

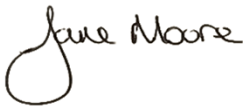


DATE: 23 June 2026  
MY REF: RW/CCouncil  
PLEASE ASK FOR: Mrs. R. Whitelaw  
DIRECT DIALLING: (0116) 305 6098  
E-MAIL: [rosemary.whitelaw@leics.gov.uk](mailto:rosemary.whitelaw@leics.gov.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam

I summon you to the MEETING of the LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL to be held at COUNTY HALL, GLENFIELD on WEDNESDAY, 1 JULY 2026 at 2.00 p.m. for the transaction of the business set out in the agenda below.

Yours faithfully



**Chief Executive**

### **AGENDA**

1. Chairman's Announcements.
2. To confirm the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 13 May 2026. (Pages 7 - 8)
3. To confirm the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council held on 13 May 2026. (Pages 9 - 22)
4. To receive declarations by members of interests in respect of items on this agenda.
5. To answer questions asked under Standing Order 7(1)(2) and (5).
6. To receive position statements under Standing Order 8.

### **To consider reports of the Cabinet, Scrutiny Commission, Scrutiny Committees and other bodies:**



7. Report of the Scrutiny Commission.

(a) Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report.

(Pages 23 – 48)

8. To consider the following notices of motion:

(a) Prioritising Frontline Policing and Value for Money – Mrs. D. Taylor CC

1. This Council notes that the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland has proposed an 18-month, £2 million scheme to fund private security marshals to patrol town centres across Leicestershire and Rutland.
2. This Council further notes that:
  - These marshals, while visible, do not possess police powers, including the power of arrest, formal investigation, or enforcement.
  - The £2 million funding comes directly from the existing policing budget, funded by local taxpayers.
  - There is significant concern from policing professionals, including the Leicestershire Police Federation, that this approach risks diverting funding away from frontline policing.
  - Residents and businesses consistently raise concerns about crime, anti-social behaviour, and the need for a stronger visible police presence, not a substitute service.
3. This Council believes that:
  - (a) Taxpayers' money must be used efficiently, transparently, and in ways that deliver tangible outcomes.
  - (b) Public confidence in community safety depends on visible, empowered, and accountable police officers, not private contractors with limited authority.
  - (c) Investment in fully trained police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) provides better value for money, stronger legal enforcement, and long-term benefits to communities.
4. This Council is concerned that:
  - (a) The proposed scheme risks creating a two-tier system of public safety, where private security fills gaps that should be addressed by properly resourced policing.
  - (b) The effectiveness of such marshals is limited to deterrence, without the ability to follow through with enforcement action.

- (c) At a time of financial pressure, this represents a questionable use of limited public funds.

5. This Council therefore resolves to:

- (a) Oppose the proposed £2 million private security marshal scheme as an inefficient use of policing resources.
- (b) Call on the Police and Crime Commissioner to halt the procurement process and review the proposal.
- (c) Urge that the £2 million be reallocated to recruit, train, and retain additional frontline police officers and PCSOs, increasing visible patrols and enforcement capability.
- (d) Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the PCC to formally convey this Council's position and seek a response.

(b) Community Impact of Asylum Accommodation - Mr. M. England CC

1. This Council notes that:

- (a) Residents across Leicestershire have raised concerns regarding the concentration of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and accommodation associated with national asylum dispersal arrangements.
- (b) Residents have expressed concerns regarding pressures on local services, parking, waste management, neighbourhood amenity, community cohesion and the pace of change within established communities.
- (c) Local residents and community organisations continue to seek greater transparency regarding the scale and operation of asylum accommodation arrangements within their communities.
- (d) Effective democratic governance is strengthened when members are able to bring forward matters arising from their representational responsibilities, ensuring that local experience continues to inform the deliberations of the authority.
- (e) Leicestershire County Council is responsible for a range of services which may be affected by significant population changes, including education, public health, transport, social care and community wellbeing.

2. This Council believes that:

- (a) Existing residents should be appropriately informed and consulted where significant changes are taking place within their communities.
- (b) Public confidence is strengthened when decisions

affecting local communities are accompanied by transparency, accountability and meaningful engagement.

- (c) Local authorities should be provided with sufficient information to understand and plan for any impact on local services arising from national asylum accommodation policies.
- (d) Communities function best when residents feel informed, listened to and represented.

