



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

*Date/Time:* **Wednesday, 12 March 2025 at 2.00 pm**

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

*Contact:* **Aqil Sarang (tel: 0116 305 2583)**

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### **Membership**

Mr. M. Frisby CC (Chairman)

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

**Please note: this meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's web site at <http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk>**

### **AGENDA**

<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Report by</u></b>
1. Election of Vice Chairman.	
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2025.	(Pages 5 - 10)
3. Question Time.	
4. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).	
5. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.	
6. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.	



7. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.
8. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 35.
9. Carbon Emissions in County Council Buildings      Director of Corporate Resources      (Pages 11 - 16)
10. Environmental Performance and Progress Update Report.      Director of Environment and Transport      (Pages 17 - 28)
11. Date of next meeting.  
  
The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to take place on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 2.00pm.
12. Any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent.

## QUESTIONING BY MEMBERS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

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

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

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

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



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Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee. held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 22 January 2025.

PRESENT

Mr. M. Frisby CC (in the Chair)

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

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

36. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

37. Question Time.

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

38. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

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

39. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

40. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

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

No declarations were made.

41. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

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

42. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 35.

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

#### 43. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025/2026 - 2028/2029.

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Environment and Transport and the Director of Corporate Resources which provided information on the proposed 2025/26 to 2028/29 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as it related to the Environment and Waste Management Services within the Council's Environment and Transport Department. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 8', is filed with these minutes.

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

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

##### Revenue Budget

- i) A reduction in residual waste and therefore a saving had been forecast due to the planned introduction of mandatory food waste collections from April 2026. A member questioned what else the Council planned to do to reduce this further. The Director assured members that the Council would continue to deliver existing programmes that sought to encourage recycling and reuse and educating residents on how they could better dispose of their waste as well as continuing to implement the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy. However, Members acknowledged there would always be some demand for residual 'black bin' waste disposal. The Lead Member highlighted that reductions would be countered by rising population and housing growth which were expected to result in more waste being generated. The Authority would monitor the impact of growth against the impact of its programmes and the introduction of mandatory food waste collections and other factors such as changing waste types, which all had to be taken into account when assessing the Council's future waste contract needs.
- ii) A Member raised concern that the Department's resources of £0.39m to tackle Ash Dieback had been transferred to the Corporate Resources Department. It was noted that this was simply an accounting matter and reflected the fact that the Corporate Resources Department employed the team that looked after trees and woodlands.

##### Growth

- iii) The technology currently being used to dispose of residual waste which came at a cost was currently considered the most viable option to dispose of waste at the scale required. A Member challenged whether it was more economical to use and therefore pay landfill tax or to incinerate waste and pay the proposed incineration tax. It was noted that the Council sought to manage waste in accordance with the waste hierarchy at the top of which would be waste prevention, reuse and recycling and landfill at the bottom. It was agreed that there needed to be a push towards repurposing waste in line with the circular economy principals rather than sending it to landfill as there were no benefits from this, in order to limit any damaging impact on the environment.
- iv) A Member commented that the ultimate aim would be to reduce non-recyclable packaging. As previously discussed by the Committee, it was noted that the Government's introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging

would now make producers responsible for the costs relating to that packaging from 'cradle to grave' (i.e from production of the material to its disposal). A scheme administrator had been set up by the Government who producers paid a fee to and which was now feeding through to the Authority to help it meet the cost of disposing of this type of waste. The Lead Member emphasised that the Council had been indicatively allocated £6m for 2025/26 but that future allocations were unclear. It was intended that this approach would help to manage away non-recyclable packaging materials, which would then in turn reduce the payments having to be made by the industry.

### Savings

- v) Opening hours at recycling and household waste sites (RHWS) were being reduced in the summer but not universally. Sites would no longer be open 9am until 7pm every day through the summer opening period. Some sites would close at 5pm on certain days but on occasion be open later for residents convenience. Evidence of use showed that sites were used less in the evenings compared to morning usage. However, it was acknowledged that some evening access was still needed and there would therefore be days when some sites would be open until 7pm, to accommodate this. The Director emphasised that the advice to the public would be to check the Council's website prior to visiting.
- vi) Fly-tipping was raised as a concern by some Members who queried whether there were links between closing waste disposal sites and an increase in fly-tipping. It was noted that there was currently no data to suggest there was an escalation in fly tipping cases as a result of closed sites. A Member suggested that enforcement action was the biggest deterrent which was the responsibility of district councils. However, the Lead Member emphasised this was not only a district council problem as the County Council had responsibility for disposing of the waste which could be costly. The Council therefore worked closely with district councils and other agencies, such as the Police and the Environment Agency to address what was a criminal offence. Members noted that the cost of disposal had been factored into the budget.

