increase Over Past Five Years					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Sept 2025	
England	430,697	473,255	517,049	575,693	638,745		48%
East Midlands	30,500	33,402	36,950	41,806	47,444		56%
Leicestershire	5,288	5,813	6,201	6,377	7,196	8,311	36%

2025 EHCP Comparison

Alternative Provision: Leicestershire County Council has a duty to ensure that any child permanently excluded from school has access to full-time education through alternative provision.

In Leicestershire we have Oakfield, a Short Stay School, to meet this duty. Places are commissioned to meet the needs of excluded children and those at risk of exclusion alongside, in exceptional circumstances, for those whom no other maintained school provision can be secured.

Current data shows us that we currently need 50 places at Primary and 400 places in secondary. The provisions operate over 7 satellites consisting of 2 Primary and 5 Secondary, which ensures that pupils remain in their local area, but operates as one school and ensures pupils fulfil our statutory duties, to deliver an education that offers breadth and depth and at the quality that pupils would receive compared to their peers.

Education Performance: There are many strengths that should be recognised through the performance of Leicestershire schools, the quality of the people working within them and the relationship between schools, academies and the local authority. 90% of Leicestershire's schools are rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding', this comprises 63 maintained schools and 193 academies.

9 - Encouraging Diversity

Leicestershire County Council is dedicated to equal, high-quality education for all children and young people, regardless of need. It values local community diversity and supports school management models that best serve local needs, including specialisation or federated/trust governance. The Council aims to maintain and expand diverse educational provision wherever possible.

10 - Responsible Bodies

Diocesan Schools: The current pattern of school provision across Leicestershire includes many schools with a religious foundation or background. The Catholic and Church of England Diocesan authorities work closely with the County Council in the planning of school places to provide opportunities for parents to express a preference for denominational education.

Independent Schools: In July 2024 there were 12 independent schools located in Leicestershire; two of these schools designated as primary, three as secondary schools and the remaining seven as all through (4-18). In total, the 12 schools had a registered capacity of 7,005 places, with 5,945 pupils registered on roll. The Local Authority does not hold records of independent school placements and the children attending may or may not live within Leicestershire. Children resident in Leicestershire may attend independent provision in other areas.

Academy Trusts: Academy Trusts are their own responsible body. For Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) they are the responsible body for all the schools within their Trust.

11 - Academisation

Since the introduction of the 2010 Academies Act Leicestershire has seen the majority of its schools converted to academy status as either a Single Academy Trust (SAT) or as part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). There are 216 academies in Leicestershire: 165 primary, all 44 11-16 or 11-19 secondary schools, 1 Post 16 and 6 Special schools.

There are currently 29 MATs operating within Leicestershire of which 20 are Leicestershire based. In 2024 5 schools joined a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). In 2025, 4 schools are progressing with conversion into a MAT.

Currently 77% of schools in Leicestershire are academies. A summary of the 284 schools and academies can be seen below:

	Primary	Secondary	Post 16	Special	Total
Local Authority	65	0	0	3	68
Maintained	00	O	0	3	00
Academy	166	44	1	6	217
Schools	100	44	'	U	217
	231	44	1	9	285

2025 Leicestershire Schools and Academies

12 - Housing Growth

To meet expected growth, major housing development is proposed in all of the districts with Local Plans being developed to deliver the required number of

houses. The 2020 Housing and Economic Needs Assessment carried out on behalf of the County and Leicestershire's District Councils stated that 52,160 homes were required by 2036. This would see pupil population increase by 26,278 pupils across all phases of education using current pupil yield rates per 100 dwellings.

	Primary	Secondary	Post 16	Primary Special	Secondary Special	Total
Pupil Yield	30.0	16.7	3.3	0.363	0.4	
Pupil Places	15,648	8,711	1,721	189	209	26,478

Leicestershire Projected Pupil Yield Due To Housing Growth

Patterns of population change will also affect Leicestershire's local communities. In some areas inward migration is a major factor, particularly where new development is planned, while in all areas there are some uncertainties about future birth rates.

Factors such as population shifts, age distribution and housing growth are all challenging to predict accurately.

The Department for Education's Rural School statistics shows Leicestershire has 38 schools designated as rural. New housing development in these areas may be less extensive than before, so population and pupil numbers are unlikely to increase significantly. This ongoing trend will continue to impact the viability of some schools.

13 - Place Planning Areas

Effective pupil place planning is a fundamental element of the County Council's role as strategic commissioner of good school places. It is under pinned by the use of local area knowledge and data to identify any early warning signs of insufficient numbers of school places in specific parts of the authority. Place Planning Areas are a group of schools within the Local Authority which is used for the purpose of assessing current and future pupil demand for school places.

People, Schools and Partners

Leicestershire has 99 Planning Areas, 74 primary and 25 secondary. The Place Planning Area structure was agreed with the DfE in 2012, in line with the prevailing guidance. Since then, Planning Areas have been adjusted to reflect changes to age range and from a 3-tier to 2-tier education structure as agreed in 2018/19.

As a largely rural county, Leicestershire has a significant number of small, relatively isolated, village schools with no other school within a 'reasonable' travel distance and as such operates 22 single school planning areas.

Section E of this strategy contains SCAP forecast data and narrative about each of our Planning Areas.

It is recognised that pupils benefit from high quality learning environments and equipment. Capital investment priorities are based on requirements to:

- Provide sufficient places to meet the needs of local communities.
- Provide healthy and safe environments.
- Meet curriculum and class organisational needs.
- Enhance physical access to buildings.
- Replace temporary accommodation with permanent buildings where possible
- Implement key strategic initiatives.

Leicestershire County Council uses condition surveys alongside net capacity assessments to determine investment priorities for the schools it remains responsible for. Capital resources are, however, becoming increasingly stretched. Building maintenance in academies is no longer the responsibility of the Local Authority and these schools receive capital funding direct from central government.

There are several sources of funding available to Local Authorities to support the delivery of school places and help them fulfil their statutory duty to ensure there are enough school places for children.

1 - DfE Funding

DfE Basic Need: The Basic Need allocations are based principally on data collected from Local Authorities in the School Capacity Survey (SCAP). This survey collects information on the capacities of schools in each planning area of each local authority, and local authorities' forecasts of pupil numbers for several years ahead.

DfE High Needs Funding: Is intended to support Local Authorities in their duty to provide suitable school placements for children and young people with SEND, or who require alternative provision (AP). The grant funding is intended for children and young people with complex needs, who have Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs), pupils with SEND without an EHCP and who require AP.

2 - Developer Contributions

Where additional school places are needed because of new housing development, as far as possible the costs should fall on the landowners and developers by way of developer contributions in line with the County Council's Planning Obligations Policy. Leicestershire's policy has an agreed methodology for calculating the infrastructure needs arising from new development, a robust

mechanism for requesting contributions from developers and how such funding is used for the delivery of places arising from housing development.

Developer contributions for education are secured by means of conditions attached to a planning obligation under Section 106 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990, or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and is part of planning permission being granted for a development. When a planning application for new housing development comes forward analysis takes place to determine the number of pupils that may be yielded from the development. If there is not enough space in existing schools the developer will be expected to make a financial contribution to the provision of the additional places required.

On occasions, a developer may choose to build a new school themselves rather than making a financial contribution towards the Local Authority delivering the places. In this situation the developer will work with the local authority to ensure the school meets the requirements of Build Bulletin 103, and Leicestershire's school land and building specifications. Once a site is proposed for a new school the Local Authority will conduct due diligence to ensure it meets the requirements for delivering a school and any subsequent conditions such as Highways and services access.

3 - Strategic Capital Maintenance

The Department for Education (DfE) allocates funding each year to help maintain and improve the condition of school buildings and grounds.

School condition funding includes capital allocations for:

- Local Authorities and local-authority-maintained schools, including maintained nursery schools.
- Local voluntary-aided bodies and voluntary-aided schools.
- academies and large multi-academy trusts (MATs).
- Sixth-form colleges.
- Non-maintained special schools.
- Special post-16 institutions with eligible students.

Eligible schools and colleges can access funding through either:

 School Condition Allocations (SCA), with funds paid to eligible responsible bodies for maintaining school buildings. These include the local authority for maintained schools, Multi Academy Trusts for their academies and the Diocese for Voluntary Aided Schools. Single and smaller Multi Academy Trusts can apply to the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) on an annual basis. If successful, funding is paid directly to the Trust to carry out the maintenance works.

In addition, Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) is allocated for individual schools and other eligible institutions to spend on capital projects.

4 - Growth Funding

Leicestershire Schools Forum has the responsibility to agree a policy for significant pupil growth to support the Local Authority's duty for delivering additional school places. This includes pre-opening and diseconomy of scale costs and agreeing the criteria for Local Authority maintained schools and academies to access this fund.

There are restrictions on what a Growth Fund can be used for. The regulations specify that a growth fund, subject to the locally adopted growth policy, can only be used to:

- Support growth in pre-16 pupil numbers to meet basic need.
- Support additional classes needed to meet the infant class size regulation.
- Meet the revenue costs of new schools.

Growth funding cannot be used to support:

- Schools in financial difficulty. No such contingency is held for Leicestershire Local Authority maintained schools.
- General growth due to increasing pupil numbers. This is managed through lagged funding. Growth Funding is currently applied to opening schools until they have reached their full capacity and it may also be considered for permanent expansions where appropriate.

5 - Other Funding Sources

Other sources of funding towards the delivery of additional school places are limited but may include:

- One-off grants from third party organisations such as Government, national bodies and charities.
- Personal donations from individual benefactors.
- Funding from Leicestershire County Council's own financial reserves.

Forecasting future demand for school places can never be absolutely accurate given the broad assumptions which have to be made about movements in and out of any given locality, the pace of individual housing developments, patterns of occupation and not least the parental preference for places at individual schools. This will be a function of geography, school reputation, past and present achievement levels and the availability of alternative provision, hence the need to review on an annual basis.

The analysis of need for school places in Leicestershire is identified through robust data analysis with pupil forecasting at the core of understanding where future provision is needed. The analysis of the data sources described below determines the need prior to identifying solutions.

Local Authorities can use different methods to forecast pupil numbers and take different factors into account. The Department for Education, for their annual School Capacity Survey (SCAP), require local authorities to provide a statement to accompany the forecast pupil numbers explaining the method by which the forecast is made. The forecasts produced cover both mainstream and SEND.

6 - Forecasting

Various data sources are used to produce our mainstream pupil forecasts and include:

Office of National Statistics (ONS) Local Authority Live Births by Postcode: Birth data is usually provided by the ONS for us to identify children coming through the system. If birth data is not available at the time of completing the forecasting work, they are estimated based on an average of previous years and/or recent trends.

DfE GP Registration Data: This is captured in May each year and is based on the number of GP registrations that are captured on the first day of each month.

School Number on Roll (NoR) Data: Derived from the January School Census.

Admissions Data: First Time Admissions (FTA) and Secondary School transfer data captured in June for the following academic year.

Housing Data: Information on new housing developments from planning application data and, where available, Local Planning Authority housing trajectory information. Housing developments 'Under construction' progress is monitored twice a year in March and December to determine current levels of occupancy.

SEND Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) Data: In addition to the above data for SEND forecasting the latest SEND EHCP pupil level data is also used. In recent years the quality of data has improved greatly. Data dashboards have

been developed to show the type of SEND need by year group along with geographical location. This allows for greater strategic planning of places rather than reactive planning on a year-by-year basis.

7 - Data Processing

Our forecasts for the primary phase of education comprise of the following elements:

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Forecast: This is forecast by looking at the previous EYFS numbers compared to the births for each cohort. The reception numbers are analysed for each school in one of three ways:

- As an average percentage of the births cohort for that year group.
- Looking at the differences between births and EYFS cohorts if the school has very low birth rates.
- For schools that do not have a formal Local Authority catchment area,
 EYFS numbers are analysed in terms of the average intake at the school in recent years.

Forecasts for each school are usually averages or weighted averages based on 4 years' data. This can sometimes vary if there are good reasons to use a different calculation, such as a three-year average for example. If this is used assumptions are then taken regarding take-up figures to forecast intakes for the next five years.

Admissions allocations regarding intake for year of entry at the start of the academic year, including allocated places for pupils from neighbouring local authorities, is incorporated into the forecast and generally form the basis of year 1 figures. Generally, intake is not limited by the Admission Number (AN) listed for the school as the intention is to show the true pressure of demand for places.

Non-Intake Year Groups: Cohort numbers are rolled forward from the preceding academic year. An appropriate average percentage retention rate is applied to each non entry year group transition as appropriate.

Junior Schools: The forecast for intake at Year 3 is based on the percentage average from the feeder Infant schools. The percentage rate may be increased if the Junior school also makes small gains from other schools at this transfer point.

Secondary Schools: Each Secondary school has an allocated list of feeder Primary schools for 11+ transfer. These enable the local authority to calculate the size of potential intakes over the next ten years based on the seven years actual Primary school NOR data and three years Primary school forecast intake.

Secondary school intakes are calculated based on the 4-year average, or some close variant, of previous intakes relative to the potential feeder cohort sizes.

Non-intake groups are forecast in an equivalent way to primary schools with the average percentage retention rate applied to each non entry year group transition as appropriate.

Migration and Housing Developments: Potential gains from new housing are included for all sites either currently under construction or expected to start having been granted full planning permission. In addition, gains from other sites that currently have outline planning permission only have also been included if available information from district councils' housing trajectories has not indicated that construction is not expected to commence within the forecast period.

Education Phase	Pupil Yield Per Dwelling	Pupil Yield Per Flat
Primary	0.3	0.043
Infant	0.129	0.018
Junior	0.171	0.025
Secondary	0.167	0.02667
Post 16	0.033	0.00533

2025 Leicestershire Pupil Yield Rates

8 - In/Out Catchment Analysis

Parent preference causes movement between schools in neighbouring authorities and catchment schools. After every school census day, the movement for each school is monitored. Most schools gain or lose to and from other local schools. Depending on the numbers they gain minus the number they lose, they will be known as a net gainer or loser of pupils. This data factors into identifying future need for places, especially where housing development falls into a catchment of an existing school. Additional school places may not be needed if pupils over time can be pushed back to their original catchment as children in catchment, through the school's admissions policy, would gain a place over those from out of catchment.

9 - Forecast Accuracy

Pupil forecasts are checked annually against the autumn term School Census NOR. The checks are made against intake and total NOR as of October and variances above applied thresholds are investigated. However, where the above threshold variance against October NOR is identified, the subsequent January NOR figure is checked to determine whether the variance still applies, and potential adjustment justified.

The thresholds for variance investigation are:

Primary: Forecast intake of more than 2 pupils

Forecast NOR 10 or more pupils (or >5% for small schools)

Secondary: Forecast intake of more than 10 pupils

Forecast NOR 20 or more pupils

Investigation seeks to determine the reason for the variance and ascertain if there was a more accurate intake or retention rate option that could have been applied based on system generated averages or the latest year. This will then be considered during the next round of forecasting. Investigation of variance covers both forecasts with and without housing gains to determine the current impact of pupil yield from housing development under construction.

Intake variance is usually due to inaccuracy in First Time Admissions (FTA) and/or Secondary transfer data from the Schools Admissions Team. Where a pattern of variance emerges, the decision could be taken to increase or reduce Admissions Team data for certain schools to increase the accuracy of future forecasts.

Our comparable accuracy rates are calculated on Year 1 forecast compared to the previous years to monitor ongoing performance. The latest NOR is checked against previous years' forecasts relating to the current academic year to determine the ongoing accuracy of forecasts covering forecast years 2 to 5 for primary schools and forecast years 2 to 10 for secondary schools.

10 - Local Plans

The School Organisation Service works closely with housing developers and district councils to ensure that Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDP) presented for examination during the Local Plan assessment will deliver the additional school places needed due to housing growth. Once potential sites are confirmed by the district council the local authority can propose educational solutions to accommodate the additional pupil yield. At this point the proposed pupil yield from Local Plan allocated sites can be factored into the strategic planning of additional school places alongside the forecast data.

Identifying solutions is the most complex part of the process for delivering school places. DfE guidance gives a strong emphasis towards the expansion of successful and popular schools where possible. Leicestershire County Council is committed to supporting ways of increasing parental choice in school admissions and ensuring places are located where parents want them, ideally serving the local community where children live.

As Leicestershire is a rural county, it can sometimes be difficult to provide diversity, when there is only one school serving a local community. However, as the population continues to grow the council will seek to meet the increasing demand wherever school places can be expanded or provided new in local communities. Working with a range of internal and external stakeholders effectively will ensure that this aim will be met with additional school places being delivered that allow children to achieve good outcomes throughout their time at school.

In this section we will look at the considerations behind identifying solutions, working with stakeholders and the various possible solutions that are available for delivery.

11 School Accommodation Analysis

This is the foundation for the development of a project brief. Once the number of school places is known, a detailed analysis of the DfE's Building Bulletin 103 is undertaken to determine the accommodation that will be needed.

This analysis may be for a whole new school, expansion of an existing school or the remodelling of an existing space. The analysis will identify the accommodation needed to support good teaching and learning outcomes.

12 - Working with Responsible Bodies

If the delivery of places involves an existing school, the School Organisation Service will seek early engagement to gain a full understanding of the school, its vision and values and the community it serves. This will ensure that the school places provided meet the needs of the school, support good outcomes for children and are in line with national and local education policies.

If a new school is needed, engagement will happen with the housing developers at the development master planning stage to ensure that any site coming forward for a new school is suitable, prior to a Section 106 agreement being agreed or planning permission being granted. The County Council's Highways and Property Services departments will support with due diligence to ensure the site is fit for purpose.

When a new school build is ready to be submitted to planning the Local Authority will work with the DfE, though the presumption process, to identify a Multi Academy Trust for the school. The Trust appointed can then be involved in the final stages of detailed design of the school ahead of construction.

13 - Solution Principles

The delivery of additional school places within Leicestershire County Council is focused on ensuring that they do not cause detriment to other schools and supports long term sustainability. Before the solution for school places is identified, the County Council will plan to provide school places in schools that are of a viable size and promote:

- Sufficient curriculum coverage and, where appropriate, adequate curriculum choice.
- Viable and sustainable schools which do not require disproportionate financial support and may attract DfE capital funding.
- Viable class organisation structures.
- Adequate non-contact time for staff.
- Supporting the needs of the local community.

Once it is established that solution principles can be met, the provision of school places can be delivered by using one or more of the following approaches:

- Remodelling existing space.
- Expansion of the school premises.
- Relocation of a school to an alternative site.
- Amalgamation with another school
- Off-site expansion by creating a satellite of the existing school.
- Delivery of a new school.

14 - School Sizes

Whilst the County Council does define optimum sizes for schools it recognises that there will be some schools falling outside this range which still provide an excellent education and deliver good outcomes for children. Factors that can affect the size of a school include the local population, site constraints, availability of funding and deployment of revenue resources. Our preferred school sizes for new and expanding schools are:

Primary School: The preferred size for new primary schools is within the range of 420 places to 630 places (2FE to 3FE) and Leicestershire County Council will

only seek to open new primary schools of full forms of entry in line with our standardised primary school designs which allow for phased delivery of places to support the availability of funding needed and to prevent the destabilisation of existing places in the area.

Where a new primary phase school is required, this will be built as an all through primary school, rather than separate infant or junior schools. The County Council will continue to seek opportunities to amalgamate separate infant and junior schools where the combined numbers are less than 420 and the sites lend themselves to a single becoming a single school.

Secondary Schools: The minimum size for an 11 to 16 secondary school is 900 (6FE) to 1,200 (9FE) pupils. However, Leicestershire County Council recognises that provision in some communities may fall outside the ideal size of secondary school and demand for additional places could be met either by expanding existing schools, if there is sufficient capacity on the site, or by new provision of a new school located within a substantial new housing development. The expansion of an existing secondary school to the optimum size is preferable to support sustainability and ensure children are receiving an education within an established setting.

Special Schools: These need to be of sufficient size to provide appropriate facilities and opportunities to meet the needs of the range of pupils they admit and to act as resource and to support SEND pupils at settings within maintained schools and academies. Their size will depend on the age range of pupils, locality and the type of SEND that they cater for. Work is currently ongoing to review SEND provision across Leicestershire to ensure future demand can be provided in one of the following ways:

- New SEND schools.
- Expansion of SEND Schools on site or at a satellite location.
- Enhanced Resource Bases and Units within mainstream schools and academies.

15 - Location of New Schools

Leicestershire County Council aims to provide school places within their communities, close to where children live and to meet parental preferences as far as possible.

Leicestershire's approach is that new primary schools should be provided, wherever possible, within major new housing developments where the pupil yield is sufficient to open a 2FE school. The site should ideally be within a 2-mile walking distance of most of the development. The School Organisation Service

works with the Highways Department through the development's master planning process to develop safe routes to school for pedestrians and cyclists. Sites should be of a suitable size to allow future expansion of the school if further housing development happens.

Where a new secondary school is planned, a site will be sought that provides safe pedestrian and cycling routes and good access for those pupils arriving by public and school transport from further afield. To discourage the use of private cars, schools are expected to prepare and maintain a School Travel Plan. Like new primary school sites, additional land may be sought to futureproof any future expansion of the housing development and additional pupil yield. On occasions, additional land may be required from a single developer to address the need for school places from cumulative developments in the area. Where this is required, and in line with the DfE's Securing Developer Contributions guidance, a land equalisation mechanism will be put in place between the developers to ensure the cost of land for providing the secondary school is shared on a fair and equitable basis between all developments feeding into the school.

16 - Home to School Travel

Leicestershire County Council recognises the importance of considering distance of travel from home to school when planning new developments to reduce dependence on subsidised bus travel and encourage safe walking and cycling to school.

Leicestershire County Council has a statutory responsibility to ensure that children aged 4-16 can access compulsory school age education. Transport assistance for all students aged over 16 is a discretionary provision. Different arrangements are in place for children with SEND, where the nearest suitable school is stated in their Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).

To meet this requirement Leicestershire County Council will encourage the use of walking and cycling to school. Where this is not an option Leicestershire County Council's Mainstream Home to School Transport policy will provide transport to children who are attending their nearest maintained school or academy. Stakeholders should be aware there is no Council provision for school transport where children are not attending their nearest school.

The key challenges that Leicestershire County Council has in terms of providing access to compulsory education are summarised as follows:

- Providing flexible choices for young people is a challenge for the Council.
- Managing down the costs of school transport within the context of a growing population and increasing fuel costs.

- Ensuring new housing growth areas are well connected by walking and cycling routes to minimise demand on school services provided under statutory regulation.
- Encouraging young people to take up active modes where convenient as a substitute for car journeys through alternative methods of travel such as walking and cycling that will help foster positive lifetime travel habits.

17 - Project Brief

Leicestershire's School Organisation Service will write a detailed brief to enable project delivery, including details of:

- Main project requirements summarising the work to be delivered.
- Project background including evidence of need.
- Accommodation required based on analysis against the DfE's Building Bulletin 103.
- Site requirements including social space, sport provision and infrastructure such as car parking.
- Building specification requirements such as mechanical and electrical needs delivered to current building regulations.
- Room specification requirements to support delivery of teaching and learning.
- Stakeholder involvement required and project communication to ensure the project runs smoothly.
- Phasing of works required to ensure, particularly on existing school sites, that the education of children is not hindered during project delivery.

Where applicable for schools that are being expanded, the brief will be signed off by the school and Trust prior to release for Capital Programme Board approval and the commissioning of a suitable delivery method.

18 - Leicestershire's Approach

All school places' provision falls under the County Council's Capital Programme as part of its Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). This is reviewed throughout the year on a regular basis to make sure that adequate resources are provided for the County Council's place planning statutory duty to be discharged.

Leicestershire County Council has successfully used various commissioning methods for the delivery of school places. Prior to commissioning additional school places, the project must be approved by the Children and Family Services Capital Programme Board (CPB) to agree to the need, approve the funding required and provide an appropriate commissioning method. The School Organisation Service prepares Place Planning Papers (PPP) that summarise these three areas for members of the board to consider as part of their decision making.

19 - Market Position Sufficiency Statement (MPSS)

It is recognised that commissioning school places is not restricted to providing school places by funding them through capital investment alone. For SEND places where there is inadequate capital funding to provide the places needed to meet the growing demand alternative provision also needs to be considered. To meet this demand Leicestershire County Council has developed an Education, Inclusion and Additional Needs Placement Market Position Sufficiency Statement (MPSS). The purpose of the MPSS will be to consider current placement sufficiency across the SEND system in Leicestershire and indicate how the department will ensure sufficiency for SEND school places in the future outside of those places being provided directly by the County Council. The MPSS will therefore build upon this School Places Strategy and consider the role of and opportunities for the external market to support the County Councils SEND sufficiency needs.

20 - Commissioning Routes

The commissioning of school places must meet Procurement Regulations and the County Council's Procurement Team ensure compliance. Capital funded school places at existing schools and academies, or the delivery of a new school is usually delivered by one of the following routes:

Leicestershire County Council Property Services Department: This is the most traditional route of commissioning places. The procurement route to be

followed is dependent on the value of the work. Frameworks are used to deliver both minor and major projects. Projects are overseen by the department's team of building and quantity surveyors.

Responsible Bodies: Where an academy Trust has the capacity to manage the delivery of school places to Leicestershire County Council's building specifications, the passporting of funding may be agreed. A legal agreement will be drawn up to ensure that places will be delivered and where Section 106 funding is involved, the legal obligations of the Section 106 agreement will be passported to the academy Trust to also meet. The academy trust is then responsible for meeting procurement regulations and appointing an appropriately qualified contractor to deliver the places.

Developer Delivered: For new schools and major expansion within large housing developments, the Section 106 agreement provides the option for the developer to construct and deliver the additional school places. Again, they must be delivered to Leicestershire County Council's specification and officers from the County Council will work in partnership with the developer and academy trust to ensure that the project reaches a successful conclusion.

DfE Free School Delivery: The County Council has been successful in bidding for DfE Free Schools to meet our need for new SEND places. Bowman Academy opened in 2024, and Achieve Academy is in development. This delivery model is dependent on the DfE releasing funding to bid for new schools. Leicestershire County Council will continue to bid for this type of funding as and when the government releases any further funding waves.

1 - Need to Reorganise Schools

Leicestershire County Council recognises that reorganisation may be needed for more than one reason. Where these reasons impact on rural schools, we acknowledge the government's presumption against the closure of rural schools and will only bring forward proposals to close any school where it can be demonstrated through a robust business case that one or more of the following criteria can be met:

- There is only very limited demand for places at the school from children living within the immediate catchment area or wider planning area of the school.
- Surplus places at the school exceed 25%.
- Education standards are low and there is little confidence in the likelihood of improvement.
- The school is not financially viable and is in or has a long-term forecast budget deficit that cannot be recovered.
- Necessary improvements to the school accommodation are either not possible or not cost effective.

For all schools with fewer than 105 pupils on roll the County Council will actively encourage the governors of maintained schools and Trustees of academies to consider further collaboration with the amalgamation with one or more neighbouring schools or by joining a Multi Academy Trust to achieve sustainability.

2 - Types of Reorganisation

In addition to the above, the County Council may have to reorganise schools in the following situations:

- Where an age range change may be required, for example so schools can use existing space to set up an Early Years provision.
- A change in a school's PAN to allow for a reduction or increase in the number of pupils being admitted.
- The redesignation of an existing school to meet another educational need such as additional SEND places.
- Conversion of maintained schools into Multi Academy Trusts (MAT), the transfer of a Stand-Alone Trust (SAT) into a MAT and a MAT merging with another MAT.

Whilst the County Council does define optimum sizes for schools it recognises that there will be many schools falling outside this range which provide excellent

Section D - Approach to the Reorganisation of Schools Need for Reorganisation

education. Factors that can affect the size of a school include local population, site constraints, availability of funding and deployment of revenue resources.

Leicestershire County Council will plan to provide school places in schools of sizes which:

- Can offer a curriculum that allows pupils to achieve good outcomes.
- Are viable and sustainable schools which do not require disproportionate financial support and attract DFE capital funding.
- Have a viable staff structure that supports efficient class structures.
- Can offer a suitable amount of non-contact time for teaching and support staff.
- Are at the heart of their community.

To achieve this, Leicestershire County Council will initially consider opportunities to expand existing schools where possible. Where significant housing developments warrant new schools within their community our preference is to open schools of the following size:

- **Primary:** A range of 420 to 630 places (2FE to 3FE). New schools may be phased to open to whole forms of entry. The County Council will continue to seek opportunities to amalgamate separate infant and junior schools where the combined numbers are less than 420 and their sites allows them to exist as a single institution.
- Secondary: For an 11 to 16 secondary school the preferred range is 900 to 1,200 places (6FE to 9FE). However, the County Council recognises that some communities may not fit within our preferred range for a secondary school. Additional places may be met by expansion of existing schools if there is sufficient site capacity or by new provision located within a development for an existing school such as Sixth form provision.

3 - Consultation

Leicestershire County Council will always consider all possible options prior to proposing the reorganisation or closure of schools. A full business case will always be provided to relevant stakeholders which sets out the case and details the background, reasons, timeframe and benefits. This will be the basis for transparent decision making and allow stakeholders to comment through the process of meaningful consultation.

The change process for reorganisation will be detailed in the next section. It is the responsibility of the County Council and other responsible bodies to ensure that reorganisation is appropriately supported to ensure that change can be delivered to benefit children and the community where their family lives.

4 - Types of Change Process

The County Council have a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient schools for primary and secondary education in their areas. There is an expectation from the Department for Education that Local Authorities manage their school estate efficiently and to reduce or find alternative uses for surplus capacity to avoid a negative impact on a school offering to its children, their families and the community it serves.

There are different change processes depending on the nature of the change and whether the school is maintained or an academy.

5 - Academy Conversion

There is a strong Multi Academy trust (MAT) sector in Leicestershire which works productively with the Local Authority in planning school places. The pace of conversion has slowed but the Local Authority continues to support schools wishing to convert. Leicestershire's School Organisation Service coordinates the process of academy conversion by liaising with the converting school, receiving Trust, teams across the authority and legal advisors to ensure a smooth process takes place. This ensures that we continue to maintain positive relationships with academies and MATs.

6 - School Expansion and Age Range Change

Change in age range or expansion of a school is covered by the statutory notice process for Local Authority maintained schools and the Department for Education's Significant Change Process for academies.

Statutory Proposal: For Local Authority maintained schools this must contain sufficient information and be accessible for all interested parties to decide on whether to support or challenge the proposed change.

Significant Change: For academies, they must follow the required significant change process in advance of the change being made. Failure to do so will constitute a breach of the academy trust's funding agreement.

7 - Local Authority Maintained School and Academy Closure Considerations

For school closures the following Department for Education guidance is followed:

- Maintained Schools: Opening and Closing Maintained Schools
- Academies: Closure of an Academy by Mutual Agreement

For maintained schools, the local authority can propose the closure of a community, foundation, voluntary, community special, foundation special or maintained nursery school; and the governing body of a voluntary, foundation or foundation special school may publish proposals to close its own school.

For academies it is important that the trust engages early with the relevant Regional Director and local authorities and involves them in planning and decision-making right from the outset.

Regardless of whether it is a maintained school or an academy where discussions are being held about possible closure, it is important to Leicestershire County Council that the process is delivered in a transparent and clear manner to ensure Leicestershire children, and their families are fully informed about the need for change.

8 - Presumption Against Closure

The County Council recognises the Government's Presumption Against the Closure of Rural Schools and will only bring forward proposals to close such a school where it can be demonstrated that the school is no longer sustainable:

Although the guidance for maintained schools and academies is different, Leicestershire County Council believe the same closure process should be followed regardless of school type.

To achieve the closure of any type of school, all parties involved must work in a collaborative manner, following the appropriate guidance, in a pragmatic, respectful and sensitive manner. This will involve the County Council's Schools' Sustainability Board (SSB) working closely with schools, responsible bodies,

academy trusts and the Department for Education. Alternative options to closure that could be considered are:

- Academisation by joining a MAT.
- Federation or amalgamation with another school.
- Relocating the school to a site on a new housing development where additional school places are needed.
- Extended school provision that provides viability such as a pre-school or wrap around care.
- SEND provision being provided by the school.
- Sharing school facilities with community groups.

All these options need to be thoroughly investigated with an appropriate level of due diligence being undertaken to ensure the long-term sustainability of the school.

9 - Maintained Schools and Academy Closure Process

The table below outlines the timeframe to be followed:

Item	Process Stage	Work Required
1	Prioritisation of schools for reorganisation	 Analysis of pupil forecast data. School financial viability analysis. Reorganisation modelling of school places. Risk analysis and resources required. Discussions with responsible bodies and leaders of affected schools.
2	Business Case	 Production of business case including detailed proposal for reorganisation. Approval to proceed to consultation by responsible body ensuring their own decision-making process is adhered to. Draft proposal.
3	Pre-Publication Consultation	 Time frame to be determined by the proposer having regard to the proposer's own consultation guidance. Consultation must happen during term time. Proposal to follow approved business case. Arrange consultation meetings and write necessary communications for relevant stakeholders.

		Set up website for consultation, feedback forms and consultation FAQ.
4	Statutory Notice Publication and Representation	 The updated proposal made available clearly identifying changes to the proposal consulted upon. Proposal sent to relevant bodies. Proposal requests sent out within 1 week of requests being made. Arrange consultation meetings and write necessary communications for relevant stakeholders. Compile representations to be provided to the decision maker and shared on the consultation website.
5	Decision	 Decision and reasons to be published within one week of the decision being made. Relevant stakeholders informed. May be requests within 1 week to refer to the Schools Adjudicator.
6	Implementation	 Publication of detailed Implementation Plan. Communications and meetings coordinated to progress closure. Implementation of plan to redesignate vacated school site for schools and academies.

10 - Prioritisation of Schools for Reorganisation

A School Sustainability Board including officers from education, finance, HR, admissions, legal and property services will consider any school reorganisations and manage the process. Every reorganisation will be different due to the diversity of schools and communities involved. The following analysis will be undertaken:

- Pupil forecast data for the schools within the Planning Area.
- Cohort survival rate looking at progress from year of entry to leaving year.
- Financial viability looking at recent actuals and budget forecasting.
- Staff Headcount and possible HR reorganisation costs.
- Impact of future housing development and Local Plans.
- Designation of schools in the area include relation to third parties and rural designation.
- Condition and suitability of school sites and buildings.
- · Stakeholders impacted by reorganisation.
- Potential alternatives to schools that may be considered for closure.

- Potential time frame and audit trail for reorganisation including statutory procedures and County Council governance.
- Potential risks entered captured on a risk register and RAG rated.
- Appointment of officers to deal with the reorganisation with roles and responsibilities clearly identified.

Once the analysis is complete, a recommendation will be made by the SSB to seek approval to proceed with informal discussions with the appropriate responsible bodies and leaders of schools affected.

11 - Reorganisation Business Case

Following careful consideration of alternative options to closure, and prior to any consultation being approved by proposers, a detailed business case will be produced that sets out the following for every school impacted by a proposal. The business case will be shared with all relevant stakeholders, including schools and academies, that may be impacted by the potential reorganisation:

- Narrative explaining the reason for change.
- Affected stakeholders including people, schools and third parties.
- Pupil forecast data including places available at other schools for future parental preference.
- Financial projections and costs associated with reorganisation.
- Staffing implications including restructuring costs.
- Community considerations.
- How the change will impact all schools within the planning area, including their numbers of children, families, staff and community stakeholders.
- Future admission arrangements.
- Current and future transport and vehicular movements.
- Impact on curriculum knowledge, Ofsted ratings and resource availability.
- Considerations for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.
- Possible rebranding of schools impacted by the reorganisation.
- Statement about future use of the site.
- Time frame for closure with clear milestones for decision making.
- Details of other statutory processes required to deliver the closure.
- Draft Statutory Notices and Significant Change documentation.

Once the business case is written it will be presented to the relevant board for a decision to be made regarding progressing to Pre-Publication Consultation.

12 - Pre-Publication Consultation

This is the stage at which the potential reorganisation will be published. Therefore, every consideration and detail must of the reorganisation must be understood and prepared by the Schools Sustainability Board. This will include the impact of staff and children leaving the school prior to formal decisions being made. Communication will be key to the success of the reorganisation, and the following will be needed for the consultation:

- Appointed member of LCC Media team who has ownership of comms plan and communications.
- Consultation proposal to be published.
- Public meeting to formally launch consultation.
- Website for consultation information, responses and FAQ.
- A range of formats for consultation responses to be made by.
- Consideration of other resources that may be required to manage aspects such as public protests.
- The consultation report is to be written once closed, including key points raised, matters to be considered further and next steps.

13 - Statutory Notice Publication and Representation

Once a consultation report is written and considered, a formal decision needs to be made to progress Statutory Notice Publication by Cabinet within 12 months of the consultation being completed. For academies, this decision will be proposed by the academy Trustees to the Secretary of State for a decision. Representations that are made must be passed on to the decision makers for consideration. The publication of the notice must be for a minimum of four weeks during term time and include details of:

- Where copies of the proposal can be obtained, including the consultation website.
- How representations can be made to decision makers.
- Clear timeframe for representations to be made.

14 - Decision

For maintained schools the final decision is made by Cabinet as the decision makers. They must decide within two months of the end of the representation period and the outcome of the decision must confirm the decision made and the reasons for doing so. The decision can be referred to the Schools Adjudicator and must be referred within 1 week of the decision being made. For academies the decision is made by the Secretary of State for Education.

15 - Reorganisation Implementation

Once the final decision is made the process of implementing a reorganisation must happen within three years of the decision being made and a detailed plan for the implementation must be followed. Where the reorganisation of schools involves school closure, the date of closure must be considered carefully and be at least one academic year after the decision is taken. This will set out the major milestones for completing the reorganisation including how vacated sites and buildings will be used, ensuring any land trust issues as stipulated in the 1841 School Sites Act are addressed.