3. This Council resolves to:

- (a) Write to the Home Secretary seeking greater transparency regarding asylum accommodation arrangements affecting Leicestershire and requesting that local authorities be given meaningful engagement and advance notification where placements may have a significant impact on local communities.
  - (b) Request that the Chief Executive writes to the Home Office seeking information regarding asylum accommodation provision within Leicestershire, including any available information on the use of HMOs associated with Government accommodation contracts and the potential impact on County Council services.
  - (c) Request that the relevant Director prepares a report for consideration by the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee outlining any known or anticipated impacts of asylum accommodation arrangements and concentrations of HMOs on County Council services, where such information is available.
  - (d) Request that the Home Office and its contractors engage openly with local authorities and communities where accommodation arrangements are proposed or expanded, recognising the importance of maintaining community confidence.
  - (e) Reaffirm this Council's commitment to transparency, democratic accountability, community cohesion and ensuring that the concerns of local residents are properly considered when national policies have significant local consequences.
- (c) Maintaining Professional Standards, Workforce Sustainability, and Fair Employment Practices in Leicestershire's Specialist SEND Services - Mr J Miah CC

1. This Council notes:

- (a) The vital role that specialist Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services play in supporting vulnerable children across the county.
- (b) That the Council should seek to maintain high

- professional standards in specialist SEND services.
- (c) That, when reviewing service delivery models, the Council should have regard to service quality, safeguarding, workforce stability, recruitment and retention, and value for money.
- (d) That significant workforce changes in critical specialist services should be considered in a way that maintains confidence among service users and residents.
- (e) That concerns have been raised regarding possible changes to staffing structures and role requirements within specialist SEND services.
- (f) That poorly managed restructuring can adversely affect workforce morale, retention and service continuity.

2. This Council resolves to request a report to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on:

- (a) The proposed future model of early years SEND advisory support.
- (b) How service quality, continuity, and workforce sustainability will be maintained, including the role of professional qualifications where relevant.
- (c) What consideration has been given to maintaining appropriate professional qualifications in role requirements.
- (d) How the views of staff and recognised trade unions have been considered, including alternative models proposed by staff to secure year-round delivery.
- (e) Assurance that any workforce changes will be undertaken in accordance with applicable employment law and the Council's policies and procedures.

(d) Bus Services in Wigston - Mr M H Charlesworth CC

1. This Council notes that:

- (a) The recent significant changes to the bus services in Wigston.
- (b) The poor level of any consultation undertaken by the operator concerning these changes.
- (c) The impact on some service users who now must catch 2 buses with the inevitable longer journey times and additional costs.
- (d) The disconnect this has caused to the local community with 2 large estates effectively cut off from each other, with the resultant family and friends having to make alternative arrangements.
- (e) It has made journeys to the local GP, the LRI and train station more difficult and for some impossible (especially the elderly) due to the removal of some routes.
- (f) That the 47/48 and 49 services have been replaced with a changed 47/48 and a 44/44a/44b and 44s service. These more complex services have caused confusion, with users unable to make much sense of the difficult timetables and unsure which stops are for

which services. This is verified by the drivers taking the incorrect route on many occasions.

- (g) The Leicestershire Bus Service Improvement Plan 2025 had as one of its objectives 'to encourage bus use to local facilities', the recent changes could undermine this.
- (h) The limited ability of the Council to influence the decisions of commercial operators.

2. Therefore, this Council resolves to:

- (a) Continue to engage with Arriva to request a review of the recent changes taking into account the concerns and views of Wigston residents.
- (b) Write to the Traffic Commissioner and ask if they were aware of the lack of consultation before they approved these changes.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
HELD AT COUNTY HALL, GLENFIELD ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MAY 2026**

**PRESENT**

Mr. P. Harrison CC (in the Chair)

Mr. C. Abbott CC, Mr. R. Bailey CC, Dr. J. Bloxham CC, Mr. J. Boam CC, Mr. M. Bools CC, Mrs. N. Bottomley CC, Mr. S. Bradshaw CC, Mr. S. L. Bray CC, Mrs. L. Broadley CC, Miss H. Butler CC, Mr. N. Chapman CC, Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC, Mr. G. Cooke CC, Mr. K. Crook CC, Mrs. L. Danks CC, Mr. M. Durrani CC, Mr. M. R. England CC, Mr. H. Fowler CC, Mr. S. J. Galton CC, Mr. D. A. Gamble CC, Ms. B. Gray CC, Mr. D. J. Grimley CC, Mr. A. Hamilton-Gray CC, Mr. D. Harrison CC, Dr. S. Hill CC, Mr. N. Holt CC, Mr. A. Innes CC, Mr. P. King CC, Mrs. K. Knight CC, Mr. B. Lovegrove CC, Mr. J. McDonald CC, Mr. J. Melen CC, Mr. P. Morris CC, Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC, Dr. D. North CC, Mr. O. O'Shea JP CC, Mr. J. T. Orson CC, Mr. D. Page CC, Mrs. R. Page CC, Ms. A. Pendlebury CC, Mr. B. Piper CC, Mr J. Poland CC, Mr. C. Pugsley CC, Mr. V. Richichi CC, Mr. K. Robinson CC, Mr. P. Rudkin CC, Mrs B. Seaton CC, Mr. C. A. Smith CC, Mr. M. Squires CC, Mrs D. Taylor CC, Mr. A. Tilbury CC, Mr. B. Walker CC and Mr. C. Whitford CC

**60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

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

No declarations were made.