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

- vii) It was noted that the County Council had responsibility for the ongoing maintenance of a section of the Ashby Canal as a result of the legacy of a proposal a number of years previously to restore and reopen the canal.

### RESOLVED:

- a) That the report on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 -2028/29 be noted;
- b) That the comments now made be forwarded to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration at its meeting on 27 January 2025.

### 44. Environmental Performance & Progress Update Report for 23/24.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport the purpose of which was to update the Committee on Environmental Performance and a Progress Update for 2023/24. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i) A Member emphasised the importance of delivering on targets set to address climate change and commented that the quick, easy gains had been achieved making future progress more difficult to deliver, particularly given the financial pressures the Council continued to face.
- ii) The use of electric vehicles was considered a step in the right direction but a Member raised concerns regarding the detrimental impact on the environment of having to mine rare materials used in creating the batteries and the impact of batteries being disposed of at the end of their expected lifespan. Members were assured that every effort was made to repurpose batteries, reusing them for storage if no longer suitable for use in vehicles, and then further repurposing the rare materials.
- iii) A Member queried the percentage of homes (49%) that did not have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C or above, suggesting that this seemed high. It was noted that the Warm Homes Grant administered by the Council's Public Health Department would help residents to improve insulation within their homes and thus improve their EPC rating. Members noted that an update would be provided to the Committee regarding the Grant scheme at an appropriate time.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

#### 45. Environment Strategy and Net Zero Strategy - Revised Action Plans.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport the purpose of which was to seek the Committee's views on the draft revised Environment Strategy Action Plan, the 2035 Net Zero Council Action Plan and the 2050 Net Zero Leicestershire Action Plan. The report also sought the Committee's views on a proposed Mink Control Policy proposed to be introduced by the Leicestershire and Rutland Water Vole Steering Group of which the Council is a member. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

#### Environment Strategy and Net Zero Action Plan Reviews

- (i) The streamlining of objectives from over 300 to 55 as part of the efficiency review was considered a good approach, as was the plan to streamline activity to enable officers to focus more on delivery. A Member commented, however, that the objectives were not SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relative or Time bound) objectives and did not seem to be time dependent. They suggested that more needed to be done to prioritise these to focus delivery towards the 2035 and 2050 target.
- (ii) It was noted that there were two action plans; a County wide plan and a County Council plan. The County Council updates were feeding through and the Department strived to make these SMART with clear actions attached. The County wide action plan was more high level and challenging, and covered strategies such



as the Local Transport Strategy and the Energy Strategy. These were supported by more detailed action plans held within the department which had responsibility for delivering these (for example, the Energy Strategy would be supported by an action plan held within the Corporate Resources Department). Officers acknowledged that this was a challenge for officers as it was difficult to track what was being delivered by all the relevant teams. However, the governance processes in place made sure regular updates were provided so that overall progress on key priorities could be tracked.

- (iii) The Lead Member highlighted that the revised Strategy had been consolidated and streamlined in response to budget constraints. Officers had managed a considerably difficult task to narrow down the list of previous actions which had been criticised for being too detailed. It was acknowledged that in a changing environment the Department had to be prepared to adapt to change but at the current time the Strategy now presented what was considered the best way forward. The Lead Member welcomed comments from the Committee and asked that any contradictions which Members identified in either Strategy or Action Plan be provided directly to the Department for consideration.

### Mink Control Policy

In presenting the Mink Policy for consideration, the Director outlined that this fell under the Environment Strategy which included a commitment to support action to reduce the impact of invasive non-native species. In seeking to deliver on this commitment, the County Council was a member of the Leicestershire and Rutland Water Vole Steering Group which involved other partners such as other local authorities, the Environment Agency, the River Trust and Rutland Wildlife Trust. The Steering Group had proposed that a common mink control policy be introduced by all partners as it was a non-native species and a predator to water voles.

Members noted that water voles were an endangered species and identified as a priority species within the Council's Local Nature Recovery Strategy alongside a commitment to implement predator control measures as a means of protection.

The Committee supported action to reduce invasive and non-native species but questioned whether mink were the most destructive factor. It was queried whether other factors such as water quality and loss of habitat had been considered as a reason for the decline of water voles. Members also raised serious concerns about the suggested method of disposal (i.e. the use of an air rifle) and questioned whether this was truly regarded as humane and in line with best practice.

The Director advised the Committee that the draft policy and the information provided by the Steering Group had been based on expert guidance which suggested native water vole numbers were in decline as a result of carnivorous mink which were on the incline. The Steering Group supported the strategic and humane control of mink and the policy it had put forward including the suggested method of disposal had been based on the Water Life Recovery Trust's Field Manual for smart mink trapping, the Trust being considered experts in this field.