The implementation of the reorganisation will be reported to the Schools' Sustainability Board with copies being shared with relevant responsible bodies. Where the reorganisation is being implemented by another responsible body, relevant officers from the County Council will work with them to support the reorganisation and ensure a smooth transition for Leicestershire children and families affected by the reorganisation.

There are 74 Primary School Planning Areas with Leicestershire. Please click on the relevant Planning Area below which will take you to the County Council's School Organisation Service website where the data is stored:

- Schools within the Planning Area.
- Planning Area map.
- Admission Number (AN).
- Capacity.
- Five-year pupil forecast.
- Current Overview.
- Future actions.

The SCAP Data will be updated on an annual basis once the SCAP return is signed off with the Department for Education.

Number	Name	District	Schools Included
			Fossebrook Primary School
			Lubbesthorpe Primary School
855019	Braunstone LFE Primary	Blaby	Kingsway Primary School
000010	Bradilotone El E i illinary	2.asy	Millfield L.E.A.D. Academy
			Ravenhurst Primary School
			Stafford Leys Community Primary School
	Narborough Enderby Croft Thurlaston Primary		Croft Church of England Primary School
		Blaby	Enderby Danemill Primary School
			Greystoke Primary School
8550160			Huncote Primary School
			Red Hill Field Primary School
			The Pastures Primary School
			Thurlaston Church of England Primary School
8550206	Glenfield Primary	Blaby	Glenfield Primary School
0000200	Glerinela Filmary	Diaby	The Hall School
8550235	Countesthorpe Arnesby Kilby Primary	Blaby	Arnesby Church of England Primary School
3330200	Countestricipe Africady Milby Fillinary		Greenfield Primary School

			Kilby St Mary's Church of England Primary School
			All Saints Church of England Primary School
8550321	Stoney Sapcote Sharnford Primary	Blaby	Manorfield Church of England Primary School
			Sharnford Church of England Primary School
			Badgerbrook Primary School
			Blaby Stokes Church of England Primary School
8550335	Blaby Whetstone Cosby Primary	Blaby	Blaby Thistly Meadow Primary School
			Cosby Primary School
			St Peter's Church of England Primary School
			Bishop Ellis Catholic Primary School
8550004	Thurmaston Primary	Charnwood	Church Hill Church of England Junior School
0000004	Thumaston Filmary	Chariwood	Church Hill Infant School
			Eastfield Primary School
8550005	Burton Wymeswold Primary	Charnwood	Burton-on-the-Wolds Primary School
0000000		Onaniwood	◆Wymeswold Church of England Primary School
85500006	Anstey Primary	Charnwood	The Latimer Primary School
	Alistey Filinary	Chariwood	Woolden Hill Primary School
	Loughborough North Primary		Hathern Church of England Primary School
			Robert Bakewell Primary School
8550009		Charnwood	Stonebow Primary School Loughborough
			Thorpe Acre Infant School
			Thorpe Acre Junior School
	Barkby Syston Queniborough Primary		St Peter and St Paul Church of England Academy
8550204		Charnwood	Queniborough Church of England Primary School
			The Merton Primary School
			The Pochin School
			Cossington Church of England Primary School
8550205	Cossington Sileby Primary	Charnwood	Sileby Highgate Community Primary School
			Sileby Redlands Community Primary School
			Belton Church of England Primary School
8550208	Shepshed Belton Primary	Charnwood	Newcroft Primary Academy
3000200			Oxley Primary School Shepshed
			Saint Winefride's Catholic Voluntary Academy

			St Botolph's Church of England Primary School
			Beacon Academy
			Booth Wood Primary School
			Cobden Primary School & Community Centre
			Holywell Primary School
			Loughborough Church of England Primary School
8550209	Loughborough South Primary	Charnwood	Mountfields Lodge School
			Outwoods Edge Primary School
			Rendell Primary School
			Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy
			Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School
			Broomfield Community Primary School
8550304	Rearsby East Goscote Primary	Charnwood	St Michael & All Angels Church of England Primary School
			Barrow Hall Orchard Church of England Primary School
	Quorn Barrow Mountsorrel Seagrave Primary		Christ Church & Saint Peter's CofE Primary School
8550305		Charnwood	Seagrave Village Primary School
			St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School
			Hallam Fields Birstall
8550306	Birstall Primary	Charnwood	Highcliffe Primary School and Community Centre
0000000		Charnwood	Riverside Community Primary School
			Swithland St Leonard's Church of England Primary School
8550405	Swithland Woodhouse Primary		Woodhouse Eaves St Paul's CofE Primary School
			Richard Hill Church of England Primary School
8550406	Rothley Thurcaston Primary	Charnwood	Rothley Church of England Primary School
8550704	Thrussington Primary	Charnwood	Thrussington Primary
3000.01	Thrassington i finally	Ondiminosa .	Battling Brook Primary School
			Burbage Church of England Infant School
			Burbage Junior School
		Llingklay	Hinckley Parks Primary School
8550021	Hinckley & Burbage Primary	Hinckley and	Richmond Primary School
,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	Fillickley & Bulbage Filliary	Bosworth	Saint Peter's Catholic Primary School A Voluntary Academy
			Sketchley Hill Primary School Burbage
			St Mary's Church of England Primary School Hinckley
			Hollycroft Primary School
			Fioliyoloft i filliary oction

			Westfield Infant School Westfield Junior School
8550200	Desford Primary	Hinckley and Bosworth	Desford Community Primary School
8550220	Barlestone Verdon Primary	Hinckley and Bosworth	Barlestone Church of England Primary School Newbold Verdon Primary School
8550221	Barwell & Earl Shilton Primary	Hinckley and Bosworth	Barwell Church of England Academy Barwell Infant School Newlands Community Primary School Saint Peters Catholic Voluntary Academy Townlands Church of England Primary School St Simon and St Jude CofE Primary School
8550230	Congerstone Primary	Hinckley and Bosworth	Congerstone Primary School
8550240	Sheepy Primary	Hinckley and Bosworth	Sheepy Magna Church of England Primary School
8550250	Linford Groby Kirby Ratby Primary	Hinckley and Bosworth	Elizabeth Woodville Primary School Kirby Muxloe Primary School Lady Jane Grey Primary School Martinshaw Primary School Newtown Linford Primary School Ratby Primary School
8550260	Markfield Stanton Thornton Primary	Hinckley and Bosworth	Mercenfeld Primary School Stanton Under Bardon Community Primary School Thornton Primary School
8550270	Market Bosworth Primary	Hinckley and Bosworth	St Peter's Church of England Primary Academy
8550280	Witherley Primary	Hinckley and Bosworth	Witherley Church of England Primary School
8550421	Higham Stoke Golding Primar	Hinckley and Bosworth	Higham-on-the-Hill Church of England Primary School St Margaret's Church of England Primary School
8550015	Market Harborough Primary	Market Harborough	Farndon Fields Primary School Foxton Primary School

			Wellington Place Primary School
			Great Bowden Academy A CofE Primary School Little Bowden School
			Lubenham All Saints Church of England Primary School
			Market Harborough Church of England Academy
			Meadowdale Primary School
			Ridgeway Primary Academy
			St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy
			Dunton Bassett Primary School
		Market	Hallbrook Primary School
8550135	Broughton Astley Dunton Bassett Primary	Harborough	Old Mill Primary School
			Orchard Church of England Primary School
			Claybrooke Primary School
	Lutterworth & South Harborough Primary		Gilmorton Chandler Church of England Primary School
			Husbands Bosworth Church of England Primary School
			John Wycliffe Primary School
		Market	Sherrier Church of England Primary School
8550165		Harborough	South Kilworth Church of England Primary School
			St Andrew's Church of England Primary School
			St Mary's Church of England Primary School
			Swinford Church of England Primary School
			Ullesthorpe Church of England Primary School
		Market	Fernvale Primary School
8550214	Thurnby Primary	Harborough	Thurnby St Luke's Church of England Primary School
		Market	Fleckney Church of England Primary School
8550215	Fleckney Kibworth Primary	Harborough	Kibworth Church of England Primary School
0550044	и и в	Market	,
8550314	Houghton Primary	Harborough	Houghton-on-the-Hill Church of England Primary School
8550315	Billesdon Primary	Market Harborough	Billesdon Church of England Primary School
8550415	Bringhurst Primary	Market Harborough	Bringhurst Primary School
8550515	Church Langton Primary	Market Harborough	Church Langton Church of England Primary School
8550615	Great Glen Primary	Market Harborough	Great Glen St Cuthbert's Church of England Primary School

8550715	Hallaton Primary	Market Harborough	Hallaton Church of England Primary School
8550815	Tugby Primary	Market Harborough	Tugby Church of England Primary School
8550007	Melton Town Primary	Melton	Brownlow Primary School Saint Francis Catholic Primary School Sherard Primary School St Mary's Church of England Primary School Swallowdale Primary School and Community Centre The Grove Primary School
8550070	Asfordby Frisby Primary	Melton	Asfordby Hill Primary School Captains Close Primary School Frisby Church of England Primary School
8550075	Bottesford Redmile Primary	Melton	Bottesford Church of England Primary School Redmile Church of England Primary School
8550275	Clawson Hose Harby Stathern Primary	Melton	Harby Church of England Primary School Hose Church of England Primary School Long Clawson Church of England Primary School Stathern Primary School
8550370	Ab Kettleby Primary	Melton	Ab Kettleby School
8550375	Croxton Waltham Primary	Melton	Croxton Kerrial Church of England Primary School Waltham on the Wolds Church of England Primary School
8550404	Gaddesby Primary	Melton	Gaddesby Primary School
8550470	Buckminster Primary	Melton	Buckminster Primary School
8550570	Great Dalby Primary	Melton	Great Dalby School
8550670	Old Dalby Primary	Melton	Old Dalby Church of England Primary School
8550770	Scalford Primary	Melton	Scalford Church of England Primary School
8550870	Somerby Primary	Melton	Somerby Primary School
8550970	Wymondham Primary	Melton	St Peter's Church of England Primary School
8550008	Kegworth Donington Diseworth Whatton Primary	North-West	Diseworth Church of England Primary School Hemington Primary School Kegworth Primary School Long Whatton Church of England Primary School Foxbridge Primary School Orchard Community Primary School

			St Edward's Church of England Primary School
			All Saints Church of England Primary School
			Greenstone Primary School
			Woodstone Community Primary School
8550022	Cook ille I karales este Mendetone Drimen	North-West	Belvoirdale Community Primary School
0330022	Coalville Hugglescote Woodstone Primary	North-west	Broom Leys School
			Hugglescote Community Primary School
			Saint Clare's Primary School Voluntary Academy
			Warren Hills Community Primary School
			Ashby Hill Top Primary School
			Ashby Willesley Primary School
			Ashby-de-la-Zouch Church of England Primary School
8550023	Ashby Coleorton Packington Primary	North-West	Packington Church of England Primary School
			Viscount Beaumont's Church of England Primary School
			Hastings Primary School
			Woodcote Primary School
	Ibstock Heather Ellistown Nailstone Primary		Dove Bank Primary School
			Ellistown Community Primary School
8550024		North-West	Heather Primary School
			Ibstock Junior School
			St Denys Church of England Infant School Ibstock
	Whitwick Thringstone Swannington Primary		Holy Cross School A Catholic Voluntary Academy
			New Swannington Primary School
8550222		North-West	Swannington Church of England Primary School
			Thringstone Primary School
			Whitwick St John The Baptist Church of England Primary School
8550223	Albert Village Primary	North-West	Albert Village Primary School
	Measham Snarestone Primary		Measham Church of England Primary School
8550224		North-West	St Charles Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy
			Snarestone Church of England Primary School
8550308	Breedon Primary	North-West	St Hardulph's Church of England Primary School
8550324	Newton Burgoland Primary	North-West	Newton Burgoland Primary School
8550423	Donisthorpe Oakthorpe Primary	North-West	Donisthorpe Primary School
0000420	Bornothorpo Galterorpo i initary	. 13.1.1 11.331	Oakthorpe Primary School

8550424	Appleby Magna Primary	North-West	Sir John Moore Church of England Primary School
8550523	Griffydam Primary	North-West	Griffydam Primary School
8550323	8550323 Blackfordby Moira Primary		Moira Primary School
	·		Blackfordby St Margaret's Church of England Primary School
8550723	Newbold Church of England Primary School	North-West	Newbold Church of England Primary School
8550923	Worthington Primary	North-West	Worthington School
8550013	Wigston Primary	Oadby and Wigston	All Saints Church of England Primary School Glenmere Community Primary School Little Hill Primary Saint John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy Wigston Leicestershire The Meadow Community Primary School Thythorn Field Community Primary School Water Leys Primary School
8550014	Oadby Primary	Oadby and Wigston	Brocks Hill Primary School Brookside Primary School Langmoor Primary School Oadby Launde Primary School Woodland Grange Primary School
8550136	Glen Parva South Wigston Primary Oadby and Wigston		Fairfield Community Primary School Glen Hills Primary School Parkland Primary School South Wigston

There are 25 Secondary School Planning Areas with Leicestershire. Please click on the relevant Planning Area below which will take you to the County Council's School Organisation Service website where the data is stored:

- Schools within the Planning Area.
- Planning Area map.
- Admission Number (AN).
- Capacity.
- Five-year pupil forecast.
- Current Overview.
- Future actions.

The SCAP Data will be updated on an annual basis once the SCAP return is signed off with the Department for Education.

Number	Name	District	Schools Included
8551019	Braunstone Town Secondary	Blaby	The Winstanley School
8551135	Countesthorpe Secondary	Blaby	Countesthorpe Academy
8551160	Enderby Secondary	Blaby	Brockington College
8551004	Syston Secondary	Charnwood	The Roundhill Academy Wreake Valley Academy
8551005	Barrow & Quorn Secondary	Charnwood	Humphrey Perkins School Rawlins Academy
8551006	Birstall Secondary	Charnwood	The Cedars Academy
8551009	Loughborough Secondary	Charnwood	Charnwood College De Lisle College Loughborough Leicestershire Limehurst Academy Woodbrook Vale School
8551025	Shepshed Secondary	Charnwood	Iveshead School
8551270	Anstey Secondary	Charnwood	The Martin High School Anstey

8551021	Hinckley & Earl Shilton Secondary	Hinckley and Bosworth	Hastings High School Heath Lane Academy The Hinckley School Redmoor Academy Saint Martin's Catholic Voluntary Academy
8551200	Market Bosworth Secondary	Hinckley and Bosworth	The Market Bosworth School
8551201	Desford Secondary	Hinckley and Bosworth	Bosworth Academy
8551250	Groby Secondary	Hinckley and Bosworth	Brookvale Groby Learning Campus
8551260	Markfield Secondary	Hinckley and Bosworth	South Charnwood High School
8551136	Broughton Astley Secondary	Market Harborough	Thomas Estley Community College
8551150	Market Harborough Secondary	Market Harborough	The Robert Smyth Academy Welland Park Academy
8551155	Kibworth Secondary	Market Harborough	Kibworth Mead Academy
8551165	Lutterworth Secondary	Market Harborough	Lutterworth College Lutterworth High School
8551070	Melton Secondary	Melton	John Ferneley College Long Field Spencer Academy
8551075	Belvoir Secondary	Melton	The Priory Belvoir Academy
8551008	Castle Donington Secondary	North-West	Castle Donington College
8551022	Coalville Secondary	North-West	The Castle Rock School The Newbridge School
8551023	Ashby Secondary North-West		Ashby School Ivanhoe School
8551024	Ibstock Secondary	North-West	Ibstock Community College
8551014	Oadby Secondary	Oadby and Wigston	Gartree High School Manor High School Beauchamp College

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8551130	Wigston Secondary	Oadby and Wigston	South Wigston High School
			Wigston Academy

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Section F – Appendix: Guidance:	Guidance, Legi	siation, Po	olicies, Reports and Strategy
Basic need Funding	DfE	2025	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e2ce356e54ea5b2b8ee251/Capital_funding_for_sch_ool_places_needed_by_2028_explanatory_note_on_methodology.pdf
Building Bulletin 103	DfE	2014	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f23ec238fa8f57acac33720/BB103_Area_Guidelines_for_Mainstream_Schools.pdf
Closure of an Academy by Mutual Agreement	DfE	2024	http://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66fd1134a31f45a9c765efaa/Closure_of_an_academy_b_y_mutual_agreement_2024.pdf
Convert to an academy: guide for schools	DfE	2025	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/convert-to-an-academy-information-for-schools
Establishing a new academy: the free school presumption route	DfE	2024	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/663dfcab993111924d9d324a/Free_school_presumption_guidance.pdf
High Needs Capital Funding	DfE	2025	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e2d2025698d84e39cfdafb/HNPCA_2025- 26_Grant_Spend_Guidance.pdf
Making Significant Changes to an Academy	DfE	2024	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/670f97de3b919067bb48325b/Making_significant_changes_to_an_academy_October_2024.pdf
Making Significant Changes to Maintained School	DfE	2025	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67c0397d68a61757838d2026/Making_significant_chan ges_prescribed_alterations_to_maintained_schools-2025.pdf
Opening and Closing Maintained Schools	DfE	2024	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66fd4f0a080bdf716392eccf/Opening_and_closing_maintained_schools_2024.pdf
Securing Developer Contributions	DfE	2023	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64d0f70d7a5708001314485f/Securing_Developer_Contributions_for_Education.pdf
Strategic Capital Maintenance	DfE	2025	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-capital-funding#overview
Legislation:			
Academies Act 2010	Government	2018	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/32/contents
School Sites Act 1841	Government	1841	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/4-5/38/introduction
Section 14 Education Act 1996	Government	2022	https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/14
Policies:			

Basic Need Growth Funding Policy	LCC	2023	https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s179825/05%20-%20School%20Growth%20Policy.pdf
Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy	LCC	2025	https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-08/Mainstream-home-to-school-transport-policy-2025-26.pdf
Planning Obligations Policy	LCC	2019	https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2019/8/16/Planning-Obligations-Policy.pdf
SEND Home to School/College Transport Policy	LCC	2025	https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-08/SEN-home-to-school-college-transport-policy-2025-26.pdf
Reports:			
Housing Needs Assessment	LCC	2022	https://www.llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Housing-Distribution-Paper-June-2022.pdf
Population Data	Office of National Statistics	2025	https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/subnationalpopulationprojectionsforengland/2022based
Strategy:			
SEND and Inclusion Strategy	LCC	2025	https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-07/SEND-and-Inclusion-Strategy-2025-2028.pdf



CABINET – 18 NOVEMBER 2025

PROPOSED TRANSFER OF FUNDING FROM THE SCHOOLS BLOCK TO THE HIGH NEEDS BLOCK OF THE DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT FOR 2026/27

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

PART A

Purpose of the Report

- The purpose of this report is to note the outcome of the consultation process with schools on a proposed funding transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for 2026/27, and feedback from the Schools Forum.
- 2. The report outlines two options for funding a sustainable outreach and graduated support offer to mainstream schools, continuing with the transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block or implementing a range of other measures to continue to fund the outreach support.

Recommendations

- 3. It is recommended that the Cabinet:
 - Notes the responses to the consultation on a 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for the 2026/27 financial year;
 - b) Considers the two options set out in paragraphs 48-64 for funding a sustainable outreach and graduated support offer to mainstream schools through Oakfield School, noting the decision of the Schools Forum who did not support either option but proposed further consultation with schools on Option 2.
 - Option 1 is a 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block, or

- Option 2 is a per-pupil contribution from schools to support pupil outreach support and a commitment from schools to supporting ongoing mainstream inclusion.
- c) Agrees a preferred option for implementation, noting that if it agrees to progress with a Schools Block Transfer, the Director of Children and Family Services will be authorised to seek permission from the Secretary of State to approve a 0.5% transfer.

(KEY DECISION)

Reasons for Recommendation

- 4. Demand for support for children and young people with SEND in Leicestershire is growing at a significantly faster rate than was anticipated in the current Medium Term Financial Strategy, leading to an increasingly unsustainable financial position for the council and education system in the county. These pressures are also reflected nationally. There is a need for ongoing support for inclusion and belonging of children and young people with SEND in mainstream schools, and a clear need for outreach and graduated support for pupils with additional needs following the ending of existing offers funded through the SEN Investment Fund for 2025/26. Mainstream inclusion is anticipated to be a key expectation from the upcoming Schools White paper.
- 5. Local authorities are able to transfer 0.5% of funding from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the DSG following consultation with schools and the approval of the Schools Forum. If the Schools Forum does not approve, or if a transfer in excess of 0.5% is being sought, local authorities can seek formal permission from the Secretary of State to disapply sections of the School and Early Years Finance England Regulations which govern the use of DSG.
- 6. This report notes the views of consultees, feedback from the Schools Forum and seeks a decision from the Cabinet on the preferred approach for funding a sustainable outreach and graduated support offer for children and young people with SEND in mainstream schools.
- 7. Should a School Block Transfer of 0.5% be the preferred option, the Cabinet's approval is necessary in order for the Director of Children and Family Services to approach the Secretary of State for permission to undertake the transfer which would be used to continue the SEN Investment Fund.

<u>Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)</u>

- 8. On 6th November 2025, the Schools Forum received a report setting out the findings of a consultation with schools on the proposal for a further School Block Transfer for 2026/27. The Schools Forum considered options set out for funding a sustainable outreach and graduated response model from Oakfield School and did not agree to support either option presented.
- 9. Should a decision be made to continue with the School Block Transfer without the agreement of the Schools Forum, a request for a decision from the Secretary of State will need to be submitted by mid-November 2025. Confirmation of the decision from the Secretary of State would be expected prior to the next Schools Forum meeting in February 2026.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

- 10. The Children and Families Act 2014 sets out the legal duties that local authorities and Integrated Care Boards must fulfil for children and young people with SEND aged 0-25. This includes a duty to identify and assess the SEND of children and young people in their area when they become aware that they have or may have SEND, and to provide special educational provision where this is identified in an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- 11. The SEND Code of Practice 2015 sets out the statutory guidance for supporting children and young people with SEND. This includes the legal framework for making decisions around requests for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNAs).
- 12. The financial framework for pupils with High Needs and the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) are outlined within the School and Early Years (Finance) Regulations and associated High Needs Funding Operational Guide issued by the Department for Education. The decision on a transfer of funding is devolved under legislation to the Schools Forum following consultation with mainstream schools and academies. Local authorities are able to seek approval from the Secretary of State should the Schools Forum not approve the transfer or if they are seeking a transfer in excess of 0.5%.
- 13. At its meeting on 22 November 2024, the Cabinet agreed that the Council could seek the approval of the Secretary of State on the proposed 0.5% transfer for 2025/26. The decision of the Secretary of State to approve the School Block Transfer for 2025/26 and the subsequent establishment of an SEN Investment Fund was reported to the Schools Forum in February 2025.

- 14. The Cabinet, at its meeting on 7 February 2025, considered a report on the Council's Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and noted the on-going significant financial challenges facing the authority, including a growing deficit in the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
- 15. The Cabinet agreed the SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2025-2028 at its meeting on 17 June 2025. The proposal to improve support for inclusion and belonging in mainstream schools supports the delivery of actions within Section 5 of the Strategy.
- 16. A report to the Cabinet on 12 September 2025 noted that demand pressure on the High Needs Block had continued to increase since the report in February, leading to a significantly worsening projected overspend position for 2025/26 and an increase in the cumulative DSG deficit.
- 17. The proposal for a sustainable outreach and graduated support offer for children and young people with SEND in mainstream schools aligns with the ambitions set out in the Children and Family Services Department Plan 2024-26 and the County Council's Strategic Plan 2022-26.

Resource Implications

- 18. At the end of 2024/25 the accumulated DSG deficit stood at £64.4m. Due to sustained year-on-year growth in demand for funded EHCPs since they were introduced in 2014, a £15m overspend on the HNB grant was anticipated for the 2025/26 financial year, based on a 7% increase in EHCPs from the previous year which was expected to increase the overall DSG deficit to around £80m by the end of 2025/26. The percentage uplift built into this year's MTFS was based on historical trend data from the last 5 academic years.
- 19. Growth in demand for EHCPs has risen at unprecedented levels both nationally and locally during 2025/26, with Leicestershire experiencing a 15% increase in active EHCPs since the beginning of 2025 to 8,311 at the end of September 2025. This is expected to increase the deficit to £110.5m by the end of 2025/26.
- 20. The growth in demand for EHCPs and the related DSG deficit directly impacts the availability of financial resources for other council priorities, as funding is required through the General Fund (including Council Tax). This is required due to lost interest income on the entire £110.5m deficit, payment of transport costs for pupils with SEND (£26.9m) and the cost of assessment and psychology services (£3.7m). This impact is forecast to grow significantly.

- 21. Whilst the Government's Schools White Paper is expected to result in systemic changes to the national SEND system, such changes will take several years to deliver, and none appear to directly address the current or forecast funding issues. Any announcements linked to SEND reform are now not expected until the New Year. However, an announcement on Government's approach to the deficit is expected in December alongside the Local Government Finance Settlement.
- 22. The 0.5% transfer proposed from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block is expected to generate around £2.8m for 2026/27, which would maintain a similar level of funding transfer to 2025/26 the exact amount to be confirmed when budget allocations are received from the DfE. Alternatively, a per-pupil contribution from schools and mainstream inclusion measures would enable the SEN Investment Fund outreach work to continue. It would result in an outreach and graduated support offer to mainstream schools through Oakfield School, supporting children and young people with SEND to remain in mainstream with the right support and interventions in place at the time they are needed. However, there would be no compulsion on schools to participate and without sufficient contribution the service would not be sustainable.
- 23. The financial impact of any block transfer on individual schools will be confirmed following budget allocations being received from the DfE.
- 24. Should a per-pupil contribution be agreed, the amount for each school would also be confirmed following receipt of budget allocations from the DfE and using the number of pupils on roll on the annual school census day.
- 25. The Director of Law and Governance and the Director of Corporate Resources have been consulted on this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

26. This report has been circulated to all Members of the County Council.

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PART B

Background

- 27. Since 2006 the Department for Education has funded schools, early years and children and young people with high needs through a specific grant known as the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), which is made up of 4 blocks
 - Early Years Block
 - Schools Block
 - High Needs Block
 - Central Services Block
- 28. The DSG is paid to local authorities, with much of it being passported directly to education settings through an agreed formula. Additional funding for pupils with SEND comes from the different blocks within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Leicestershire's DSG allocation for 2025/26 is £790.7m, of which £117.4m is allocated for pupils with High Needs. Leicestershire is the fifth lowest funded authority of gross DSG funding per mainstream pupil.
- 29. The High Needs Block (HNB), which is held by the Council on behalf of schools, is provided for pupils with more complex SEND and funds the cost of meeting the educational needs of children and young people set out in their EHCP. Pupils in special schools and independent special schools all have EHCPs and are fully funded through HNB funding, while those in mainstream schools with EHCPs will receive HNB funding to 'top up' the amount of funding the school already receives through the Early Years or Schools Blocks. High Needs block funding is allocated on an individual child basis to schools as agreed through their EHCP.
- 30. Most local authorities in England spend more on meeting their statutory obligations to support children with High Needs than available funding which has increased nationally by 66% from £7.5bn in 2016 to at least £12bn in 2025 and is forecast to rise by a further £3bn by 2029. Since 2020, local authorities have been able to accumulate a DSG deficit which does not impact the wider local authority budget through a temporary statutory accounts override which has recently been extended to March 2028. Unless further legislation changes this, from April 2028, local authorities will be required to make financial provision for the deficit within their wider budget. The Institute of Fiscal Studies, in its most recent publication, has forecasted that local authority HNB deficits will reach £8bn by 2028.
- 31. As at the end of July 2025, there was a net in-year overspend of £45m on the HNB, which is approximately £30m more than the originally projected overspend of £15m. This is largely due to increased demand on the placement budget. At the end of 2024/25, the accumulated High Needs deficit stood at £64.4m and is now projected to rise to £110.5m at the end of 2025/26. A range of future demand scenarios are being considered in

- forecasting the High Needs budget for future years; however, any level of growth above the funding settlement will increase the cumulative DSG deficit.
- 32. The number of requests for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments (EHCNA) in Leicestershire increased by 12% in 2024, in line with a similar increase in requests nationally (11.7%). Leicestershire has experienced an additional 25% increase in the number of EHCNAs received between January and September 2025, with the 12-month rolling average annual number of requests reaching over 2,000 at the end of September 2025. The total number of active EHCPs in Leicestershire has also increased over 15% between January and September 2025, to 8,311 at the end of September. It is anticipated that demand for funded EHCP packages will reach 8,500 by March 2026, three years earlier than the previous MTFS forecasted projection.
- 33. As part of the mitigation against the cumulative HNB overspend and the increasing number of funded EHCPs, the Cabinet agreed that the Director of Children and Family Services should approach the Secretary of State for permission to transfer 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the DSG for 2025/26. Following agreement to the transfer by the Secretary of State, the transfer was used to create a SEN Investment Fund to support children and young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs in mainstream schools.
- 34. The SEN Investment Fund offers for 2025/26, developed in consultation with schools, have been subject to a phased launch for mainstream educational settings during the Autumn term. The majority of the 2025/26 SEN Investment Fund will be used to expand the existing Primary outreach offer from Oakfield School and create a new multidisciplinary Secondary outreach offer coordinated through Oakfield, with additional funding for SEMH training for school staff and in-school alternative provision offers.
- 35. Outreach offers funded through the SEN Investment Fund will initially be introduced temporarily due to the temporary nature of the Fund itself. However, it is noted that there is a need for ongoing targeted support for children and young people with SEND in mainstream schools at risk of permanent exclusion through outreach and a graduated model of support for pupils with additional needs. Demand for support from Primary schools currently outstrips permanent capacity, and it is anticipated that demand for Secondary support will be strong when this offer is introduced in January 2026. It is proposed that any transfer for 2026/27 will be focused solely on funding Oakfield outreach and graduated support.

Consultation Outcome

36. In September 2025, the Schools Forum agreed to proceed with formal consultation on a 0.5% transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block of the DSG for 2026/27.

- 37. A 4-week consultation was undertaken during September and October 2025 through an online survey issued to all mainstream maintained schools and academies, supported by direct written submissions from headteachers, trust leaders, and senior education professionals. The consultation sought views from schools, academies, and education leaders across Leicestershire on the continuation of the 0.5% transfer and the strategic focus of the SEN Investment Fund.
- 38. The consultation generated a total of 35 responses. A quality assurance review was undertaken to ensure analytical validity and to identify duplicate responses from the same school or organisation. In line with standard consultation methodology, only one response was retained per individual school. However, submissions from different schools within the same Multi-Academy Trust were each counted independently to reflect their distinct budgets and governance responsibilities. Following this review, 31 valid responses were included in the analysis.
- 39. The respondent group was dominated by secondary academies (approximately 77%), with smaller representation from primary academies, schools with resource bases, and other educational organisations. Around two-thirds (69%) confirmed that their response represented the official position of their school or MAT.
- 40. The overall response rate was broadly consistent with previous Schools Forum consultations; however, this represents a small proportion of the 276 mainstream Primary and Secondary schools across the County.
- 41. Analysis of the quantitative data demonstrates a clear majority opposition to the continuation of the 0.5% transfer.
 - 71% of respondents strongly disagreed with the continuation of the SEND Investment Fund.
 - 14% tended to disagree.
 - 6% neither agreed nor disagreed.
 - 9% tended to or strongly agreed.
- 42. When asked whether Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) should remain the Fund's principal focus:
 - 31% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
 - 40% strongly agreed or tended to agree.
 - 29% expressed neutrality or uncertainty.
- 43. On the proposal to make the 0.5% transfer annual, the level of disagreement increased further:
 - 89% strongly disagreed.
 - 9% tended to agree.
 - 3% neither agreed nor disagreed.

- 44. The overall findings highlight a consistent and significant level of concern across the school system, with respondents questioning both the financial rationale for the transfer and the effectiveness of the Fund's current implementation.
- 45. More information on key themes within written feedback received through the consultation is included in Appendix A.

Ongoing need for a SEN Investment Fund

- 46. The feedback from the consultation demonstrated an opposition to undertaking the schools block transfer and the continuation of the SEN Investment Fund for 2026/27. Whilst this feedback was clear, demand for support for children and young people with SEND in Leicestershire is growing at a faster rate than was anticipated in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, leading to an increasingly unsustainable financial position for the education system. Mainstream inclusion is a critical component in addressing the current financial challenges and schools will need to actively embrace inclusion to return the system to a more sustainable position.
- 47. There is a need for ongoing support for inclusion and belonging of children and young people with SEND in mainstream schools, and a clear need for outreach and graduated support for pupils with additional needs following the ending of existing offers funded through the SEN Investment Fund.

 Mainstream inclusion is anticipated to be a key expectation from the Schools White paper.
- 48. This therefore leaves the local authority and school leaders with some difficult decisions over how to support children with additional needs going forward.

Options

Option 1 – Continue with School Block Transfer to create an ongoing SEN Investment Fund

- 49. The School Block Transfer for 2026/27 would be used to fund a sustainable outreach and graduated support offer accessed via Oakfield for mainstream Primary and Secondary Schools.
- 50. The multidisciplinary outreach model introduced during 2025/26 from the existing SEN Investment Fund will offer in-reach support for schools accessed through Oakfield School that upskills staff working with children with additional needs and provides direct intervention with a child and their family. Staff will go into schools to support teachers and support staff through observations, modelling and solution circles, as well as delivering direct interventions. It is proposed that this will continue on a sustained basis through the future SEN Investment Fund.

- 51. In addition, the Fund will also deliver an offer of bespoke in-school intensive support for children and young people outside of their classroom through Oakfield. This would be co-produced with schools. It would take place at the times triggers are observed. The provision would seek to help children and young people regulate their emotions but would also have an academic focus to ensure they are able to reach their full potential. There may be an additional focus in the sessions to address specific identified needs.
- 52. The offer will support parents to fully understand what support mainstream schools can be expected to provide. They would also present parents with data around the attainment and progress of children and young people placed in specialist provision compared with those who remain at a mainstream school.
- 53. As a key area of ongoing concern, support for Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) will be considered as part of the graduated support and outreach offer. EBSNA consultations introduced through the SEN investment fund for 2025/26 may look to be continued subject to feedback from schools on their effectiveness.
- 54. The SEN Investment Fund and onward plan will deliver:
 - Increased direct support to schools
 - Increased access to specialists
 - High quality educational curriculums for pupils at risk of exclusion or those permanently excluded that provide pupils with meaningful outcomes through Oakfield School
 - An opportunity to support pupils to maintain their place in their mainstream school through targeted intervention
 - Reduced mobility of pupils within the system
 - Improved targeted support through access to high-quality training
- 55. Within the nationally set financial framework for school funding, the only option of removing funding from the Schools Block to High Needs is by capping per pupil funding gains between years. Given that per pupil funding is protected at a level only slightly above the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) as the only universal funding received by all pupils, funding gains are delivered within the NFF additional factors which are largely related to deprivation measures.
- 56. Taking into account feedback from the consultation around equity of funding contributions, the final methodology for determining contributions will be confirmed when funding allocations have been announced by the DFE.

Option 1 - Risks

57. As mainstream schools have not agreed to a school block transfer for 2026/27, progressing with this option may risk a lack of cooperation and engagement in the implementation and ongoing success of both outreach and

graduated response from Oakfield, and broader support for inclusion of children and young people with SEND.

Option 2 – A per-pupil contribution from schools to support pupil outreach support and a commitment from schools to supporting ongoing mainstream inclusion.

- 58. In light of the opposition to continuation of the transfer, an alternative to continuing the transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block has been developed for consideration. This proposal would potentially fund the activities delivered through the SEN Investment fund, namely outreach and graduated support for pupils with additional needs in mainstream schools via Oakfield School. However, there would be no compulsion on schools to participate and without sufficient contribution the service would not be sustainable.
- 59. This option would see schools requested to make an annual per-pupil contribution based on the number of children on roll. Mainstream schools would also be asked to commit to supporting ongoing mainstream inclusion and support measures to create a more sustainable financial position for the Leicestershire educational system by:
 - Reducing new EHCP requests in proportion to their individual historical request level through the development of mainstream inclusion offers
 - Reducing permanent exclusions, using managed moves/alternative provision
 - Accepting an agreed number of pupils with SEND rather than LCC placing in specialist provision
 - Develop inclusion provision/spaces
- 60. An indicative per pupil contribution level would need to be agreed based on creating a sustainable outreach and graduated support model across the Primary and Secondary mainstream education system for Leicestershire.
- 61. A number of responses to the Schools Block Transfer consultation refer to schools with higher numbers of SEND pupils being impacted more than others by the proposals and the disproportionate impact of the transfer across Leicestershire Schools. A per-pupil contribution model would address these concerns by introducing a standard contribution, ensuring equity across all mainstream schools.
- 62. In following this approach, consideration would need to be given to proportionate access to support offers to ensure that mainstream inclusion and belonging remains a priority for all schools. The Leicestershire education system would need to work in partnership to create a more sustainable system, with expectations that the current unprecedented level of demands upon the High Needs Block are reduced, including reductions in the number of pupils permanently excluded from schools, particularly those schools with a disproportionately high number.

Option 2 - Risks

- 63. As per-pupil contributions would be voluntary, schools may not agree to pay in to the model, risking ongoing sustainability of the outreach and graduated support offer from Oakfield which benefits from economies of scale when supporting larger numbers of schools and pupils. However, some scaling of the offer could be made according to the level of contributions from schools.
- 64. Schools may choose not to support mainstream inclusion measures, although the pending White Paper is likely to compel them to do so. The former would lead to a continuation of pressure on the SEND system for EHCPs and specialist support and placements and accelerate the DSG deficit position.

Equality Implications

65. The SEN Investment Fund by its nature is targeted at children and young people with SEMH needs, however it will support wider inclusive mainstream practice which should benefit all children and young people. A full Equality Impact Assessment will accompany this proposal.