**61. PROTOCOL ON THE APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMEN AND ALDERWOMEN**

It was moved by Mr D Harrison, seconded by Mrs Taylor and carried unanimously:

“That the Protocol on the appointment of Honorary Aldermen and Alderwomen, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be approved.”

**62. NOMINATIONS FOR ADMISSION AS HONORARY ALDERMEN:**

Mr Bill Boulter

It was moved by Mr Mullaney and seconded by Mr D Harrison:

“That in pursuance of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 Mr Bill Boulter be admitted as an Honorary Alderman of the County of Leicestershire in recognition of the eminent services he has rendered to the people of Leicestershire through the performance of his duties from 2001 to 2025.”

The motion was put and carried with the unanimous support of the Council.

The Chairman then presented Mr Boulter with the address conferring the title of Honorary Alderman and a badge of office.

Mr Boulter addressed the Council and thanked members for the honour they had bestowed upon him.

Mr Jeffrey Kaufman

It was moved by Mr Mullaney and seconded by Mr D Harrison:

“That in pursuance of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 Mr Jeffrey Kaufman be admitted as an Honorary Alderman of the County of Leicestershire in recognition of the eminent services he has rendered to the people of Leicestershire through the performance of his duties from 1981 to 1985 and 2013 to 2021.”

The motion was put and carried with the unanimous support of the Council.

The Chairman then presented Mr Kaufman with the address conferring the title of Honorary Alderman and a badge of office.

Mr Kaufman addressed the Council and thanked members for the honour they had bestowed upon him.

Mr Nicholas Rushton

It was moved by Mrs Taylor and seconded by Mr Orson:

“That in pursuance of Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 Mr Nicholas Rushton be admitted as an Honorary Alderman of the County of Leicestershire in recognition of the eminent services he has rendered to the people of Leicestershire through the performance of his duties from 1989 to 1993 and 2001 to 2025.”

The motion was put and carried with the unanimous support of the Council.

The Chairman then presented Mr Rushton with the address conferring the title of Honorary Alderman and a badge of office.

Mr Rushton addressed the Council and thanked members for the honour they had bestowed upon him.

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
HELD AT COUNTY HALL, GLENFIELD ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MAY 2026**

**PRESENT**

Mr. P. Harrison CC (in the Chair)

Mr. C. Abbott CC, Mr. R. Bailey CC, Dr. J. Bloxham CC, Mr. J. Boam CC, Mr. M. Bools CC, Mrs. N. Bottomley CC, Mr. S. Bradshaw CC, Mr. S. L. Bray CC, Mrs. L. Broadley CC, Miss H. Butler CC, Mr. N. Chapman CC, Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC, Mr. G. Cooke CC, Mr. K. Crook CC, Mrs. L. Danks CC, Mr. M. Durrani CC, Mr. M. R. England CC, Mr. H. Fowler CC, Mr. S. J. Galton CC, Mr. D. A. Gamble CC, Ms. B. Gray CC, Mr. D. J. Grimley CC, Mr. A. Hamilton-Gray CC, Mr. D. Harrison CC, Dr. S. Hill CC, Mr. N. Holt CC, Mr. A. Innes CC, Mr. P. King CC, Mrs. K. Knight CC, Mr. B. Lovegrove CC, Mr. J. McDonald CC, Mr. J. Melen CC, Mr. P. Morris CC, Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC, Mr. O. O'Shea JP CC, Mr. J. T. Orson CC, Mr. D. Page CC, Mrs. R. Page CC, Ms. A. Pendlebury CC, Mr. B. Piper CC, Mr J. Poland CC, Mr. C. Pugsley CC, Mr. V. Richichi CC, Mr. K. Robinson CC, Mr. P. Rudkin CC, Mrs B. Seaton CC, Mr. C. A. Smith CC, Mr. M. Squires CC, Mrs D. Taylor CC, Mr. A. Tilbury CC, Mr. B. Walker CC and Mr. C. Whitford CC

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

It was moved by Mr D Harrison and seconded by Mr Crook:

“That Mrs Linda Danks be elected Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.”

It was moved by Mrs Taylor and seconded by Mr Smith:

“That Mr Ozzy O’Shea be elected Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council”.

The Chairman informed members that both candidates had been duly proposed and seconded. In accordance with Standing Order 25 a secret ballot would therefore take place.

The Monitoring Officer announced the results of the ballot, as follows:

24 votes for Mrs Linda Danks, 18 votes for Mr Ozzy O’Shea and 12 abstentions. The motion “That Mrs Linda Danks be elected Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council” was therefore carried.

Mrs Danks read out and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed and signed by the Chief Executive.

Mrs Danks took the Chair and thanked her proposer and seconder and members of the Council for electing her.