Overall Members supported the principle of the proposed Policy but agreed that the Cabinet should be made aware of its concerns regarding the possible method of disposal and requested that it seek assurances that only humane methods would be used when

implementing this. The Lead Member assured the Committee that their concerns would be brought to the attention of the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the report on the revised Environment Strategy Action Plan, the 2035 Net Zero Council Action Plan and the Net Zero Leicestershire Action Plan be noted and that the comments now made by the Committee be presented to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 7 February 2025.
- b) That the Mink Control Policy be noted and supported in principle, but that the concerns raised by the Committee regarding possible methods of disposal of American mink as suggested within the policy be submitted to the Cabinet for further consideration.

46. Draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport the purpose of which was to seek the Committee's views and comments as part of the ongoing consultation on the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategy. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i) The Committee welcomed the Strategy which identified steps that could be progressed to make a big difference to the local environment.
- ii) It was noted that the development of the Strategy had been funded by the Government for which the County Council had led on as designated responsible authority for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Members were pleased and supported the innovative approach that had been taken to make the Strategy interactive which would help encourage participation.
- iii) A Member who was also the Chair of a Community Library Trust suggested that there was an opportunity to have an additional line of engagement if the finalised copies of the Strategy were left in local libraries for public access.

AGREED:

That the Local Nature Recovery Strategy be noted and welcomed.

47. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 12 March 2025 at 2.00pm.



**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**  
**COMMITTEE: 12 MARCH 2025**

**CARBON EMISSIONS IN COUNTY COUNCIL BUILDINGS**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES**

**Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Committee on the Council's progress toward net zero carbon emissions from its corporate properties.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. In May 2019 the Council declared a 'Climate Emergency' and set a 'Net Zero Carbon' target for Council operations to be achieved by 2030.
3. In 2021 the Strategic Property Energy Strategy was revised. This Strategy is a sub strategy of the Council's Environment Strategy which was approved by Full Council in July 2020.
4. In December 2022, the County Council adopted the 2030 Net Zero Council Action Plan.
5. Since these commitments were made, the Council has been subjected to an increasingly constrained financial position with a significant deficit forecast. In February 2024, in light of this and the estimated increased resources required to reach net zero, the Cabinet resolved to extend the net zero targets to 2035 for Council operations.
6. A report was taken to this Committee on 22nd January 2025 which presented revised versions of the 2035 and 2050 Net Zero Action Plans. The action plans were then subsequently agreed by the Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

**Background**

7. The Council has a strong history of reducing carbon emissions across all of its operations. Since the 2008-09 baseline year the Council's emissions have reduced by over 74% whilst the 2023-24 Environmental Performance Report states the Council's current net greenhouse gas emissions are 9,282 tCO<sub>2e</sub>, a fall of 2.7% compared to 2022-23.

8. Following the completion of the £3.6m Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) funded project, in 2023/24 direct emissions from buildings saw the largest reduction from all County Council sources at 11.7%.
9. The PSDS scheme extended the biomass heat network at County Hall, along with the installation of air source heat pumps in the cabins at Beaumanor Hall and additional solar photovoltaic (PV) panels across the estate.
10. Whilst the majority of the 23/24 decrease was due to reduced gas use in corporate buildings, attributed in part to warmer weather and the increased use of the biomass boiler at County Hall, emissions from buildings remains the largest source of carbon emissions accounting for approximately 36% of the Council's carbon emissions in 2023/24. The remaining emissions are split between fleet - 29%, street lighting - 21% and business travel - 14%.
11. In addition to this upgrades to the solar PV array at County Hall completed in June 2023 led to a 38% increase in renewable generation at County Hall compared to the previous 12 months.

### Progress to date

12. Following the successful submission to Phase 4 of the Low Carbon Skills Fund, in June 2023 the Council was awarded £191,000 to develop a Heat Decarbonisation plan for all the gas heated properties in the Council's estate. This plan was completed in March 2024.
13. The Heat Decarbonisation Plan (HDP) outlines how to reduce carbon emissions from heating Council buildings with a strong focus on fabric improvements and installation of air source heat pumps. The study also recommends projects to reduce electricity or increase renewable generation.
14. The table below outlines the key findings at a portfolio level. On their own the pay back periods do not make sense financially and would need grants or technology improvements to achieve.