Human Rights Implications

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

Partnership Implications

67. Current growth in demand for EHCPs supporting children and young people with SEND and the accelerating DSG deficit position noted in this report highlight the increasingly unsustainable financial position for the entire education system in Leicestershire. This is a shared problem for partners and cannot be resolved without collaboration and joint action between the Council and school leaders over how to support children with additional needs going forward.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 12 September 2025, "Medium Term Financial Strategy – Budget Monitoring and MTFS Refresh",

https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s191577/MTFS%20Sept%2025%20Cabin et%20-%20030925%204pm%20FINAL.pdf

Report to the Cabinet on 17 June 2025 "Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) And Inclusion Strategy 2025-2028"

https://cexmodgov01/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=135&Mld=7877

Report to the Cabinet on 7 February 2025 "Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2028/29"

https://cexmodgov01/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=135&Mld=7873

Report to the Cabinet on 22 November 2024, "Proposed Transfer of Funding From The Schools Block to The High Needs Block of The Dedicated Schools Grant" https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s186577/Resetting%20SEND%20Finance %20 Cabinet%20report.pdf

Report to the County Council on 18 May 2022 "Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026"

https://cexmodgov01/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=134&Mld=6482

Appendix A - Key Themes within Consultation responses

Transparency, Governance,

Communication and Accountability

The key themes within the consultation and the local authority response are set out below:

Theme **Local Authority response Lack of Demonstrable Impact from** The Local Authority acknowledges that the first 6 months of the Fund's the Existing Fund implementation was primarily focused on The most prominent concern was the co-producing the 2025/26 offers with absence of clear, publicly available school representatives, commissioning, evidence demonstrating the impact of and establishing delivery infrastructure the SEND Investment Fund introduced including recruitment, which has inevitably in 2025/26. Schools consistently delayed implementation and therefore reported that, while a portion of their measurable impact. A formal outcomes funding had been redirected, they had framework has now been established. not observed any tangible linking performance to attendance, improvements in pupil outcomes, exclusions, and EHCNA reductions. An access to support, or specialist input. initial evaluation report will be presented Several respondents expressed to Schools Forum in Spring 2026, with frustration that schools were being subsequent regular updates thereafter. It asked to continue funding an initiative has been noted to the School Forum whose benefits remained unproven. previously that the impact of the Fund on reducing systemic demand pressures will take some time to be realised. Impact on Frontline Provision and The Local Authority recognises the Staffing financial pressures faced by schools. It emphasises the transfer represents a Many schools described how the limitation on annual funding growth, rather funding transfer had limited their than a reduction in core budgets. The capacity to sustain frontline provision, purpose of the Fund is to invest in systemparticularly Learning Support Assistants wide strategies and support that improve (LSAs) and other classroom-based staff sustainability; building collective capacity supporting pupils with additional needs. and reducing overreliance on one-to-one Several leaders noted that this adult support. The Authority is working reduction undermines inclusion and with schools to ensure that future contradicts the stated objectives of investments are demonstrably visible and improving outcomes for pupils with beneficial at school level. SEND. The growing deficit has a direct impact on other County Council services

The Local Authority has overseen a

working group of school representatives who have shaped and agreed the offers

A strong theme throughout the consultation was the perceived lack of transparency regarding how funds were distributed, governed, and evaluated. Respondents expressed concern about limited engagement and perceived lack of co-production in developing the proposals. Many schools highlighted that previous attempts at collaboration had not led to meaningful dialogue or shared decision making. Schools called for the publication of detailed financial information, clear governance structures, and outcome-based reporting. Respondents requested that schools be represented in decisionmaking processes to ensure accountability.

for 2025/26 and has actively encouraged further membership of the group along with providing regular progress updates to a range of forums. The working group also attempted to engage widely with schools through surveys publicised through Headteacher Briefings. However further improvements in communication and transparency will be introduced to ensure more ownership of decision-making going forward. Performance data will be presented to Schools Forum on a termly basis.

Focus of the Fund – SEMH and Wider Needs

While the majority of respondents acknowledged the increasing prevalence of SEMH needs, many felt that an exclusive focus on SEMH risked neglecting other areas such as cognition and learning, communication and interaction, and sensory or physical needs. Several schools argued that a broader, more flexible approach would ensure equitable access to support.

The Local Authority agrees that any future iterations of the Fund should respond to a wider spectrum of SEND. SEMH will remain the lead priority for 2026–27 due to its prevalence in the local EHCP population (currently 23%) and influence on attendance and exclusions, but new workstreams focusing on cognition and learning and communication and interaction will be developed during the year in collaboration with schools.

Equity of funding contributions and the Impact on Inclusive Schools

A recurring concern was that schools with higher proportions of pupils with SEND contribute proportionately more to the transfer and therefore experience a greater financial impact. Respondents described this as counterintuitive and inequitable, suggesting that it risks discouraging inclusive practice.

Under the National Funding Formula (NFF), the Minimum Per Pupil Funding Level (MPPL) and Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) continue to safeguard core budgets. Nonetheless, the Local Authority recognises that perceptions of inequity can undermine confidence. An alternative proposal for continuation of funding for outreach and support using a different method for establishing funding contributions is set out in paragraphs 43-46 below.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Equalities Compliance

Respondents asked for assurance that appropriate equality impact assessments had been completed and requested that outcomes be monitored against clear, measurable objectives.

A full Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Impact Assessment will accompany this proposal. Monitoring and evaluation processes will be embedded from the outset, with progress reviewed annually and reported to Schools Forum. Performance indicators will focus on inclusion, attendance, and educational progress for pupils with SEN.



CABINET – 18 NOVEMBER 2025

RESPONSE TO THE HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL REGULATION 18 LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION 2025

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

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Cabinet on the content of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council's (Hinckley & Bosworth BC) Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation, and to set out the County Council's proposed response.

Recommendations

- 2. It is recommended that:
 - a) The County Council's response to Hinckley & Bosworth BC's Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation, set out in paragraphs 37 to 65 inclusive and the appendix to this report, be noted and approved;
 - b) The Chief Executive, following consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member, be authorised to make any minor amendments to the consultation response prior to its submission to Hinckley & Bosworth BC by 28 November 2025.

Reasons for Recommendations

3. The County Council's response will set out key comments for consideration by Hinckley & Bosworth BC in progressing its new Local Plan. It seeks to ensure alignment with the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (SGP), and to influence the content of the Local Plan in the interests of local communities, including ensuring that the Local Plan provides the most robust possible policy platform for securing the provision of the infrastructure and services required to support its successful delivery.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

4. The County Council's consultation response is required to be submitted to Hinckley & Bosworth BC by the close of consultation on 28 November 2025.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

5. In 2018 the County Council, Leicester City Council, the seven district councils in Leicestershire, and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP),

approved the SGP which provides the long-term vision for planned growth for the area up to 2050. In Hinckley & Bosworth Borough, Hinckley is identified as an Area of Managed Growth, whilst the A5 is identified as an Improvement Corridor.

- 6. In March 2019, the County Council responded to Hinckley and Bosworth BC's Local Plan Review: New Directions for Growth. A number of concerns were raised, including the lack of consultation with the (as then referenced) County Highway Authority and insufficient reference to the policy framework provided by the agreed SGP.
- 7. The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities (LLSTP) was approved by the Cabinet on 20 November 2020. This document has a plan period to 2050 and was developed by the County and City Councils alongside the SGP to ensure the long-term development needs and associated transportation requirements are co-ordinated.
- 8. In 2021, the County Council and its partners (Leicester City Council, the seven district councils and the LLEP), commissioned the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA). The HENA, published in June 2022, provides evidence that across Leicester and Leicestershire, the projected housing need from 2020 to 2036 is 91,400 dwellings and the employment land need from 2021 to 2036 is 344 hectares.
- 9. In September 2021, the County Council responded to Hinckley & Bosworth BC's draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) consultation and expressed the need for closer partnership working with Hinckley & Bosworth BC across key disciplines and at a senior officer level in recognition of:
 - the challenges presented by the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in the Borough and wider area:
 - the lack of capacity on the Local Road Network;
 - the need to take a strategic approach to education and other infrastructure provision; and
 - the need to secure deliverable planned growth supported by infrastructure rather than 'unplanned' speculative development.

The response noted that, at that time, the level of partnership working needed to understand the strategy of the proposed Local Plan, how it would be delivered and how the impacts would be mitigated, had not been achieved. It further set out that the County Council's view was that in order to achieve the required level of partnership working, a revised timetable would be needed (and agreed with relevant stakeholders) to build in time for appropriate dialogue and to share and consider technical evidence.

- 10. In October 2021 the Cabinet considered a further report regarding Hinckley & Bosworth BC's emerging Local Plan. The Cabinet agreed that the County Council would continue to work with Hinckley & Bosworth BC to develop a Local Plan that was sound and deliverable, but that if Hinckley & Bosworth BC decided to publish a Regulation 19 Local Plan that did not satisfactorily address the County Council's concerns, it would raise a formal objection as part of the consultation process, and at the Examination in Public.
- 11. In December 2021, the County Council and Hinckley & Bosworth BC became signatories to a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) relating to South Leicestershire Local Plan Making (November 2021), aligning the gathering of evidence and activity in the development of new local plans for three districts in the south of the County (Blaby, Harborough and Oadby & Wigston).

- 12. In February 2022 the Cabinet authorised the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Cabinet Lead Member, to submit comments on behalf of the County Council, prior to the end of the Hinckley & Bosworth BC Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation period. The report reiterated that to date, insufficient evidence had been provided to demonstrate that the Local Plan met the tests of soundness as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and as a result, this was likely to form the basis of the County Council's response.
- 13. In September 2022 the Cabinet approved the County Council becoming a signatory to a SoCG relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (June 2022), setting out how the City Council's identified unmet needs would be accommodated in the County. Hinckley & Bosworth BC approved the SoCG at its Council meeting in January 2024.
- 14. In November 2022 the Cabinet received a paper setting out the financial implications for the County Council of delivering sustainable and inclusive growth and the approach and principles that it proposed the County Council should adopt to address and manage these risks.
- 15. In September 2024 the Cabinet approved the response to the Hinckley & Bosworth Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan consultation (July 2024). The comments referenced some concerns over the development of transport evidence and wider unknowns and uncertainties including the Government's proposed planning reforms, the decision on the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order and the unclear position regarding future investment in the SRN.
- 16. Also in September 2024 the Cabinet approved the County Council's response to the Government's proposed reforms to the NPPF and the planning system.
- 17. In October 2024 the Cabinet received a paper on the strategic planning issues associated with the emerging Charnwood Local Plan. This included principles for future engagement of the LTA in other local plan processes in light of the County Council's experience of the Charnwood Local Plan.
- 18. In November 2024 the Cabinet received a paper which included a reiteration of the new local plan development principles set out in the October 2024 Cabinet report and highlighted the need for an appropriate delivery mechanism for infrastructure to be set out.
- 19. In December 2024 the Cabinet received a paper on the Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 2028/29. This outlined that it was critical for local plans to be prepared with sufficient evidence to secure contributions to deliver critical infrastructure and that it was necessary for the district councils to work with the County Council to ensure local plans included policies that balanced the need to support delivery of growth without exposing the County Council to further financial risk.
- 20. In September 2025 the Cabinet considered a paper and gave approval to start consultation and exploratory work on a potential road link to connect the A5 and the A47 in Hinckley, alleviating pressure, providing travel choice and unlocking development land.
- 21. In October 2025 the Cabinet received a paper on the next steps for delivering the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2025-2040. This included a resolution that the draft key 'policy positions' that are intended to form the basis of the Enabling Travel Choice

Strategy (ETCS) be approved for consultation and that the work undertaken on three pilot draft Multi-Modal Area Investment Plans (MMAIPs) including Hinckley, be noted.

Resource Implications

- 22. The County Council has committed significant resources to engaging in, and supporting, a collaborative approach to strategic planning in order to facilitate the delivery of growth within the County and to mitigate the negative impacts of development, to the extent that it is reasonably possible to do.
- 23. Despite increasing challenges, as set out in the report to the Cabinet in September 2024 on the proposed reforms to the NPPF and the planning system, the County Council continues to seek to provide support for local plans that provide as robust as possible policy platforms for securing the provision of infrastructure and services required to support their successful delivery.
- 24. The approach of both authorities should be to ensure that the required infrastructure is funded as far as possible from the development itself and the next phases of the plan preparation will identify any funding or infrastructure gaps so Hinckley & Bosworth BC, in close liaison with the County Council, can take a view on those at the appropriate time.
- 25. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

26. This report will be circulated to members representing the Hinckley & Bosworth area – Mr Stuart Bray CC, Mr Mark Bools CC, Mr Martin England CC, Mr Joshua Melen CC, Mr Michael Mullaney CC, Mr Ozzy O'Shea CC, Ms Ann Pendlebury CC, Mr Barry Walker CC, Mr Charles Whitford CC.

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PART B

Background

- 27. The purpose of a local plan is to set out a vision and a framework for the future development of an area and its production involves various stages of statutory consultations. A Regulation 18 consultation forms part of the 'preparation stage', whilst a Regulation 19 consultation relates to the soundness and legal compliance tests of the pre-submission version of the plan. This consultation from Hinckley & Bosworth BC is known as a 'Regulation 18' consultation and builds on five previous rounds of consultation to develop their new Local Plan, these being:
 - Regulation 18 Scope, Issues and Options (2018);
 - Regulation 18 New Directions for Growth (2019);
 - Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation (2021);
 - Regulation 19 Pre-submission consultation (2022); and
 - Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan Consultation (2024)
- 28. The County Council has responded to Hinckley & Bosworth BC on each prior round of consultation. It is of particular note that in 2022 a pre-submission Regulation 19 consultation was undertaken (the final step ahead of submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State); however it was clear that submission of a sound plan was not possible at that time and Hinckley & Bosworth BC instead took a step back and undertook a further Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation between July 2024 and September 2024. The key comments from the County Council included concerns that the transport evidence had not reached a sufficiently advanced stage to inform the Local Plan, wider unknowns and uncertainties including the Government's proposed planning reforms, the decision on the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order and the unclear position regarding future investment in the SRN. Issues were also highlighted around proposed housing allocation sites, namely at Lindley Meadows and the Barwell and Earl Shilton Sustainable Urban Extensions.
- 29. Since the consultation draft Local Plan was published in 2024, a number of key updates have emerged which Hinckley & Bosworth BC believes need to be considered through a further Regulation 18 consultation. These include changes to the national planning system brought about by a new NPPF and the need to address an increase in the Borough-wide housing target as a consequence to changes in the Standard Method for calculating housing need.
- 30. The proposed Local Plan covers the period 2024 to 2045 and will replace the current adopted development for plan for Hinckley & Bosworth which consists of:
 - the Hinckley & Bosworth Core Strategy (December 2009);
 - Hinckley Town Centre Area Action Plan (March 2011);
 - Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan (September 2014); and
 - Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (July 2016).
- 31. This Regulation 18 consultation runs for 6 weeks from 17 October 2025 to 28 November 2025. The conclusion of this consultation will pave the way for the final Regulation 19 submission version of the Local Plan to be consulted on in spring 2026, prior to submission to the Secretary of State for Examination by December 2026.

Overview of content of the Regulation 18 Plan

- 32. This Regulation 18 consultation is focused specifically on new or updated elements that have been developed since the previous consultation in 2024. Elements of the Local Plan which were consulted on previously are therefore not included, but will be carried forward for consideration in the next version of the draft Local Plan at Regulation 19 pre-submission stage.
- 33. Hinckley & Bosworth BC considers that the Local Plan needs to allocate land for 15,603 dwellings over the period 2024-2045 (743 dwellings per annum). The draft Local Plan now includes 12 additional proposed development sites to meet increased housing targets which have resulted in an identified shortfall of c.3,700 dwellings. Potential new Strategic Sites and New Settlements include:
 - Land South of the A47, Earl Shilton 513 homes;
 - Land South of Desford 500 homes; and
 - New Settlement: Land off Atherstone Road (A444) and Ashby Road (B41116), Norton Heath - minimum of 7,500 homes (2,250 within the plan period). Note part of the new settlement extends the Borough boundary into North West Leicestershire).
- 34. The exact requirement for Hinckley & Bosworth BC's employment land needs is not yet fully known. However, four additional potential future employment sites are being consulted on, should they be required. Final employment site allocations will be set out in the Regulation 19 pre-submission version of the Local Plan in 2026. These sites include:
 - Land at Start Farm, Burbage 7.1 ha;
 - Land East of Hinckley Park, Burbage 35.82 ha;
 - Land South of Soar Brook, Burbage 117.38 ha; and
 - New Settlement: Land off Atherstone Road (A444) and Ashby Road (B41116).
 Norton Heath 19 ha (7 ha within the plan period) Note part of the new settlement extends the Borough boundary into North West Leicestershire).
- 35. This consultation also provides an opportunity to address some policy gaps, either as a result of the new December 2024 NPPF or to reflect emerging evidence. The new and/or updated policies within this Regulation 18 consultation are:
 - Sustainable Development Policy;
 - Safeguarding Development Potential Policy;
 - Hot Food Takeaway Policy;
 - Open Space Provision Policy; and
 - Sport and Recreation Facilities Policy.
- 36. Hinckley & Bosworth BC highlight that it is still finalising pieces of evidence which includes highways modelling, infrastructure capacity, whole plan viability, design coding, habitat survey and strategic flood risk assessment. This means that some of the proposed development sites and draft policies may be subject to change/modification in the Regulation 19 pre-submission version of the Local Plan.

Overarching response and key points on the Regulation 18 Plan

37. The County Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on this Regulation 18 consultation. The response focuses on the new or revised policies outlined in this particular consultation and it is noted that there will be a further opportunity to comment when all elements of the Local Plan, including further evidence, are brought together in the Regulation 19 consultation, expected in Spring 2026. The County Council's full response, including in its role as LTA is appended to this report and is summarised in the paragraphs below.

- 38. The significant challenges Hinckley & Bosworth BC has faced in identifying suitable land to accommodate its housing requirement and other national matters beyond its control (i.e. wider unknowns and uncertainties including the Government's proposed planning reforms, the then unknown decision on the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange Development Consent Order and the unclear position regarding future investment in the SRN) is recognised. The County Council is supportive of Hinckley & Bosworth BC's aim to produce a sound Local Plan ahead of the December 2026 submission deadline for local plans to be examined under the existing plan-making legal framework and continues to support in principle, a (local) plan-led approach to the delivery of new development in order to coordinate delivery of growth with the delivery of necessary infrastructure and services.
- 39. The County Council has significant concerns about the scale of housing and employment growth and associated infrastructure in the A5 corridor. This would require significant investment to mitigate its impact, and the County Council would need to see justification of deliverability for those sites. It will also be vital to engage with National Highways, and possibly other Government Agencies too, such as Homes England, to identify and agree prior to the publication of the Regulation 19 Plan a plausible route to the delivery of the likely scale of investment required in the A5 corridor to enable this scale of growth in this broad location.
- 40. It is expected that Hinckley & Bosworth BC will continue to engage with the County Council to ensure that: the Local Plan reflects the draft key 'policy positions' of the proposed ETCS and demonstrates how the Local Plan will help to deliver on the Core Themes and Policies of LTP4, that the Local Plan's transport evidence base is sufficiently developed by the time that it is ready to be submitted for Examination in Public, and that the proposed A5 Concept Link is appropriately included in the Local Plan, including safeguarding its future delivery and identifying an approach to its funding.
- 41. It is essential that Hinckley & Bosworth BC will also need to work with the County Council to ensure that viable education solutions are established for the proposed housing allocations intended to be taken forwards to Regulation 19.

Spatial Strategy

- 42. The methodology underpinning the settlement hierarchy needs to be robust and logical given that the settlement hierarchy informs the underlying spatial development strategy of the Local Plan. The 'stretching out' of the settlement hierarchy from 6 tiers to 9 is considered to be desirable, enabling a distinction to also be made between the spatial location of settlements in addition to the level of services and facilities they offer. For example, it enables those settlements closer to or within the Principal Urban Area (PUA) around the City to be clearly distinguished from other settlements with a similar level of services and facilities and indicates scope for enhanced growth to be directed towards them to provide for the sustainable expansion of existing communities in close proximity to the City.
- 43. Regarding the scale and distribution of housing, the Local Plan makes provision over the plan period (2024 to 2045) for 15,603 dwellings (743 dwellings per annum), which includes meeting a proportion of Leicester City's unmet need. This is considered to be an appropriate approach at the current time.

- 44. Hinckley & Bosworth BC has been working closely with officers at the County Council and elsewhere in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area to understand the implications of the December 2024 NPPF and the new Standard Method for calculating housing need. This joint work is anticipated to continue and is highly likely to inform an updated L&L Housing and Employment Needs SoCG.
- 45. This 2025 Regulation 18 Local Plan needs to be read in conjunction with the Regulation 18 Local Plan consulted upon in September 2024 to gain an overview of all the potential allocations being considered. Collectively, a selection of potential sites for allocation are set out which include a new settlement near Twycross and a new settlement at Lindley Meadows near MIRA Technology Park (previously consulted on in the Local Plan consultation from September 2024).
- 46. The preference of the County Council is to direct housing and employment growth to the Hinckley area as it provides the greatest opportunity to provide for communities to access services and facilities using sustainable modes of transport, and to direct other growth further down the settlement hierarchy. There is ongoing significant concern regarding the two potential new settlements given the impact on the SRN and other uncertainties.
- 47. Regarding *Policy NEW03: Housing Development Sites* The LTA has significant reservations about the scale of housing and employment growth proposed in the A5 corridor (potentially up to 10,500 homes near to Twycross and 160 hectares equivalent to around 200 football pitches close to the A5/M69 junction). In particular, in respect of the proposed locations' accessibility by active and sustainable means (modes) of travel and the traffic impacts on the A5 and the likely scale of investment required to deliver the improvements necessary to accommodate those impacts.
- 48. The proposal to include three separate policies (*Policy NEW02: Provision of Overall Development, Policy NEW03: Housing Development Sites, Policy NEW04: Employment Development Sites*) in relation to the development strategy is generally supported however the underlying spatial development strategy needs to be clearly articulated, and it is anticipated this will be the case in the Regulation 19 version of this Local Plan. This will enable the proposed housing and employment allocations to be considered more holistically and more clearly than at present in terms of their interrelationship and cumulative impact, recognising the continuing concerns identified with proposed growth in the A5 corridor, and early work exploring an A5 Concept Link.
- 49. The County Council expect to be further engaged on an ongoing basis with regards to potential site allocations and the development of the Local Plan's transport evidence base to ensure the Regulation 19 version reflects adequate access to services and facilities.

Transport

50. The LTA consider that unless there are significant changes in societal behaviours and expectations there will be limits on the extent to which the travel demand impacts of population and economic growth can be mitigated. In light of this, the LTA is in the process of developing an ETCS as part of LTP4. The LTA would welcome the opportunity to discuss with Hinckley & Bosworth BC how the Regulation 19 Local Plan will consider these policy positions and has made some initial comments to enhance the visions and objective section of the current text. Furthermore, the County Council has previously approved a set of principles for the LTA's engagement in local plan processes and welcomes engagement with Hinckley & Bosworth BC over addressing these.

51. Policy NEW01: Safeguarding Development Potential, includes reference to the exploratory work being undertaken by the County Council around the Hinckley western link road (A5 Concept Link). This is a welcome policy to safeguard the development of potential sites and ensure development proposals do not compromise the delivery of essential infrastructure. The County Council will continue to engage with Hinckley & Bosworth BC around the A5 Concept Link and it is expected that they will develop the detail of the policy and supporting text for its forthcoming Regulation 19 consultation.

Education

52. The County Council has sought to assess the implications of potential housing development sites from an education perspective. Hinckley & Bosworth BC have yet to provide an indication of build rates or timings for the developments but irrespective of this, it is considered that some of the sites will be particularly challenging from the perspective of finding suitable education solutions to meet the anticipated demand. These include Land South of Sacheverell Way, Groby (LPR146 A & B), Land South of London Road and West of Ratby Land (Parcel B), Markfield (LPR94 B) and Land off Oakfield Way and Meadow Close Sheepy Magna (AS519).

Health

- 53. Revisions to the policy on Hot Food Takeaways and Fast-Food Outlets (Policy REV02) are welcome to the extent that it now duly acknowledges the December 2024 update to the NPPF and attempts to add clarity around local circumstances. It is recommended that the policy wording is amended further to allow some flexibility in the areas which planning permission for hot food takeaways and fast food outlets will not be granted. It is also noted that the Policy no longer includes text which refers to proposals for new betting offices only being supported where they are located within a Town, District or Local Centre and do not result in an over proliferation of this use. It is considered that this policy wording should be retained and included in Policy REV02, or another relevant policy.
- 54. Policy NEW05: Open Space Provision and Policy NEW06: Sport and Recreation Facilities: Outdoor and Indoor Provision are new policies and are informed by recent evidence including a Hinckley & Bosworth Open Space Assessment (2025) and Hinckley & Bosworth Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy and Action Plan supported by an accompanying Assessment Report (2025). The introduction of these policies are broadly welcomed to maintain and enhance biodiversity, climate resilience, and the health and wellbeing of the Borough's communities. It is considered however, that further refinement of the methodology around Policy NEW05 is required, in particular around access distances.
- 55. As part of the pilot Strategic Health Impact Assessment (HIA) for local plans, the County Council's Public Health team is working in close collaboration with planning colleagues at Hinckley & Bosworth BC to inform policy development and work is underway to produce an additional chapter focusing on policies most relevant to health and wellbeing outcomes.

Minerals and Waste

56. A number of the potential new housing and employment development sites are within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel and so would need to be accompanied by a suitable Mineral Assessment. A number of the sites are also within relevant proximity to safeguarded waste sites and would need to demonstrate no adverse

- effects upon amenity and they would need to avoid prejudicing the operation of the facility.
- 57. Within *Policy REV01: Sustainable Development* it is also considered that there is the opportunity to link in with minerals and waste, the circular economy and sustainable development by amending the text which reads 'Making effective use of land' with 'Making effective use of land, natural resources and waste'.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 58. It would be beneficial to see Hinckley & Bosworth BC making the express commitment to inform and work with Neighbourhood Planning groups on any national or local policy changes in the future, to ensure they remain compliant, particularly in light of the Government ceasing its funding for the neighbourhood planning support programme.
- 59. The Local Plan makes numerous references to Hinckley & Bosworth BC's continued support and commitment for Neighbourhood Planning. It is a concern however, that despite stating that the Local Plan has been informed by 'actively progressing neighbourhood plans', there is no reference to the proposed 500 dwelling strategic site at Land South of Desford within the Desford Neighbourhood Plan Review currently out to consultation.
- 60. The County Council is largely content with the Settlement Boundary Methodology Review Paper, which sets out the methodology for reviewing and refining settlement boundaries, however it is suggested that the Paper includes a mechanism to resolving any conflict between boundary changes and existing Neighbourhood Plan boundaries.
- 61. It is suggested that within *Policy REV01: Sustainable Development*, specific reference to "Development that accords with the policies in the Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in *neighbourhood plans* or other development plan documents) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise" (which was in previous versions of the policy), should be reinstated.

Strategic Property Services on behalf of the Council as a Landowner

- 62. Strategic Property Services on behalf of the County Council as a landowner has also prepared a response, this is included in the appendix and is clearly identified. This aligns with the County Council's overall response.
- 63. Strategic Property Services are promoting two significant sites through the Local Plan process, the most significant at Middlefield Farm, north of Hinckley which strongly aligns with the spatial focus for future growth, and a further site at Barlestone.

Next Steps

- 64. Whilst the County Council supports the principle of a plan-led approach to the delivery of new development, it expects Hinckley & Bosworth BC to work with the County Council to develop a set of robust policies and ensure that:
 - i. The Local Plan needs to include an appropriate and robust mechanism for securing and collecting developer contributions and delivering key infrastructure. This reflects the need to meet the concerns raised in previous County Council Cabinet reports (including October and November 2024 Cabinet reports) regarding sufficient funding to deliver infrastructure.

- ii. The Local Plan reflects the draft key 'policy positions' of the proposed ETCS and demonstrates how the Local Plan will help to deliver on the Core Themes and Policies of LTP4.
- iii. The Local Plan's transport evidence base is sufficiently developed by the time that it is ready to be submitted for Examination in Public.
- iv. The proposed A5 Concept Link is appropriately included in the Local Plan, including to safeguard its future delivery and to identify an approach to its funding.
- v. Viable education solutions are established for the proposed housing allocations intended to be taken forwards to Regulation 19.
- 65. The County Council will continue to work with Hinckley & Bosworth BC and other organisations (such as National Highways) to find ways to address infrastructure challenges. However, this is without prejudice to any future views that it might express at later stages of the Local Plan's development and on any planning application(s) relating to the proposed allocation sites.

Duty to Cooperate and Statements of Common Ground

- 66. The NPPF 2024 (paragraph 24) states that local planning authorities and county councils (in two-tier areas) are under a 'duty to co-operate' with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries.
- 67. A SoCG relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs (June 2022) for the Leicester and Leicestershire area was guided by the Strategic Planning Group and Members' Advisory Group which consisted of representatives from the County Council, Leicester City Council, and the seven district councils. The SoCG sets out the City Council's identified unmet need of 18,700 homes and 23 hectares of employment land for the period 2020-2036 to be accommodated in the County. Despite some objection to parts of the methodology, Hinckley & Bosworth BC resolved to become a signatory to the SoCG at Council on 30 January 2024.
- 68. In December 2024 a revised NPPF updated sections of the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) and a revised Standard Method for calculating housing need was published. Subsequent adjustments to the Standard Method calculation has given Hinckley & Bosworth BC an increased figure of 663 dwellings per annum.
- 69. A further SoCG is now being prepared, underpinned by the Leicester & Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (Distribution Paper) update, to give sufficient certainty on the scale and high-level distribution of housing in response to the revised Standard Method (December 2024) and distribution of Leicester City's unmet need post 2036 (the end date for Leicester City's emerging Local Plan). This can be seen as an addition to the previous SoCG (2022), rather than superseding it, and will support the submission of the Hinckley & Bosworth BC Local Plan.

Equality Implications

70. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Hinckley & Bosworth BC is working with the County Council and with other partners in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area to provide for the homes and jobs required in the future.

Human Rights Implications

71. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Hinckley & Bosworth BC is working with the County Council and with other partners in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area to provide for the homes and jobs required in the future.

Environmental Implications

- 72. The County Council will continue to work closely with Hinckley & Bosworth BC and other partners to minimise the impact of the planned growth on the environmental assets of Leicester and Leicestershire.
- 73. The impact upon the environment is a key consideration in all planning decisions made within the context of an approved or emerging local plan, and the County Council will seek to ensure that opportunities are taken to enhance the environment through biodiversity net gain and sustainable forms of development.

Partnership Working and Associated Issues

74. The County Council works closely with the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Planning Partnership, which includes Hinckley & Bosworth BC, the other six district councils in Leicestershire, Leicester City Council and the Leicester and Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership. Without a clear aligned approach to delivery, Leicestershire faces high levels of speculative/indiscriminate development with the consequent high risk of inadequate highway and education infrastructure provision. To avoid this, ongoing commitment from all the local authorities to joint working is therefore crucial, as is their support for a collaborative and coordinated approach to the defining and allocating of infrastructure funding requirements of local plans.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 23 November 2018: Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan – Consideration of Revised Plan for Approval http://bit.ly/4pYS95R

Report to the Cabinet on 29 March 2019: Response to Consultation on Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's Local Plan Review: New Directions for Growth http://bit.ly/46II8DJ

Report to the Cabinet on 20 November 2020: Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities 2020 to 2050 http://bit.ly/46SD7G9

Report to the Cabinet on 20 November 2020: Draft City of Leicester Local Plan 2020 to 2036 http://bit.ly/46SD7G9

Report to the Cabinet on 22 June 2021: Urgent action taken by the Chief Executive in relation to the Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground relating to housing and employment land needs (March 2021) http://bit.ly/476nX0m

Report to the Cabinet on 17 September 2021: Response to the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) Consultation http://bit.ly/3VVpscs

Report to the Cabinet on 26 October 2021: Development of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's New Local Plan – Latest Position http://bit.ly/4nJPN9E

Report to the Cabinet on 14 December 2021: South Leicestershire Local Plan Making Statement of Common Ground (November 2021) http://bit.ly/3KG2tim

Report to the Cabinet on 11 February 2022: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's New Local Plan - Response to Regulation 19 Consultation http://bit.ly/3Wq2I4u

Report to the Cabinet on 29 March 2022: Response to the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Pre Submission Local Plan (2020 – 2039) Regulation 19 Consultation https://bit.ly/4qEOB9z

Report to the Cabinet on 23 September 2022: Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities – Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Land Needs http://bit.ly/4nEF7ZI

Report to the Cabinet on 25 November 2022: Managing the Risk Relating to the Delivery of Infrastructure to Support Growth https://bit.ly/4ogjjnr

Report to the Cabinet on 13 September 2024: Response to the Hinckley and Bosworth Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan Consultation (July 2024) https://bit.ly/4o2vWCm

Report to the Cabinet on 22 October 2024: Strategic Transport Planning Issues Associated with the Emerging Charnwood Local Plan https://bit.ly/4h6lZR3

Report to the Cabinet on 22 November 2024: Strategic Transport Planning Issues Associated with the Emerging Charnwood Local Plan https://bit.ly/47YMKoq

Report to the Cabinet on 12 September 2025: A5 Concept Link https://bit.ly/4nOSbw0

Report to the Cabinet on 28 October 2025: Delivering the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2025-2040: Next Steps http://bit.ly/4qxBXsV

Appendix

Leicestershire County Council Response to the Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation 2025



Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan Regulation 18 | Autumn 2025

Leicestershire County Council Response

Note: These comments should be read in conjunction with the County Council comments on the 2024 version of the Regulation 18 Plan, as set out in a <u>report to the County Council's Cabinet in September 2024.</u>

Overarching Comments

Whilst the County Council supports the principle of a plan-led approach to the delivery of new development, it expects Hinckley & Bosworth BC to work with the County Council to develop a set of robust policies and ensure that:

- i. The Local Plan needs to include an appropriate and robust mechanism for securing and collecting developer contributions and delivering key infrastructure. This reflects the need to meet the concerns raised in previous County Council Cabinet reports (including October and November 2024 Cabinet reports) regarding sufficient funding to deliver infrastructure.
- ii. The Local Plan reflects the draft key 'policy positions' of the proposed ETCS and demonstrates how the Local Plan will help to deliver on the Core Themes and Policies of LTP4.
- iii. The Local Plan's transport evidence base is sufficiently developed by the time that it is ready to be submitted for Examination in Public.
- iv. The proposed A5 Concept Link is appropriately included in the Local Plan, including to safeguard its future delivery and to identify an approach to its funding.
- v. Viable education solutions are established for the proposed housing allocations intended to be taken forwards to Regulation 19.

The County Council will continue to work with Hinckley & Bosworth BC and other organisations (such as National Highways) to find ways to address infrastructure challenges. However, this is without prejudice to any future views that it might express at later stages of the Local Plan's development and on any planning application(s) relating to the proposed allocation sites.

The County Council continues to support in principle a (local) plan-led approach to the delivery of new development; it represents the best way to seek to coordinate the delivery of growth with the delivery of necessary infrastructure and services (transport or otherwise). This in comparison to an unplanned, speculative development approach. It remains

committed to seeking to work in partnership with Plan-making authorities to develop and to secure the successful adoption of Plans; this increasingly in circumstances beyond the Plan-making authority's and (Local Transport Authority) LTA's control, e.g. as was acknowledged in the LTA's response to the 2024 version of the Reg18 Plan.

Having said that, the LTA is on record (as an example in this <u>report to the County Council's Cabinet</u>) as stating that unless there are significant changes in societal behaviours and expectations there will be limits on the extent to which the travel demand impacts of population and economic growth can be mitigated.

In the light of this, the LTA is in the process of developing an Enabling Travel Choice Strategy (ETCS) as part of its full <u>Local Transport Plan (LTP4)</u>. In essence, the ETCS will be built around the concept of seeking to understand how and where people living and working in existing and future communities and business in Leicestershire will need to travel and then:

- seeking to deliver the most appropriate choices of travel to enable that demand;
 and/or
- looking at how services and facilities could be brought closer to communities to improve travel choices (e.g. because distances become walkable or cyclable).

Please see a report to the County Council's Cabinet 28 October 2025 <u>'Delivering the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2025 -2050 Next Steps' (Item 5)</u> for further information on the LTA's ETCS and its draft key 'policy positions' relating to, amongst other things, the Local Plan development process. The LTA will welcome the opportunity to discuss with Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (the Borough Council) how these key 'policy positions' might be reflected through the development of the Reg19 version of the Plan.

Since the previous Regulation 18 consultation, the LTA's <u>LTP4 Core Document</u> (LTP4 CD) has been approved by the County Council. The LTA will expect the Reg19 Plan version to demonstrate how it will help to deliver on the LTP4 CD's Core Themes and Policies.

Finally also since the previous consultation, via a report on the <u>Charnwood Local Plan in October 2024 the County Council's Cabinet</u> approved a set of principles for the LTA's [or LHA as referenced in the report] future engagement in other local plan processes. The LTA will welcome the opportunity to discuss with the Borough Council how these principles have been addressed/will be addressed through the development of the Reg19 version of the Plan.

As part of the pilot Strategic Health Impact Assessment (HIA) for local plans, Leicestershire County Council's Public Health team is working in close collaboration with planning colleagues at Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council to inform policy development. A comprehensive Strategic HIA report was submitted to the council in 2024, and work is now underway to produce an additional chapter focusing on policies most relevant to health and wellbeing outcomes. The objective is to ensure that policy wording is as clear, precise, and robust as possible from a health perspective, with recommendations integrated directly into the planning process to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities. This work

remains ongoing as part of our commitment to strengthening health considerations within local planning frameworks.