The Chairman thanked Mr P Harrison for his services to the County during his period of office as Chairman. Mr D Harrison, Mrs Taylor and Mr Mullaney

each joined the Chairman in associating their Groups with the thanks to Mr PHarrison. Mr P Harrison thanked members for their generous remarks.

Mrs L Danks CC (in the Chair)

## **2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

It was moved by Mr Mullaney and seconded by Mr Bray:

“That Mrs Linda Broadley be elected Vice-Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.”

It was moved by Mrs Taylor and seconded by Mr Smith:

“That Mrs Brenda Seaton be elected Vice-Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council”.

The Chairman informed members that both candidates had been duly proposed and seconded. In accordance with Standing Order 25 a secret ballot would therefore take place.

The Monitoring Officer announced the results of the ballot, as follows:

36 votes for Mrs Linda Broadley and 18 votes for Mrs Brenda Seaton. The motion “That Mrs Linda Broadley be elected Vice-Chairman for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council” was therefore carried.

Mrs Broadley read out and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed and signed by the Chief Executive.

Mrs Broadley thanked her proposer and seconder.

## **3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

The Chairman reported with great sadness the passing of former members of the Council, Mr Terence Howatt and Mr Geoff Welsh.

Mr Terence Howatt

Mr Howatt was a member of the County Council from 1981 to 1989, when he represented the Wigston Central electoral division and again from 1993 to 1997 when he represented the Leicester – Coleman electoral division.

He was Chairman of the County Council for the 1994-95 municipal year and served mainly on the Arts, Libraries and Museums Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee.

Mr Geoff Welsh

Mr Welsh was a member of the County Council from 2013 – 2023. He represented the Blaby and Glen Parve electoral division.

Mr Welsh served as Liberal Democrat Spokesman on the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

I invite members to stand in silent tribute to the memory of Terence Howatt and Geoff Welsh.

#### Armed Forces Week

As a prelude to Armed Forces Day, there would be an Armed Forces Day Flag-Raising ceremony at the Stand Easy Memorial, on Monday 22nd June at 10.30 a.m. All Members would be invited.

On Saturday 27th June, together with the Lord-Lieutenant and Lord Mayor of Leicester, the Chairman would be attending the Armed Forces Day Parade in Leicester City. The parade would include service personnel, veterans, and cadets who would march through the streets of Leicester. The salute would be taken by the Commander of the Navy Ship recently affiliated with Leicester and Leicestershire, HMS Daring.

Following the parade there would be an open-air Drum Head Service in Jubilee Square and the Chairman asked all Members, if they could, to come into the City and watch this fitting tribute to the Armed Forces and veterans

#### County Service

The Chairman would be hosting a County Service later in the year and all Members would receive an invitation in due course.

#### Public Apology from Mr Charles Whitford CC

The Chairman had been asked by the Member Conduct Panel to read out the following apology from Mr Whitford, County Councillor for Markfield, Desford and Thornton:

*"I accept the findings of the investigation report and the Member Conduct Panel's decision that I have breached the code of conduct on a number of counts. I accept that my behaviour fell well short of the behaviour that the Council expects of its members.*

*I want to apologise to any members of the community, and to anyone who was hurt or offended by my comments and behaviour. I recognise that words matter, and I am truly sorry for the distress that my remarks have caused. That was never my intention.*

*I will ensure that all future communications reflect the responsibility of the office I hold. I care deeply about serving everyone in our area, and I will do the work needed to rebuild trust."*

#### **4. REPORT OF THE RETURNING OFFICER.**

The Chief Executive presented the report of the Returning Officer on the election of Dr Dee North to the County Council at the by election held on 16 April 2026.

The Chairman welcomed Dr North to the Council.

## **5. MINUTES.**

It was moved by the Chairman, seconded by Mrs Broadley and carried:

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 18 February 2026, copies of which have been circulated to members, be taken as read, confirmed and signed.”

## **6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

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

Mrs D Taylor CC declared an other registrable interest in Agenda 10A as she held a position which was affected by the proposals.

## **7. QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 7(1)(2) AND (5).**

No questions were asked under Standing Order 7(1)(2) and (5).

## **8. POSITION STATEMENTS UNDER STANDING ORDER 8.**

The Leader gave a position statement on the following matters:

- Review of the 2025-26 Municipal Year.
- Priorities for 2026-27.
- Additional Investment.
- Road Improvement.
- Foster Care Fortnight 2026.

A copy of the position statement is filed with these minutes.

## **9. REPORTS OF THE CABINET.**

### **(a) Youth Justice Plan 2026 - 2027.**

It was moved by Mr Pugsley, seconded by Mr D Harrison and carried unanimously:

“That the Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2026 – 2027 be approved.”