Recommended solutions	Energy Bill Savings 2035 to 2050 (£)	Average Annual Energy Bill Savings (£ per Year)	Carbon Savings 2035 to 2050 (TCo2e)	Portfolio Capital Cost (£) <sup>1</sup>
Fabric Only improvements (Reduce energy demand)	£3,057,690	£203,846	7,137	£4,481,840
Fabric & Services (reduce energy demand & replace fossil fuels)	£1,554,443	£103,630	16,673	£12,001,990

<sup>1</sup> Indicative costs include the construction costs such as enabling works and installation. It doesn't include for the preliminaries, overheads/profits, professional fees or contingencies. Approximately another 20% on top.

Fabric & Services & PV (energy demand & replace fossil fuels & increase renewable generation)	£3,267,414	£217,827	16,943	£12,370,150
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15. To build on the outcome of the Heat Decarbonisation Plan, in April 2024 an application was submitted for Phase 5 of the Low Carbon Skills Fund. The funding application totalled £334,500 for investment grade audits at 28 buildings. However, this bid was unsuccessful.
16. Feedback from Salix, the funding provider, has confirmed our application would have met the minimum quality threshold and therefore would have received funding. However, applications were assessed by Salix in a random order and as the random allocation position our application was assigned sat outside the funding available it was unfortunately unsuccessful.
17. In November 2024 a funding application was submitted to the Phase 4 of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. This application was for £115,000 towards the cost of installing air source heat pumps and solar PV at four Family Hub buildings. A funding decision is not expected until May 2025. This project is expected to save approximately 14 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>/year.
18. Performance of the biomass boiler has been more consistent this winter as its operation has improved. This not only reduces carbon emissions but increased the income received from the Renewable Heat Incentive by approximately 50%.
19. Most recently a desktop solar PV review of all Council properties has been carried out by the Energy Team. This has identified a pipeline of properties for further rooftop solar installations.

### **Looking forward to 2025/26**

20. Following the desktop solar review, work is underway to explore the feasibility and viability of each site identified and then implement further rooftop solar PV installations across the estate.
21. Site visits to the Council's electricity heated properties to identify opportunities to save energy and carbon emissions are also a priority.
22. Further engagement with National Grid will be undertaken to identify areas for air source heat pump installations and understand areas of network constraints.
23. Revisiting the business case for a solar car port at Snibston Country Park along with assessing procurement options and planning considerations will be undertaken.
24. Financial business cases for sites with the largest carbon savings and sites with reasonable payback periods will be developed and external funding opportunities for sites that meet funding criteria e.g. sites with end-of-life boilers will continue to be maximised.

25. As there is a shift from gas to electric heating in the Council' properties and the fleet transitions to electric vehicles, it is forecast that there will be an increase in electricity usage, making current energy targets unattainable. For this reason, the targets in the energy strategy will be updated accordingly.
26. Work is also underway to assess and understand the Councils options for carbon offsetting, as for some properties this is likely to be a more viable option than fabric improvements.

### **Resource Implications**

27. Delivery of all projects will be dependent on the approval of appropriate business cases and staff resources to enable them to be delivered. However, it is not anticipated that there will be any resource implications arising from this report.
28. Funding has been allocated through the Medium Term Financial Strategy to support projects arising from the Heat Decarbonisation Plan. The Energy Team will also continue to seek all possible external funding opportunities.

### **Conclusions**

29. Members are asked to note the report and to make any comments on the report or the continued work to reduce carbon emission from County Council buildings in support of the Council's net zero carbon target.

### **Background papers**

30. Environment Strategy 2018 – 2030  
<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2018/7/19/LCC-Environment-Strategy-2018-2030-June-18.pdf>
31. Environmental Performance and Progress Update Report 2023-2024  
<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/Environmental-performance-and-progress-report-2023-2024.pdf>
32. Net Zero Council Action Plan – page 209 Appendix B -  
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/g7906/Public%20reports%20pack%20Wednesday%2022-Jan-2025%2014.00%20Environment%20and%20Climate%20Change%20Overview%20and%20Scrut.pdf?T=10>
33. Environment and Climate Change Scrutiny Report from 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025 -  
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s187772/Final%20Revised%20Environment%20Strategy%20and%20Net%20Zero%20Action%20Plans%20E%20Scrutiny%20220125%20-%20Copy.pdf>

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

34. None.

**Equality Implications**

35. There are no equality implications arising from this report. Although any future change to the Council's policies, procedures, functions and services because of the updated Energy Strategy targets or associated action plans will be the subject of an Equality Impact Assessment as appropriate.

**Human Rights Implications**

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

**Officer(s) to Contact**

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**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12 MARCH 2025**

**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PERFORMANCE  
REPORT TO DECEMBER 2024**

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

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the latest performance update on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), to December 2024, that the Council is responsible for delivering against the Council's Strategic Plan (2024-26).