3 What is the Local Plan? (and further contextual info)

Page 10, paragraph 3.8. As was recognised in the LTA's response to the 2024 version of the Reg18 Plan, the Borough Council is a partner in the South Leicestershire Joint Transport Evidence Work, which has examined the impacts of future growth across the south of the County and identified potential strategic transport mitigation measures. However, at this time the impacts of the Plan's spatial strategy have still not been assessed in isolation. It will be essential to securing the LTA's continued support for the Plan for this aspect of its evidence-based to be sufficiently advanced by the time of the Reg19 Plan's publication. The LTA welcomes the ongoing discussions with the Borough Council in this regard.

Page 13, para' 3.14 sixth bullet point. The LTA welcomes that the Plan now covers a period up to 2045. This provides a greater degree of long term 'certainty' in respect of spatial planning, which in turn will assist the LTA in planning for the longer term travel needs of the County's growing population; albeit seeking to provide for such will continue to be challenging (as per the LTA's overarching comments).

Page 13, para' 3.17 - The last line is missing the word 'used' – 'used in decision-making on planning applications'.

4 Spatial Portrait

Page 26, para' 4.28: Caution should be exercised in quoting travel to work data from 2021 as it may not provide representative data regarding 'normal' travel patterns, WFH etc. given that the Country was still in the grips of a pandemic at that time.

5 Vision and Objectives

Page 31, the Vision: With reference to the '...development of a new settlement...', in line with the intention the LTA's proposed Enabling Travel Choice Strategy (ETCS), it will expect the Reg19 Plan to set out the Borough Council's Place Vision for this new settlement, particular with regard to future residents' access to service and facilities needs and how they are to be provided for over the lifetime of the site's development. (See also LTA comments on NEW03.)

Page 33, Objective 5 Transport: In line with the intention of the LTA's proposed ETCS, it is suggested that this objective should be updated as follows:

'Travel and transport

To promote a pattern and form of development that will enable its future occupiers to have genuine and realistic choices of travel. For future residents that will be travel choices to services and facilities that they are most likely to require access to on a daily basis. For future business that will be travel choices that enable them to access the necessary pools of skilled labour.'

Page 33, Objective 6 Natural Environment: This objective should refer to the local Nature Recovery Network rather than the Local Nature Recovery Network. A small 'l' on local is required as there is not an official Local Nature Recovery Network. The Nature Recovery Network is an ambition of the Government and is intended to be delivered by a range of mechanisms including the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, BNG, biodiversity duty. These will be delivered locally and will contribute to delivering the national network of wildlife rich places which is called the Nature Recovery Network. Also having the 'L' of Local capitalised risks it being confused with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

6 General Development Principles

a Policy REV01 Sustainable Development

LCC generally support the Policy however it is suggested that specific reference to "Development that accords with the policies in the Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in **neighbourhood plans** or other development plan documents) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise" which was in previous versions the policy, should be reinstated.

It is also considered that there is the opportunity to link in with minerals and waste and the circular economy and sustainable development by the replacement of:

• 'Making effective use of land' with 'Making effective use of land, natural resources and waste' on p. 35

Strategic Property Services on behalf of the Council as a Landowner

Policy REV01 broadly follows the guidance set out in the NPPF (2025) at Paras 11 c) and 11 d). For completeness it needs to incorporate all aspects of Para 11 d) ii)

b Settlement Hierarchy Methodology Review (see <u>4 Settlement Hierarchy Methodology</u> Paper 2025, item 9. PDF 365 KB)

The methodology underpinning the settlement hierarchy needs to be robust and logical given the settlement hierarchy that informs the underlying spatial development strategy of the Local Plan. The 'stretching out' of the settlement hierarchy from 6 tiers to 9 is considered to be desirable, enabling a distinction to also be made between the spatial location of settlements in addition to the level of services and facilities they offer. For example, it enables those settlements closer to or within the Principal Urban Area (PUA) around the City to be clearly distinguished from other settlements with a similar level of services and facilities and indicates scope for enhanced growth to be directed towards them to provide for the sustainable expansion of existing communities in close proximity to the City.

The LTA has no particular views on the need for the Regulation 19 Plan to include a specific hierarchy policy. In terms of the methodology, the LTA would wish to see a robust approach taken, i.e. one that has a focus on the day to day services and facilities that people are likely to need to access and thence through the Plan's spatial strategy and policies seeking to enable that access by a range of transport modes (in accordance with the ETCS draft key

'policy positions'). In particular, this consideration should be inherent to the Borough Council's visions for the new places that are to be created through the Plan's allocation of sites, including how they might address existing access issues through the delivery of new services and facilities and/or a need to rely on travel connectivity to such in the 'surrounding world'.

Strategic Property Services on behalf of the Council as a Landowner

It is noted that to date the settlement hierarchy within the Core Strategy 2009 has been used, it is therefore appropriate to update the methodology for determining the hierarchy to reflect the current level of services within individual settlements and the need to support existing services by the delivery of additional housing.

c Site Selection Paper (see 5 Site Selection Paper 2025, item 92 PDF 158 KB)

The Borough Council has engaged with the LTA thus far in seeking its views on allocation sites for possible inclusion in the Regulation 19 Plan. It would expect to be further engaged in the development of the Plan's transport evidence base and to ensure that the Regulation 19 version reflects access to services and facilities needs, as set out in the LTA's response on the Settlement Hierarchy Methodology Review.

LCC note the use of waste safeguarding and historic landfills in assessment, but that there is no mention of mineral safeguarding. It would be helpful to clarify if this is an omission in the text, rather than the assessment.

Strategic Property Services on behalf of the Council as a Landowner

The site selection paper whilst describing the process to be followed does not set out how particular strategies were selected or rejected and similarly does not show the specific reason(s) for sites being selected or rejected.

d Settlement Boundary Methodology Review Paper (see <u>6 Settlement Boundary</u> Methodology Paper 2025, item 9th PDF 172 KB)

The County Council is largely content with the Settlement Boundary Methodology Review Paper. **Page 39, Para' 6.25** — Suggest including sentence about if any conflict between boundary changes and existing NP boundary occurs from any proposed changes that they will work in collaboration with the group/community to resolve these.

Strategic Property Services on behalf of the Council as a Landowner

The proposals within the plan are broadly supported.

e Policy NEW01: Safeguarding Development Potential

Page 42, para' 6.30 and page 43, para' 6.33 and page 44 Figure 9. The LTA welcomes that the Borough Council has responded positively to the <u>A5 Concept Link report presented to the County Council's Cabinet in September 2025 [Item 43]</u> by including reference to a potential/possible 'Hinckley Western Link Road' in this version of the Plan. The LTA and the Borough

Council have started discussions about how best now to take this matter forward, such that the benefits of any link are demonstrated through the Plan's transport evidence work; it can be further defined and more definitively safeguarded through the Reg19 Plan; and the approach to its delivery/funding can similarly be set out through the Reg19 Plan (including through a Community Infrastructure Levy as necessary).

Page 42, Policy NEW01: The LTA welcomes in principle the proposed 'Safeguarding Development Potential' policy and that it includes seeking to prevent development that would prejudice the delivery of key infrastructure required to support the current and future development in the borough. However, in terms of the detail of the policy:

- strategic transport infrastructure should be explicitly mentioned in sub-section i; and
- reference should also be included to not prejudicing the delivery of the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan's spatial vision.

Page 43, para 6.33: It is suggested that this paragraph could be expanded slightly to give a broad indication of the link road's purpose. Suggested addition as **shown**:

'The potential Hinckley western link road lies predominantly within the borough of Hinckley and Bosworth (although there is a small area that falls within adjacent Nuneaton and Bedworth borough along the A5). Its general purpose is to seek to facilitate future growth whilst limiting the impacts of growth on the A5 Dodwells and Longshoot junctions. It is at a very early stage in its initial development. A report on the matter is presented at the Leicestershire County Council Cabinet Meeting on 12 September 2025. The broad area relating to the proposed Hinckley western link road is shown in Figure 9 overleaf.'

Strategic Property Services on behalf of the Council as a Landowner

The proposals within the plan are broadly supported.

7 Spatial Strategy

a Policy NEW02: Provision of Overall Development

Regarding the scale and distribution of housing, the Local Plan makes provision over the plan period (2024 to 2045) for 15,603 dwellings (743 dwellings per annum), which includes meeting a proportion of Leicester City's unmet need. This is considered to be an appropriate approach at the current time.

The preference of the County Council is to direct housing and employment growth to the Hinckley area as it provides the greatest opportunity to provide for communities to access services and facilities using sustainable modes of transport, and to direct other growth further down the settlement hierarchy. There is ongoing significant concern regarding the two potential new settlements given the impact on the SRN and other uncertainties.

LCC welcome Policy NEW02 and especially the bullet that development on unallocated sites will be supported where they

'Are compatible with or do not adversely impact surrounding uses'

It is hoped that this will safeguard extant mineral and waste sites from proximal development which may prevent them from expanding or operating. This would be in line with Policy W9 and Policy M11 of the LMWLP.

Strategic Property Services on behalf of the Council as a Landowner

Policy NEW02: Provision of Overall Development states that overall provision over the period 2024 to 2045 of 15,603 new homes (743 dwellings per year). This figure of 743 includes meeting a portion of Leicester City's unmet need.

Table 2 sets out how this housing requirement has been calculated, it states that the housing requirement is actually 708 per year, but a 5 % buffer has been added to meet paragraph 78a of the NPPF.

Plans should include over provision against their housing requirement or flexibility to account for housing delivery being slower than anticipated or sites not coming forward for development.

This 2025 Regulation 18 consultation version of the Local Plan needs to read in conjunction with the version of the Plan consulted upon in September 2024 as they both include separate allocations.

The council states that 2024 Plan includes provision for 7,884 homes. Taking account of windfall over the plan period (1392) and current commitments (2,560) and Neighbourhood Plan allocations 57 leaves a figure to be found of 3,710 homes.

The 2025 Plan sets out the allocations to meet the figure to be found in Policy NEW03: Housing Development Sites. This policy sets out the amount each allocation is expected to deliver in the Plan period and this amounts to 4191.

Taking the Council's housing provision figure at face value, this would give an overall provision of 16,084.

As noted above the plan seeks to meet a housing requirement over the plan period of 15,603 new homes.

If the Council's position is that their housing requirement is 743 homes per year, then the Plan includes flexibility of 3%. If the housing requirement is taken as 708 homes per year or 14,868 over plan period (which the Council may argue) then this would leave 8% flexibility.

Whilst there is no national policy or guidance about a specific figure a 10-20% is usually considered reasonable, with 20% being appropriate if the supply includes large or complex sites as is the case in Hinckley.

b Policy NEW03: Housing Development Sites

The LTA has previously questioned the active and sustainable travel credentials of the proposed Lindley Meadow allocation, because geographically it is poorly located in terms of accessibility by modes other than private car. Whilst the now further proposed allocation of 'Norton Heath' might address the LTA's other comment on the Lindley Meadow allocation (i.e. that the Strategic Growth Options and Constraints Mapping for Leicester and Leicestershire indicates that even a "co-dependent" new settlement needs to be in excess of 5,000 dwellings), that would only be the case if the two sites were developed as a single place. And, that would still not address 'Norton Heath's' equally questionable sustainable travel credentials.

It is challenging to see how this location can be enabled to be served by a sufficient range of realistic travel choices, given likely travel distances and patterns to services and facilities in the 'surrounding world' and the limited proximity of labour pools. Additionally, given phasing and viability considerations it is hard to see how a sufficient scale and mix of onsite societal and economic services and facilities will be deliverable 'upfront' to engrain trip internalisation from day one of occupation. Finally, it also difficult to see how growth of this scale will be able to come forward without strategic scale investment in the A5 corridor.

At the very least a clear 'Place Vision' (as per the ETCS draft key 'policy positions') needs to be established for growth as whole in this broad locations; this will need to be consistent across boundary, i.e. between the districts of Hinckley and Bosworth and North West Leicestershire and to identify the site's (as one) likely relationships with the surrounding world. In turn a 'Place Vision' will inform an understanding of the site's travel demand implications and further in turn how that should be tested (modelled) as part of the development of the Plan's transport evidence base.

It will also be vital to engage with National Highways, and possibly other Government Agencies too, such as Homes England, to identify and agree prior to the publication of the Regulation 19 Plan a plausible route to the delivery of the likely scale of investment required in the A5 corridor to enable this scale of growth in this broad location.

The LTA looks forward to working closely with the Borough Council and other partners as necessary on seeking to find ways to address the significant travel and transport challenges posed by seeking to deliver growth at scale in this broad location. However, this is without prejudice to future views that it might express on the Regulation 19 Plan and any planning application(s) relating to these proposed allocation sites.

Education

Education colleagues have provided feedback to HBBC on all the suggested developments. All of these have been Red-Amber-Green (RAG) rated to highlight challenges associated with education infrastructure. LCC has yet to receive any indication of build rates or timings for the developments and in order to ensure we are providing the best solution, this information would be useful.

- * Land South of the A47, Earl Shilton (LPR216): Amber: The primary solution here would be tricky if LRP200 does not also come forwards. 500 homes is not enough to warrant a new primary school, however a 2FE has already been decided for Earl Shilton SUE (on the other side of the A47) and S106 agreements are currently at the stage where this cannot be altered. A secondary solution may also be difficult, Heath Lane cannot expand to take all pupils from these developments, but a new secondary would require LPR200 and also homes in Stoney Stanton to come forwards.
- * Land South of Desford, Desford (LPR151A): Green: Expansion of Desford Primary School and Bosworth Academy would be needed, but this is a fairly simple solution.
- * New Settlement: Land off Atherstone Road (A444) and Ashby Road (B4116) 'Norton Heath' (LPR231 in part, HBBC only): Amber: New provision would be needed for all stages of education. The reason it is amber is because there is no existing provision nearby and it would need to be considered how early an education provision could be provided as otherwise the first pupils living on the estate will face long journeys to existing schools.
- * Land South of Sacheverell Way, Groby (LPR146 A & B): Red: A primary solution is not easy for this site due to the existing Groby primaries being near capacity and none of them being able to be expanded. The number of houses does also not warrant a 1FE expansion.
- * Land South of New Barn Farm, Kirkby Road, Barwell (LPR185): Green: The pupils yielded from this development can be absorbed in existing schools.
- * Land West of Station Road, Bagworth (LPR221): Amber: Primary capacity is an issue in this area. Thornton Primary and Dove Bank Primary cannot be expanded any further.
- * Land off Barns Way and North of Leicester Lane, Desford (LPR86): Green: Expansion of Desford Primary School and Bosworth Academy would be needed, but this is a fairly simple solution.
- * Land South of London Road and West of Ratby Lane (Parcel B), Markfield (LPR94 B): Red: Mercenfeld Primary School is forecast to have a deficit of 96 places by 2029. This school cannot be expanded as it is on a constrained site. There is not enough pupils yielded by this development to warrant a new primary school. Stanton Under Bardon Community Primary School is the next nearest primary school and it does have a small amount of capacity (around 20 places) but is a very small school, again on a constrained site.
- * Land South of Arnolds Crescent, Newbold Verdon (LPR190): Amber: Newbold Verdon Primary School can be expanded to 3FE if required but cannot be expanded beyond that. Secondary numbers would impact an expansion at Bosworth Academy, Desford.
- * Land North West of Old Farm Lane and South of Bosworth Lane, Newbold Verdon (LPR207): Amber: Newbold Verdon Primary School can be expanded to 3FE if required but cannot be

expanded beyond that. Secondary numbers would impact an expansion at Bosworth Academy, Desford.

- * Land Between the A5 and Northwood Farm, Wood Lane, Higham on the Hill (LPR181): Amber: This development is problematic in terms of a primary education solution. Higham on the Hill C of E Primary School is a 0.5FE school with a reducing amount of surplus places. There is not capacity for these pupils yielded in Higham on the Hill, with no other primary schools in a 2-mile radius. A solution could be a combined approach in LPR252, where Higham on the Hill primary school could be relocated and form a 2FE primary with pupils yielded from these developments and LPR252 which would make a more financially sustainable solution. We would welcome discussions with the developers regarding this option.
- * Land off Oakfield Way and Meadow Close, Sheepy Magna (AS519): Red: There is no primary solution for housing in this area. Sheepy Magna C of E Primary School is a very small school, 0.5FE. It is at capacity and it cannot be expanded due to a constrained site. Witherley and Congerstone are the next nearest primary schools, but both of these are also small schools which do not have capacity to expand.

Minerals and Waste

LPR216 – Land South of the A47, Earl Shilton – the site is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. The site is also less than 300m from a safeguarded waste site (Earl Shilton STW, Document S4/2015, ref HK6) to the south west. Under Policy W9 of the LMWLP it is important to safeguard waste sites. The policy grants permission for development which adjoins, is adjacent to or would locate a potentially sensitive receptor in closer proximity to an existing or permitted waste management facility where it is demonstrated that there would be no adverse effect upon amenity and the development would not prejudice the current and future operation of the facility.

LCC note that LPR216 is expected to be delivered as part of a comprehensive development with previous Regulation 18 proposed site allocation on Land East of Earl Shilton (SHELAA site ref LPR200). LPR200 is in a MSA for Sand & Gravel. This is a huge amount of housing at some 2,513 homes. This will have a cumulative impact in conjunction with other sites.

LPR151 – Land South of Desford, Desford – the western half of the site is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a

Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. No waste safeguarding issues.

LPR231 – Norton Heath (HBBC only) – the south western portion of the site is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. It also appears – but is difficult to ascertain at this scale – that the allocation includes the safeguarded waste site at Norton Juxta Twycross STW (Document S4/2015, ref HK15). This is inappropriate as it is contrary to Policy W9 of the LMWLP as amenity issues could prevent expansion or operation of the waste site.

LPR146 A & B – Land South of Sacheverell Way, Groby – it appears that the allocation is partly within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. No waste safeguarding issues.

LPR185* — Land South of New Barn Farm, Kirkby Road, Barwell — the allocation is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. No waste safeguarding issues.

LPR221 – Land West of Station Road, Bagworth – the allocation is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. No waste safeguarding issues.

LPR86 – Land off Barns Way and North of Leicester Lane, Desford – the allocation is outside the Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel to the east, but at its closest point is around 50m from it. This proximity could sterilise the mineral within this area. There is also a more distant (approx. 600m) Mineral Safeguarding Area (also for Sand & Gravel) to the west, separated by built development. No waste safeguarding issues.

LPR94 B – Land South of London Road and West of Ratby Lane (Parcel B), Markfield – the allocation is outwith the Mineral Safeguarding Area for igneous rock however this practically touches the southern end of the site. Therefore, at this proximity the allocation could sterilise the mineral within this area. No waste safeguarding issues.

LPR190 – Land South of Arnolds Crescent, Newbold Verdon* – the allocation is within the Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel and is also within 500m of Newbold Verdon STW, a safeguarded waste site reference HK14 (Document S4/2015). Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. Under Policy W9 of the LMWLP it is important to safeguard waste sites. The policy grants permission for development which adjoins, is adjacent to or would locate a potentially sensitive receptor in closer proximity to an existing or permitted waste management facility where it is demonstrated that there would be no adverse effect upon amenity and the development would not prejudice the current and future operation of the facility.

LPR207* – Land North West of Old Farm Lane and South of Bosworth Lane, Newbold Verdon* – the allocation is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. There is a safeguarded waste site (Newbold Verdon STW, ref HK14) within 900m to the south. Under Policy W9 of the LMWLP it is important to safeguard waste sites. The policy grants permission for development which adjoins, is adjacent to or would locate a potentially sensitive receptor in closer proximity to an existing or permitted waste management facility where it is demonstrated that there would be no adverse effect upon amen ity and the development would not prejudice the current and future operation of the facility.

LPR181 – Land Between the A5 and Northwood Farm, Wood Lane, Higham on the Hill – the allocation is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. No waste safeguarding issues.

AS519 – Land off Oakfield Way and Meadow Close, Sheepy Magna – the allocation is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected

from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. No waste safeguarding issues.

LPR241 – Land at Start Farm, Burbage – the allocation is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. No waste safeguarding issues.

LPR16 A - Land South of Soar Brook, Burbage – the allocation is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. The allocation also surrounds a safeguarded waste site (Document S4/2015, Watling Street, Red Lion Farm, ref HK24) which is inappropriate as amenity issues could prevent the site from operating. This would be contrary to LMWLP Policy W9.

LPR259 – Land East of Hinckley Park, Burbage – the allocation is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. The allocation also is within 300m of a safeguarded waste site (Watling Street, Red Lion Farm, HK24) which is needs consideration as amenity issues could prevent the site from operating. This would be contrary to LMWLP Policy W9.

LPR134 A - Land North of Glenfield, Groby (Parcel A) – the site is not within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. There is a more distant MSA for Sand & Gravel across the road at approximately over 500m away. The site is also around under 400m from the safeguarded waste site (Glenfield Auto Spares, Document S1/2015, ref B2) and approximately 650m from Glenfield STW (Document S1/2015, ref B23 [west]).

LLFA Comments on selected sites

Land South of Desford, Desford (LPR151A): 500 homes

There are three significant surface wate flow paths passing through the site from west to east. A sequential approach to the site layout should be taken, ensuring these blue corridors

are preserved and enhanced. Measures should be incorporated to provide additional storage to reduce flood risk downstream to the Rothley Brook.

BGS mapping indicates that much of the western portion of the site is underlain by sands and gravels and therefore greenfield runoff rates should be set accordingly. Opportunities to maximise the disposal of surface water to the ground should be taken.

New Settlement: Land off Atherstone Road (A444) and Ashby Road (B4116), 'Norton Heath' (LPR231 - in part, HBBC only): minimum of 7500 homes (2,250 within the Plan period)

It will be expected that a development of this nature will include strategic level sustainable surface water drainage and catchment management infrastructure which has the effect of reducing flood risk overall to the downstream River Mease.

Land South of Sacheverell Way, Groby (LPR146 A & B): 170 homes

Surface water flow path running through the middle of the site from north to south before joining the Rothley Brook. Sufficient space must be provided to enhance this area as a bluegreen corridor, whilst demonstrating the reduction of flood risk downstream. Assess the risk posed by the watercourse/ditch shown on mapping adjacent to the A46, which is not presenting any risk on strategic level Flood Map for Planning.

Land West of Station Road, Bagworth (LPR221): 46 homes

Large area of surface water flood risk within the western portion of the site. A sequential approach to site layout should be taken. Consideration should be taken as to whether 46 homes are deliverable given the large area of flood risk.

Land off Barns Way and North of Leicester Lane, Desford (LPR86): 94 homes

Surface water flow path present along the southern boundary of the site. Sequential approach to site layout should be taken and opportunities to enhance the blue-green corridor should be explored.

Land South of London Road and West of Ratby Lane (Parcel B), Markfield (LPR94 B): up to 95 homes

Surface water flow path on the eastern boundary adjacent to Ratby Road. This risk will need to be assessed further, especially if using Ratby Road as a point of access to the site. It will need to be demonstrated that there is safe access and egress into the site for all events up to and including the design flood event (1 in 100 year plus climate change).

Land off Oakfield Way and Meadow Close, Sheepy Magna (AS519): 58 homes

No significant flood risk concerns within the red line boundary. BGS mapping indicates the underlying strata consists of sands and gravels. Drainage techniques which maximise infiltration opportunities should be considered, and greenfield runoff rates should be based on permeable soil conditions.

Neighbourhood Planning

The Local Plan makes numerous references to Hinckley & Bosworth BC's continued support and commitment for Neighbourhood Planning. It is a concern however, that despite stating that the Local Plan has been informed by 'actively progressing neighbourhood plans', there is no reference to the proposed 500 dwelling strategic site at Land South of Desford within the Desford Neighbourhood Plan Review currently out to consultation.

Strategic Property Services on behalf of the Council as a Landowner

The Council is proposing a strategy which relies on the delivery of strategic sites, including a new settlement at Twycross and a new settlement previously consulted upon at Lindley Meadows / Mira area. Further, there is no supporting evidence from either site promoter demonstrating deliverability for the strategic sites.

However, the Council has not published a Sustainability Appraisal Report which assesses reasonable options for the strategy for accommodating housing growth and has not provided a site-by-site assessment. Therefore, the council is yet to publish a justification setting out why its strategy or sites has been selected and alternatives rejected, thereby failing at present to meet the 'justified' test in the NPPF paragraph 36 b).

The Council has selected sites where its evidence demonstrates that they are not suitable.

The new settlement at Twycross was assessed through the Strategic Growth Options and Constraints Mapping for Leicester and Leicestershire (August 2023). Which concluded that:

- "The site lies within the catchment of the River Mease, which is designated as both a SSSI and an SAC (River Mease SSSI / SAC). It is currently in unfavourable condition and is failing to meet its conservation objectives. As a result, there is currently little scope for development within the catchment without strategic mitigation".
- There is a concern about how the development will achieve sustainable travel patterns
 and avoid dependency on car use given its rural character and location, with very
 limited accessibility to Leicester
- Additionally, there is poor access to rail services, with the nearest station being Polesworth, approximately 7.3km south-westward with no viable accessibility by existing public transport provision.
- WPD has stated that this site is likely to require significant, extensive and lengthy works. Major reinforcement in the form of a Primary substation upgrade and/or a new primary substation, alongside extra high voltage network reinforcement.
- "... its discrete location some distance from larger settlements, means that local employment opportunities may be quite limited

Further, the site would have significant difficulty in meeting the expectations of the NPPF at para 109, especially given the limited extent of the employment opportunities proposed.

Contrast the above with the findings of the same Study in respect of the proposed strategic development area north of Hinckley, including the County Council's land at Middlefield Farm, which was found to be suitable for strategic development especially given its proximity to

services and facilities such as Hinckley town Centre, railway station and major road network.

The Plan provides no evidence relating to the quantum or delivery of infrastructure and has not published any transport modelling or utilities assessment demonstrating that its proposal for two large new settlements is feasible or viable and that delivery can be achieved. This means that the Council's anticipated yield from each site cannot be relied upon in meeting the borough's housing needs.

Cumulatively, the two new settlements would have a significant impact on the A5 corridor and require significant investment in infrastructure to mitigate their potential impacts.

c Policy NEW04: Employment Development Sites.

This draft Reg18 Plan proposes to allocate around 160 ha on three sites to the east of the A5/M69 Junction 1.

This general location is not particularly accessible from a sustainable travel perspective, with the M69 creating a significant barrier for the most direct routes for walking and cycling for existing residents in the 'Hinckley area'. It also difficult to see how growth of this scale will be able to come forward without strategic scale investment in the A5 corridor.

At the very least a clear 'Place Vision' (as per the ETCS draft key 'policy positions') needs to be established for growth as whole in this broad locations, including to consider the quantum and skills of employees that are likely to be required relative to existing available labour pools. In turn a 'Place Vision' will inform an understanding of the site's (as a whole) travel demand implications and in further turn how that should be tested (modelled) as part of the development of the Plan's transport evidence base.

It will also be vital to engage with National Highways to identify and agree prior to the publication of the Reg19 Plan a plausible route to the delivery of the likely scale of investment required in the A5 corridor to enable this scale of growth in this broad location.

The LTA looks forward to working closely with the Borough Council and other partners as necessary on seeking to find ways to address the significant travel and transport challenges posed by seeking to deliver growth at scale in this broad location. However, this is without prejudice to future views that it might express on the Reg19 Plan and any planning application(s) relating to these proposed allocation sites.

Minerals and Waste

LPR151A – the development site is partly within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral, including Sand & Gravel, will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within this Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it.

LPR231 – Norton Heath (HBBC only) – the south western portion of the site is within a Mineral Safeguarding Area for Sand & Gravel. It also appears – but is difficult to ascertain at this scale – that the allocation includes the safeguarded waste site at Norton Juxta Twycross STW (HK15). This is inappropriate as it is contrary to Policy W9 of the LMWLP as amenity issues could prevent expansion or operation of the waste site. Under Policy W9 of the LMWLP it is important to safeguard waste sites. The policy grants permission for development which adjoins, is adjacent to or would locate a potentially sensitive receptor in closer proximity to an existing or permitted waste management facility where it is demonstrated that there would be no adverse effect upon amenity and the development would not prejudice the current and future operation of the facility.

LLFA Comments on selected sites

Land South of Soar Brook, Burbage (LPR16 A): 117.38 ha

Site is bounded to the north, west and east by ordinary watercourses and associated Flood Zones 2 and 3. These two key blue-green corridors should be enhanced as part of the development proposals. There is a surface water flow path / smaller watercourse bisecting the site (passing by Hogue Hall). Opportunities to enhance this watercourse should be taken, which could include incorporating the surface water drainage strategy into any enhancements.

Land North of Glenfield, Groby (Parcel A) (LPR134 A): 10.64 ha

Surface water flow path on the western boundary adjacent to the A46. This risk will need to be assessed further, especially if using the A46 as a point of access to the site. It will need to be demonstrated that there is safe access and egress into the site for all events up to and including the design flood event (1 in 100 year plus climate change).

Strategic Property Services on behalf of the Council as a Landowner

The major new employment development sites are again centred on the A5 corridor adjacent to and to the south of the M69 away from the proposed areas of residential growth potentially resulting in the need for further significant infrastructure investment throughout the wider area in addition to limiting the ability to access the sites by active and sustainable modes of transport.

8 Health Place Making

a Policy REV02: Hot Food Takeaways and Fast-Food Outlets

It is the position of Public Health that the policy wording is amended further to improve clarity and accuracy of the data indicators used. The addition of Part C will allow a 'catch-all' and build in flexibility later in the plan period if data changes. There are examples of this wording in several other adopted local plans. It is recommended that the policy wording is amended from:

'b) in and within a 400-metre radius of Barwell, Earl Shilton and Hinckley Castle wards which demonstrably have both higher obesity prevalence for certain age categories and higher concentrations of hot food takeaways than the Leicestershire average. '

To

'b) in and within a 400-metre radius of Barwell and Earl Shilton wards, which have a significantly higher prevalence of obesity in Year 6 compared to the Leicestershire average, and in and within a 400-metre radius of Hinckley Castle ward, which has a significantly higher density of hot food takeaways than the Leicestershire average.

C) in any other areas of public health concern'

It is also noted that the Policy no longer includes text which refers to proposals for *new* betting offices only being supported where they are located within a Town, District or Local Centre and do not result in an over proliferation of this use. It is considered that this policy wording should be retained and included in Policy REV02, or another relevant policy.

The inclusion of the policy is supported from a Neighbourhood Planning perspective, as this will provide Neighbourhood Plan groups with strategic context for any policies they wish to include, aimed tackling issues in their area and more specific locations.

9 Leisure and Tourism

a Policy NEW05: Open Space Provision

Given that the LTA's LTP4 CD Core Themes and Policies embrace health and environmental considerations, it welcomes this policy in principle. Whether on or off-site open space provision is made routes to those spaces for cycling, wheeling walking should be direct, safe and accessible for all likely users. In this regard there is a concern at the use of straight line (crow fly) access distances; for example, whilst an area of green space might be 480m away as the crow flies, where is that measured from within a development and what if there are buildings or other obstacles in the way of that straight line? It is suggested that the methodology/approach needs further refinement in this regard.

Additionally, it is suggested that the proposed policy should be amended to include that routes to open spaces for cycling, wheeling walking should be direct, safe and accessible for all likely users. Further it should also specifically reference that in some cases off-site provision might require existing cycling, wheeling and walking routes to be upgraded to a safe and appropriate standard. For example, even if a Local Equipment Area for Play falls within the specified straight line access distance of 400m, children and their parents are likely to be discouraged from using it if to do so would require a walk along a road with no footway.

The Policy should have regard to Policy M11 of the LMWLP. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for

non-mineral development within a Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. The development of a site for open space in a mineral safe guarding area could sterilise the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to the site and would therefore be contrary to Policy M11 of the LMWLP without a Mineral Assessment. This should therefore form a consideration in the assessment of suitable sites.

b Policy NEW06: Sport and Recreation Facilities: Outdoor and Indoor Provision

Outdoor sport and recreation facilities provision also needs to have regard to Policy M11 of the LMWLP. Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (LMWLP) outlines that mineral will be protected from permanent sterilisation by other development. Any forthcoming planning applications for non-mineral development within a Mineral Safeguarding Area should be accompanied by a Mineral Assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to it. The development of a site for recreation provision in a mineral safeguarding area could sterilise the mineral resource beneath or adjacent to the site and would therefore be contrary to Policy M11 of the LMWLP without a Mineral Assessment. This should therefore form a consideration in the assessment of suitable sites.





CABINET – 18 NOVEMBER 2025

ANNUAL DELIVERY REPORT AND PERFORMANCE COMPENDIUM 2025

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PART A

Purpose of the Report

- 1. The purpose of this report is to present the draft Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium for 2025 which sets out the Council's progress and performance over the past year. The Delivery Report itself (attached as Appendix A to this report) focuses largely on delivery against the County Council's priorities as set out in the Council's main service strategies.
- 2. The Performance Compendium (attached as Appendix B) includes information on comparative performance and 2024/25 performance outcome results, low overall funding for Leicestershire and the current associated risks.

Recommendations

- 3. It is recommended that:
 - (a) The progress in delivering on the Council's service priorities as set out in the draft Annual Delivery Report 2025 be noted;
 - (b) The Council's low comparative funding, good performance outcomes position, and the financial pressures and risks now facing the Authority set out in the Performance Compendium be noted;
 - (c) In light of the pressure on the Council's financial sustainability arising from continued service demand, improvement and cost pressures, the Council continues to press its case for a fairer funding settlement, progresses plans for a fundamental Budget and Efficiency Review and its preference to secure c£40m efficiency savings and wider benefits from a new unitary authority for Leicestershire and Rutland.
 - (d) The Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader, be authorised to make any amendments to the draft Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium prior to its submission for approval to the County Council on 3 December 2025.

Reason for Recommendations

- 4. It is best practice in performance management, implicit in the LGA Sector-Led approach to local authority performance and part of the Council's Internal Governance Framework, to undertake a review of overall progress at the end of the year and to benchmark performance against comparable authorities. It is also good practice to produce an annual performance report and ensure that it is scrutinised, transparent, and made publicly available.
- 5. The National Audit Office has issued best practice guidance for annual reports, highlighting that the annual report is a key mechanism for transparent disclosure of an organisation's in-year performance and governance matters. The report should discuss how the entity has performed in the year, including areas where performance has deteriorated or is below expectations, and the other key risks.
- 6. The County Council is poorly funded in comparison with other local authorities and this, until addressed, will continue to affect delivery, performance, risks, and Council Tax levels. The Annual Performance Report will be a useful source of data for the Council's Efficiency Review which is due to start this month with the aim of identifying further opportunities to reduce costs, generate income and deliver services differently.
- 7. The draft Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium may be modified to reflect comments made by the Cabinet as well as to include any final national comparative data which becomes available prior to its consideration by the County Council.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

- 8. The draft Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium 2025 will be considered by the Scrutiny Commission on 10 November, and members will be updated on the comments from the Commission at the meeting.
- 9. The Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium is scheduled for consideration by the County Council at its meeting on 3 December 2025.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

10. The Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium form part of the County Council's Policy Framework. The information outlined in the report provides performance data which will help the Council and its partners to ensure services continue to meet standards, provide value for money, and that outcomes are being achieved for local people.

Resource Implications

11. The report has no direct resource implications.

<u>Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure</u>

None.

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PART B

Background

- 12. The draft Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium, appended to this report, cover County Council delivery over the last twelve months or so. They draw largely on 2024/25 data, although older data and benchmarking is included where more up-to-date information is not available. In some cases, the data is more recent.
- 13. The assessment of performance has been divided into two parts the Annual Delivery Report (the first part) is narrative, describing delivery, progress with implementing service plans and strategies, and achievements over the last twelve months.
- 14. The second part is the 'Performance Compendium' which contains information on:
 - Current inequality in funding.
 - Comparative performance, cost, and service benchmarking 2023/24 including lower comparative performing areas.
 - 2024/25 end-of-year performance figures, where available.
 - Main service and corporate risks.
- 15. There is some comparative data still to be published, some of which is due to be published by December 2025. The overall Council benchmarking position for 2024/25 will also be updated at that point.
- 16. The appended Annual Report is a draft document and will continue to be developed to incorporate points made by the Cabinet, as well as the inclusion of any final national comparative data which becomes available prior to its consideration by the County Council on 3 December. The final Annual Report will be properly formatted and published on the County Council website (http://www.leics.gov.uk).

Delivery Summary and Efficiency Review

- 17. Overall, analysis of the narrative shows good examples of delivery across the service areas. There remain good planning arrangements, financial management and governance in place supporting delivery of the priorities.
- 18. A fundamental Efficiency Review and plans for Local Government Reorganisation to a single unitary County and Rutland Council are being progressed to help meet the significant financial challenges faced by the Council and council taxpayers. The data contained in the Compendium and the narrative progress report and improvement areas will be important elements considered by the Efficiency Review.

Performance Data Analysis

- 19. The Council's own detailed benchmarking shows that it was the fifth best performing county in England on a wide range of performance measures in 2023/24, despite being the lowest funded. The final position for 2024/25 will be confirmed early next year.
- 20. Initial analysis of 2024/25 end-of-year data shows that of 160 metrics, 73 improved, 34 showed no real change and 53 worsened. Direction of travel cannot be determined for 5 indicators, due to the absence of previous data or changes to indicator definitions. The impact of low funding and service demand pressures has continued to be felt, affecting outcomes in a number of areas, and some of these issues are flagged in the associated dashboards. A summary of progress on the indicators is set out in the Performance Compendium along with the actual detailed data and dashboards.

Areas for Continued Focus

- 21. Given the significant financial challenges, demand, and delivery pressures facing the Council, areas for focus include: -
 - Continuing to maintain awareness of Leicestershire's unfair funding position, pursue a significant Budget and Council Efficiency Review and savings initiatives and cost mitigation measures and seek more sustainable funding for local services.
 - Continuing progress on the Council's preferred option for Local Government Reorganisation which will deliver significant efficiency savings and wider benefits.
 - Continuing to progress improvements to SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) services and targeted improvements to Children's Social Care.
 - Implementing the Public Health Strategy and a refreshed Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and supporting public health services.
 - Pressing for an effective government solution to the challenges in Adult Social Care and implementing the Improvement Plan in response to the CQC Inspection of Leicestershire Adult Social Care services.
 - Implementing a refreshed Local Transport Plan (LTP 4) continued public transport improvements and measures to help support and grow the local economy.
 - Maintaining the focus on ensuring good local public services and customer satisfaction.

