

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Wednesday, 10 September 2025.

PRESENT

Mr. N. Chapman CC (in the Chair)

Mrs. N. Bottomley CC  
Mr. G. Cooke CC  
Ms. B. Gray CC  
Dr. S. Hill CC  
Mr. J. McDonald CC

Mr. P. Morris CC  
Ms. A. Pendlebury CC  
Mr. B. Piper CC  
Mr J. Poland CC  
Mr. C. A. Smith CC

In attendance

Mr. A. Tilbury – Lead Member for Environment and Flooding  
Ann Carruthers – Director for Environment and Transport  
Jo Gyll – Assistant Director  
Nicola Truslove – Corporate Resources  
Joanne Twomey – Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Aqil Sarang – Democratic Services Officer

13. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2025 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

14. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that one questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

**Question asked by Mr. Adam Stares**

On 15 July, the Cabinet agreed to reallocate £2 million to flood mitigation initiatives.

How will the council decide which projects will be supported with this funding and how will it measure the success in terms of flood mitigation?

**Reply by the Chairman**

**The County Council is currently in the process of shaping proposals for how this reallocated funding is to be spent on flood mitigation initiatives including expected outcomes, the details of which will be presented to Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> October for approval.**

15. 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).

16. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

17. 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.

18. 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.

19. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 35.

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

20. Environment and Climate Change Performance Report to June 2025.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Environment and Transport and the Director of Corporate Resources, the purpose of which was to provide the Committee with a six monthly performance update to June 2025. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were made:

- (i) The Lead Member for Environment, Flooding and Climate Change approved of the current rate of the tree planting programme as highlighted in the report which was good but he suggested that the ambition should be to beat the target and increase tree planting. It was noted that he agreed with the Committee Members suggestion, that the authority should aim to achieve the previous proposal of a million trees planted.
- (ii) As highlighted in the report that the amount of renewable energy generated as a percentage of consumption' increased to 21% in Quarter Four 2024/25, which indicated an improvement in performance this was achieved through some of the sustainable sources of energy at the authority's buildings. It was noted that Property Services had considered models to expand and that all options had been considered and the Council's targets were ambitious and hopefully achievable but barriers to such as resources to expand and manage needed to be considered. Ultimately, all targets were subject to investment and financial viability.
- (iii) As per the report, the Council were installing the very first EV Charging points supported through the LEVI funding which allowed the Council to kick start the initiative on public highways. As part of the scheme, public engagement had been

carried out and this provided some indication as to where there may be a demand. It was noted that the current model is to support the EV charging infrastructure although this could potentially change in the future as new technologies came forward.

- (iv) In response to a Members concerns on the air quality exceeded World Health Organisation expectations and the importance of joined up travel, it was noted that there was a considerable amount of work going into delivering on this which was funded through Active Travel England and delivered in stages. It was highlighted that the LCWIPS supported the case when applying for funding and whenever there was funding available the Council took these opportunities.

RESOLVED:

That the Performance Update until June 2025 be noted.

21. Annual Review of Leicestershire Country Parks.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources, the purpose of which was to provide the Committee with an annual update on country parks. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were made:

- (i) The Lead Member for Environment, Flooding noted that if Members were interested in observing how natural the flood defences worked, there was an opportunity to witness this at Beacon Hill Country Park. It was highlighted that the Team were doing substantial work to support flood defences and as a result this was increasing biodiversity in the area and hopefully this would support to minimise the flooding down the Soar Valley, which was commendable.
- (ii) In response to A question from the Lead Member on the connectivity of the new parking system at Watermead Park it was noted that there were third party organisations responsible for the delivery of this work and it was hoped this would be completed by the end of October 2025.
- (iii) In response to a further query from the Lead Member in regards to increasing revenues at country parks it was noted that the Team had dedicated significant effort in recent years to developing a commercial strategy for country parks, which had led to a notable increase in income for the service. This progress had been achieved through ongoing reviews of concession and catering arrangements, evaluating car parking options where appropriate, and determining what partners were licensed to use the parks for various activities. The service continued to explore opportunities while maintaining a careful balance with biodiversity and public access responsibilities. Commercial revenue generation remained a key focus. The Team were particularly pleased to be collaborating with a new partner at the Beacon Hill café, and work was also underway to enhance visitor facilities and ensure the long-term sustainability of the country parks.
- (iv) In response to a Members concerns on flooding and vandalism at Watermead Country Park, it was noted that the installation of the new parking system would prevent future vandalism and that flooding in recent years had closed access to pedestrians and caused damage to infrastructure and this was a wider issue.

- (v) A Member suggested that flooding in county parks should not necessarily be viewed as a problem, but rather as an opportunity. It was noted that the flooding in these areas may actually help prevent flooding elsewhere by acting as a natural form of defence, and this should be embraced.
- (vi) It was noted that there were third party links that supported the delivery of events at Snibston Colliery Park alongside a small team of 14 rangers and a volunteer community. It was suggested that if local groups wanted to utilise the space and host events there were contact details online and that they should be urged to engage with the Team well in advance as it was not possible.
- (vii) In response to a Member query about the possibility of installing solar panels at on the roof of the building at Snibston Colliery Park, it was noted that the site in question was a complicated site due to the nature of the buildings, the age of the buildings and the listed status of the buildings. Whilst the sites could be perfect on one measure, as a scheduled monument for part of the site, the very highest level of protection, and a number of the other buildings being listed buildings, this did somewhat restrict where solar panels could be installed on that site.
- (viii) It was highlighted that although the Team were not involved in the delivery of the Bosworth Trail, there was responsibility for managing the footpaths around the Battlefield Centre.
- (ix) A Member shared the appreciation from local community groups that supported the improvements to the footpath at Broombriggs footpaths and queried whether there would be further improvements at Jubilee Woods. It was noted that there were no current plans to substantially upgrade the access into Jubilee Wood and this was a balanced approach as parts of the woodland in Jubilee Wood was some of the most untouched within the country parks estate and a space for nature to thrive.
- (x) It was confirmed that grassland management was something that took place across a number of parks and something that the Team were hoping to expand on as a priority area within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. There were some displays of wild flowers at Market Bosworth Country Park and some extensive wildflower meadows that were managed at Beacon Hill Country Park and a number across some of the sites within the heart of the National Forest.

RESOLVED:

That the annual update on the Country parks update be noted

22. Date of next meeting.

RESOLVED:

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

2.00pm – 2.56pm  
10 September 2025

CHAIRMAN