### **(b) Dates of Council meetings 2026/27 and 2027/28.**

It was moved by Mr Dan Harrison, seconded by Mr Crook, and carried unanimously:

“That Council meetings in 2026/27 and 2027/28 be held on the following dates:

- Wednesday 1 July 2026
- Wednesday 23 September 2026
- Wednesday 2 December 2026
- Wednesday 17 February 2027 (to consider the budget)
- Wednesday 12 May 2027 (Annual meeting)
- Wednesday 7 July 2027
- Wednesday 29 September 2027
- Wednesday 1 December 2027
- Wednesday 16 February 2028 (to consider the budget)
- Wednesday 17 May 2028 (Annual Meeting)
- Wednesday 5 July 2028
- Wednesday 27 September 2028
- Wednesday 6 December 2028.”

## **10. REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE**

### **(a) Review and Revision of the Constitution.**

#### Motion 1

It was moved by Mr Dan Harrison, seconded by Mrs Taylor, and carried unanimously:

“(a) That the proposed changes to the Constitution excluding the proposed change to Article 6.05, as set out in the Appendix to this report, be approved.”

#### Motion 2

It was moved by Mr Dan Harrison, seconded by Mr Mullaney and carried:

“(b) That the proposed changes to Article 6.05 of the Constitution, as set out in the Appendix to this report, be approved.”

The motion was put and carried, with 35 members voting for the motion and 18 members voting against.

## **11. APPOINTMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITEM 11 OF STANDING ORDER 4:**

### **(a) To appoint the Leader (and to note the members which the Leader proposes to appointment to the Cabinet);**

It was moved by Mr Crook and seconded by Mr Hamilton-Gray:

#### Motion 1

“That Mr Dan Harrison be appointed Leader of the Council for the period until the next Annual Meeting of the Council.”

The motion was put and carried with 25 members voting for the motion, 17 members voting against and 11 abstentions.

Motion 2

“That it be noted that the Leader proposes to appoint the members named on List ‘1’ attached to the Order Paper as members of the Cabinet.”

The motion was noted.

**(b) To appointment such Cabinet Support Members as the Council considers appropriate.**

No Cabinet Support Members were appointed.

**12. POLITICAL BALANCE AND APPOINTMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITEMS 12 AND 13 OF STANDING ORDER 4;**

**(a) Political Balance and allocation of Committee Seats - Report of the Monitoring Officer;**

It was moved by Mr Hamilton-Gray, seconded by Mr Poland and carried unanimously:

- “(a) That the Council’s political balance following the results of the by election held on 16 April 2026 be noted;
- (b) That the allocation of seats on those committees subject to political balance arrangements be approved, subject to the Chief Executive being authorised to make any amendments in accordance with the wishes of the Political Groups to whom the seat in question has been allocated.”

**(b) To appoint members of the Scrutiny Commission, Boards and Committees.**

Motion 1

It was moved by Mr Hamilton-Gray, seconded by Mr Poland and carried unanimously:

“That the membership of the Scrutiny Commission, Boards and Committees as set out in List ‘2’ attached to the Order Paper be approved.”

A copy of List ‘2’ is filed with these minutes.

Motion 2

The Chairman reported that she had received two lists naming Chairmen and Spokespersons. In accordance with Standing Order 26, each list would be proposed and seconded and then put to the Council for decision. Each member would have one vote only, to be cast in favour of list of nominations.

It was proposed by Mr Hamilton-Gray and seconded by Mr D Harrison:

“That the Chairmen and Spokespersons named in List ‘3A’ attached to the Order Paper be approved.”

It was proposed by Mr Poland and seconded by Mrs Taylor:

“That the Chairmen and Spokespersons named in List ‘3B’ attached to the Order Paper be approved.”

List ‘3A’ received 24 votes.

List ‘3B’ received 17 votes.

There were 12 abstentions.

The Chairman declared the appointment of those members named in List 3A’.

A copy of Lists ‘3A’ and ‘3B’ is filed with these minutes.

### Motion 3

It was proposed by Mr Hamilton-Gray, seconded by Mr Poland and carried unanimously:

“That the Chief Executive be authorised to make and terminate appointments to the Commission, committees, boards and other County Council bodies (not including the Cabinet) in accordance with the wishes of the Political Groups to whom the seat in question has been allocated, subject in the case of those bodies set out in List ‘2’ to the Group giving one day’s notice to the Chief Executive of its wishes.”

### **13. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING NOTICES OF MOTION:**

#### **(a) Northern Ireland Troubles: Legacy, Accountability and Veterans.**

It was moved by Mr Richichi and seconded by Mr Smith:

“(a) This Council notes that:

1. The Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 was enacted to address the legacy of the Troubles but was subsequently found by the courts to be incompatible with Convention rights under the Human Rights Act 1998, particularly in relation to its conditional immunity provisions and restrictions on access to justice.
2. In response to those judgments, Parliament has approved the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 (Remedial) Order 2025, which removes the conditional immunity scheme from statute and lifts the statutory bar on new Troubles-related civil claims.