Views of the Scrutiny Commission

22. The Scrutiny Commission will consider the draft Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium at its meeting on 10 November 2025. Members will be updated on the Commission's views at the meeting.

Equality Implications

23. There are no equality implications arising directly from this report. The draft Annual Delivery Report and draft Performance Compendium incorporate the progress of the County Council against key equalities outcomes and indicators.

Human Rights Implications

24. There are no human rights implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers

Report to the Scrutiny Commission on 10 November 2025 - Annual Delivery Report and Performance Compendium 2025

Local Government Association: LG Inform Benchmarking System https://lginform.local.gov.uk/

Institute for Government - Public Services Performance Tracker 2025. https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/our-work/trackers/public-services-performance-tracker

Appendices

Appendix A - Draft Leicestershire County Council Annual Delivery Report 2025 Appendix B - Draft Performance Compendium 2025



Annual Delivery Report

2025



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1. Introduction

This progress and performance report covers the period from September 2024 to September 2025, reflecting on recent progress and achievements made by the Council at that point.

A separate Performance Compendium looks at service data and outcomes in more detail, including a range of performance indicators and comparative benchmarking data, as well as some of the risks to service outcomes and delivery.

Over the last 12 months, the Council has continued to adapt to an evolving landscape, including responding to national policy changes, economic pressures and the evolving needs of our residents. Despite these challenges, and with the continued low funding provided to Leicestershire, our focus has been on delivering high quality public services.

Following the County Council elections in May good progress has been made including lobbying government for a better deal for Leicestershire, progressing work towards a fundamental Efficiency Review and new Efficiencies Plan to help drive down the budget gap, a focus on public services, seeking to find new business for Beaumanor Hall and consulting on a new working arrangements policy.

The Government is also proposing a shake-up of Council structures in two-tier areas. Our detailed work on the best option for Local Government Reorganisation in Leicestershire proposes a new single council for the County and Rutland, including joint work with the City Council that demonstrates there would be significant savings of c£40 million each year. Options analysis also highlights significant wider service benefits that will accrue from the changes.

2. Adult Social Care

We continue work to ensure that people have the opportunities and support they need to live active, independent, and fulfilling lives. We are also working to ensure improvements in the experiences of those who receive adult social care.

It is important that people find it easy to access information about social care services and that service users are satisfied with their care and support, live as independently as possible and report a good quality of life. The Council also aspires for unpaid carers in the community to feel more recognised, valued and supported to undertake their caring roles.

It is also critical that adults who may be disadvantaged due to learning disabilities and/or mental health issues are able to live as independently as possible and access suitable employment. Also, that vulnerable adults are supported and safeguarded.

Vulnerable Adults and Safeguarding

Progress in 2024/25

- We have continued to work alongside the Integrated Care Board (ICB) on neighbourhood offers for Mental Health support with a focus on prevention and wellbeing.
- There has been a review of our Adult Mental Health Provision (AMHP) service to ensure that we are able to better meet demand over a 24/7 period.
- Work has continued to update leaflets and guidance around safeguarding to
 educate people on how to keep safe from abuse and neglect. This was
 completed in collaboration with people who draw on services and the LLR
 Safeguarding subgroup.
- 94% of people who were supported through Adult Safeguarding reported their safeguarding personal objectives as achieved.
- Our Legal Services Contracts Team assisted with the procurement of a new Home Care framework with a view to taking care of vulnerable adults and fulfilling the Council's obligations under the Care Act 2014.
- The Homecare Assessment and Reablement Team (HART) supported people to remain at home or return home and continues to receive positive feedback.
- The positive impact of prevention services and measures through the use of community spaces, Occupational Therapy and the Local Area Coordination services has continued, to reduce and delay the need for formal support.

Adult Social Care Services, Information and Advice

Progress in 2024/25

 Our customer feedback form, for use following involvement from adult social care, has been updated, and is being piloted and rolled out. This has been developed in co-production with people who access services, and the feedback is being used to improve service experiences.

- In January 2025, we launched a brand-new website to help people find support to help them to continue to live independently at home. The website helps residents match with carers.
- The Engagement Panel, made up of people with lived experience, have directly influenced and supported change in ways of working to improve the experiences of people accessing services. This includes developing questions for homecare re-commissioning, supporting with an AI pilot of assessment writing and developing paper-based information packs.
- Work commenced with York University to research and develop value based situational judgement tests for Adult Social Care provider recruitment. This work has concluded with results expected to be published in Autumn 2025.
- Our Adult Social Care Service was subject to inspection by the Care Quality Commission earlier this year. The Inspection highlighted a number of service strengths as well as areas for improvement. Strengths highlighted in the report include:
 - Case records reflect people's right to choice, build on their strengths and assets and reflect what they want to achieve and how they wish to live their lives.
 - People's experiences of assessment are positive, with a professional, respectful approach and a clear focus on them as individuals.
 - The Homecare Assessment and Reablement Team (HART) supporting people to remain or return home received positive feedback.
 - The positive impact of prevention services and measures through the use of community spaces, Occupational Therapy and the Local Area Coordination services to reduce and delay the need for formal support.
 - Our commitment to partnership working with evidence of positive relationships and examples of effective partnership working, including Home First, Occupational Therapists, Care Coordination, CQC (provider quality), and the Learning Disabilities Collaborative.
 - People had good access to safe, effective support options, particularly home care.
 - A clear understanding of the safeguarding risks and issues in the area, with senior leadership oversight.
 - o An inclusive and positive culture of continuous learning and improvement.
 - A strong culture of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) with a clear strategy and actions across the organisation.
- Following the inspection we have reviewed and updated our improvement plans.
 The focus for improvement includes:
 - Reducing waiting lists.
 - Improving access, information, advice and guidance, including digital exclusion.
 - o The carers assessment pathway and support offer.
 - o Further understanding and addressing gaps in support services.
 - o Reviewing safeguarding pathways and processes.
 - A demand and capacity management review aiming to ensure manageable workloads across all teams.

Supporting Carers

Progress in 2024/25

- The Care Technology Service has completed a project introducing care technology to people with early onset dementia and their unpaid carer. The findings were reviewed by Social Finance and showed, along with qualitative feedback, a reduction of stress experienced by the carer. This is leading to a second project looking at the use of technology to support carers in their caring role and also benefiting the cared for in remaining at home and being supported as they wish.
- A commissioning review of the Carer's Support Service is being undertaken. We have started working in partnership with carers to develop a future service model.
- Carer's contingency planning has progressed, supported by the Accelerated Reform Fund. This will support carers if they are suddenly unable to meet their caring obligations in a time of emergency.
- A review of our Carers' Strategy has started.
- In February 2025, we opened applications for grants to support carers facing costs arising from supporting adults recently discharged from hospital. The grant offers much needed support to carers looking after their loved ones.
- There was increased engagement with carers who receive support and advice on a range of wrap around services such as benefits, carers passports, dementia and cancer support.
- Local Area Coordinators continued to identify carers in the community and support them to access their community, to live active, independent lives.
- In Autumn 2024 the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland partnership 'Connected Care Programme' was highly commended at the Health Service Journal Awards. The programme uses remote technology to reduce avoidable hospital admissions for care home residents, saving almost £1m in avoided hospital admission costs. The programme was also shortlisted in the Local Government Chronicle awards.
- There was a Comprehensive Infection Prevention and Control audit of care homes who contract with the Council with specialist support to make improvements to protect those at risk of harm.

3. Communities, Heritage and Libraries, Regulatory Services

Our work with communities aims for Leicestershire to have active and inclusive communities in which people support each other and participate in service design and delivery. Communities also need to be resilient; able to avoid, prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies. We are working to ensure Council services are more accessible and inclusive and working with partners to increase community cohesion and tackle hate crime.

We are also working to ensure that our cultural and historical heritage are enjoyed and conserved and that people support each other through volunteering. We aim to protect consumers and promote a fair and safe trading environment through our Regulatory Services.

Participation in service design and delivery

Progress in 2024/25

- A Series of 'Parish Briefings' were held, covering topics such as the Councill's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), Environment & Transport, Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and local government reorganisation
- There have been a range of public consultations through the year to engage with residents on a variety of topics, including Rights of Way, Adults Social Care Strategy, SEND and Inclusion Strategy and Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4).
- We worked to improve the information on the website relating to people asking
 questions at Council committee meetings to make this clearer and provide more
 guidance for members of the public about how the process works. The website
 now includes a form where people can submit their questions to public meetings
 of the Council's overview and scrutiny committees.
- During the 2024/25 municipal year, 74 questions were submitted to overview and scrutiny meetings by Members and the public, an increase of 56 from the previous year.
- Work took place during the year to promote the County Council election
- Adult learning ran four engagement events during the academic year which provided the opportunity for communities to shape the curriculum offer.
- 1650 residents contributed to the co-produced activities in Communities and Wellbeing venues over the last 12 months.
- Ongoing support was provided to the Culture Leicestershire Community
 Connectors group. The group is made up of volunteers from different parts of the
 service (Charnwood Museum, Home Library service etc). This helped to provide
 insight and feedback on service wide activity and generate ideas and
 suggestions.
- There was co-production with volunteers of workshops as part of the Museum Collections Development Policy Review.
- We led the Suicide Prevention Lived Experience Network, which co-produced the refreshed Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (LLR) Suicide Prevention Strategy.

Cultural and historic heritage and libraries

Progress in 2024/25

- There were over 900,000 visits to our libraries and museums between April 2024 and March 2025.
- In September 2024, the 1620s House and Garden achieved its highest score to date (of 93%) from the VisitEngland team. Melton Carneige Museum also received its highest ever score of 94% in March 2025.
- Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre, 1620s House and Garden and Beaumanor Hall all also celebrated success at the Leicestershire Tourism and Hospitality Awards.
- In December 2024, Harborough Museum achieved a national award for its display and exhibition of the historic Hallaton Helmet.
- In February 2025 we launched a new free scheme to enable eligible people to experience the Council's unique art and museum collections from their own home. The project 'Culture to You' is being trialled in Oadby and Wigston with 26 clients and 10 new volunteers recruited to deliver to people's homes.
- There were over 2.5million library loans between April 2024 and March 2025
- 5 Culture Leicestershire websites have been improved and updated to meet accessibility guidance and support residents in accessing information.
- Learning for Independence programmes, designed to support adults with additional needs, make use of cultural/historical heritage resources at Melton Mowbray, Hinckley, Charnwood and Coalville. Projects and performances have helped learners develop self-advocacy, confidence and independence.
- A new section named 'Protecting Heritage' has been added to Leicestershire Highway Design Guide, asking developers to ensure that they have considered protection of heritage in their design and construction activities.
- We continued to promote Leicestershire cultural and heritage activities via the Leicestershire Communities website, social media platforms and established networks.

Volunteering

Progress in 2024/25

- The Leicestershire Lieutenancy promoted the King's Award for Voluntary Service which is the highest award given to local volunteer groups across the UK to recognise outstanding work done in their own communities.
- We procured and implemented a corporate volunteer management database to improve data security and consistency of our volunteer offer.
- A toolkit, checklist and training programme were developed to support the management of volunteers.
- We continued to support volunteering at a strategic and operational level through the Volunteering Operational Group (VOG), the Volunteer Managers Network and weekly drop-in sessions.

- There was continued growth in the number of Council volunteers and volunteering hours, as well as the variety of Council managed volunteer roles.
- The Leicestershire Lieutenancy ran a reservist event in June 2024, to coincide with Armed Forces week where a number of businesses were invited to discuss the benefit of businesses allowing their staff to be reservists.
- We supported Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE)
 organisations to embed asset based and Friendly Connected Community
 approaches within their organisations.
- Local area coordinators (LACs), alongside partner organisations, supported a pilot work experience programme in Public Health via the Career Ready programme.
- In March 2025, the Chairmans Volunteer Event took place which celebrated the Council's volunteers.
- The Environment and Transport Parish Partnership Initiative continued to support parishes and residents to improve their area by enabling additional services such as sign cleaning, grass cutting and asset maintenance to be provided.
- There continues to be a range of services delivered through our volunteer programmes in Targeted Family Help, Youth and Justice Services and the Fostering Service for children in care, including the Independent Visitors Scheme.
- The Quorn Community Managed Library received the Kings Award for volunteering.
- The Community Managed Libraries (CML) network was maintained and there was renewed support agreements with CML groups.
- Culture Leicestershire benefitted from over 21,000 hours of volunteer support between April 2024 and March 2025.
- The Home Library Service took on an additional 26 clients and recruited 12 new volunteers.

Consumer Safety and Regulatory Services

- In the past year, Trading Standards officers conducted over 70 enforcement visits
 to Leicestershire retailers, seizing over 9,000 tobacco products. Enforcement
 typically results in prosecutions and premises closure orders. This year, a
 business proprietor involved in the distribution of illicit products was sentenced to
 eight months' imprisonment.
- Supported by central government resources, Trading Standards maintain an operational presence at East Midlands Airport, where we routinely inspect imported consignments to ensure compliance with UK regulations. Over the past year, nearly 1,100 shipments were intercepted by trading standards officers, resulting in 240,000 unsafe items being prevented from entering the UK market.
- The Litigation Team supported this by continuing to be involved in fire safety
 prosecutions to ensure compliance with fire safety legislation which protects the
 public, but which also helps to act as a deterrent to others with a view to driving up

- safety standards generally. The Litigation Team also supports work undertaken by Trading Standards with the principal aim of ensuring that markets for consumers operate in a fair and lawful manner.
- Trading Standards continued to address the growing challenge of doorstep crime, responding to a noticeable rise in rogue traders targeting residents. Close collaboration with the police and other partner agencies is essential to reduce crime, educate potential victims, and enforce action against persistent or serious offenders. A recent Trading Standards investigation led to a rogue builder receiving a five-year prison sentence for fraudulent trading
- Our Trading Standards Service remain committed to proactive prevention, with a
 particular focus on supporting vulnerable residents. Their efforts include the
 installation of call blockers in homes to significantly reduce the volume of scam
 calls, helping to safeguard those most at risk.
- The Learning Disability Partnership Board delivered support and guidance to people with a learning disability including how to keep safe from scams and attended the Victim First event.

Customer Service, Community Cohesion and Hate Crime

- In November 2024, we agreed a new Customer Experience Strategy to ensure people can communicate with our services more quickly. Nearly half a million people have contact with the Council every month, with around 130,000 phone calls received monthly.
- We organised meetings of the Leicestershire Equalities Challenge Group of community representatives and co-ordinated the development and implementation of the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.
- In July 2025 we agreed a new approach to flying flags at County Hall to focus on the Union flag, County flag, St George's flag or Lord Lieutenant's flag, to celebrate values that unite us all.
- We organised a Leicestershire Faiths Seminar with a keynote speech from the Bishop of Loughborough.
- A total of 25 people received a Personal Honour during the year.
- We encouraged communities to apply for free road closures and host street parties to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day in May 2025.
- In June 2025 we honoured the huge contribution made by current and former members of the armed forces, their families, reservists and adult cadet volunteers through a key Armed Forces Day event.
- We held an internal session for staff to highlight and promote methods of reporting Hate Crime and sharing best practice.
- Local Area Coordinators supported engagement events in Braunstone to support the recovery of the community after the death of Bhim Kohli.
- Over 4000 adults have engaged in learning activities across the county, engaging a broad demographic to learn about cultures, whilst embedding British fundamental values during the induction of all classes.

4. Highways and Transport

We need our transport, and infrastructure to support the economy and enable housing and employment growth, whilst helping to reduce emissions. The ongoing forecast high population and housing growth will continue to place pressure on our highways and transport services and exacerbate funding challenges.

Major Schemes and Maintenance Supporting Growth

- Our Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) aims to provide a transport network that
 delivers economic prosperity and supports local, regional and international
 markets. We adopted the Core Document in July 2025 (stage 1). Work has begun
 on stage 2, which includes development of focused strategies and multi modal
 area investment plans.
- Major construction work continued on the north and east Melton Mowbray distributor road to reduce congestion and support new homes and employment growth in the town. The new road is expected to open in early 2026.
- The A511 major road network growth corridor scheme will make significant highway improvements to 9 locations between A42 junction 13 near Ashby-de-la-Zouch and the A50 Field Head roundabout.
- A programme of maintenance and improvement works is being delivered in the 2025/26 financial year that provides benefits for communities and supports growth. This includes Section 106 funding to deliver junction improvements identified in the Market Harborough Transport Strategy.
- Design work continues to progress on the Desford Crossroads junction improvements to reduce congestion, improve journey time reliability on the A47/B582 corridor and re-distribute traffic away.
- Temporary work began on the Zouch Bridge replacement scheme in July 2024 to accommodate Environment Agency "in river" working restrictions. The main construction programme began in February 2025 and is scheduled to complete in January 2027.
- In 2024/25 a total of £22m was invested in Highways Asset Maintenance including £18m on carriageways, £1.6m on footways and rights of way, £0.8m on bridge maintenance and strengthening, £1.2m on street lighting, £0.1m on flood alleviation and £0.3m on traffic signal renewal.
- In 2024/25 our highways teams were out across Leicestershire as part of a £3.3m summer maintenance programme of surface dressing covering more than 751,000m2 (around 70 miles) of road. The process sealed cracks, prevented potholes, restored road texture and will keep roads waterproof.
- In November 2024, 23 gritters were on standby to grit 1,300 miles of highway with 16,500 tonnes of salt stored in grit barns across the county. The team carried out 53 runs on 17 routes in 2024/25.
- In March 2025 five new 'hotbox' roadmenders were deployed to maintain Leicestershire's highways. They ensure good quality repairs are done effectively and efficiently. The Council completed 8,764 road repairs last year, an average of 168 jobs a week.

Public Transport

Progress in 2024/25

- Following a refresh of the Council's Passenger Transport Policy and Strategy in October 2023 and Bus Service Improvement Plan in September 2024, progress has been made with an extensive review of the county's passenger transport network. The receipt of £7m of Government Bus Grant Funding along with a range of Section 106 funding has provided an opportunity to reshape the network for Leicestershire's residents as part of this review.
- The review has seen extensive improvements to the network including the introduction of 11 new Digital Demand Responsive Transport services covering areas across Melton, Harborough and North and Southwest Leicestershire. We have launched a new FoxConnect app for flexible journey booking alongside a package of community-based support for passengers. Several new bus routes have started including town services across Melton, Harborough and Loughborough, new pilot services for shoppers, new journeys to access education, employment and medical care as well as additional evenings journeys for leisure purposes.
- In addition, Bus Fare promotions included free bus travel during the first month of operation of the new FoxConnect services, free youth travel during school holidays, festive free bus services and free travel for all for fixed periods on all supported services. We also launched new Leicestershire Buses branding and area bus information booklets with wide distribution to residents.
- Further support has been provided for park and ride services and enhancements to cross-boundary services in partnership with neighbouring authorities.
- Funding of £8.1 million was awarded for electric buses, following a successful Zero Emission Bus Regional Area (ZEBRA) bid. This was rolled out in partnership with two commercial bus operators. Progress has been made by the ZEBRA schemes which will see the introduction of 46 new electric buses by July 2026.
- In November 2024 new figures showed that 1 million miles had been clocked up since the electric Park and Ride buses launched in May 2021. The 10 electric buses operate on routes linking Birstall, Enderby and Meynell's Gorse with the city centre.

Active Travel, Cycling and Walking

- Work continued with Active Travel England to further the Council's commitment to active travel in Leicestershire, with associated walking and cycling facilities and behaviour change programmes. We have received £2.6m in funding from Active Travel England (ATE) since March 2024.
- Active Travel Fund monies were secured to deliver an active travel improvement at The Parade junction in Oadby. We carried out consultation on the proposal and have continued to work with ATE to explore options to revise the scheme in a way that maintains the benefits of the proposed scheme.

- Work has begun on a proposal for a £1m capital funding allocation, directed to Market Harborough to enhance existing Section 106 programmes.
- Active Travel 5 funding continues to focus on enhancing routes to schools, to
 encourage families to walk and wheel to school. Such improvements will have a
 positive impact on journeys to school that encourage active travel to schools and
 help reduce school gate congestion.
- In September 2024 and February 2025, the Council held local forums showcasing active and sustainable transport initiatives including local walking and cycling plans. This included a free course to allow people to have a go on an electric powered bike alongside a guide.
- In April 2025, the signalised junction at Hollier's Walk in Hinckley was upgraded to meet planning obligations associated with nearby developments. The project replaced outdated infrastructure and reconfigured the junction layout to improve traffic flow and provide enhanced, more accessible crossing facilities for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- The 'Betterpoints' regular driver campaign saw 100 drivers targeted with specific messaging and incentives. 52% of drivers changed behaviour, resulting in a 25% drop in single occupancy car journeys. The 'Betterpoints' general programme continues to run successfully with a total of 4,915 users. More than 930,000 active and sustainable journeys have been recorded, and approximately 586,000 active and sustainable journeys have directly replaced single occupancy car trips.
- The Leicestershire Highway Design Guide Review was developed in December 2024 and provides an Active Travel Matrix that helps designers to make decisions on suitable provision for development sites.

Road Safety

- The LLR Road Safety Partnership continued to deliver a programme of targeted road safety initiatives across the area. Social media campaigns as well as press and radio interviews focused on e-scooter use/legality, the Fatal4 (speeding, drink, and drug driving, driving whilst distracted, non-wearing of seatbelts) and educating drivers about vulnerable road users.
- Our Traffic and Safety Team developed and trialled the Road Safety Education programme, a series of road safety presentations and messages to a number of schools during Autumn 2024. After a review, this was rolled out to all schools in February 2025. The programme aims to provide young people with the skills they need to stay safe.
- Bikeability courses were delivered to 3,225 primary school children throughout the year to equip young riders with practical skills of how to cycle safely.
- The Driver Education Workshop team administered and delivered National Driver Offender Scheme (NDORS) courses to 40,000 clients.
- 'School Streets' were adopted at two schools in Leicestershire. The trial led to permanent schemes being introduced with 93% of parents saying that the scheme was positive, attendance improving and parents feeling confident to let their children walk to school independently.

5. Environment, Flooding and Waste

We are working to ensure that nature and the local environment are valued, protected and enhanced, resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way, the economy and infrastructure are environmentally friendly and there is a stronger response to incidents of local flooding.

Environment

- Working in partnership with other local authorities, public bodies, environmental groups, farmers, landowners, and residents, we led the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester, and Rutland, which was launched in July 2025.
- Our first Biodiversity Duty Plan was produced, in compliance with the new strengthened biodiversity duty introduced through the Environment Act 2021.
 It sets out the current and future actions to meet the biodiversity duty.
- We continued to support the Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership Scheme and its bid to become a UNESCO Global Geopark.
- Our partnership with local wildlife charity, Nature Spot, continues to boost biodiversity and wildlife by planting wildflowers on urban roadside verges across the County. The Wildlife Verge scheme now includes 79 verges across 60 parishes.
- We delivered the Communities Summit 2025, which focused on recognising the achievements of various local groups, champions and businesses in showcasing innovative approaches to supporting biodiversity and the environment.
- In January 2025 we secured £445,000 in grant funding from the Forestry Commission to support more tree planting including new tiny forests. As of July 2025, over 494,000 trees have been planted as part of our Tree for Every Person scheme.
- In November 2024, our project to restore a reedbed at a Leicestershire country park won a national 'Green Apple' environmental award. The reedbed provides a natural and sustainable water filtration system as well as enhancing the environment.
- A review of the Country Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in Northwest Leicestershire was completed, to make sure they were up to date and improve the efficiency of the TPO service.
- In September 2024, we opened our popular scheme, run in conjunction with the Woodland Trust, which offers free trees and hedges to landowners and farmers in a bid to encourage more planting across Leicestershire. Each free tree pack includes 50 native trees. In 2023 alone, we gave away 50,000 trees.
- In partnership with the Green Living Leicestershire Group, Leicestershire and Rutland Ornithological Society and others, the Natural England funded Swift Action for Swifts project (worth £60,000) was completed. The project installed

- over 350 Swift boxes and 150 Swift callers. The aim of the project was to provide more homes for the birds and inform residents about the importance of Swifts, to increase their population.
- Working with the County Invasive and Non-Native Species (INNS) Local Action Group, we completed a project, funded by Natural England and DEFRA worth £17,000, to record invasive and non-native species as well as for controlling the spread of certain species such as Himalayan Balsam, Floating Pennywort, American Mink, and Japanese Knotweed.
- In November 2024, an environmental project to remove trees affected by ash dieback and allow the remaining trees to thrive commenced along the A511. A comprehensive replanting programme will replace the felled trees with native species.
- Work was completed to review our Tree Strategy to ensure it reflects the changes in national and local policy.
- The delivery of the Countryside Stewardship Woodland Improvement programme continued, having completed the second year of the grant.
- There was ongoing maintenance of the gardens at the 1620s House to promote indigenous plants and a variety of habitats.
- Old technology streetlights have been replaced with new energy efficient LED streetlights. There has also been a reduction in energy costs, energy consumption and carbon production through the street lighting dimming trial. In December 2024, the project was given the prestigious Highway Electrical Association award for Sustainable Project of the Year. Total emissions from street lighting in Leicestershire have reduced by 84% since 2008.
- Our Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy was adopted in September 2024. Its goals include promoting a healthy environment, improving air quality and helping to create better places.
- The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) pilot scheme progressed, with appointment of a charge point operator to deliver the project. The first batch of electric vehicle points are scheduled for installation.
- A pilot study was developed to investigate opportunities for electrification of the Councils fleet vehicles.
- In April 2025 community groups and organisations were invited to apply for funding to kickstart renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in their local areas. The Get Ready Community Energy Fund is part of the Greener Future Leicestershire project led by the County Council.
- Work was carried out with teams within the authority that drive high mileages to consider how business mileage can be reduced, saving the Council money and reducing emissions to improve air quality in communities.
- A heat decarbonisation plan has been completed for 62 County Council properties which have fossil fuelled heating systems.
- There was a successful application for £115,000 Phase 4 Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding to install solar panels and air-source-heat pumps at 4 Family Hub properties.
- We acted as a key partner in the delivery of the Leicestershire Collaborate to Accelerate Net Zero (LCAN) Project. The project is delivering 4 key work

- packages aimed at improving energy security locally, supporting communities to develop their own energy generation methods via renewables and helping businesses and residents to be energy efficient and save money.
- Our Warm Homes Service delivered a demonstrator project (Home Energy Retrofit Offer) funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero to encourage engagement with government grant initiatives. The Service provided tailored home energy advice visits to 288 households and advice to 1,401 residents with a 97% satisfaction rate.
- Our Adult Learning Service delivered 902 courses that included content to encourage behaviours that help to protect the environment.
- We recruited further Environment Action Volunteers and expanded the scheme to include Sustainable Travel.

Waste

- Working in partnership with the district councils, the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy was progressed which sets out how the Leicestershire Waste Partnership intends to manage municipal waste up to 2050. Work continues on implementing pledges in the strategy, including action to reduce waste and the amount of waste sent to landfill.
- A campaign to reduce contamination in recycling was delivered during 2024/25 utilising social media platforms and ensuring clear and consistent information to residents on what can be recycled. The Council also developed a video demonstrating the recycling sorting facility to increase awareness.
- We supported the national Recycle Week 2025 campaign with the theme of rescuing recyclable items from the rubbish bin.
- We ran a series of cross-cutting seasonal campaigns across the year associated with religious and cultural festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Ramadan, Diwali and Halloween focusing on a range of waste prevention behaviours.
- The provision of ReHome Zones was extended to all but one of the county's Household Waste Recycling Centres. Working with Alupro, (Aluminium Packaging Recycling Organisation) we delivered a 6-week social media campaign called #MetalMatters to encourage the recycling of metals at home and change recycling behaviour.
- An online waste prevention map was created where residents can find reuse, refill and repair services easily. Organisations are also encouraged to sign up if they offer services to help Leicestershire residents to reduce waste.
- We promoted campaigns to reduce food waste such as 'Love Food Hate Waste.' This included Food Waste Action Week 2025 with the theme of 'Buy Loose, Waste Less' encouraging people to only buy loose fruit and vegetables to prevent food waste.
- We continued to prepare for transfer and treatment of household food waste from April 2026, as part of the Simpler Recycling reforms.

 There has been increased direct engagement with Leicestershire residents, speaking to 3,973 people at 173 talks and roadshows and a series of composting workshops to support people in their home composting activities.

Flooding

- In July 2025 we decided to allocate £2m of extra money into tackling flooding, including expanding investment to undertake more investigations, find the causes of flooding, identify potential solutions and fund drainage repairs.
- Since the publication of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy in November 2023 we have continued to support work with communities and partners to prevent and respond to flooding events.
- Work continued on building a new website for the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to encourage and support community education around flood risk and how best to be prepared for severe storm events.
- January 2025 saw the worst flooding event in recent history in Leicestershire with over 700 properties flooded internally. Working with partners, we provided support to communities to get back to normal afterwards. Work included setting up rest centres, visiting flooded homes to support and signpost, and pumping water from flooded areas.
- A series of multi-agency flooding drop-in sessions were held in March and April 2025 across the most impacted areas. This provided the opportunity for people to report and discuss flooding impacts, hear about actions being taken and to learn about how to be prepared and more flood resilient. It also provided the opportunity to learn about which agency does what and explain the role of the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) and Highway Authority with respect to highway drainage. Further winter preparedness events are happening in autumn 2025.
- In our role as LLFA, we have continued to progress with formal investigations into flooding events throughout 2024 and the event in 2025 is triggering further investigations.
- Around £500,000 of Local Transport Grant has been allocated to projects in Long Whatton and Oakthorpe to help better protect residents from future flood risk. The LLFA was also successful in a bid to the Environment Agency and was awarded around £1m towards flood alleviation measures in Stoney Stanton.

6. Children and Families

We work to ensure that all children and young people get the best start for life and have the opportunities they need to fulfil their potential, regardless of their circumstances. Children are best supported to grow within their own families, and this reflects an aspiration for families to be self-sufficient. We want every child to have access to good quality education and young people to aim high and reach their potential. In addition, that vulnerable children are identified and protected from harm and abuse.

Best start in life

- Since the introduction of the government's Expansion of Childcare programme for working parents, 4,095 two-year-olds and 3,911 children under two have accessed funded childcare places.
- More infants received a New Birth Visit within 14 days, and more infants received a 6–8-week review within 8 weeks, ensuring early identification of issues or concerns and early help support.
- Our Public Health service continued to commission Health Visitors who
 provide advice and support to parents, promote child development such as
 bonding and attachment; feeding; and protecting babies from harm by
 promoting the importance of immunisations. Health visitors assess and
 monitor growth and development and encourage the development of healthy
 lifestyles and good nutrition.
- The Healthy Tots programme has continued to support health and wellbeing recognition within early years settings
- The Oral Health Team has continued to deliver Occupational Health training and establish supervised toothbrushing in early years settings.
- There was continued delivery of the HENRY (health eating, nutrition in the really young) programme which has seen 6 programmes delivered within family hubs.
- Leicestershire's Maternity and Early Years Strategy Group created a plan aimed at supporting early communication in children from birth to two years old.
- We used two-year health review data to identify childcare providers where children missed milestones, aiming to target training in communication, language and physical touch.
- Training was organised by our Children and Family Services on behalf of the Department for Education, for the Early Years sector to support best practices in the development of two-year-olds.
- A 'Baby Fortnight' campaign was delivered with 138 families with children under two by encouraging participation in events and activities including messy play, sensory sessions and speech and language support.

- We continued to deliver the Bookstart offer in partnership with Booktrust, targeting vulnerable families.
- All libraries offered free weekly Wriggly Reader sessions to support early reader development.

Families are self-sufficient and resilient

- We continued to support families to access services and improve their personal, family and household circumstances, for example, via the Household Support Fund, debt/money advice services, and access to furniture, white goods and other household essentials.
- Hundreds of local families received extra support for Christmas including food hampers, toys, and food vouchers through our Targeted Family Help service.
 We also opened up our wider Household Support Fund to enable eligible households to apply for an average of £200 for food and energy costs. The Family Help Service also runs Family Hubs across the County.
- Our Family Hub 'Start for Life' initiative offered a range of free sessions to parents and carers of babies and toddlers to help with early childhood development. Free stay and play sessions were run at more than 20 Family Hubs across the county.
- Our Community Delivery teams have supported access to services such as Citizens Advice, the Household Support Fund, and debt support, along with distribution of warm packs to those in crisis.
- Free holiday clubs and gym membership ran over Easter for eligible children, through the government funded Holiday Activities and Food programme, coordinated by the Council. Free holiday clubs and gym and swim memberships were also offered over the summer for eligible families at more than 90 venues across the county.
- Children and Family Service Targeted Help teams continued to provide support to families referred by partner organisations and offer phone advice, assistance and information on various parenting topics, with 10,764 contacts made with families during 2024/25.
- Information and Support Coordinators working in our 'front door' service supported 1,986 families with phone advice, support and signposting on issues including child behaviour and emotional well-being. In the locality teams, 257 families received support from a Family Wellbeing Worker.
- The Teen Health Service (ages 11–16) delivered early intervention and preventative initiatives, supporting healthier lifestyles and discouraging risktaking behaviour through individual support, group interventions, school-based drop-in sessions, and resources available on the Teen Health website.
- Specialist staff in the Youth and Justice Service provided ongoing emotional support, mentoring, and group activities for young carers across the County and organised SEND groups for children with special educational needs and

- disabilities, focusing on friendship, support and informal education to help develop life skills.
- A new Family Hubs website has been developed and serves as a universal self-help resource for families and professionals.
- Our Adult Learning Service worked with 9 Family Hubs and pathway groups across the county. 32 courses were delivered supporting 178 parents/carers and 251 children. There were 574 family learning enrolments in the 2024/25 academic year, with a range of courses including parent literacy and numeracy skills enabling them to support their children. These courses are targeted in areas of higher deprivation.
- Our Property Team have been active in dealing with loans to foster families to enable the adaptation of properties to ensure that there are sufficient places for children in the social care system.
- Our Independent Visitor scheme continued to support young people in care to make connections with a responsible adult and enjoy fun activities.

Access to good quality education

- A new School Places Strategy is being developed and will set out our approach
 to delivering school places for 2025 to 2030. This will be supported by a revised
 Leicestershire Planning Obligations Policy which will help ensure developer
 contributions are received from developers for children from approximately
 52,000 homes expected to be delivered.
- There was a high level of success in meeting parent preferences for first time admissions into primary schools and phased transfer into secondary schools.
 95% of primary allocations secured their first choice and 99% one of their top 3 preferences.
 92% secured their first choice of secondary school, and 98% one of their top 3 preferences.
- Coalville Greenstone Primary School, the County's first forest school, opened in August 2025 with capacity for 420 pupils.
- There has been an expansion at four secondary schools providing 924 additional school places across Oadby Manor High, Hinckley Redmoor Academy, Burbage Hastings High and Shepshed Iveshead School.
- At the start of the academic year, Bowman Academy opened on the Shepshed lveshead campus providing 64 Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) places. In addition, new SEND provision for early years stage SEND children is being provided within mainstream primary schools, with 40 new places opening in 2025/26.
- In June 2025 we approved a new three-year SEND and Inclusion Strategy setting out how organisations representing education, health and social care will work together to improve support for children with special educational needs and disabilities. There has been a continued increase in applications, and improvement work has led to an improvement in issuing timeliness during 2025.

- Improved education attainment has remained a priority for the Council, with 91% of schools now rated good or outstanding, 6.5% higher than the national average.
- There are more pupils in good or better schools at the end of the 2024/25 academic year, and fewer pupils in Requires Improvement or Inadequate schools compared to the end of the 2023/24 academic year.
- Our Education Effectiveness Team have actively supported the education of County children who are disadvantaged through the development of a Pupil Premium Network to share expertise and good practice across schools.
- Tailored support, advice and resources were provided to Leicestershire schools through our Creative Learning Services, including a new SEND offer.
- In October 2024 Beaumanor Hall's education school activity programme was honoured with a learning outside the classroom quality badge. Activities offered include 'day in the life of a viking', 'Victorian day' and 'World War II experience'.

Young people are able to reach their full potential

Progress in 2024/25

- The Inclusion Service continues to provide advice and signposting to young people Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) in Leicestershire.
 Those who are vulnerable can access direct support from an Education Officer to explore their next steps and secure a place in education or training. In August 2025, 44 vulnerable NEET young people were receiving support from the service.
- The Inclusion Service carried out preventative work with Year 11 pupils who are at risk of becoming NEET when they leave school. This is to ensure the majority of Year 11 pupils that receive support have a post 16 destination in place at the end of the academic year.
- The Lord Lieutenant's Young Person of the Year Award took place celebrating achievements including Young Person of Courage, Young Volunteer, Young Artist, and Young Leader. There was a total of 70 nomination for the awards which were held in May 2025.
- During the academic year, our Adult Learning Service supported 97 apprentices over a variety of subject areas.

Safeguarding

- In 2025, our Children and Family Service launched focused guidance to support
 practice in response to Domestic Abuse. This supplements the established
 extended domestic abuse team offer of early contact to families to avoid
 escalation of conflict and to understand the impact of domestic abuse on children.
- The Leicestershire Safeguarding Partnership has developed additional safeguarding responses to children with complex health needs in the context of

- parental neglect. This new procedure was endorsed by all partner agencies in July 2025 and will be launched in October 2025.
- Leicestershire's Family First Partnership was established to implement national social care reforms aimed at further enhancing the provision of support to children and families, including safeguarding vulnerable children.