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

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

**Background**

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

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

### **Performance Update – latest data to December 2024**

10. The quarterly performance dashboard shows Environment and Climate Change performance up to December 2024. Overall, there are 26 performance indicators included in this report which are aligned with the Council's Strategic Plan outcomes. They are presented in the Environment and Climate Change performance dashboards within the Appendix. This report focuses on the 16 indicators that have recently been updated. Where a DOT is available for the updated indicators: six showed performance improvement, one had declined in performance and nine remained the same as the previous update.

11. The latest position shows that of the indicators updated which have targets, six KPIs are green (they have met the target or are on track), three are amber (performance is currently not meeting the target or is set to miss the target by a narrow margin) and one is rated red (where performance is currently not meeting the target or is set to miss the target).
12. When compared to other English county councils, out of all the Council's Clean and Green KPIs, there are two indicators which are in the top quartile, which include the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance rating C+ (new homes)' and the 'Total fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 population' (listed in the Appendix with a green first quartile position). There are nine Clean and Green KPIs that perform below average, within the third and fourth quartiles, listed in the Appendix.
13. The following updates focus on the 16 indicators that have been updated by the end of December 2024 (Quarter Three).

### **Clean and Green Outcome**

14. The 'Renewable electricity generated in the area (MWh)' has increased by 12% from 355,263 MWh in 2022 to 398,399 MWh in 2023, demonstrating an improvement in performance since the previous year. When compared to other English county councils in 2023, this indicator remains in the third quartile. Renewable electricity generated includes wind, solar, tidal/wave, small scale hydro, bio energy and others e.g. thermal exchange. The annual district level data is aggregated to provide a Leicestershire total. Data is sourced from the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) and is nine months in arrears.
15. The 'Renewable electricity capacity in the area (MW)' has improved in performance by 27%, from 340 MW in 2022 to 433 MW in 2023. However, this indicator also performs below average when compared to other English county councils (third quartile) in 2023. The Council has limited influence over countywide renewable energy capacity, which tends to change in response to incentive schemes from the Government and the wider energy market. Although this indicator is not within the Council's control, progress is monitored in line with the objectives outlined in the Council's Environment Strategy 2018-30.
16. The Council monitors the energy efficiency of new and existing homes within the County in the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating C+' indicators. There are separate indicators for new build properties and existing properties. The latest data shows that 99% of new homes are relatively energy efficient, with a C+ EPC rating, compared to older homes which are only 52% energy efficient in Quarter Two 2024/25 (most recent). New homes had fairly static performance whilst existing homes had a slight increase in performance (one percentage point) since the previous quarter. The EPC register does not hold data for every domestic and non-domestic building, or every building occupied by public authorities. Buildings only require an EPC when they are sold, let or

constructed. These statistics should, therefore, not be interpreted as a true representation of the whole of the building stock but viewed as part of a wider package of the Government's provision of information on the energy efficiency of buildings. The data is updated quarterly and sourced from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

17. Comparisons with other English county councils for 2022/23 show that the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance certificate rating C+' for 'new homes' falls within the first (top) quartile in 2023/24. Energy efficiency of 'existing homes' are second quartile in 2023/24. Both had above average comparative performance in 2023/24. The Authority does not have direct control over these indicators, but it does have some influence in terms of local initiatives: for example, the Home Energy Retrofit Offer supports residents with advice on what can be done to homes to keep them warm and cut energy bills, which is provided by the Warm Homes team in Public Health and the Green Living Leicestershire group. The Warm Homes service launched its Home Energy Retrofit Offer project in 2024 to offer personalised energy and retrofit advice to homeowners in hard-to-reach communities. It also continues to deliver the Home Upgrade Grant Phase Two, with an estimated maximum of 173 homes supported by March 2025 and an anticipated capital budget up to £2.5m.
18. The 'Amount of renewable energy generated as a percentage of consumption' remained static at 15% in Quarter Two 2024/2. This internal KPI has not yet met its target of 32.5% which has resulted in a red RAG rating. This is expected to improve over the coming year following improvements to the biomass boiler and the solar panels and their management.
19. Air quality performance improved slightly as PM2.5 declined from 8.9  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  in 2022 to 7.7  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  in 2023 for Leicestershire (excluding Leicester). Compared to other English County Councils, Leicestershire remained in the 4th quartile in 2023 (lowest performance). Despite this, PM2.5 within Leicestershire is still within the UK target of 10  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . However, these latest results exceed the World Health Organisation's recommendations of 5  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . Inhalation of particulate pollution can have adverse health impacts. This data describes the annual mean concentration of fine particulate matter at an area level, adjusted to account for population exposure and it is measured in micrograms per cubic metre ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ). According to data from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the major sources of primary PM2.5 are combustion in the energy industries, road transport (both exhaust and non-exhaust emissions), rail and air transport, residential sources, and small-scale (waste and wood burning stoves) burning. The Council's Public Health Department lead on Air Quality work for the County Council and work in partnership with district councils and other health bodies. The Leicestershire Air Quality and Health Partnership was formed in 2020, it was created following recommendations from a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment undertaken in 2019 on air quality and health. The Partnership consists of officers from the County Council and all of the district councils (which have a statutory duty to monitor air quality), the Integrated Care Board, and representatives from the University of Leicester. The group has established a