3. The UK Government has introduced the Northern Ireland Troubles Bill, which is currently before Parliament, to repeal and replace the 2023 Act in full and to establish a reformed framework for addressing legacy matters, including new investigatory and information-recovery arrangements.
4. Ministers have indicated that the Bill will be subject to substantial amendment during its Parliamentary passage, including amendments intended to strengthen safeguards for Operation Banner veterans who engage with legacy processes.

(b) This Council further believes that:

1. Legal certainty and fairness are essential to maintaining public confidence in the handling of legacy issues arising from the Troubles.
2. It is vital that any new legacy framework both:
  - protects the rights of victims and survivors to truth, information, and accountability, and
  - avoids the creation of renewed uncertainty, repeated investigations, or disproportionate adversarial processes for veterans and their families many decades after events occurred.
3. A durable and credible approach to legacy can command public confidence only if it is rights-compliant, proportionate, and developed with the meaningful involvement of victims' groups, Northern Ireland political parties, and representatives of the Armed Forces community.

(c) This Council therefore resolves to:

1. Write to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland urging that the Northern Ireland Troubles Bill, as it proceeds through Parliament, delivers:
  - a balanced and rights-compliant legacy framework,
  - clear, statutory safeguards for veterans engaging with legacy mechanisms, and
  - non-adversarial processes that prioritise truth-recovery and information where criminal prosecution is neither realistic nor proportionate.
2. Write to the leaders of the main political parties represented in the House of Lords emphasising the importance of careful scrutiny of the Bill and its proposed amendments, particularly in relation to human rights compliance, veterans' protections, and long-term legal certainty.
3. Reaffirm this Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, including its responsibility to support those who have served and their families."

On the motion being put and before the vote was taken, five members rose asking that a named vote be recorded.

The vote was recorded as follows:

For the motion:

Mr Abbott, Mr Bailey, Dr Bloxham, Mr Boam, Mr Bools, Mrs Bottomley, Mr Bradshaw, Mrs Broadley, Mr Cooke, Mr Crook, Mrs Danks, Mr England, Mr Fowler, Mr Galton, Ms Gray, Mr Grimley, Mr Hamilton-Gray, Mr Dan Harrison, Mr Paul Harrison, Dr Hill, Mr King, Mrs Knight, Mr Lovegrove, Mr McDonald, Mr Melen, Mr Morris, Mr Mullaney, Dr North, Mr O'Shea, Mr Page, Mrs Page, Ms Pendlebury, Mr Piper, Mr Poland, Mr Pugsley, Mr Richichi, Mr Robinson, Mr Rudkin, Mr Smith Mr Squires, Mrs Taylor, Mr Walker, Mr Whitford.

The motion was carried with 43 members voting for the motion. There were no votes against the motion.

**(b) Church Lane Bus Route (Whitwick).**

It was moved by Mr Boam and seconded by Mr Richichi that:

“(a) This Council notes that:

1. Arriva’s Service 12 has operated along Church Lane, Whitwick since August 2025 as part of its commercial bus network.
2. While the service provides connectivity and is used by a number of passengers, some local residents have raised concerns regarding the operation of the service along Church Lane.
3. The Council has previously engaged with residents and the operator in relation to the routing and operation of the service.

(b) This Council believes that it is appropriate, where residents have raised ongoing concerns, for the Council to keep matters under review and ensure that engagement with the bus operator remains constructive and informed by evidence.

(c) This Council resolves to request the Director of Environment and Transport to provide a written report to the Growth, Highways, Transport and Waste Overview and Scrutiny Committee within six months, setting out:

- Engagement undertaken with the bus operator in relation to the operation of Service 12 on Church Lane;
- A review of the operation of the service, including consideration of relevant factors such as safety, punctuality and passenger usage; and
- Any observations or recommendations arising from that review, within the Council’s powers.”

The motion was put and carried, with 19 members voting for the motion and no members voting against the motion. There were 20 abstentions.

2.30 pm – 6.16 pm  
13 May 2026

CHAIRMAN

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 13<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2026**

### **POSITION STATEMENT FROM THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

#### **Review of the 2025-26 Municipal Year**

During 2025–26, the Council delivered a balanced and sustainable budget, agreeing a below inflation 2.99 per cent Council Tax increase for 2026/27 — there has been no lower increase in over a decade. For the first time in ten years, the Council did not set Council Tax at the maximum permitted level, while financial monitoring indicates a projected underspend for the 2025/26 financial year and without the use of any reserves, as originally expected when the budget was set in February 2025.

We have established a comprehensive Efficiency Review, undertaking a root-and-branch examination of services, spending and procurement to address long-term financial pressures. The outcome of the review, which scrutiny considered earlier this week shows savings of £27 million over the MTFs period, with the potential to stretch that figure to almost £60m.

This month is a watershed moment for the County Council and the residents we support. The Review demonstrates our commitment to the people of Leicestershire financially and through improving the services they receive.

The Review has identified enough improvements for us to transition into implementation; this will be known as the Better Leicestershire Programme.