Young people involved in and impacted by criminal behaviour

- Our Youth Justice Service highlight that fewer children are entering the justice system and that custody rates are decreasing in Leicestershire. The service offers new pathways for child victims to receive help, aiming to reduce their risk of offending. A variety of restorative justice methods are available, including conferences, mediation, and regular updates for victims.
- Leicestershire's Diversion Offer, a collaboration between Leicestershire Police, Children's Social Care, the Council's Youth Justice teams, the Youth Court and the Crown Prosecution Service, continued to work on diverting children from criminal proceedings into support services, aiming to reduce re-offending and victim numbers.
- The Safer Returns Project continued to work with children reported missing in Leicestershire, exploring their circumstances, reducing repeat incidents, and supporting families and care providers through advice and empowerment sessions.
- The Children and Family Service Child Exploitation team continued to offer support to children affected by sexual and criminal exploitation. In 2024, there were 201 referrals for suspected child criminal exploitation and 161 for child sexual exploitation. Specialist child exploitation workers spend time building a positive working relationship with children.

7. Economy and Strategic Planning

We are working to use innovation and skills to build a productive, inclusive and sustainable economy at the cutting edge of science, technology and engineering. It is important to ensure that education and skills are aligned to employers' needs as this will drive economic growth and ensure people can get good jobs and make progress in their careers. With work to ensure fewer employers report skills shortages or gaps and to increase opportunities in the labour market. To support a flourishing economy, we need higher productivity rates facilitated by increased investment in research and development (R&D). There are also opportunities to capitalise on our prime location for international business. We also need housing and digital infrastructure to support the local population and economy.

Progress in 2024/25

Skills and Work

- In partnership with Leicester and Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership and Leicester City Council we were awarded £3.2m Wave 6 Skills Bootcamp funding, to deliver a wide range of courses.
- In September 2024 it was announced that a new generation of students will be skilled up for careers in advanced manufacturing and clean energy through an investment of more than £2m by East Midlands Freeport. The Freeport is investing more than £2m in the Future Energy Skills Hub (FESH), with higher technical skills courses started in September 2025.
- Our Adult Learning Service continues to offer a huge catalogue of courses through GoLearn including free GCSE English and Maths for eligible residents.
- The Multiply Programme completed its third year providing people with the numeracy skills they need for everyday life, to allow them to be confident in things like budgeting, working out bills, helping with children's homework and improving job prospects. Nearly 7,500 people benefited from support with 98% reporting increased confidence with numbers.
- A range of local activities were highlighted during Number Confidence Week in November and a project celebration event in February recognising the hundreds of adults supported across Leicestershire.
- In March 2025, our Adult Learning Service was rated as 'Good' across all key
 areas in its latest Ofsted inspection. Inspectors praised the friendly and inclusive
 environment that helped learners feel welcome and valued. The service plays a
 crucial role in helping people gain new skills and enhance their career prospects.
- Referrals from the Work and Skills Leicestershire service have continued to progress into wider Adult Learning provision that supports employability, including CV writing and job searches.
- Our Adult Learning Service ran the Learning for Wellbeing programme, which supported 719 adults to develop and build confidence and improve their mental wellbeing, helping to remove barriers to employment and promote independence.
- We supported the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Workwell and Connect to Work programmes.

- The Armed Forces Covenant programme has supported two Armed Forces
 Voices webinars. The Forces Family Employee network, which we co-ordinated
 and supported, was attended by over 40 members offering peer support, advice
 and opportunities.
- A Female Veterans Working Group was established to identify and address the needs of the group, including social, physical, employment issues.
- In February 2025 we were rated 'excellent' as a training provider for the work we
 do to support our 225 apprenticeships in varied roles from chefs and forest
 operatives to social workers and business analysts. The approach enables staff
 to upskill whilst they work and helps retain a valued workforce.
- The Inspired to Care offer and uptake was reviewed and promoted. The number of views on posts on social media has increased 172% and the number of visitors to the website increased by 112%. The Inspired to Care Team passed on 3,117 candidate leads to members, a rise of 74% on last year.
- Inspired to Care developed a Sector Work based Academy Programme (SWAP), which offers training and work experience to those seeking work. The first successful programme started in June 2025.

Strategic Planning

- The publication of the Leicestershire County Council Local Aggregate
 Assessment (LAA) in November 2024 forecasts demand for aggregates based
 on sales data and other relevant local information; analysis of aggregate supply
 options; and assessment of the balance between demand and supply.
- The fourth Leicestershire County Council Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) on the implementation of the Council's Minerals and Waste Local Plan reviewed whether the evidence, assumptions and targets within the plan remain relevant.
- We delivered 100% of county planning applications for major developments in the statutory timescales.
- We continue to input to the Members' Advisory Group and Strategic Planning
 Group to ensure that strategic planning matters, in particular strategic land use
 planning and transport planning, across the County, City and other neighbouring
 authorities are considered and addressed to enable housing and economic
 growth to come forward supported by key infrastructure. Most recently this has
 been through the preparation of updated joint evidence to inform future
 Statements of Common Ground.

Business Support and Economic Development

Progress in 2024/2025

 We continue to be a key partner in the Enterprise Zone Programme which supports Research and Development businesses on 3 sites in the County: Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Park, Charnwood Campus and MIRA Technology Park near Hinckley.

- In October 2024 progress on our Investing in Leicestershire Programme was noted, supporting economic growth in the county as well as income for the Council.
- The Freeport continued work to deliver tens of thousands of jobs and add billions to the regional economy by attracting inward investment at its three tax sites including the East Midlands Airport Gateway.
- In December 2024 the final phase of the Council's Airfield Business Park development got underway. The development, featuring sustainable construction methods including use of solar panels and electric car charging points, will help provide jobs and boost the local economy. The phase will see 10 new units and a coffee outlet drive-thru unit.
- Invest in Leicester, working in partnership with the public and private sector, has showcased major Leicestershire development sites at a key investment event, the UK's Real Estate Investment & Infrastructure Forum (UKREiiF) conference. This highly regarded event connects people, places and businesses to accelerate and unlock sustainable, inclusive and transformational investment.
- Working in partnership with the Team Leicester Network, Invest in Leicester Shire has secured sponsorship to deliver events and promotional activities to showcase Leicestershire as a great place to live and work.
- We launched a new look 'Visit Leicester/Leicestershire' website with the City Council as part of the Place Marketing joint working agreement.
- The Leicestershire Lieutenancy promoted the King's Award for Enterprise which
 is presented annually to businesses across the Country who have made
 outstanding progress in the categories of innovation, international trade,
 sustainable development or promoting opportunity through social mobility.
- Trading Standards officers continued to provide support to the Leicestershire economy, offering regulatory guidance to over 1,000 businesses. When initial advice does not lead to compliance, the service has been prepared to take enforcement measures, ensuring fair competition for all.
- We are working closely with Building Digital UK on the delivery of Project Gigabit in Leicestershire. Gigabit-capable broadband will be rolled out to 14,400 homes and businesses in the County with the potential for more premises to be included in the project. The rollout began in Summer 2024 and is expected to conclude in 2029.
- A partnership with the universities of Leicester, DeMontfort and Loughborough was launched to support free access to academic libraries for Leicestershire residents.

8. Public Health and Wellbeing

We continue work to ensure that people live in a healthy environment and enjoy long lives in good health and with reduced health inequalities. That an increased proportion of residents have a healthy weight and that there is improved mental wellbeing and reduced prevalence of mental ill health.

Good health is a basic precondition for people to take an active role in family, community and work life. Health outcomes are influenced by a wide range of social, economic and environmental factors, known as 'wider determinants of health'. We are embedding a 'Health in all Policies' approach to systematically consider the health implications of all decisions.

Health Inequalities

- In January 2025 the Council secured £5.25m of funding, in partnership with local universities, to deliver health and wellbeing research that improves people's health and tackles health inequalities. The funding is from the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR).
- Last year over 160 people each month across Leicestershire accessed stop smoking services for help and support to quit. The Smoke Free Generations initiative is targeting key groups and individuals including schools and pregnant women, to help reduce smoking and vaping.
- Quit Ready's enhanced stop smoking offer supports people with mental health conditions, pregnant women, young people, and routine and manual workers.
 Tailored pathways, workplace outreach, trauma-informed support, financial incentives, and flexible help empower people to quit smoking, tackle health inequalities, and live healthier lives.
- Through an integrated approach with our health partners (Learning Disability and Autism Collaborative and Learning Disability Partnership Board) work progressed to reduce health inequalities for people with a Learning Disability.
- In November 2024 a new partnership between the Council and Age UK Leicester Shire supported more people to claim pension credit, helping them to stay warm and well. The scheme uses some of the Government funded Household Support Fund.
- We supported the delivery of the Local Immunisation Street Team (LIST), which is a community-based immunisation initiative aimed at improving uptake of MMR and pertussis vaccines in areas with low coverage across Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland.
- In December 2024, we established a new Leicestershire Air Quality and Health Action Plan to 2028 setting out plans to improve health inequality linked to air quality.
- The Air Quality and Health Partnership action plan was renewed in 2024 and focuses on groups most at risk of harm from poor air quality, informed by a needs assessment advocating for focus on these groups when planning interventions

- and programmes of work. An example is a multi-partner project around South Wigston schools and surrounding air quality.
- There was continued influence on wider policy work across the Council through the Health in all Policies (HiAP) wider determinants approach, including strategic health impact assessment.
- A Strategic Health Impact Assessment pilot focused on district and borough council Local Plans to enhance health outcomes and reduce negative health impacts. Our Public Health Service continued to provide support to all local planning authorities renewing their Local plans embedding considerations on food environments and active travel.
- In January 2025 our Healthy Workplaces programme signed up its 100th workplace to help keep employees' health a priority. Members receive health checks and training support.
- We developed the Leicestershire and Rutland Oral Health Steering Group and working groups to push forward the recommendations from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), working alongside partners from across the health system.
- We worked to increase the uptake of those with Serious Mental Illness to have health checks, breast cancer screening and access to the Quit Ready programme.
- We re-procured the Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) service to ensure local community access to LARC for women of Leicestershire and Rutland.
- Making every contact count has continued to deliver Healthy Conversation Skills training working with University Hospitals of Leicester and Adult Social Care to embed the training.
- Community Delivery teams continue to support trauma informed approaches and utilise asset-based community development approaches to deliver work directly to communities that meets their needs and aspirations as well as promoting good health.
- We supported screening initiatives for our learning disability and autism (LDA)
 community to increase coverage and uptake. This supports our local Learning
 from Lives and Deaths of those with LDA Review.
- Our Warm Homes Service implemented the local authority Flexible Eligibility mechanism to widen access to national Energy Company Obligation funding, providing energy efficiency upgrades to low income and energy inefficient households. The wider criteria supports those with health conditions exacerbated by cold homes. This resulted in an additional 967 households being able to access funding in 2024/25.
- The Warm Homes Service delivered approximately £1.2m of capital works installing energy efficiency measures via Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) funding from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. This provided 145 measures across 108 properties.
- We developed the Whole Systems Approach for Healthy Weight, Food and Nutrition which is bringing system partners together to address unhealthy weight and supporting residents to access healthy, nutritious and sustainable food.

 We launched 'Going for Gold' - Leicestershire's bid to become a Gold Sustainable Food Place which showcases Leicestershire's innovation and commitment to ensuring access to healthy and sustainable food for residents.

Mental Wellbeing

- Over 79 organisations have now signed up across the county to be a Mental Health Friendly Place (MHFP) and over 170 people have received training via the programme – which includes MHFA awareness and suicide awareness training. The MHFP programmes offer low level mental health support, providing a safe space for people to seek support. In February 2025 we expanded a mental health initiative to offer dedicated help to football clubs to support adult males experiencing mental health challenges. Clubs receive mental health first aid awareness and suicide prevention training.
- The launch of the My Space My Game pilot project, developed in partnership with Leicestershire Football Association and the new Mental Health Friendly Clubs (MHFC) is specifically targeted towards men. The aim is to offer a safe space for men to be able to open up and start to 'normalise' conversations around mental health.
- In September 2024 the Council won two awards for its efforts in supporting employees in the workplace. The Menopause Friendly Employer of the Year Award and Best Peer to Peer Support Award for being a supportive workplace.
- 981 adults attended health and wellbeing programmes offered through our Adult Learning Service. These included: Learning for Confidence and Better Mental Health, Coping for Change and Five Ways to Wellbeing. 247 of the 981 adults attended programmes to support recovery and maintain positive mental health following poor mental health experiences.



Annual Performance Compendium



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Risks and Risk Management	49

PART 1: Inequality in Funding and Fair Funding Campaign

Low funding remains the Council's Achilles heel and without a fairer system, local services have increasingly been cut to the bone and council tax increased to the maximum allowed under Government rules. The Council's financial position continues to be extremely challenging following over a decade of austerity, the longer term impact of Covid-19 and recent inflation and spending pressures, particularly around social care and special educational needs.

The local government funding system continues to be based on increasingly outdated cost drivers and assumptions, The impact of this over the years has been to allow London Boroughs in particular to receive levels of funding that has led to them being able to set lower Council Tax levels than other parts of the country. Rural areas have been the losers.

The list of county authorities with financial problems continues to grow - with some counties having moved to provide services only to the statutory minimum. The County Council being at the bottom of the funding league has major implications for the provision of services to the people of Leicestershire and for council tax levels.

There is also significant uncertainty and risk around future funding levels. The 2025 Spending Review did allow for an increase in local government funding, although the majority of headline increases will be funded by assumed council tax increases.

The Government is planning to implement Fair Funding and a Business Rates 'reset' from 2026/27. However, other long-promised reforms to Social Care and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities appear to be delayed in the medium term. All of these reforms are essential for the long-term sustainability of local government, although experience shows that badly implemented reforms can make the situation worse.

Extent of Funding Inequality

In terms of the scale of inequality, Leicestershire would be £645m better off if we had the same income per head as the highest funded authority, the London Borough of Camden. The Core Spending Power Charts (overleaf) set out the extent of current funding inequality. An analysis of funding by accountants PwC found that the more generous funding for London boroughs has allowed them to provide more services for their residents while maintaining some of the lowest council tax rates in the country. Given Camden's funding per head our budget would more than double. Even given the national average funding per head, Leicestershire would gain £172m each year and we would be looking to invest in services and not cut them. We have already taken over a quarter of a billion pounds (£290m) out of the budget. This is why we must succeed in securing fairer funding, so that we can fund statutory services on an equitable basis.

Lowest Funded County

Leicestershire remains the lowest-funded county council with greater risks to service delivery and improvement as a result. If we were funded at the same level as Surrey, we would be £136m per year better off. Some of the higher funded counties have

traditionally been the better performing ones, though even these are now reducing service standards. Leicestershire's low funded position means that the scope for further savings is severely limited compared to other authorities.

Without fairer funding the forecast position will make it increasingly difficult to maintain good delivery levels and target improvements in response to key local issues. The 2025/26 budget was only balanced after the planned use of £5m from reserves and delivery of the 2025-29 MTFS required savings of £176m to be made to 2028/29. The MTFS sets out £3m of savings, while a further £52m of savings are required from the Dedicated Schools Grant. A proposed major efficiency and service reviews are planned to identify savings to offset the £91m funding gap in 2028/29.

Fair Funding Campaign

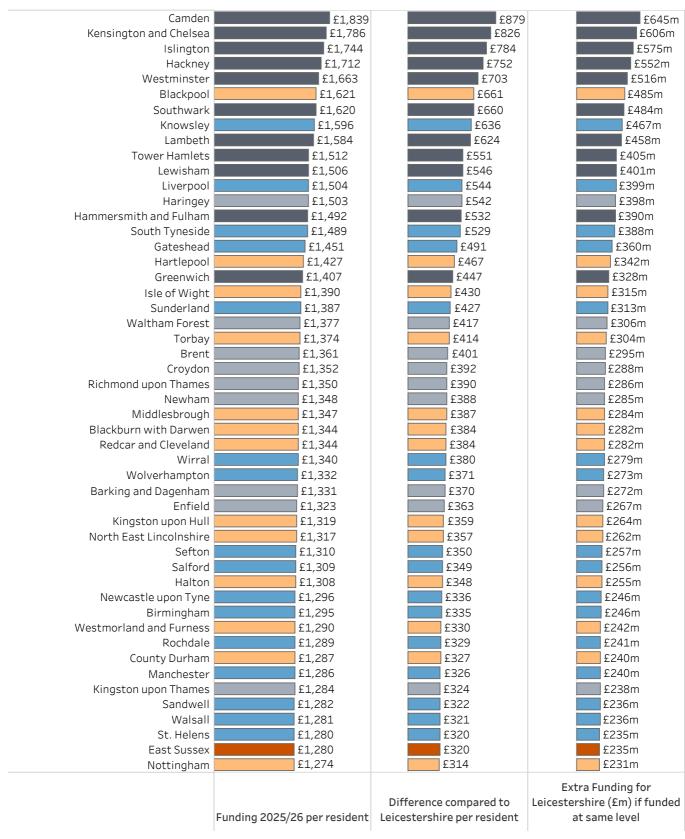
We have campaigned to ensure that Leicestershire gets a fairer deal. We enlisted the support of other low funded authorities and their respective MPs into a campaign to highlight the unfairness of the current funding system. The current funding system is out of date, complex and unclear and based upon old systems which focus heavily on past levels of spending. County Councils have suffered most from the current outdated system of council funding, hence the Council's campaign for fairer funding.

The previous Government had accepted many of the arguments put forward and indicated a preference for a simpler system that recognises the relative need of areas, rather than just reflecting historic funding levels. Unfortunately, the reforms were postponed over a number of years. However, the new Government intends to implement a form of Fair Funding with effect from 2026/27, with a three-year settlement running to 2028/29. Early indications are that the County Council may gain some additional funding from the new formulae but there are some potential significant losses for some areas, including London and Metropolitan areas and the Government may make amendments accordingly which could lead to any potential gains being reduced or not materialising at all.

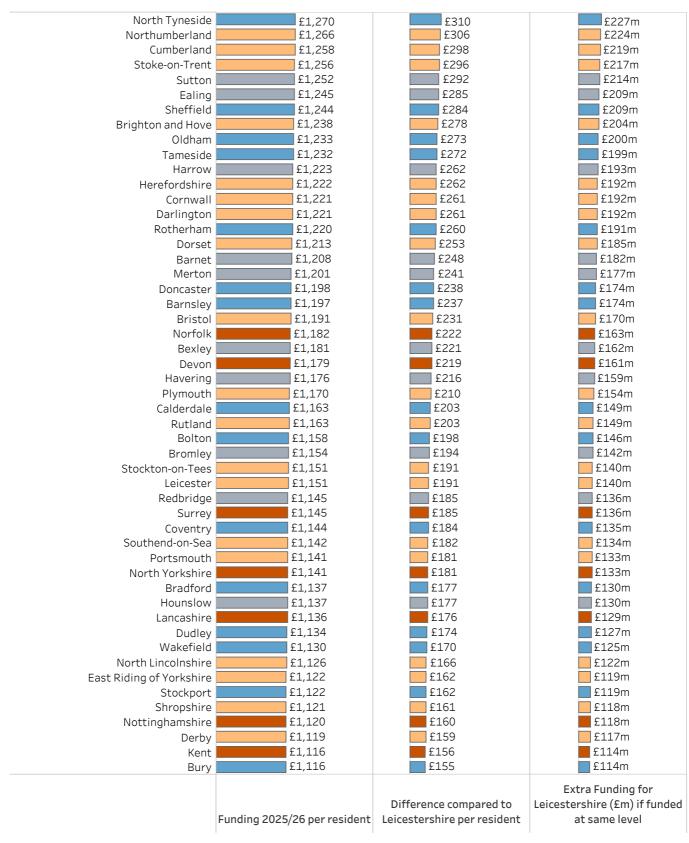
Impact of Cuts on Performance

The extent of service reductions made has already impacted most areas of service delivery and some areas of performance and any further cuts will put at risk other priority areas. The later sections of this report set out the current performance position and summarises current key Council risk areas. These pressures have been further exacerbated by the financial and service implications arising from the longer lasting demand impact of Covid-19 on residents, communities, services and the Council as well as demands arising from the recent cost-of-living crisis and inflation.

Core Spending Power per head 2025/26 -169mparison with Leicestershire







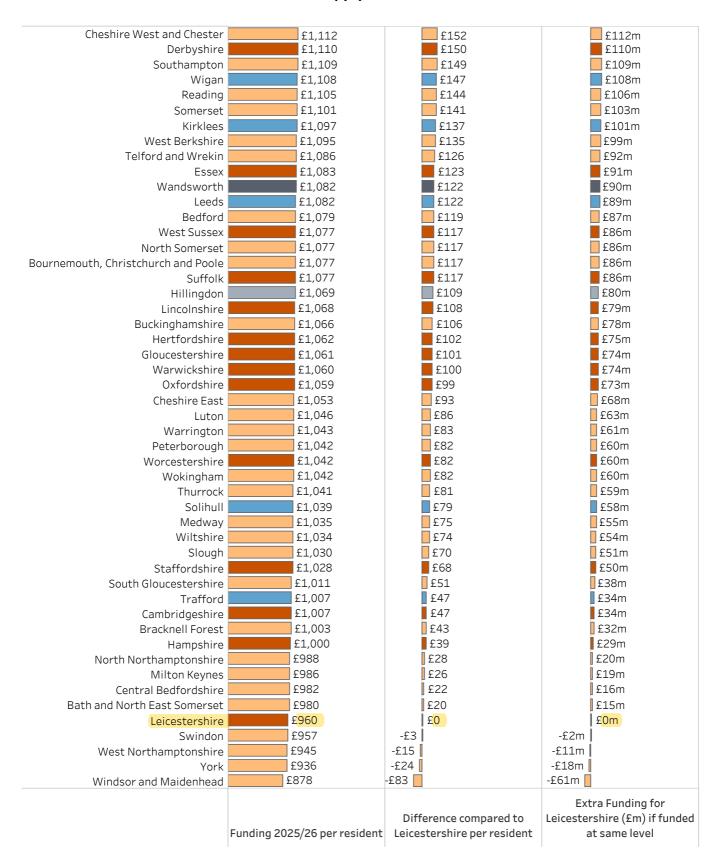
Authority Type

County

Metropolitan District

Unitary Authority

Outer London Borough



Authority Type

County

Metropolitan District

Unitary Authority

Inner London Borough

Outer London Borough

PART 2: County Performance: Benchmarking Results 2023/24

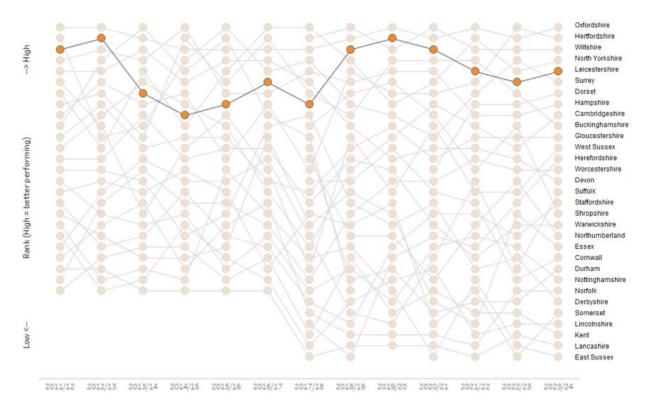
This annual report compendium uses performance indicators to compare our performance over time against targets and with other local authorities. Comparison or benchmarking helps to place Leicestershire's performance in context and to prompt questions such as 'why are other councils performing differently to us?' or 'why are other councils providing cheaper or more expensive services?'

The County Council compares itself with other English county areas in terms of spend per head and performance. We use a range of nationally published indicators linked to our improvement priorities, inspectorate datasets and national performance frameworks. Our sources include central government websites, the Office for National Statistics and NHS Digital.

Our comparative analysis draws on 256 performance indicators across our main priorities and areas of service delivery. Our approach looks at performance against each indicator and ranks all county areas with 1 being highest performing. We then group indicators by service or theme and create an average of these ranks as well as an overall position.

Overall Comparative Performance

The chart below shows Leicestershire's relative overall performance compared to the other counties over the past 13 years, excluding any consideration of funding/expenditure. Low comparative funding meant that near the start of this period Leicestershire had to move quickly to reduce some service levels. This had an impact on our overall pure comparative performance position. The Council was placed 5th in comparative terms during 2023/24.



Comparing Performance and Expenditure

The Fair Funding section of the report notes that Leicestershire is the lowest funded county in the country. It is therefore critical to review the Council's performance in the light of spend per head on different services. Our approach uses scatter charts to show the relationship between spend and performance. The vertical axes show rank of performance, with high performance to the top. The horizontal axes show rank of net expenditure per head, with low spend to the right. Therefore, authorities that are high performing and low spending would be in the top right quadrant, while those that are low performing and high spending would be to the bottom left as shown below.

High	High performance /	High performance /
Rank of	high spend	low spend
performance	Low performance /	Low performance /
Low	high spend	low spend
	High Rank of spe	end per head Low

Overall Performance vs Expenditure

Looking at the overall position for 2023/24, Leicestershire is ranked 5th in performance terms compared to other counties and has the lowest core spending power per head. Overall and service performance are shown in charts over the following pages.

Lower Comparative Performing Areas 2023/24

Looking across 263 indicators for which quartile data is available for Leicestershire, 39 (15%) fall within the bottom quartile compared to other counties. These indicators are set out in the table below.

Service Area	Indicators
Adult Social Care	Adult Social Care – Delivery
	 Staff turnover (wider social care workforce - all sectors) % of Care Homes rated good or outstanding
	Adult Social Care – Perceptions
	 5 indicators covering social care users' perceptions of their: overall satisfaction with care and support, care related quality of life, social contact, and ease of finding information about service. Carers' ease of finding information about services.

Service	
Area	Indicators
Public Health	Health and Wider Determinants
	 Air pollution: concentration and attributable mortality HIV late diagnosis
Environment, Flooding & Waste	Waste Management
	% municipal waste landfilled
Children and Families	Children's Social Care
	 Timeliness of child protection conferences and review of child protection cases Child protection plans lasting 2 years or more Re-referrals to children's social care Looked after children's health checks, immunisations and offending
	School Quality & Access - Context
	 % secondary schools rated good or outstanding Average points score per entry, best 3 'A' levels
Child Health	Child Health
and SEND	 % of children achieving a good level of development at 2-2.5 years % of children achieving a good level of development at 5 years (FSM) Baby's first feed breastmilk Physically active children and young people Infant mortality rate
	Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
	% new Education Health & Care Plans issued within 20 weeks (all)
Transport & Highways	Transport and Highways
	Passenger journeys on local bus services per head of population
Economy - Context	 % 3-year survival of new enterprises % employees in knowledge-based industries

Looking back at last year's benchmarking exercise, the following bottom quartile indicators have shown a significant improvement in performance.

Indicators

Adult Social Care – Delivery

• % of people using social care who receive self-directed support

Adult Social Care – Perceptions

- % of carers who report that they have been included or consulted in discussion about the person they care for
- % of people who use services who feel safe

Children's Social Care

 % of young people receiving a conviction in court who are sentenced to custody

Health - Child

• Low birth weight of term babies

SEND

- % of 19-year-olds qualified to Level 2 inc. Eng. & Maths with statement/EHCP
- % of 19-year-olds qualified to Level 3 with statement/EHCP SEND tribunal appeal rate

Health - Adult

% of physically active adults



Theme

Overall Performance

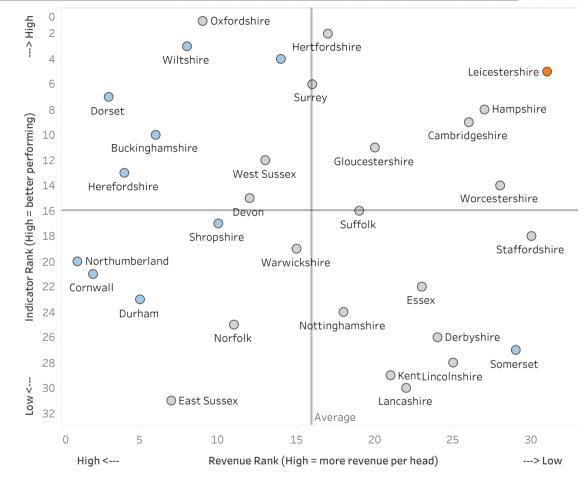
Comparator



How to Read This Chart

The chart is divided up into quadrants based upon average rank for all indicators (vertical axis) and net revenue expenditure per head (horizontal axis) for county councils. Authorities in the top right quadrant are high performing and low spending, while authorities in the bottom left are low performing and high spending. The 'Deprivation' comparator uses local authority 2019 Multiple Deprivation rank. 'Overall Performance' is the rank of average rank for all indicators, while 'LA Core Performance' only includes

themes that are related to county council functions.





Theme

LA Core Performance

Comparator

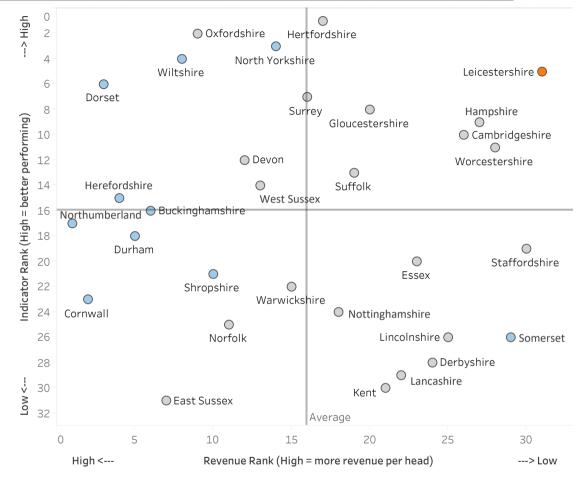


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Theme Economy

Comparator

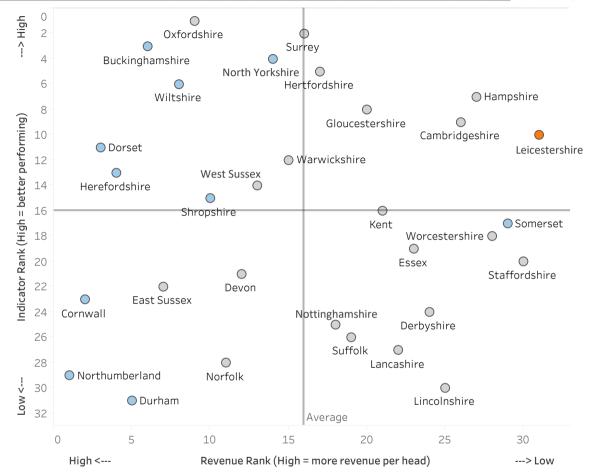


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Theme

Transport & Highways

Comparator



How to Read This Chart

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Theme

Adult Social Care - Perception

Comparator



How to Read This Chart

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Blue dots represent county unitary authorities.

themes that are related to county council functions.





Theme

Adult Social Care - Delivery

Comparator



How to Read This Chart

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Theme

Health - Child

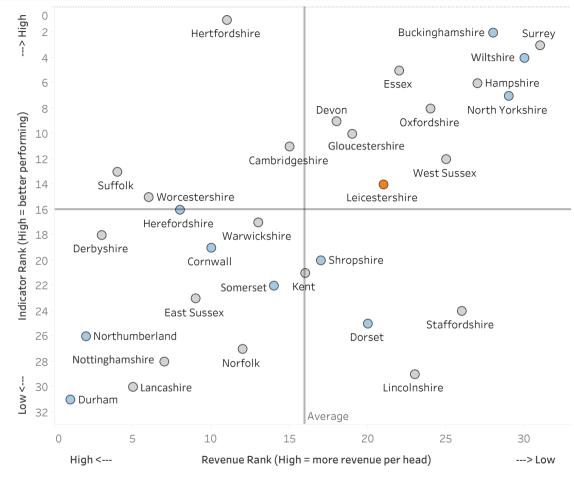
Comparator



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Theme

Health - Adult

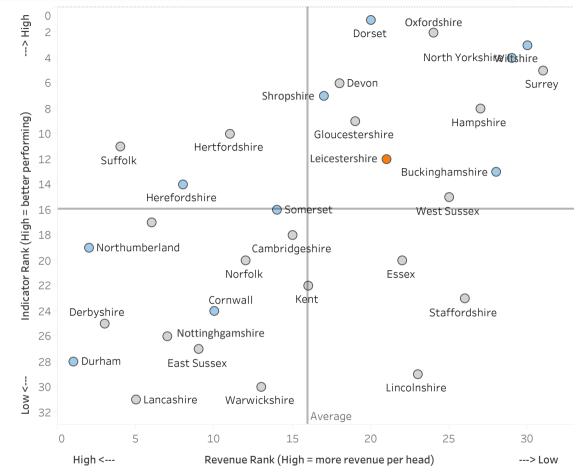
Comparator



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Theme

Children's Social Care

Comparator

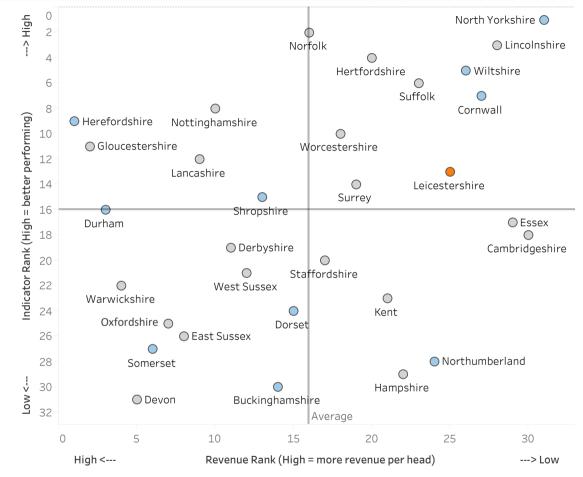


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Theme

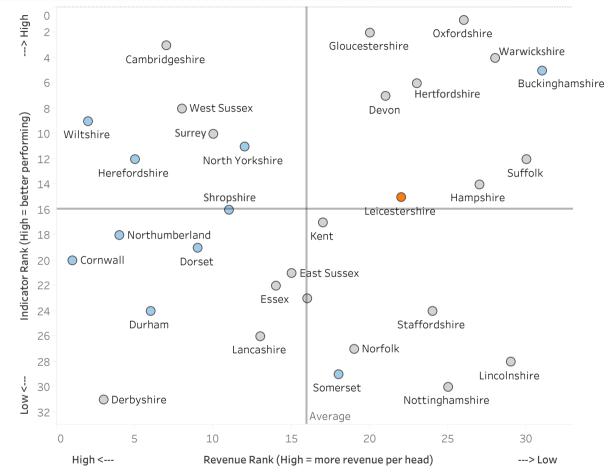
Environment & Waste

Comparator



How to Read This Chart

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Leicestershire Performance Data Dashboards 2024/25

Introduction

In order to measure our progress against our priority area we track a number of key performance measures for each of the outcomes. These are summarised in a set of dashboards with ratings that show how our performance compares with other areas where known, whether we have seen any improvement in performance since the previous year, and whether we have achieved any relevant targets. As well as this annual report, we also publish dashboards on our website on a quarterly basis so that our overall performance and progress is transparent.

Initial analysis of 2024/25 end of year data shows that of 160 metrics 73 improved, 34 showed no real change and 53 worsened. Direction of travel cannot be determined for 5 indicators, due to the absence of previous data or changes to indicator definitions.

Overview of Performance Improvement and Reduction

The paragraphs that follow review each dashboard, highlighting indicators that have shown improvement compared to the previous period, as well as those that have worsened.

Transport

This dashboard covers transport infrastructure including road condition, journey times, bus services and road safety. Looking at the 20 performance indicators, 5 display improvement compared to the previous period, 9 show a decline and 6 show no change. The 5 improving indicators cover use of local buses and satisfaction with local bus services, satisfaction with traffic levels and congestion, EV ownership and charge points. The 9 indicators displaying lower performance include park and ride journeys, satisfaction with cycle routes and facilities, rights of way and road safety, as well as average vehicle speeds, road casualties and numbers killed or seriously injured. The 6 indicators showing similar results cover satisfaction with the condition of highways, satisfaction with pavements and footpaths, satisfaction with road condition, and carbon emissions from transport.

Environment, Waste and Flooding

This dashboard covers environment, waste management, flooding and the Council's environmental impact. It includes 16 indicators, of which 9 show improvement compared to the previous period, 1 indicator shows a decline in performance and 5 have similar results. The 9 indicators showing improvement cover household waste recycling, use of landfill, recycling of internal waste from Council sites, tree planting, renewable energy generated by the Council, greenhouse gas emissions from all sources in Leicestershire, Council greenhouse gas emissions and staff business mileage. The indicator displaying lower performance covers waste produced from internal Council sites. The 5 indicators with similar results cover waste collected per household, Council environmental risks, staff perceptions of Council actions to reduce its environmental impact and Council land in better management for nature.

Health and Wellbeing

Child Health & Best Start in Life

This dashboard covers child health and early years services. Looking at the 12 indicators, 3 show an improvement compared to the previous period, while 6 deteriorated and 1 shows a similar result. Data was not available for 2 indicators. The 3 indicators that have improved cover smoking at the time of delivery, dental decay among 5-year-olds and take-up of free early education by 3 and 4-year-olds. The 6 indicators displaying lower performance cover take-up of free early education by 2-year-olds, excess weight, children's physical activity, chlamydia detection and under 18 conceptions. The indicator showing little change is % of early years providers assessed as good or outstanding. Data is awaited for good level of development (age 5) and pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

Adult Health

This dashboard covers adult health. Looking at the 20 indicators, 9 show an improvement compared to the previous period and 11 display a decline. The 9 indicators that have improved cover life expectancy, under 75 mortality from cancer, respiratory disease and causes considered preventable, opiate drug treatment, adult obesity, particulate air pollution and the fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution. The 11 declining indicators cover healthy life expectancy, health inequalities, under 75 mortality from circulatory disease, smoking prevalence, alcohol related hospital admissions, non-opiate drug treatment, NHS Health Checks and physical activity.