new Air Quality and Health Action Plan for 2024-25, which will enable, facilitate and monitor collective action on air quality and health across the County Council, the district councils and the NHS partners. Progress against this will be monitored by the partnership. The Director of Public Health signed-off the district councils Annual Status Reports prior to the submission to the DEFRA, and they could ensure that different health and active travel considerations were reflected in the reports.

20. The County Council's gross 'greenhouse gas emissions' remained similar to the previous year at 9,351 tCO<sub>2e</sub> (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) in 2023/24 (internal data). It has met its refreshed target as the latest results are lower than 9,892 tCO<sub>2e</sub>, resulting in a green RAG rating. The County Council's 'net' greenhouse gas emissions were 9,282 tCO<sub>2e</sub> for this period.
21. 'Total business miles claimed ('000s of miles)' improved in performance as miles claimed reduced from 4.8m miles in Quarter Two 2024/25 to 4.7m miles in Quarter Three in 2024/25 (internal data). It is currently much lower than its target (5.3m), resulting in a green RAG rating showing good performance. It also performed better than its long-term average of 5.6m miles since 2012.
22. The 'Hectares of LCC land in better management for nature' indicator was updated for 2023/24 and has declined by 3% leaving 3,736 ha in better management for nature, despite this slight decline in performance it continues to have met its target (3,641 ha). The change is due to 118ha of land being disposed of by the Council. This internal data includes a combination of the Council's land, including country parks, rural and urban highway verges, county farms and playing fields. It is based on the best available data of the amount of Council land that is in better management for nature. Namely, there is a conscious decision to manage the land with nature in mind.
23. The 'percentage of suitable Council land in better management for nature' remained the same as the previous year at 97% for 2023/24 and has met its target (95%), demonstrating very good performance (internal data). (This is the above figure from paragraph 22 presented as a percentage of the total amount of suitable Council land).
24. Leicestershire is one of the least wooded areas of the Country, currently with only around 6% woodland, which is well below the national average of 10% for England. As a major landowner in Leicestershire, the Council has identified areas of its own landholdings where trees, woodlands and hedgerows can be planted to increase overall tree coverage. The Council made a pledge for an 'ambitious project to plant 700,000 trees' by 2032, which is the equivalent of one for every resident of Leicestershire. This equates to 70,000 trees planted each year. To help achieve this pledge, the Tree Management Strategy and Planting Action Plan was updated in 2021 to ensure the delivery of the pledge over a 10-year period. The latest tree planting provisional update shows that 437,284 trees have been planted by the Council and its partners up to December 2024, since July 2021, and this has greatly exceeded its cumulative target of 210,000 for 2024/25 (data derived from LCC & partners). The latest result is over half of its 2032 target, showing excellent performance.

A detailed Tree Management Strategy Annual update was provided to the Committee on 2 November 2024

25. The 'Percentage of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling or composting (former NI 192)' remained similar to the previous quarter at 44% over a 12-month rolling period up to and including Quarter One 2024/25 (data is two quarters in arrears) and narrowly missed its 45% target. It lies within the third quartile position using latest 2022/23 published data compared to other English county councils. This indicator has had relatively static performance over the past year ranging between 42% and 44%. The Council adopted the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy in April 2023, which includes a pledge to put in place collection systems to contribute towards the future national target of 65% recycling by 2035. (Source: WasteDataFlow). These include future waste reforms such as mandatory weekly food waste collections from all households by 31 March 2026 and an extended producer responsibility scheme for packaging which, by making producers responsible for their packaging throughout its whole life cycle, will encourage the use of more easily recycled materials.
26. The 'Annual percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill (former NI 193)' remained similar to the previous quarter at 12%, 12 month rolling period up to and including Quarter One 2024/25, and slightly missed its more challenging refreshed target of 10%. Since the same time last year waste landfilled has decreased by 43% (from 21% in Quarter One 2023/24) showing a significant improvement in performance over the year. When compared to other English county councils, this indicator remained in the fourth (bottom) quartile in 2022/23. In order to achieve an average position when compared to the other English county councils, performance would have to meet a more challenging 5% landfill rate. Through the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy, the Council is committed to reducing waste to landfill to less than 5% by 2025, well in advance of the national target of 10% by 2035. A new energy from waste contract started in April 2023, and it is expected that this will further reduce the amount of municipal waste being sent to landfill this year. (Source: WasteDataFlow).
27. The 'Total household waste per household (kg)' remained relatively static in performance at 963 kg over the 12-month rolling period up to and including Quarter One 2024/25 (data is two quarters in arrears). In comparison to other English county councils, Leicestershire's performance was below average as it is in the third quartile for 2022/23 (same as the previous year's quartile). (Source: WasteDataFlow).
28. The results on the 'Percentage of staff who say LCC is doing enough to reduce its environmental impact (post training survey)' remained relatively static at 90% for Quarter Two 2024/25. It has met its target (90%) showing overall good performance. This is from internal data taken from the post training survey and reported quarterly.