Better Leicestershire will make every pound work harder for taxpayers whilst improving lives.

This pioneering project has identified up to £60 million in extra savings, including expanding social care teams to boost independence, intervening to prevent people reaching crisis point and creating more residential care places. That's on top of £44 million already identified in the Budget, without compromising quality public services.

We will see these savings banked not just once, but every year, creating a Better Leicestershire for everyone.

I set out with a bold vision to close the budget gap we inherited, and the experts, working alongside our officers, have brought me a confident plan to get on with it.

Significant progress has been made in highways and infrastructure. Just over 100,000 pothole repairs have been completed since May last year, alongside the clearance of just over 80,000 drains and gullies to reduce flood risk. The Melton Mowbray Distributor Road, the largest scheme ever delivered by the council, is ready for its opening ceremony, marking a major infrastructure milestone for the county. This will significantly relieve traffic congestion in the town centre and open up land for more much needed homes.

We have refocused environmental activity towards practical priorities affecting residents, particularly flooding and resilience. Substantial investment has been committed to local flood risk schemes, community preparedness and the development of the Flood Wardens service. Alongside this, we have confirmed our ambition to plant one million trees by 2032.

Additional investment in adult and children's social care was agreed to support vulnerable residents, and we strengthened our sector engagement by rejoining the Local Government Association and the County Councils Network.

### **Priorities for 2026-27**

In 2026/27 our priorities will be to:

- Maintain financial stability while protecting essential services, including delivering a balanced budget, continuing strong in-year financial management.
- Implement the service and financial improvements contained within the Better Leicestershire Programme
- Deliver Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). This is one of the most significant changes for Leicestershire in a generation. We believe that our business case is the strongest of the three presented to central government. We await the decision which is expected from the minister in July. Regardless of the decision, we are committed to making LGR work. Our Chief Executive and officers are working constructively with their counterparts from across Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, to ensure that we are well placed to support whatever the future of Local Government is in Leicestershire.
- Deliver the new Rural Estate Strategy over the next 10 years, demonstrating our firm commitment to the farming community, protecting Leicestershire's rural heritage, and keeping the estate financially sustainable for tenants and the Council.
- Continue to make great progress towards our One million trees target.
- Support the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to make Leicestershire greener while protecting biodiversity and nature.
- Work with communities to tackle flood risks and build resilience.
- Build on the success of FoxConnect, which has already seen nearly 88,000 journeys since its launch in January 2025, and supporting connectivity for our communities through continued investment in local bus services.

- Start on site with the A511 Growth Corridor scheme and complete the new Zouch bridge replacing the existing life expired and weight restricted 1930 structure.

### **Additional Investment**

Additional funding of £30m for adult social care will enable more people to access care and support year on year. We know the population is increasing, people are living longer and living longer with ill health and will require additional support over the next few years. In 2026 /27 we will spend over £1m per week on delivering home care services, over £1m per week on supporting people with disabilities to live independently and over £3m per week funding residential care for local residents

In addition, we are investing in workforce capacity and commissioned services to address the required improvements highlighted by the Care Quality Commission when they assessed the Council in 2025. As a result, we are moving forward at pace to reduce the number of people waiting for social care assessment and the time people wait has halved

Children and Family Services will receive additional funding of £13m for SEND transport, £56m for Children's Social Care, £87m for school investment and improvement, including £27m for SEND provision. We are focused on delivering the National reforms for how social care is designed and delivered, via the Family First Partnership Programme with key partners and the SEND reforms. Many key principles are within the new Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act.

There are many challenges with raising demand on services and pressures particularly around placement sufficiency for homes for children in care, but we are confident that we are focused on service developments that place Leicestershire in a strong position to meet the aforementioned challenges.

### **Road Improvement**

We are investing £270m over the MTFS into highways and transport with around £72m of that in 2026/27 financial year. Around half of that (£38m) will go to maintaining our carriageways, footpaths, street lighting, drainage and other assets and crucially just over £25m will go into preventative maintenance treatments such as surface dressing. It is these treatments we need to be implementing to stop potholes forming in the first place.

Alongside this we will also be investing in safety schemes, walking and cycling improvements, flood risk schemes and the council's vehicle fleet to support our frontline delivery.

### **Foster Care Fortnight 2026**

I am proud to join the nationwide celebration of Foster Care Fortnight 2026, that runs from Monday 11 May to Sunday 24 May 2026. The fortnight celebrates and

recognises the extraordinary commitment, compassion and resilience of foster carers across our communities. Foster carers provide stable, nurturing homes for some of our most vulnerable children and young people, often in challenging circumstances, and their contribution cannot be overstated.

On behalf of our organisation, we extend our sincere thanks to every foster carer for the vital role you play in transforming lives. Your dedication, patience and advocacy make a lasting difference, offering hope, security and opportunity where it is needed most.