Adult Social Care and Better Care Funds

The first dashboard covers work with health partners to reduce admissions to hospital and residential care, facilitate discharge from hospital and reablement. Looking at the 8 performance indicators, 4 display improvement compared to the previous period, 1 shows a decline in performance, 2 show similar results and data was not available for 1 indicator. The 4 indicators that have improved cover admissions to residential care of 18–64-year-olds, unplanned admissions for chronic ambulatory care-sensitive conditions, service users' access to information, and people discharged from hospital to their normal place of residence and people still at home 91 days later. The declining indicator is admissions to residential care of older people. The 2 indicators showing similar results are discharge from acute hospital to normal place of residence and people receiving reablement with no subsequent long-term service. No new data was available for carers access to information.

The second dashboard covers adult social care services including support for carers. Looking at the 18 indicators, 4 display an improvement, 8 display a decline in performance and 3 show no change. For 3 indicators there is no new data. The 4 indicators that have improved cover service users receiving self-directed support, carers receiving direct payments, care homes rated good or outstanding, and people with learning disabilities who live in their own home or with their family. The 8 declining indicators cover service users having control over their daily life, service users receiving support via direct payments, dementia diagnosis rate, overall satisfaction with social care support, home care providers rated good or outstanding, service users having as much social contact as they would like, service users who feel safe and safeguarding alerts received. The 3 indicators showing little change cover carers

receiving self-directed support, social care related quality of life, and safeguarding enquiries where the identified risk was reduced or removed. The 3 indicators with no new data cover overall satisfaction of carers with their care and support, carers reported quality of life and carers having as much social contact as they would like.

Mental Health

This dashboard covers mental health and wellbeing. Looking at the 5 indicators, 1 improved, 3 deteriorated and 1 had a similar result. The indicator showing improvement was excess under 75 mortality in adults with serious mental illness. The 3 declining indicators cover life satisfaction, happiness and suicide. The indicator with a similar result covered anxiety.

Children and Families

Safeguarding Children & Families

This dashboard covers Early Help services, child safeguarding and looked after children. Looking at the 17 indicators, 7 show improvement compared to the previous period, 3 display a decline in performance, 5 show similar performance to the previous period and data is awaited for 2 indicators. The 7 indicators showing improvement cover successful claims through the national Supporting Families programme, review of child protection cases, repeat child protection plans, looked after children's health checks, care leavers in education, employment or training, and timeliness of adoption. The 3 declining indicators cover timeliness of children's social care assessments, rereferrals to children's social care and looked after children's dental checks. The 5 indicators with similar performance cover early help assessments, stability of looked after children's placements, emotional health of looked after children, and care leavers in suitable accommodation. Data is awaited for 2 indicators covering child criminal and sexual exploitation.

School and Academy Performance

This dashboard covers school admissions and school quality. Looking at the 14 indicators, 3 show an improvement compared to the previous period, 2 show a similar result and comparable data is not available for 9 indicators. The 3 indicators that have improved cover school admissions and primary schools assessed as good or outstanding. The 2 indicators with similar performance cover secondary schools assessed as good or outstanding and special schools assessed as good or outstanding. Results for 2025 exams are awaited for 9 indicators.

Community Safety

This dashboard covers youth justice, domestic abuse and adult safeguarding. The dashboard contains 9 indicators, of which 6 show improved performance, 2 show lower performance compared to the previous period and 1 shows no change. The 6 indicators showing improvement cover first time entrants to youth justice, youth custody, reported hate incidents, domestic abuse, domestic violence with injury, and the number of safe accommodation spaces for domestic abuse victims. The 2 indicators showing lower performance cover reported anti-social behaviour and repeat domestic abuse conferences. The indicator with similar performance covered community cohesion.

Communities

This dashboard covers libraries, cohesion and volunteering. Looking at the 14 indicators, 8 show improvement compared to the previous period, 1 displays a decline in performance and 5 show similar performance. The 8 indicators showing improvement cover volunteering, library visits, total library issues, library e-downloads, tourism visitor days, and visits to heritage sites. The indicator with lower performance is children's library issues. The 5 indicators with similar results cover perception of residents' ability to influence council decisions, satisfaction with local area as a place to live, neighbourhood planning, community response planning, and the number of communities running their own library.

Strategic Planning and Economic Development

Growth and Investment

This dashboard provides a high-level overview of the Leicestershire economy. Looking at the 11 performance indicators, 8 show improvement compared to the previous period and 3 indicators show a decline in performance. The 8 indicators displaying an improvement cover economic growth, gross disposable household income (GDHI) per head, gigabit broadband, funding for new infrastructure, fuel poverty, and new business creation. The 3 indicators showing lower performance cover free school meals and new business survival.

Employment and Skills

This dashboard covers the skills of the local population, as well as employment and unemployment. Looking at the 11 performance indicators, 4 show improvement compared to the previous period, 4 show a decline and 3 show similar results. The 4 improving indicators cover the population qualified to RFQ 4 (degree) level, apprenticeship starts, unemployment rate, and average pay. The 4 indicators displaying lower performance cover the population qualified to RFQ level 2 and 3, employment rate, and economic inactivity rate. The 3 indicators showing similar results cover the achievement of level 2 qualifications by age 19, out of work benefit claimants, and young people not in education employment.

Strategic Planning for Housing

This dashboard covers the supply of new housing and affordable housing. Looking at the 5 indicators, 3 show an improvement compared to the previous period, 1 shows a decline and 1 shows a similar result. The 3 improving indicators cover affordable homes delivery, housing affordability, and energy efficiency ratings for existing homes. The indicator with lower performance is completion of new homes. The indicator with a similar result is energy efficiency ratings for new homes.

Leicestershire Wider Environment

This dashboard provides background information about the local environment in Leicestershire. Looking at the 5 indicators, 2 show an improvement compared to the previous period, 1 shows lower performance and data is not available for 2 indicators. The 2 indicators that have improved cover renewable electricity capacity and NO2 exceedances. The indicator showing lower performance is renewable electricity generation. There is no new data on river water quality.

Corporate and Enabling Services

This dashboard covers customer service, digital delivery and the Council workforce. Looking at the 13 indicators, 6 show improvement compared to the previous period, 3 display a decline in performance and 4 show similar results. The 6 indicators showing improvement cover media rating, call answering by the Customer Service Centre, complaints received, staff turnover, apprentices employed, and the gender pay gap. The 3 indicators showing lower performance cover compliments received, complaint response times, and health and safety RIDDOR incidents. The 4 indicators showing similar results cover perceptions of the Council doing a good job, trust in the Council, people feeling well informed about the Council, and people agreeing the Council treats all types of people fairly.

Explanation of Performance Indicator Dashboards

The performance dashboards set out year end results for a number of the performance indicators (PIs) that are used to help us monitor whether we are achieving our priorities. Many indicators relate to more than one service area, but in this report, each indicator has been assigned to just one area.

Where relevant, the performance sections show 2024/25 year-end outturn against performance targets (where applicable), together with comparative performance information where available and commentary. Where it is available, the dashboards indicate which quartile Leicestershire's performance falls into. The 1st quartile is defined as performance that falls within the top 25% of relevant comparators. The 4th quartile is defined as performance that falls within the bottom 25% of relevant comparators. Each dashboard uses different comparator groups, and these are explained at the bottom of each dashboard. Based on current comparative analysis, out of 136 indicators 39 are top quartile, 46 second quartile, 31 third quartile and 20 bottom quartile.

The polarity column indicates whether a high or low figure represents good performance. A red circle indicates a performance issue, whereas a green tick indicates exceptional performance. The direction of travel arrows indicate an improvement or deterioration in performance compared to the previous result. The arrows are indicative, and do not necessarily represent statistically significant change.

alue for Money & Council Spending	Quartile	Direction of	End of Yr	Target /	End of Yr		
escription	position	Travel	2024/25	Standard	2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
nance & Value For Money							
ore Spending Power per head of population	4th (2025/26)	↑	£960	Fair Funding	£915	High	Leicestershire has the lowest core spending power per head of county councils nationally, which poses a risk to service delivery going forwards. Current funding system benefits certain classes of authority more, particularly London boroughs, who make up 8 of the 10 best funded authorities. Results are for 2024/25 and 2025/26.
et expenditure per head of population	4th* (2024/25)	\uparrow	£646	MTFS	£589	High	Small increase compared to previous year.
ducation - expenditure per head of population	4th* (2024/25)	\uparrow	£482	MTFS	£406	High	Small increase compared to previous year. Second lowest net spend per head on education of all counties.
dult Social Care - expenditure per head of population	4th* (2024/25)	\uparrow	£328	MTFS	£325	High	Increase compared to previous year. Lowest net spend per head or adult social care of all counties.
hildren's Social Care - expenditure per head of population	4th* (2024/25)	\uparrow	£188	MTFS	£171	High	Increase compared to previous year.
ublic Health - expenditure per head of population	4th* (2024/25)	\uparrow	£45	MTFS	£43	High	Small increase compared to previous year.
ighways & Transport - expenditure per head of population	2nd* (2024/25)	\uparrow	£65	MTFS	£56	High	Increase compared to previous year.
nvironment & Regulatory - expenditure per head of opulation	3rd* (2024/25)	\uparrow	£51	MTFS	£50	High	Small Increase compared to previous year.
ulture - expenditure per head of population	4th* (2024/25)	\downarrow	£11	MTFS	£12	High	Small decrease compared to previous year. Second lowest net spend per head on culture of all counties.
fficiencies and other savings achieved	-	\uparrow	£14.1m	£14.2m	£12.3m	High	Efficiencies and savings achieved during 2024/24 were very close to target.
agree County Council provides value for money	1st/2nd (2024)	\rightarrow	67.8%	-	66.7%	High	The result is similar to the previous year and is significantly better than the England average of 36% (LGA Survey). The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1100 residents during 2024/25.
affected by service changes	-	\downarrow	27.4%	-	20.3%	Low	The result is higher (worse) than the previous year. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1100 residents in 2024/25.
eicestershire Traded Services operating profit	-	↑	-£0.35m	-£0.60m	-£2.2m	High	Losses during 2024/25 are largely due to reduced income from Beaumanor outdoor activity centre and Watermead country park car park following damage by thieves.

Highways & Transport							
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Leicestershire has the right infrastructure for sustainable grow	: <u>h</u>						
Overall satisfaction with the condition of highways (NHT satisfaction survey) (%)	1st (2024)	\rightarrow	21.6% (2024)	38%	21.8% (2023)	High	The Council was amongst the highest rated county councils for satisfaction with condition of highways in 2024. Low satisfaction levels are typical across the country.
% of principal (A class) road network where structural maintenance should be considered	2nd (2023/24)	\rightarrow	3%	2%	3%	Low	Leicestershire continues to have above average maintained principal roads in the country. Severe weather events such as flooding and drought conditions increase the need for road maintenance.
% of non-principal (B & C class) road network where structural maintenance should be considered	1st (2023/24)	\rightarrow	4%	4%	4%	Low	The condition for non-principal roads remains very good at 4% in 2024/25, meeting the target.
% of the unclassified road network where maintenance should be considered	2nd (2023/24)	\rightarrow	12%	13%	12%	Low	The condition of unclassified roads remained the same as the previous year and met its target. Severe weather events such as flooding and drought conditions increase the need for road maintenance.
Overall satisfaction with local bus services (NHT satisfaction survey) (%)	3rd (2024)	↑	42.6% (2024)	56.3%	41.8% (2023)	High	Overall satisfaction with local bus services improved slightly to 42.6% in 2024 compared to the previous year.
Local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area (millions)	4th (2023/24)	↑	10.9	10.0	10.5	High	Bus passenger journey numbers continued to increase over the year, up by 3% since the previous year. This increased significantly from a low of 3m during the Covid-19 pandemic. 2024/25 levels are similar to the long term average of 11m annual journeys since 2015. The quartile is based on the number of bus passenger journeys per head of population.
Number of park and ride journeys	-	\	726,588	-	740,427	High	Journeys decreased by 2% since the previous year but is above the long term average of 666,612 journeys (since 2015/16). (Source local operators).
Overall satisfaction with cycle routes & facilities (NHT satisfaction survey) (%)	1st (2024)	\downarrow	31.4% (2024)	38%	35.1% (2023)	High	Overall satisfaction with cycle routes & facilities (NHT survey) saw a 4 percentage point decline in performance since 2023.
Overall satisfaction with the Rights of Way network (NHT satisfaction survey) (%)	1st (2024)	\downarrow	37.7% (2024)	52%	42.4% (2023)	High	Overall satisfaction with the Rights of Way network declined by 5 percentage points in performance since the previous year.
Overall satisfaction with the condition of pavements & footpaths (NHT satisfaction survey) (%)	1st (2024)	\rightarrow	55.3% (2024)	65%	55.7% (2023)	High	The overall satisfaction with the condition of pavements remained similar to the previous year at 55% in 2024.
Overall satisfaction with traffic levels & congestion (NHT satisfaction survey) (%)	2nd (2024)	↑	29.7% (2024)	42%	27.4% (2023)	High	Overall satisfaction with traffic levels & congestion saw an improvement in performance in 2024 and Leicestershire performed above average when compared to other English County Councils.
Average vehicle speed - on locally managed 'A' roads (mph)	2nd (2024)	\downarrow	29.5 (2024)	-	30.6 (2023)	High	The annual 'average vehicle speeds on locally managed 'A' roads' remained above average and within its expected range. Data is 1 year in arrears. (Source Department of Transport).

Highways & Transport Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Electric vehicle charging location per 100,000 population	√ 3rd (Jun 2024)	↑	73.5	-	59.1	High	Electric vehicle charging locations saw a significant 24% increase since the previous year.
Electric vehicle ownership - Ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) rate/10,000 population	2nd (Jun 2024)	↑	297.0	-	216.5	High	Electric vehicle ownership has increased by 37% since 2023/24, demonstrating a continued shift towards more sustainable transport.
Road Safety							
Road safety satisfaction (NHT satisfaction survey) (%)	1st (2024)	\downarrow	44.8% (2024)	58%	49.7% (2023)	High	Satisfaction with road safety declined in performance (by 5 percentage points) since the previous year.
Total casualties on Leicestershire roads	1st (2024)	\	943 (2024)	1022	916 (2023)	Low	There was a small increase in 'Total casualties on our roads' from 2023 to 2024. In recent years the Police have made it easier to report incidents online, which is likely to more accurately reflect incidents. The latest annual result performs better than the long term average of 1,135 casualties since 2015. (Source Police reports).
Number of people killed or seriously injured (KSIs)	• 1st (2024)	\	286 (2024)	182	227 (2023)	Low	There was an increase in the number of KSIs from 2023 to 2024. In recent years the Police have made it easier to report incidents online, which is likely to more accurately reflect incidents. The results are higher than the long term average of 228 KSIs since 2015 (Source Police reports).
Total casualties involving road users, walking cycling & motorcyclists (excluding cars)	1st (2024)	\	291 (2024)	269	268 (2023)	Low	Total casualties involving road users, walking, cycling & motorcyclists (excluding cars) increased from 2023 to 2024. In recent years the Police have made it easier to report incidents online, which is likely to more accurately reflect incidents. It performs better than the long term average of 316 casualties since 2015 (Source Police reports).
Number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI), walking cycling & motorcyclists (excluding cars)	• 1st (2024)	V	128 (2024)	84	108 (2023)	Low	The number of people killed or seriously injured (KSIs), walking, cycling 8 motorcyclists (excluding cars) increased from 2023 to 2024. In recent years the Police have made it easier to report incidents online, which is likely to more accurately reflect incidents. This indicator performs worse than long term average of 106 KSIs since 2015 (Source Police reports).
The economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environ	mentally friend	ly					
Carbon emissions (estimates) from transport within LA influence (Kt) Notes: Comparators are the 31 county councils & county uni	2nd (2023)	→	1,147.0 (2023)	-	1,152.0 (2022)	Low	The most recent update for 'Carbon emissions (estimates) from transport within LA influence (Kt)' remained similar to the previous year. This performs above average compared to other English County Councils. This data is reported annually and is two years in arrears. (Source Department for Energy Security and Net Zero).

Environment, Waste & Flooding Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Waste Management							
% of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling, composting etc.	3rd (2023/24)	↑	44.4%	45%	43.6%	High	This indicator improved slightly to 44.4% since the previous year.
Annual percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill	4th (2023/24)	\uparrow	10.7%	10%	12.6%	Low	Waste sent to landfill decreased (improved) by 2 percentage points and remains close to its target.
Total household waste per household (kg)	3rd (2023/24)	\rightarrow	961	Year on year decrease	960	Low	This indicator remained relatively static since the previous year.
Tonnes of waste produced from LCC sites	-	\	275.2 (2023/24)	375.9 (2023/24)	250.0 (2022/23)	Low	Waste produced at County Council sites increased by 10% since the previous year. The 2024/25 results are currently being collated and will be presented to the Environment & Climate Change Scrutiny Committee in January 2026.
% waste recycled from LCC sites (non-operational)	-	↑	62% (2023/24)	70% (2023/24)	51.2% (2022/23)	High	The percentage of waste recycled from County Council sites has increased by 11 percentage points. 2024/25 results are currently being collated and will be presented to the Environment & Climate Change Scrutiny Committee in January 2026.
Total fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 population	2nd (2023/24)	\downarrow	5.4 (2023/24)	-	4.8 (2022/23)	Low	Total fly tipping incidents increased slightly. Data is one year in arrears.
LCC Environmental risks managed	-	\rightarrow	2 (2023/24)	0	2 (2022/23)	Low	The number of County Council environmental risks managed remained the same as the previous year at 2 for 2023/24. The low number of risks demonstrates good performance.
% of LCC staff who say LCC is doing enough to reduce its environmental impact (post-training survey)	-	\rightarrow	89.3% (2023/24)	90%	89.8% (2022/23)	High	This result is similar to previous year, with a continued high number of Council staff saying that the Council is doing enough to reduce its environmental impact.
Nature and local environment							
Hectares of LCC land in better management for nature	-	\rightarrow	3,730	3,625	3,736	High	This figure includes a combination of Council land including country parks, rural and urban highway verges, county farms and playing fields.
Percentage of suitable LCC land in better management for nature	-	\rightarrow	97.7%	95%	97.5%	High	At the end of 2024/25, the position was similar to 2023/24.
Tree planting	✓ -	\uparrow	437,284 (Mar 25)	210,000	398,920 (Mar 24)	High	By the end of March 2025, the result greatly exceeded the planting target for the year.

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Environment, Waste & Flooding											
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary				
he economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environmentally friendly											
Amount of renewable energy generated as a % of consumption	-	↑	20.6%	34.0%	12.1%	High	The 'amount of renewable energy generated as a % of consumption' increased by 9 percentage points compared to the previous year. This improvement is likely due to a consistently high output from the County Hall biomass boiler over time.				
Greenhouse gas emissions from all sources in Leicestershire (ktonnes CO2e)	2nd (2023)	↑	4,330 (2023)	4,272 (2023)	4,568 (2022)	Low	Greenhouse gas emissions from all sources in Leicestershire improved in performance by 5% since the previous year. Data is sourced from The Department of Energy Security and Net Zero, and is 2 years in arrears.				
Greenhouse gas emissions from Leicestershire (all sources) per capita (tonnes CO2e)	3rd (2023)	↑	5.9 (2023)	6.1 (2023)	6.3 (2022)	Low	Greenhouse gas emissions from Leicestershire (all sources) per capita has improved in performance by 6% since the previous year. Data is sourced from The Department of Energy Security and Net Zero, and is 2 years in arrears.				
Total LCC Greenhouse gas emissions	-	↑	9,351 (2023/24)	-	9,427 (2022/23)	Low	The Council's Greenhouse gas emissions have improved slightly to the previous year.				
Total Business miles claimed ('000s of miles)	-	\uparrow	4,686	5,291	4,809	Low	This indicator saw 3% improvement in performance since the previous year and met its target.				

Child Health & Best Start in Life						
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Smoking at time of delivery	3rd (Eng)	1	8.0%	8.5%	Low	For latest year (2023/24 data) Leicestershire performs similarly to national average of 7.4%.
Percentage of 5 year olds with experience of visually obvious dental decay	✓ 1st (Eng)	↑	17.0%	19.1%	Low	For latest year 2023/24 result is significantly better than the national average of 22.4%.
% of providers in early years assessed as good or outstanding	4th (2025) (Counties)	\rightarrow	97.5%	97.7%	High	Similar to previous year.
% take-up of free early education by 2 year olds	4th (2025) (Counties)	\	66.5%	71.2%	High	Data for Spring Term 2025 and 2024. Government extension of funded childcare hours has impacted the number of places available and the lower result reflects a national trend. To support parents to access funded entitlements the Council is working to ensure that children are taking up their entitlement via a range of initiatives including work with social care, pre-school settings, promotional postcards and a video.
% take-up of free early education by 3 & 4 year olds	4th (2025) (Counties)	↑	95.6%	89.8%	High	Data for Spring Term 2025 and 2024.
% Achieving Good Level of Development (early years)	2nd (2024) (Counties)	↑	70.2%	69.6%	High	Latest data is a provisional result for 2024/25.
Excess weight in primary school age children in Reception (Leics)	1st (Eng)	\downarrow	19.9%	18.7%	Low	Leicestershire performs significantly better than the England average of 22.1% in 2023/24.
Excess weight in primary school age children in Year 6 (Leics)	1st (Eng)	\downarrow	32.5%	31.9%	Low	Leicestershire performs significantly better than the England average of 35.8% in 2023/24.
% of physically active children and young people	3rd (Eng)	\downarrow	45.1%	50.7%	High	Leicestershire performs similar to the England average of 47.8%, 2023/24.
Chlamydia detection (per 100,000 aged 15-24) (Females)	2nd (Eng)	\downarrow	1564	1923	High	Latest data is 2024.
Under 18 conception (rate per 1,000 females aged 15-17) (Leics)	2nd (Eng)	\downarrow	13.5	10.7	Low	Leicestershire's teenage pregnancy rate is lower than East Midlands and England rates. Data shown is for 2022.
% of school pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs Notes: Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) benchma	2nd (Eng)	-	-	3.1%	Low	The latest result (2022/23) is similar to the national average (3.3%).

Health & Wellbeing - Public Health						
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Public Health						
Life Expectancy − Males (Leics) ✓	1st (Eng)	1	80.2	80	High	Males in Leicestershire can expect to live over 1 year longer than the average for England. To reduce health inequalities we are tackling the wider determinants of health through a range of projects/activity. Latest data is for the period 2021-23.
Life Expectancy – Females (Leics)	2nd (Eng)	↑	83.7	83.6	High	Females in Leicestershire can expect to live 0.6 years longer than the average for England. Latest data is for the period 2021-23.
Healthy Life Expectancy – Males (Leics)	2nd (Eng)	\downarrow	62.7	64	High	Males in Leicestershire can expect to live in good health for over a year longer than the average for England (61.5 years). Latest data is for the period 2021-23.
Healthy Life Expectancy – Females (Leics)	2nd (Eng)	\downarrow	62.6	64.1	High	Females in Leicestershire can expect to live in good health for a half of a year longer than the average for England (61.9 years). Latest data is for the period 2021-23.
Slope Index of Inequalities – Males (Leics)	1st (Eng)	\downarrow	6.3	6.2	Low	The gap in life expectancy at birth between the best-off and worst-off males in Leicestershire for 2021-23 is 6.3 years.
Slope Index of Inequalities – Females (Leics)	2nd (Eng)	\downarrow	5.6	5.5	Low	The gap in life expectancy at birth between the best-off and worst-off females in Leicestershire for 2021-23 is 5.6 years.
Under 75 Mortality from cardiovascular disease (per 100,000 population)	1st (Eng)	\downarrow	65.6	65.5	Low	A variety of work contributes to reducing cardiovascular diseases. For the latest year (2023) Leicestershire performs significantly better than the national average of 77.4 per 100,000 population.
Under 75 Cancer Mortality (per 100,000 population)	1st (Eng)	↑	110.4	113.6	Low	Various actions are being implemented to help people to adopt healthier lifestyles and become more aware of cancer risk factors. For the latest year (2023), the Leicestershire value is significantly better than the national average (120.8 per 100,000 population).
Under 75 Respiratory Disease Mortality (per 100,000 population)	1st (Eng)	1	22.4	22.5	Low	Public health supports wider prevention programmes for respiratory disease. Latest data is for 2023. In 2023 Leicestershire performs significantly better than the national average of 33.7 per 100,000 population.

Health & Wellbeing - Public Health						
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Under 75 mortality rate from causes considered preventable (per 100,000 population)	1st (Eng)	↑	125.7	131.8	Low	Deaths are considered preventable if, in the light of the understanding of the determinants of health at the time of death, all or most deaths from the underlying cause could mainly be avoided through effective public health interventions. Latest data is for 2023. In 2023 Leicestershire performed significantly better than the national average of 153.0 per 100,000 population.
Prevalence of smoking among persons aged 18 years and over	1st (Eng)	\downarrow	9.5%	9.4%	Low	A new stop smoking service began in 2017. In 2023 the national average result was 11.6%.
Rate of hospital admissions for alcohol related causes (narrow) (per 100,000 pop - Leics) (new method)	2nd (Eng)	\downarrow	503	467	Low	Leicestershire performed similar to the national average of 504 per 100,000 population in 2023/24.
% who successfully completed drug treatment (non-opiate)	2nd (Eng)	\downarrow	28.7%	32.4%	High	Data shows completions in 2023 with no re-presentations up to 6 months.
% who successfully completed drug treatment (opiate)	2nd (Eng)	↑	6.4%	6.0%	High	As above
Cumulative percentage of the eligible population aged 40- 74 offered an NHS Health Check who received an NHS Health Check	3rd (Eng)	\	35.8%	42.2%	High	New health check service contract with the GPs agreed along with efforts to encourage pharmacies and GPs to work together to improve health check uptake. Latest data relates to the time period 2020/21 - 2024/25. Leicestershire performs worse than the national average of 38.9%.
% of adults classified as overweight or obese (Leics)	2nd (Eng)	↑	65.8%	65.9%	Low	Data sourced from Active Lives Survey. Latest data is for period 2023/24. Leicestershire value is similar than the England average (64.5%).
% of physically active adults	2nd (Eng)	\downarrow	68.6%	70.1%	High	Latest data, 2023/24, is derived from the Active Lives Survey. Leicestershire value is similar to the England value of 67.4%.
% of physically inactive adults	2nd (Eng)	\downarrow	20.8%	18.9%	Low	Latest data, 2022/23, is derived from the Active Lives Survey. Leicestershire value is similar to the England value of 22.0%.
Fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution (new method)	3rd (Eng)	↑	5.7%	6.6%	Low	Latest data is for 2023.
Levels of air pollution – fine particulate matter (PM2.5)	4th (Eng)	\uparrow	7.7	8.9	Low	As above

Notes: Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) benchmarks are compared to all single / upper tier authorities. Direction of travel arrows are indicative, and do not necessarily represent statistically significant change.

Adult Social Care & Health							
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Unified Prevention, Information & Urgent Response							
Permanent admissions of older people to residential and nursing care homes per 100,000 pop (ASCOF 2C) (BCF)	2nd (2023/24)	\	583.0	<560.0	566.0	Low	There was a increase in the number of people aged 65 or over permanently admitted to residential or nursing homes during 2024/25; 898 admissions compared to 867 admissions in 2023/24. Note: 2024/25 is a provisional figure, and may be updated after the NHSE publication of ASCOF data later in the year.
Permanent admissions to residential or nursing care of service users aged 18-64 per 100,000 pop (ASCOF 2B)	2nd (2023/24)	↑	13.3	<15.2	14.3	Low	The number of people aged 18-64 permanently admitted to residential or nursing homes during 2024/25 (58) was four lower than in the previous year (62). Note:2024/25 is a provisional figure, and may be updated after the NHSE publication of ASCOF data later in the year.
Unplanned admissions for chronic ambulatory care- sensitive conditions (BCF)	-	\uparrow	780.5	650.6	803	Low	Reduced admissions for 2024/25.
% of people who use services who find it easy to find information about support (ASCOF 3C pt 1)	4th (2023/24)	↑	61.1%	66.4%	59.3%	High	Result derived from the adult social care survey. Performance in 2024/25 at 61.1% was sightly improved on the 59.3% recorded the last time this survey was undertaken in 2023/24, but below the national average of 66.4%.
% of carers who find it easy to find information about support (ASCOF 3C pt 2)	3rd (2023/24)	-	-	59.1%	56.1%	High	Derived from the biennial carers survey, performance was 56.1% in 2023/24. The survey will next be run in October 2025.
Improved Discharge & Reablement							
% of people discharged from acute hospital to their normal place of residence (BCF)	-	\rightarrow	92.1%	93.0%	92.2%	High	BCF funding has supported the intermediate care model which has increased capacity in home care services ensuring more people go home. In turn discharging to bedded community care has helped to ensure as many people return home after a period of rest and recovery as possible.
% of people aged 65+ still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/ rehabilitation services (ASCOF 2D 1 (BCF))	2nd (2023/24)	↑	90.7%	83.8%	88.1%	High	Performance in 2024/25 of 90.7% was above the previous year, and also above the England average of 83.8%. Note: 2024/25 is a provisional figure, and may be updated after the NHSE publication of ASCOF data later in the year.
% of people receiving reablement with no subsequent long- term service (ASCOF 2A) Notes: ASCOF benchmarks are compared to all social services and services are compared to all social services.	(2023/24)	→	88.7%	77.4%	89.6%	High	This indicator measures the proportion of people who had no need for ongoing services. Outturn in 2024/25 at 88.7% was very similar to the previous year, and well above national average. Note: 2024/25 is a provisional figure, and may be updated after the NHSE publication of ASCOF data later in the year.

Adult Social Care							
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
<u>Personalisation</u>							
% of people who use services who have control over their daily life (ASCOF 1B)	3rd (2023/24)	\downarrow	76.6%	77.6%	79.1%	High	This indicator is derived from the Annual Adult Social Care Survey. Performance in 2024/25 at 76.6% was 2.5% lower than the last time this survey was undertaken in 2023/24.
% of people using social care who receive self-directed support (national, ASCOF 3D pt 1A)	3rd (2023/24)	↑	96.6%	92.2%	96.3%	High	The proportion of people in receipt of a personal budget in 24/25 was 0.3% higher compared to the previous year. Note: 24/25 is a provisional figure, and may be updated after the NHSE publication of ASCOF data later in the year.
% of carers receiving self-directed support (ASCOF 3D Pt 1B) ▼	1st (2023/24)	→	100.0%	89.7%	100.0%	High	100% of carers continued to be in receipt of a personal budget in 2024/25, reaching the required target. Note: 24/25 is a provisional figure, and may be updated after the NHSE publication of ASCOF data later in the year.
% of adults receiving support via direct payments (ASCOF 3D Pt 2A)	1st (2023/24)	\	33.0%	25.5%	35.6%	High	33.0% of service users were receiving direct payments in 24/25, lower than the 35.6% result in 23/24. This is still above the national average and target of 25.5%. Note: 24/25 is a provisional figure, and may be updated after the NHSE publication of ASCOF data later in the year.
% of carers receiving direct payments (ASCOF 3D Pt 2B) Dementia	3rd (2023/24)	↑	100.0%	77.4%	99.7%	High	The proportion of carers in receipt of a direct payment at 100% was higher than the previous year, and much greater than the target. Note: 24/25 is a provisional figure, and may be updated after the NHSE publication of ASCOF data later in the year.
Dementia diagnosis rate by GPs	4th (2025)	\	61.5%	66.7%	62.8%	High	The indicator shows the rate of persons aged 65 and over with a recorded diagnosis of dementia compared to the number estimated to have dementia given the characteristics of the population and the age and sex specific prevalence rates. Latest data is for 2025.
<u>Care Quality</u>							
Overall satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support (ASCOF 1D)	3rd (2023/24)	\downarrow	62.8%	65.4%	64.5%	High	This result is calculated from the adult social care survey. In 2024/25 it was 62.8%, 1.7% lower than the last time the survey was completed in 2023/24.
Overall satisfaction of carers with their care and support (ASCOF 1E)	2nd (2023/24)	-	N/A	36.3%	37.6%	High	The biennial carers survey is due to be completed again in 2025/26. LCC performance of 37.6% in 2023/24 was slightly higher than the England average (36.3%)

Adult Social Care							
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
% of Care Homes rated good or outstanding	3rd (Aug 2025)	↑	81.3%	-	77.9%	High	This indicator is based on Care Quality Commission (CQC) data. As of August 2025, two providers were rated as inadequate, and 26 required improvement, out of 158 registered in Leicestershire.
% of Home Care Providers rated good or outstanding	3rd (Aug 2025)	\downarrow	86.8%	-	88.2%	High	This indicator is based on Care Quality Commission (CQC) data. In August 2025, no Home Care providers were rated as inadequate, but 14 required improvement.
Social care related quality of life (ASCOF 1A)	3rd (2023/24)	\rightarrow	18.6	19.1	18.8	High	This measure is drawn from a number of questions in the annual survey of service users including such topics as control over daily life, how time is spent and social contact. In the 2024/25 survey the outturn was on par with the previous year, and slightly lower than the 2022/23 national average of 19.1.
Carers reported quality of life (ASCOF 1C) People reach their potential	2nd (2023/24)	-	N/A	7.3	7.2	High	Similar to the indicator above, this is drawn from a number of questions in the carers survey including topics such as control over daily life, social participation and safety. This survey was not completed in 2024/25, but will be undertaken in 2025/26
% of people with learning disabilities aged 18-64 who live in their own home or with their family (ASCOF 2E)	2nd (2023/24)	↑	87.2%	81.6%	85.3%	High	The proportion of people who live at home or with family; 2024/25 performance on this was 1.9 percentage points higher than the previous year. Note: 24/25 is a provisional figure, and may be updated after the NHSE publication of ASCOF data later in the year.
% of people who use services who had as much social contact as they would like (ASCOF 5A1)	3rd (2023/24)	\downarrow	39.6%	45.6%	44.9%	High	This indicator is derived from the adult social care survey. Performance in 2024/25 was 5.3% points lower than the previous survey undertaken in 2023/24.
% of carers who had as much social contact as they would like (ASCOF 5A2)	4th (2023/24)	-	N/A	30.0%	25.4%	High	The biennial carers survey was not completed in 2024/25. Performance of 25.4% in 2023/24 was slightly lower than the latest England average (30%) although similar to the previous survey result.

Adult Social Care							
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Safeguarding Adults							
% of people who use services who say they feel safe (ASCOF 4A)	2nd (2023/24)	\downarrow	66.8%	71.1%	72.2%	High	This indicator is derived from the adult social care survey. Performance in 2024/25 at 66.8% was lower than the 72.2% recorded the last time this survey was undertaken in 2023/24.
Number of safeguarding adults alerts received	-	\downarrow	2,909	-	1,732	Low	In 2024/25 a total of 2,909 safeguarding alerts were received into Adult Social Care, considerably higher than the previous year.
% of safeguarding enquiries where the identified risk was reduced or removed (New indicator, ASCOF 4B)	-	\rightarrow	95.1%	National data not yet avail	95.9%	High	In 2024/25, in 95.1% of Safeguarding enquiries, the identified risk was removed or reduced. This was very similar to the proportion in 23/24. No national comparison figures are available yet.

Mental Health						
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Mental Health						
% of people with a low satisfaction score	3rd (Eng)	\	6.0%	2.8%	Low	We are a key partner in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Mental Health workstream, with a range of interventions aimed at helping people avoid becoming ill - focus on building wellbeing and resilience. Latest data is for period 2022/23, the Leicestershire result is similar to the England average of 5.6%.
% of people with a low happiness score	3rd (Eng)	\downarrow	8.8%	6.3%	Low	As above
% of people with a high anxiety score	3rd (Eng)	\rightarrow	23.6%	23.6%	Low	As above
Suicide rate (per 100,000)	2nd (Eng)	\downarrow	10.3	9.2	Low	Latest data is for period 2021-23.
Rate of excess under 75 mortality rate in adults with serious mental illness	2nd (Eng)	↑	382%	423%	Low	Latest data is for period 2021-23. Leicestershire result is similar to the England average.

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Children & Families							
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Supporting Families & Early Help							
Number of completed Early Help Assessments	-	\rightarrow	1369	-	1381	-	Similar to previous year
Number of completed Early Help Assessments closed with reason 'outcomes met'	-	\rightarrow	83%	-	82%	High	Similar to previous year
Percentage of successful family claims as part of the national Supporting Families programme, against annual allocation	✓ -	↑	100%	100%	50%	High	Supporting Families Programme ended as of the start of 2025/26.
Safeguarding Children							
Single assessments completed within 45 working days	1st (2023/24)	\downarrow	83.5%	85%	90.8%	High	Comments to follow
% re-referrals to children's social care within 12 months	4th (2023/24)	\downarrow	25.5%	22%	23.7%	Low	Comments to follow
Child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales	4th (2023/24)	↑	84.4%	95%	83.4%	High	Comments to follow
Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	3rd (2023/24)	↑	24.8%	21%	26.9%	Low	Comments to follow
Number of child sexual exploitation (CSE) referrals	-	\downarrow	161	-	121	Low	Comments to follow
Number of child criminal exploitation (CCE) referrals	-	\downarrow	201	-	153	Low	Comments to follow

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Children & Families							
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Looked After Children							
Stability of placements - children in care with 3 or more placements in year.	✓ 1st (2023/24)	\rightarrow	8.8%	9%	9.0%	Low	Comments to follow
% Looked after children receiving health checks	4th (2023/24)	↑	91.2%	90%	82.0%	High	Comments to follow
% Looked after children receiving dental checks	1st (2023/24)	\downarrow	93.1%	90%	95.0%	High	Comments to follow
Emotional Health of looked after children - mean SDQ score	2nd (2023/24)	\rightarrow	14.7	-	14.7	Low	Comments to follow
Care leavers aged 19, 20 and 21 in education, employment or training	✓ 1st (2023/24)	↑	62.9%	50%	59.0%	High	Comments to follow
Care leavers aged 19, 20 and 21 in suitable accommodation	✓ 1st (2023/24)	\rightarrow	94.1%	80%	94.0%	High	Comments to follow
Total average time in days to place with prospective adopters	-	↑	590	-	642	Low	Comments to follow
% children who wait less than 14 months for adoption	-	\uparrow	34%		24%	High	Comments to follow

Notes: Children's Social Care data is provisional - to be confirmed by DfE in winter 2024/25. A new data system was implemented during 2022/23 and this has affected in-year tracking of children's social care indicators. Comparators are 31 county councils & county unitaries.