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

29. The 'NO<sub>2</sub> exceedances for Leicestershire' indicator shows the number of times nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) has exceeded the annual mean air quality objective of 40µg/m<sup>3</sup>. NO<sub>2</sub> is a gas that is mainly produced during the combustion of fossil fuels. In 2023 only one NO<sub>2</sub> exceedance was reported in Blaby showing an improvement in performance since the previous year when 3 exceedances were reported. (Since 2019 this indicator has ranged from 0-3). Data is sourced from the district councils Air Quality Annual Status Reports.

## **Background Papers**

Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Outcomes Framework and Strategic Plan 2024-2026

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/LCC-Strategic-Plan.pdf>

Environment Strategy 2018-30

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

Environmental Performance Progress Annual Report 2023-24

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s187765/01.%20Final%20Annual%20Environmental%20Performance%20and%20Progress%20Update%20Report%202023-24%20E%20Scrutiny%20220125.pdf>

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report 2023-24

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s187768/Appendix%20B%20-%20Leicestershire%20County%20Council%20Greenhouse%20Gas%20Report%202023-2024%20-%20E%20Scrutiny%20220125.pdf>

Tree Management Strategy 2020-2025

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

Tree Management Strategy Annual Update 2024

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s186296/Tree%20Management%20Strategy%20Annual%20Update.pdf>

Leicestershire Air Quality and Health partnership Action Plan 2024-2028

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s187233/Air%20Quality%20FINAL.pdf>  
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s187241/Appendix%20-%20AQ%20and%20Health%20Partnership%20Action%20Plan%20FINAL%20DRAFT%202024-28.pdf>

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

None.

**Equality Implications**

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

**Human Rights Implications**

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

**Appendix**

Strategic Plan Performance Dashboards by Outcomes covering Environment and Climate Change Performance to December 2024

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Strategic Plan Performance Dashboards by Outcomes covering Environment & Climate Change (ECC) Performance to December 2024

1. E&CC KPIs updated to December 2024. Clean & Green Outcome.

Environment & Transport KPI Performance Dashboard Info

DOT Arrow Summary			RAG Rating Summary				Quartile Summary				
UP	NO CHANGE	DOWN	G	A	R	NA	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	NA
5	9	1	6	3	1	5	1	1	4	2	7

<b>Outcome</b> Clean & Green	<b>Branch</b> Environment & Waste	<b>Updated</b> Y	<b>Search Indicator</b>
<b>Sub Outcome</b> All	<b>Countywide/LCC</b> All		All


Indicator (* = Statutory Returns)	Latest Data	Period	Prev. Data	Perform. DOT	Target (Yearly)	RAG	Quartiles	Previous Updates	C/L
Renewable electricity generated in the area (MWh)	398,399	2023	355,263	↑		NA	3rd 2023		C
Renewable electricity capacity in the area (MW)	433.3	2023	340.2	↑		NA	3rd 2023		C
% domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+ (new)	98.7	Q2 2024/25	98.6	→		NA	1st 2023/24		C
% domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+ (existing)	52	Q2 2024/25	50.7	↑		NA	2nd 2023/24		C
Amount of renewable energy generated as a % of consumption	14.8	Q2 2024/25	14.7	→	32.5	R	NA		L
PM2.5 Air pollution fine particulate matter (µg/m³)	7.7	2023	8.9	↑		NA	4th 2023		C
Total LCC GHG emissions	9,351	2023/24	9,427	→	9,892	G	NA		L
Total Business miles claimed ('000s of miles)	4,742	Q3 2024/25	4,804	↑	5,355	G	NA		L
Hectares of LCC land in better management for nature	3,736	2023/24	3,854	↓	3,641	G	NA		L
Percentage of suitable LCC land in better management for nature	97.5	2023/24	97	→	95	G	NA		L
Tree planting	437,284	Up to Dec 2024	437,220	→	210,000	G	NA		L
* % of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling, composting etc. (former NI192)	43.52	Q1 2024/25	43.57	→	45	A	3rd 2022/23		C
* Annual percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill (former NI 193)	11.76	Q1 2024/25	12.61	→	10	A	4th 2022/23		C
* Total household waste per household (kg)	963.31	Q1 2024/25	960.15	→		A	3rd 2022/23		C
% of LCC staff who say LCC is doing enough to reduce its environmental impact (post-training survey)	89.5	Q2 2024/25	89.3	→	90	G	NA		L

2. E&CC KPI updated to December 2024. Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure Outcome

Environment & Transport KPI Performance Dashboard Info

<b>DOT Arrow Summary</b> UP <span style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px 10px; font-weight: bold;">1</span>	<b>RAG Rating Summary</b> NA <span style="background-color: #6c757d; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px 10px; font-weight: bold;">1</span>	<b>Quartile Summary</b> NA <span style="background-color: #6c757d; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 5px 10px; font-weight: bold;">1</span>
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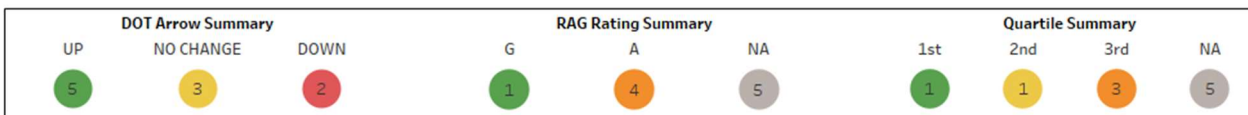
<b>Outcome</b> Strong Economy, Transport an..	<b>Branch</b> Environment & Waste	<b>Updated</b> Y	<b>Search Indicator</b> All
<b>Sub Outcome</b> All	<b>Countywide/LCC</b> All		

Indicator (* = Statutory Returns)	Latest Data	Period	Prev. Data	Perform. DOT	Target (Yearly)	RAG	Quartiles	Previous Updates	C/L
NO2 exceedances for Leicestershire	<b>1</b>	2023	3	<span style="background-color: #28a745; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">↑</span>		<span style="background-color: #6c757d; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">NA</span>	<span style="background-color: #6c757d; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 5px; font-weight: bold;">NA</span>		C

3. E&CC KPIs with older data that has been previously reported (Not recently updated)

The following KPIs were reported in previous E&CC Scrutiny Committees and have not recently been updated.

Environment & Transport KPI Performance Dashboard Info



<b>Outcome</b> All	<b>Branch</b> Environment & Waste	<b>Updated</b> N	<b>Search Indicator</b> All
<b>Sub Outcome</b> All	<b>Countywide/LCC</b> All		

Indicator (* = Statutory Returns)	Latest Data	Period	Prev. Data	Perform. DOT	Target (Yearly)	RAG	Quartiles	Previous Updates	C/L
Electric vehicle charging location per 100,000 population	<b>64.4</b>	Q1 2024/25	59.1	↑		NA	3rd 2023		C
Electric vehicle ownership - Ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) rate/10,000 population	<b>230.4</b>	Q1 2024/25	216.5	↑		NA	3rd 2023		C
Greenhouse gas emissions from all sources in Leicestershire (ktonnes CO2e)	<b>4,645</b>	2022	4,811	↑	4,446	A	2nd 2022		C
Greenhouse gas emissions from Leicestershire (all sources) per capita (tonnes CO2e)	<b>6.4</b>	2022	6.8	↑	6.31	A	3rd 2022		C
Leicestershire rivers (excluding Leicester) are in good ecological status (%)	<b>9.4</b>	2019	0.67	↑		NA	NA		C
Leicestershire rivers (excluding Leicester) are in good chemical status (%)	<b>0</b>	2019	99.6	↓		NA	NA		C
Tonnes of waste produced from LCC sites	<b>275.2</b>	Q4 2023/24	271.9	↓	375.9	G	NA		L
% waste recycled from LCC sites (non-operational)	<b>62</b>	Q4 2023/24	62.2	→	70	A	NA		L
Total fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 population	<b>5.4</b>	2023/24	4.8	→		NA	1st 2022/23		C
LCC Environmental risks managed	<b>2</b>	2023/24	2	→	0	A	NA		L

Data notes

C = Countywide Indicator, where the Council has less influence.

L = Local internal indicator, where the Council has more influence

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

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

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

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