Community Safety							
escription	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
outh Justice							
ate of first time entrants to the criminal justice system ged 10 - 17	✓ 1st (2024)	\uparrow	91	-	94	Low	Rate per 100,000 of 10-17 population (Jan 24 - Dec 24)
ustody Rate	3rd (2023/24)	\uparrow	0.04	-	0.06	Low	Rate per 1,000 of 10-17 population (Jan 24 - Dec 24)
nti-social Behaviour							
nti-social behaviour total (per 1,000 population)	-	\downarrow	9.8	-	6.4	Low	Reported anti-social behaviour is higher than the previous year.
s agree people from different backgrounds get on well ogether	1st/2nd (2023/24)	\rightarrow	90.6%	-	90.9%	High	The figure remained similar for 2024/25. We continue work to strengthen community cohesion, supporting communication with and across community groups. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1100 residents during 2024/25.
eported hate incidents (per 1,000 population)	-	\uparrow	1.3	-	1.4	Low	We continue work to strengthen community cohesion, supporting communication with and across community groups.
ulnerable People							
eported domestic abuse incident rate (per 1,000 opulation)	3rd (2023/24)	\uparrow	15.8	-	16.4	Low	Reported domestic crimes and incidents have slightly decreased compared to the previous year.
omestic violence with injury rate (per 1,000 population)	-	\uparrow	2.2	-	2.5	Low	There has been a small reduction in reported domestic violence with injury compared to the previous year.
of domestic violence cases reviewed at MARAC that are epeat incidents	-	\downarrow	40.8%	28%-40%	38.3%	Low	The figure of 40.8% covers July 2024 to June 2025.
lumber of safe accommodation spaces for domestic abuse ictims	-	\uparrow	33	-	14	High	This now includes additional units funded by MHCLG grant and public health.

Communities, Libraries & Heritage								
Description		Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Communities								
% of respondents who had given some unpaid help in the last 12 months	✓	-	↑	59.3%	-	45.9%	High	Statistically significant increase compared to the previous year. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1100 residents during 2024/25.
% of respondents agreeing that they can influence County Council decisions affecting their local area		-	\rightarrow	20.4%	-	22.3%	High	Statistically similar result to the previous year. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1100 residents during 2024/25.
% of respondents stating that they were satisfied with their local area as a place to live	✓	1st/2nd (2024)	\rightarrow	92.4%	-	92.4%	High	Similar result to the previous year. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1100 residents during 2024/25.
Number of Neighbourhood Plans adopted		-	\rightarrow	72		72	High	A range of neighbourhood plans adopted.
Number of active Community Response Plans		-	\rightarrow	62		62	High	Significant number of active Community Response plans in place.
Number of LCC volunteers managed		-	\uparrow	1208	-	1200	High	The Council supports a wide range of volunteering opportunities to help services and volunteers.
Culture, libraries and heritage								
Library total visits (beam count)	✓	-	\uparrow	765k	780k	615k	High	Visits continue to perform well with increased overall levels. We expect to maintain this level in 2025/26.
Library total issues	✓	-	\uparrow	2,534k	2,420k	2,385k	High	Total issues continue to increase, supported by strong e-loans performance.
Library children's issues		-	\downarrow	757k	845k	833k	High	Children's issues impacted in 2024/25 by works to Loughborough children's library and new Library Management System reporting. Expected to stabilise in 2025/26
Library total e-downloads	✓	-	\uparrow	1,258k	1,027k	1,006k	High	E-downloads continue to increase, and increase expected to continue but at a more modest level, being driven by E-press and E-audio books.
Number of communities running their own library		-	\rightarrow	34	-	34	High	34 Community Managed Libraries continue to support Leicestershire communities in a wide range of ways.
Number of volunteer hours - libraries & heritage	✓	-	\uparrow	21.1k	20.0k	19.6k	High	Volunteering opportunities at libraries and heritage sites in 2024/25 were 8% higher than in the previous year.
Number of tourism visitor days (millions)		-	↑	25.4	-	24.6	High	Improvement compared to previous year. The tourism sector continues to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. Data shown is for 2023 and 2024. The result for 2019 was 27.2 million.
Number of visits to heritage sites	✓	-	\uparrow	140.2k	136.0k	134.1k	High	The number of visitors to heritage sites in 2024/25 at over 140,000 is 5% higher than the previous year. A number of sites have had strong ratings and awards.

Enabling Services							
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Customer Services & Digital Delivery							
% think Leicestershire County Council doing a good job	-	\rightarrow	49.1%	-	50.6%	High	The result is statistically similar to the previous year. The results are from the Community Insight Survey of c.1100 residents during 2024/25.
% that trusts the County Council	1st/2nd (2024)	\rightarrow	64.6%	-	68.5%	High	As above.
% that feel well informed about the County Council	-	\rightarrow	53.0%	-	55.7%	High	As above.
% of residents who agree the Council treats all types of people fairly	-	\rightarrow	79.9%	-	79.5%	High	As above.
Media rating (points)	-	\uparrow	4,890	4,200	4,079	High	The result is higher than the previous year and exceeds the target.
% calls to the Customer Service Centre answered	-	↑	79.5%	-	75.7%	High	Improvement compared to the previous year. A restructure has now moved Adult Social Care call answering into the Adults and Communities Department.
Number of complaints reported	-	\uparrow	1,287	-	1,470	Low	The result shows a 12% decrease in complaints received compared to the previous year.
Number of compliments reported	-	\downarrow	393	-	422	High	There was a 7% increase in the number of compliments compared to 2023/24. Libraries, Heritage and Museums receiving 57% of the total volume of compliments.
% Complaints responded to within 20 days	-	\downarrow	71%	-	76%	High	The result is a slight decrease compared to last year. 44% of all complaints received a response within 10 working days.
People Strategy							
% annual staff turnover	-	\uparrow	11%	10%	13%	N/A	Staff turnover has moved closer to the 10% target, possibly due to fewer vacancies in the wider job market.
Number of RIDDOR (Health & Safety) Incidents	-	\downarrow	15	-	12	Low	The number of RIDDOR incidents has increased slightly during 2024/25.
Number of apprentices employed by Leicestershire County Council	-	\uparrow	134	-	114	High	The result for 31 March 2025 is higher than the previous year.
% mean gender pay gap Notes: Comparators are 31 county councils & county unitaries.	3rd (2024)	↑	7%	-	9%	Low	The result is an improvement on last year. Data shown is for March 2023 and March 2024.

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Strategic Planning & Economic Developme	Π ι Quartile	Direction of	End of Yr	End of Yr		
Description	position	Travel	2024/25	2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Economy Context						
Productivity and competitiveness (total Gross Value Added at current prices) (Leics, & Rutland)	-	\uparrow	£22.14bn	£21.57bn	High	The data shown is for 2023 and shows a rise of £0.57bn
Productivity and competitiveness (Gross Value Added to local economy per head) (Leics & Rutland)	2nd (2023)	\uparrow	£29,360	£28,260	High	Data shown is 2023. This is a rise from the previous year of £740 per head
Gross Disposable Household Income per head	-	\uparrow	£23,226	£21,388	High	Data shown is 2022 and 2023. This represents a rise of £1838 per head. Increase includes post-pandemic recovery.
Gross Disposable Household Income per head - growth over last 5 years	-	↑	17.9%	12.9%	High	Growth in GDHI over the previous 5 years rose by 5 percentage points. Increase includes post-pandemic recovery.
% of premises with gigabit-capable broadband	2nd (2025)	\uparrow	87.5%	81.1%	High	Data shown is for September 2024 and September 2025.
Private sector funding secured to deliver infrastructure (Section 106)	✓ -	↑	£23.3m	£19.2m	High	2024/25 result is provisional data. Contributions relate mainly to residential developments, with significant stages of development being reached which trigger payments.
% of households in fuel poverty	2nd (2023)	\uparrow	9.6%	12.5%	Low	The 2023 figure is 2.9% lower than in 2022.
% primary school pupils eligible for and claiming free school meals	1st (2025)	\downarrow	17.2%	16.8%	Low	Rates continue to rise (i.e. worsen) and have increased steadily since 2018.
% secondary school pupils eligible for and claiming free school meals	1st (2025)	\downarrow	19.4%	18.7%	Low	As above.
Businesses Invest and Flourish						
Number of new enterprises per 10,000 population	2nd (2023)	↑	46.2	44.8	High	The number of new enterprises rose between 2022 and 2023
3 year business survival rate	4th (2023)	\downarrow	50.9%	52.8%	High	Results showed slightly lower survival rates for 2023 data
Notes: Comparators are 31 county councils & county unitarie	es.					

Strategic Planning & Economic Development - Skills								
Description		Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary	
Skill Supply and Demand								
% achieving a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19		2nd (2023)	\rightarrow	85.5%	85.8%	High	A similar figure to 2023	
% of working age population with at least RFQ 2 level qualifications		1st/2nd (2024)	\downarrow	90.7%	91.5%	High	Slightly lower than 2023 but Leicestershire remains higher than both East Midlands and Great Britain levels).	
% of working age population with at least RFQ 3 level qualifications		1st/2nd (2024)	\downarrow	70.4%	72.6%	High	Lower than 2023 but Leicestershire remains higher than both East Midlands and Great Britain levels.	
% of working age population with at least RQF 4 level qualifications		3rd/4th (2024)	\uparrow	44.6%	42.4%	High	An incerase of 2.2 percentage points. Leicestershire is higher than East Midlands levels but lower than Great Britian	
Number of apprenticeship starts (all employers in the county)		2nd (2023/24)	\uparrow	4,460	4,340	High	There has been a small increase in apprenticeship starts after a small fall in 2023.	
% Out-Of-Work Benefit Claimants (JSA & UC)	✓	1st (Aug 2025)	\rightarrow	2.4%	2.5%	Low	The rate is similar to last year and remains lower than the regional and national averages.	
Unemployment rate	✓	1st (Mar 2025)	\uparrow	2.1%	2.3%	Low	The rate is slightly lower than 2023. The Leicestershire rate is lower than both regional and national levels.	
Employment rate		2nd (Mar 2025)	\downarrow	79.1%	81.6%	High	The rate is 2.5% lower than 2023 levels but continues to be higher than regional levels (74.9%) and national levels (75.4%).	
Economic Inactivity rate		2nd (Mar 2025)	\downarrow	19.1%	16.4%	Low	Economic inactivity has risen by 2.7%. This follows a fall in 2023. Leicestershire levels are lower than both East Midlands (21.8%) and Great Britian (21.5%).	
% of 16 to 17 year olds who are not in education employment or training (NEET)	✓	1st (2025)	\rightarrow	0.7%	0.8%	Low	The NEET level in Leicestershire has remained similar for 2024 and is below regional and national comparisons	
Gross weekly pay - all full time workers		2nd (2024)	\uparrow	£685	£668	High	Median gross weekly pay by residency has risen by £16.60 in the past year.	

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Strategic Planning for Housing							
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Total new dwellings delivered	1st (2024/25)	\	2,960	-	3,460	High	Quartile is new dwellings per 10,000 population (Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities, & Local Government).
Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	3rd (2023/24)	\uparrow	772	-	568	High	Results shown are for 2023/24 and 2022/23.
Housing affordability - ratio of median house price to median gross earnings (workplace based)	2nd (2024)	↑	8.01	-	8.57	Low	Affordability ratio has decreased (improved) since the previous year. The least affordable districts in Leicestershire are Harborough and Oadby & Wigston. Data is 2023 and 2024.
% domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+ (existing)	3rd (2024/25)	↑	54.1%	-	51.2%	High	This indicator improved (2.9%) since the previous year. Comparative performance is in third quartile for 2024/25.
% domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+ (new) Notes: Comparators are 31 county councils & county unitaries.	1st (2024/25)	\rightarrow	98.8%	-	98.8%	High	This indicator remained the same as previous year. It remains in the top quartile for 2024/25.

School & Academy Performance							
Description		Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Access to Good Quality Education							
% of pupils offered first choice primary school	✓	2nd (2025)	\uparrow	95.4%	95.0%	High	3.6% of pupils were offered their second preference and 0.8% were offered their third preference primary school.
% of pupils offered first choice secondary school	✓	2nd (2025)	↑	92.0%	91.5%	High	Slight improvement on previous year. 5.7% of pupils were offered their second preference and 1.3% were offered their third preference secondary school.
% of primary schools assessed as good or outstanding		2nd (Aug 2024)	↑	90.7%	90.3%	High	Slight improvement on previous result. Latest result is for August 2024 due to change in Ofsted inspection ratings system. Previous result is for December 2023.
% of secondary schools assessed as good or outstanding		4th (Aug 2024)	\rightarrow	77.8%	77.8%	High	Latest result is for August 2024 due to change in Ofsted inspection ratings system. Previous result is for December 2023.
SEND and Vulnerable Groups							
% of new Education, Health & Care Plans issued within 20 weeks (including exceptions)	•	4th (2023)	¥	4.3%	6.0%	High	The service has faced a continued increase in applications. Improvement plans have been implemented. Figures returned as per the SEN2 statutory returns and relate to calendar year. The % issued within 20 weeks in September 2025 was 27%, which brings the current calendar year average to 12%. The average time to finalise was 24.7 weeks at the end of September, compared to 46.9 weeks in May 2025.
% of special schools assessed as good or outstanding	✓	1st (Aug 2024)	\rightarrow	100%	100%	High	Latest result is for August 2024 due to change in Ofsted inspection ratings system. Previous result is for December 2023.
Average Attainment 8 score - Pupils with special educational needs (SEN statement / EHCP)		1st (2024)	-		-0.94	High	2025 results awaited
Average Attainment 8 score - Pupils with special educational needs (SEN support)		3rd (2024)	-		-0.51	High	2025 results awaited
Secondary school persistent absence rate		1st (2024)	-		23.6%	low	2025 results awaited

School & Academy Performance						
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Key Stage 2						
Achievement of expected standard or above in Reading, Writing and Maths at Key Stage 2	2nd (2024)	-		61.4%	High	2025 results awaited
Key Stage 4 & 5						
Average Attainment 8 score (attainment in 8 subjects at GCSE level)	2nd (2024)	-		45.9	High	2025 results awaited
Average Attainment 8 score - pupils eligible for Free School Meals	3rd (2024)	-		32.1	High	2025 results awaited
Progress 8 (measure covering overall Key Stage 2-4 progress)	3rd (2024)	-		-0.10	High	2025 results awaited
Average points score per entry at 'A' Level (or equiv.)	4th (2024)	-		32.1	High	2025 results awaited
Notes: Responsibility of schools and academies with support from Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership (LEEP). Comparators are 31 county councils & county unitaries.						

Environment Context							
Description	Quartile position	Direction of Travel	End of Yr 2024/25	Target / Standard	End of Yr 2023/24	Polarity	Commentary
Leicestershire rivers (excluding Leicester) are in good ecological status (%)	-	-	9.4% (2019)	-	0.67% (2016)	High	The latest data received from the Environment Agency (EA) is for 2019. The EA are legally obliged to publish a full set of data for every water body in England every six years and the next full set of results will next be available in 2026. Due to the EA adopting a change in methodology in 2019, the data for 2016 and 2019 are not comparable.
Leicestershire rivers (excluding Leicester) are in good chemical status (%)	-	-	0% (2019)	-	99.6% (2016)	High	Since 2019 the Environment Agency methodology for assessing river 'chemical status' became more rigorous and no rivers in Leicestershire have 'good chemical status.' Currently no surface water bodies nationally have met this latest criteria. This is the most up to date data from the Environment Agency currently available, with the next set of results available in 2026. Due to the EA adopting a change in methodology in 2019, the data for 2016 and 2019 are not comparable.
Renewable electricity generated in the area (MWh)	3rd (2024)	\downarrow	378,213 (2024)	-	400,487 (2023)	High	Renewable electricity declined in performance by 5% since the previous year. Electricity from Photovoltaics has the greatest share of this, followed by Onshore wind. District locations generating the most renewable electricity are Harborough and Charnwood.
Renewable electricity capacity in the area (MW)	✓ 3rd (2024)	\uparrow	461.6 (2024)	-	436.9 (2023)	High	Renewable electricity capacity in the area increased by approximately 6% when compared to the previous year. Electricity capacity is mainly from Photovoltaics. The Authority has limited influence on this.
NO2 exceedances for Leicestershire Notes: Comparators are 31 county councils & county units	-	↑	1 (2023)	-	3 (2022)	Low	This indicator is the number of times NO2 has exceeded 40 micrograms. According to the local District Councils Air Quality Annual Status Reports there was only one exceedance for 2023 an improvement on the previous year when there was 3. (One exceedance was in Blaby).

PART 3: Risks and Risk Management

The Council has had many years of austerity budgets and also been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and its longer-term impact, cost of living crisis and inflation. The service environment continues to be extremely challenging with a number of known major risks over the next few years. Given the pressures, it is important that the Council has effective performance monitoring and risk management arrangements in place. In relation to risk management the Council has a good risk management process to help it to identify possible risks, score these in terms of likelihood and impact and take mitigating actions. Corporate high risks currently identified include: -

 If we fail to deliver the MTFS savings, have an unexpected loss in income and/or fail to control demand and cost pressures then this will put the Council's financial sustainability at risk with major implications for service delivery.

Children and Families

- Child Social Care if the number and type of high-cost social care placements (e.g. external fostering, residential and 16+ supported accommodation) increases (especially in relation to behavioural and CSE issues) then there may be significant pressures on the Children's Social Care placement budget, which funds the care of vulnerable children.
- SEN D If demand for and the complexity of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) continues to rise, and corrective action is not taken, there is a risk that the high needs deficit will continue to increase and create a significant burden on the Council.
- If Special Educational Needs Assessments are delayed and Education, Health and Care Plans are not issued on time with appropriate school placements for children identified, Transport Operations could be failing to provide a timely statutory service.
- If current demand for EHC Needs Assessment and updating of EHCPs after annual review exceeds available capacity of staff within SEND Services (particularly educational psychology and SEN Officer) then this leaves the Council vulnerable to complaints of maladministration with regards to statutory timescales. The situation is worsened by a lack of specialist placements which means that children with complex needs may not be placed in a timely way and hence may not receive the support to which they are entitled through their EHC Plan.
- If the immigration status of refugees and asylum seekers (including UASC) who arrive in the County is not resolved, then the Council will have to meet additional long-term funding in relation to its housing and care duties, with the biggest cost and staffing impacts on Children and Family Services.
- If **suitable placements** are unavailable for **UASC** (unaccompanied asylumseeking children) who arrive in the County, then there will significant pressures meeting statutory duties for UASC as well as financial pressures in meeting their complex needs.

Adult Social Care

- If health and care partners fail to work together to address the impact of **system pressures** effectively, there is a risk of an unsustainable demand for care services and a risk to the quality of those services to meet need.
- If the Department fails to develop and maintain a stable, sustainable, and quality **social care market** to work with, then it may be unable to meet its statutory responsibilities.
- If there is a continuing **increase in demand** for assessments (care needs and financial) then it may not be met by existing capacity.

Environment

- If the **Ash dieback** disease causes shedding branches or falling trees, then there is a possible risk to life and disruption to the transport network.
- Waste If there was a major issue which results in unplanned waste site closure (e.g., fire) then the Council may be unable to hold or dispose of waste.
- If there are significant changes/clarifications to legislation, policy or guidance then performance could be impacted and cost increases.
- If services do not take into account current and future environmental changes
 in their planning such as more flooding, they may be unable to respond
 adequately to the predicted impacts, leading to significantly higher financial
 implications and service disruption, as well as making future adaptation more
 costly.

Corporate Services

- **Cyber Security** If the council does not effectively manage its exposure to cyber risk, then there is a substantial risk of a successful cyber-attack which could severely damage the Council's reputation and affect service delivery which might result in significant costs.
- **Procurement** If there is an actual or perceived breach of procurement quidelines then there may be a challenge which results in a financial penalty.
- If suppliers of critical services do not have robust **business continuity** plans in place, then the Council may not be able to deliver services.
- If there is a failure to restore services or maintain services in a major disruption
 e.g. pandemic, power outage, cyber incident, etc then the Council is at risk of
 not being able to deliver identified critical services.
- **Sickness** If sickness absence is not effectively managed then staff costs, service delivery and staff wellbeing will be impacted.
- Recruitment If departments are unable to promptly recruit and retain staff with
 the right skills and values and in the numbers required to fill the roles needed,
 then the required/expected level and standard of service may not be delivered,
 and some services will be over reliant on the use of agency staff resulting in
 budget overspends and lower service delivery.

Economy

- **Infrastructure** If developer contributions are not secured, are not sufficient to cover costs or are not spent efficiently then there could be a failure to pay for roads, schools and other essential infrastructure.
- If the East Midlands Gateway 2 application is approved without mitigating infrastructure, then this could impact the Council's services.





CABINET – 18 NOVEMBER 2025

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRADED SERVICES STRATEGY

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

PART A

Purpose of the Report

- 1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Cabinet regarding the performance of the County Council's Traded Services Strategy, which sets out the performance of the Council's traded services, known as Leicestershire Traded Services (LTS).
- 2. The report also provides an update on the progress on exiting the school food business and engagement over the future of Beaumanor.

Recommendations

- 3. It is recommended that:
 - a) The performance against targets in the Traded Services Strategy during 2024/25 be noted;
 - b) The future developments as outlined in this report and Outlook for 2025/26 be welcomed:
 - c) The current status of the programme to exit the school food service be noted:
 - d) The current status of the engagement process for the future of Beaumanor be noted.

Reasons for Recommendation

- 4. The Annual Report on the Traded Services Strategy outlines the progress that has been made by the County Council (via the Leicestershire Traded Services).
- 5. The changes to the school food service and engagement programme for Beaumanor were decisions taken by the Cabinet at its meeting in July 2025.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

6. The Scrutiny Commission considered the Annual Report on the Traded Services Strategy on 10 November 2025 and its comments will be reported to the Cabinet.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

- 7. With the continued financial pressure on the Council, the requirement to raise additional revenue has been specifically included in the County Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the past few years.
- 8. The Traded Services Strategy was approved by the Cabinet in 2023 which further resolved that an Annual Report on performance against the Traded Services Strategy be submitted to the Scrutiny Commission.
- 9. The Scrutiny Commission continues to receive regular reports on Traded Services performance, most recently in September 2024. At that meeting it was suggested that further consideration was given to the operation of Beaumanor Hall and the School Food Service. The Commission had a workshop event in November 2024 for this purpose and this was followed in March 2025 with a further report on Traded Services. The views of the Commission arising from this meeting were reported to the Cabinet in July 2025.
- 10. The Cabinet, on 15 July 2025, considered a report on the future of Beaumanor Hall and Park and agreed to commence engagement on options to improve its financial performance. Also at that meeting the Cabinet authorised the Director of Corporate Resources to take the necessary action to cease the Traded Services' school catering offer with effect from the end of the 2025/2026 academic year.

Resource Implications

- 11. The overall financial result for Leicestershire Traded Services in 2024/25 is a net contribution of £243,000 compared to a budget target of a net cost of £7,000, a positive variance of £250,000. This compares to a net cost of £1.077m in 2023/24.
- 12. The budget target for 2025/26 is a net contribution of £756,000. The current forecast position at period 6 is a contribution of £333,000, a budgeted overspend of £423,000.
- 13. The budget target for 2025/26 has been revised to the lower forecasted figure as a reflection of continuing weakness within the school food service as it winds down towards closure at the end of the academic year. This will be resolved within the MTFS process. In a number of other key service areas, such as professional services, business growth targets will not be met, as the market with schools is softening due to school budgetary constraints and academisation. Beaumanor continues to show weakness and variance from budget target, as highlighted in the report to the Cabinet in July 2025. Whilst the engagement process is underway, the turnaround will not be immediate.

The MTFS will need to ensure that the budget reflect as-is costs until the improvement plan has been implemented.

<u>Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure</u>

14. None.

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PART B

Review of Performance for 2024/25

- 15. Overall, the performance of LTS exceeded the budget target by £250,000, with a contribution of £243,000. Particularly notable were improvements to budget within the School Food Service, Professional Services and Property Services. Performance was less strong at Beaumanor and the Century Theatre, with both services missing their budget targets.
- 16. Whilst this year saw many services exceeding their financial targets, the outturn position of some services is more muted than previous years, as shown in the table below, driven by reduced customer numbers leading to lower income.
- 17. Retendering of services by Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) remains a major risk to all traded services, with aggressive pricing by competitors and some insourcing leading to several contracts being lost. Winning contracts back from the private sector is difficult as the additional costs of local government employment terms and conditions make the Council's pricing uncompetitive.
- 18. The overall financial results for LTS in 2024/25 are shown in the table below. All relevant costs have been included in the performance reporting.
- 19. As in previous years, there was no capital expenditure incurred in any of these areas.

<u>Service</u>	Budget Target	<u>Outturn</u>	<u>Over/</u> (<u>Under)</u> Spend
	£000	£000	£000
LTS Education Catering	485	329	(156)
LTS Beaumanor	386	459	73
LTS Professional Services (LEAMIS (School IT and Financial Support), HR, Health and Safety)	(203)	(271)	(68)
Cafés	(36)	(39)	(3)
Century Theatre	`67	`94́	27
Hard Facilities Management	(276)	(403)	(127)
Soft Facilities Management	(340)	(334)	` 6
Print	(76)	(78)	(2)
TOTAL	` 7	(243)	(250)

School Food Performance and MTFS Position 2025/26

20. The School Food Service ended 2024/25 with a loss of £329,000, a significantly improved position from the loss of £1.9m in the previous financial year and shows the impact of the turnaround plan that had been put in place.

- 21. This improved position was achieved mainly through the full-year impact of the new financial deals with all customers to deliver the required margin being realised.
- 22. This meant that although the number of overall customers decreased, income into the service remained static. Five sites were lost through MATs going out to tender, as part of routine re-procurement of major contracts, and then a further nine sites that were part of larger MATs moved to streamline and rationalise their catering by moving from LTS to the caterer used by the majority of schools in the MAT.
- 23. The service acquired a large number of contracts in Leicester City, after the closure of City Catering, successfully mobilising 9 sites after the February half-term holiday, implementing a full training and induction plan with staff moving to the County Council's employment.
- 24. Significant challenges continued with staff cost inflation of 5.8% (driven by national living wage rises) and food inflation of 3.4% in the year to April 2025.
- 25. Regular operational audits are undertaken by the Council's Food Standards auditor and 65 out of 71 sites achieved the highest five star rating. Local environmental health teams also inspect the sites and of 29 inspections, 28 were rated four or five star.
- 26. A three-week rotation menu is now offered, with five daily options, as standard: one of the most flexible standard menus on offer in the UK. The menu changes in line with the seasons. "Food for Life" (a Soil Association initiative) Bronze standard food continues to be offered.
- 27. The service relaunched the marketing calendar of special themed meals to run alongside the new menu, with one special menu each month, designed to increase uptake and add variety to the regular menu.
- 28. LTS ran a highly successful Junior Chef competition which saw over 90 children submit an entry form. Following 9 heats, with 43 pupils, a winner from each went forward to the final at Loughborough College. The winning dish was cooked at the winning school for all staff and pupils, and the winner served the dish to all of her school.
- 29. Following feedback from the Scrutiny Commission, arising from its meeting in March 2025, a report on the School Food Service was considered by the Cabinet on 15 July 2025. At this meeting the Cabinet considered the current and likely medium term performance of the School Food Service and concluded that there were high risks around future sustainability of the service. Accordingly, the Cabinet resolved to exit the School Food Service at the end of the academic year 2025/26.
- 30. Staff and customers have since been informed: customers are being supported as necessary to find new catering providers and it is expected that the vast majority of staff will transfer to the new catering provider under TUPE

- protections. LTS, working in partnership with ESPO, have offered primary schools a route to market via a group procurement, to simplify the process as much as possible. 26 schools have taken up this offer.
- 31. The latest forecast for School Food shows a £41,000 revenue contribution compared to a budgeted expectation of a £298,000. Whilst this is an overspend against budget of £257,000, it does mean that the service is forecast to move into a contribution position for the first time since the COVID pandemic. This a £370,000 improvement on the net loss suffered in 2024/25 of £329,000.

Beaumanor Hall and Park Performance and MTFS Position 2025/26

- 32. The 2024/25 position showed a net loss of £459,000 after operating costs in other budgets not directly managed by the service are considered. This produced a budget overspend of £73,000, the reasons for which are detailed below.
- 33. To ensure best value for the authority, some operating costs, such as maintenance, are centralised across its corporate portfolio. These below the line costs for Beaumanor relate to building maintenance, insurance, marketing, grounds maintenance etc.
- 34. Beaumanor Hall's income target was £907,000 and its actual performance was £788,000. This was a marked improvement on the previous year's turnover of £691,000 but shows there is still a need for continued focus on sales and new revenue streams. Whilst a large proportion of the uplift came from add-on packages to wedding ceremonies onsite, this was not as popular as had originally been budgeted.
- 35. Income in Beaumanor Park (primarily used for outdoor education) was £987,000, as opposed to a budget of £1.095m. There has been a year on year drop in the number of bookings coming to the site, as well as the number of children attending, which matches falling school rolls.
- 36. The Hall was temporarily closed in April 2025 when the chimneys were discovered to be potentially dangerous. The entire building had to be evacuated and staff relocated to temporary accommodation. Within a few weeks, the Council had mobilised temporary marquees in the grounds and was able to continue to trade to the public. However, the closure of the Hall lasted until June and the loss of income is estimated at around £108,000.
- 37. Energy costs are extremely high at Beaumanor and a project throughout this period focussed on better managing consumption. This has seen electricity usage decrease by 6% compared to 2023/24 levels.
- 38. The latest forecast for Beaumanor Hall and Park shows a net loss of £561,000 compared to a budgeted cost of £399,000, resulting in an overspend of £162,000.

- 39. At its meeting in July 2025 the Cabinet agreed the commencement of an engagement process with stakeholders to establish options to improve the future financial performance of Beaumanor.
- 40. Public engagement consisted of an online survey for residents which ran during August and September. A total of 888 responses were received, which is exceptionally high for a public engagement.
- 41. The Council held an onsite engagement session for businesses at Beaumanor on 16 September. A total of 18 people attended from local businesses and two from the local parish council. The event was very positive and well received.
- 42. The Council held a planned public engagement session onsite at Beaumanor on 25 September. Around 20 people attended, most of whom were residents of Woodhouse Eaves. The event was very well received by attendees who enjoyed the tour of the site and the opportunity to talk about possible future uses. All the ideas expressed were captured by the staff present.
- 43. Of the 888 responses above, 24 were received from businesses. Where business owners left details and were not attending the event onsite at Beaumanor, the Council has followed up with them all for supplementary conversations.
- 44. The Council has approached a number of existing wedding venues chains to understand more about their experience of the current operation of the market.
- 45. The engagement questionnaire for schools is now live and will close in mid-November. This focuses on why schools use the site, or the reason for not using it, as well as how they think the market for outdoor education will change in the future.
- 46. Emerging themes from the engagement so far, which may be worthy of future development and business cases, include:
 - a. Conversion of part of the estate to accommodation for wedding guests.
 - b. Conversion of the courtyard to catering and retail, to provide public access to the site, potentially alongside charged car parking and outdoor play.
 - c. Substantial increases in events run from the Hall.
 - d. Rental of the Hall to external organisation to deliver events etc.
- 47. As noted above, once the school engagement has concluded, some of the emerging themes from the engagement will be developed further, with full business cases. The outcomes of this will be brought to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

Café Performance and MTFS Position 2025/26

48. Income at Beacon Hill was £2,000 off target for the year at £340,000 and Tithe Barn brought in £265,000. Overall, the cafés slightly exceeded their annual contribution targets by £3,000.

- 49. It should be noted that on both sites, the value of having catering facilities is greater than the catering financial return that they make. For example, since the café was constructed at Beacon Hill in 2019, the car park usage at Beacon Hill Country Park increased by over 40% in the months following, compared to the figures from the previous year. Likewise, the offer at Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre would not be complete without some form of catering.
- 50. Recruitment remains challenging, in line with the wider hospitality industry. Labour costs also increased markedly, due to the local government pay award, which added further pressure to the margin.
- 51. During the year, the Council has worked with lettings agents to find long term tenants and operators for the cafés. In August 2025, the Council announced that Old Pots Ltd. would be taking over the operation of the Beacon Hill Café. They currently operate successful businesses in Newtown Linford and so have a good understanding of the local market. The Council is continuing to work with the lettings agent to finalise a new operator for the café at Tithe Barn.
- 52. It is expected that the Tithe Barn café will be outsourced by February 2026. Beacon Hill transferred in August of this year and a small contribution of £14,000 is the latest forecast for their performance. In addition, lease income of at least £25,000 from Beacon is expected to be received in 2025/26.

<u>Professional Services Performance and MTFS Position 2025/26</u>

- 53. Overall, Professional Services outperformed their budget target by £68,000. Within this there were some significant variances with Traded HR and Traded Health and Safety services exceeding their budget by £105,000, whereas LEAMIS and School Financial Services missed its contribution target by £37,000.
- 54. The principal challenge faced by HR Services and Health and Safety remains the ongoing financial pressure created by the limited budgets of existing customers. This has been exacerbated by recent market developments and increased competition. In response to rising operational costs and to align with the national pay award, HR Services implemented a significant price increase of approximately 12% across all its services from April 2025. The service is committed to regularly reviewing its pricing structure to ensure that it continues to cover escalating costs whilst maintaining the current level of contribution to the MTFS. Despite these efforts, both the Health and Safety and HR services have experienced the loss of some clients during the year. This has largely been driven by competitors introducing appealing discounts to attract new customers, as well as MATs opting to bring these services in-house, thus reducing demand for external provision.
- 55. During 2024/25, the LEAMIS service continued to assist schools seeking to change management information systems (MIS) to a cloud provider, ensure accreditation was up to date, and continued to offer support to schools.

- 56. LEAMIS successfully implemented new cloud school budgeting software, ensuring up to date financial data is available anytime, anywhere for schools and for the Council's strategic finance team. All schools have been trained, and the software is now embedded, providing schools' senior leadership and Governors with a much more improved management position of their budget, together with robust reporting for analysis purposes.
- 57. LEAMIS received notice from two out-of-County MATs as they undertook efficiency savings to reduce their annual service level agreement costs and decided to end their MIS support with the LEAMIS Service. This resulted in a loss of 27 schools.
- 58. A full review of school financial services is underway. This will see a significantly altered service, designed in conjunction with schools, that better delivers their requirements for timely budgeting, forecasting, and school business management.
- 59. Professional services latest forecast is for a contribution of £97,000 compared to a budgeted contribution of £196,000, an overspend of £99,000. This is a fall in contribution from £271,000 in 2024/25. This decline reflects the year-on-year pressures around margin, caused by local government pay awards, as well as increased competition within the market and insourcing of provision by MATs and suppliers.

Soft Facilities Management Performance and MTFS Position 2025/26

- 60. Despite the in-year impact of the pay award, Soft Facilities Management (FM) Contract Management had another strong year, delivering a contribution of £334,000, broadly in line with budgeted expectation. Soft FM includes services such as cleaning, grounds maintenance, and security. Print Services continued to improve on its financial performance following a restructuring and merger with the Council's Post Services delivering a contribution of £75,000 for 2024-25. In 2025/26 Soft FM will be focusing on embedding the significant number of new contracts for the County Council and external sites.
- 61. The forecast contribution for the Soft FM services for 2025/26 is £350,000 and £75,000 for Print Services.

Hard Facilities Management Performance and MTFS Position 2025/26

62. Hard Facilities relates to the physical and structural aspects of a building, focusing on the maintenance and repair of its essential systems and infrastructure. The service delivered a significant improvement on its budgeted contribution target of £276,000 with an outturn contribution of £403,000. This was largely due to income from increased trading levels in the Sites Development Service, which delivers minor site works for schools and other external clients, as well as the benefits realised from restructuring teams to create savings.

- 63. Within the Sites Development Team, the main challenges have been recruitment and retention to meet the demands of the service. There is a good sales pipeline for 2025/26, and the number of external enquiries is increasing.
- 64. In 2025/26, the budgeted contribution for the combined services is £324,000. Once again, the team is forecasting that this figure will be exceeded. The latest forecast is for a contribution of £400,000 in line with 2024/25 achievement.

Century Theatre Performance and MTFS Position 2025/26

- 65. Financial performance at the Theatre was a loss of £94,000, worse than the budget for the year of £69,000.
- 66. In 2025/26 new management was put in place, with a renewed emphasis on quality programming and community theatre. This is starting to show positive results with the latest forecast outturn for Century Theatre a loss of £81,000 compared to a budget of £79,000.

Equality Implications

67. There are no equality implications arising directly from this report.

Human Rights Implications

68. There are no human rights implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers

Scrutiny Commission – 12 June 2023 – Annual Commercial Strategy Report https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=137&Mld=7101&Ver=4

Cabinet – 23 June 2023 – Annual Report of the Commercial Strategy https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=135&Mld=7077&Ver=4

Scrutiny Commission – 29 January 2024 – Interim Report on the Traded Services Strategy

https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=137&Mld=7441&Ver=4

Scrutiny Commission – 4 September 2024 – Annual Report on the Traded Services Strategy

https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cld=137&Mld=7445&Ver=4

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3, 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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