We also acknowledge the wider network of families, professionals and services who support fostering. Together, we remain committed to strengthening this essential system—ensuring all children have the safe, caring environment they deserve. We thank you for all that you do, this week, next week, and every day.

## REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION

### A. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

#### Introduction

1. The Constitution requires that the Scrutiny Commission and Overview and Scrutiny Committees submit an Annual Report to the Council (or the Scrutiny Commission in a single report on their behalf) on their workings. The report may make recommendations about future work programmes and changes in working methods.

#### Annual Report

2. Attached as Appendix A to this report is a copy of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2025/26. It is intended as a public facing summary of the key highlights of scrutiny activity undertaken during the year and serves to draw out the work undertaken at committee level and how this has had an impact.
3. The Annual Report reflects on the range of specific topics that have been reviewed, which has included SEND and children's social care pressures, adult social care improvement and safeguarding, highways maintenance and drainage, local nature recovery and climate resilience, and access to health services. In addition to formal committee meetings, the Scrutiny Commission has called three additional special meetings to examine time critical and complex matters in greater depth such as the Council's local government reorganisation proposals and the outcome of the Council's efficiency review.

#### Conclusions

4. The work of Overview and Scrutiny remains important in holding decision makers such as the Cabinet to account, in ensuring that the Council's budget and performance is closely monitored, and in making certain that outcomes are delivered for the benefit of the residents of Leicestershire.

**(Motion to be moved:**

**That the information contained in the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2025-26, appended to this report, be noted.)**

**10 June 2026**

**Mrs D. Taylor CC  
Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission**

#### Background Papers

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=137&MIId=8394&Ver=4>

**Appendix**

Appendix A - Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2025-26



# Overview and Scrutiny

Annual Report 2025/26



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# Foreword

Welcome to Leicestershire County Council's annual report summarising some of the work undertaken by overview and scrutiny during 2025/26. This report highlights the broad range of work carried over the course of the year and reflects the important role scrutiny continues to play in supporting transparent, accountable and effective decision-making.

This has been a particularly significant year for scrutiny. With many new Members becoming involved in Scrutiny following the May 2025 elections, this has brought a new perspective and sense of challenge to all our scrutiny meetings. Members have considered issues of major strategic importance, including local government reorganisation, the Council's medium-term financial position and the outcomes of the far-reaching organisational efficiency review, necessary due to the continued pressure on key services and the Council's low funded position. Throughout this work, scrutiny has provided challenge, tested assumptions, sought assurance on delivery and highlighted the need to protect services for residents whilst responding to an increasingly difficult financial and policy environment.

We have been impressed by the volume and quality of scrutiny undertaken across all committees. During the year, members examined a wide range of issues including SEND and children's social care pressures, adult social care improvement and safeguarding, highways maintenance and drainage, local nature recovery and climate resilience, and access to health services. In addition to formal committee meetings, the Scrutiny Commission has called three additional special meetings to examine time-critical and complex matters in greater depth such as the Council's local government reorganisation proposals and the outcome of the Council's efficiency Review.

As Scrutiny Commissioners, we would like to thank all members involved in the overview and scrutiny process for their contribution throughout the year. We also extend our thanks to officers, Cabinet members, partner organisations and external witnesses who have supported and contributed to our work.



**Deborah Taylor CC**  
Chairman of the  
Scrutiny Commission



**Michael Mullaney CC**  
Vice Chairman of the  
Scrutiny Commission



**Dr John Bloxham CC**  
Scrutiny Commissioner



**Andrew Innes CC**  
Scrutiny Commissioner

**The four Scrutiny Commissioners are responsible for leading the Overview and Scrutiny process, deciding on priority issues for Scrutiny and areas that merit more detailed review.**

## Overview and Scrutiny at a glance

Overview and Scrutiny is a central part of local democratic accountability, enabling non-Cabinet councillors to examine matters of public importance, test proposals and support robust decision-making in the interests of Leicestershire residents.

## What scrutiny can do

Scrutiny does not make decisions, but it can make recommendations to decision makers, including the Cabinet. It can also examine services delivered by partner organisations, such as health bodies, and recommend improvements where appropriate.

## How scrutiny is organised

Leicestershire County Council has 55 elected councillors. Of these, 34 non-Cabinet members sit on the Scrutiny Commission and five politically balanced Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Each Scrutiny Committee looks at a particular service area of the Council and these are outlined in the chart below.



You can also find out more about how Overview and Scrutiny works in Leicestershire by accessing our [Overview and Scrutiny Guide](#) on the Council's website.

## What does good scrutiny look like?

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny identifies four principles of effective scrutiny. Together, these principles provide the foundation for constructive challenge, public accountability and continuous improvement.

### Principles of Effective Scrutiny



Scrutiny committees hold the Cabinet to account for the decisions it has taken, sometimes by way of call-in, or by advanced scrutiny of decisions it intends to take. It provides challenge and acts as a critical friend, testing developing proposals and examining how services are being delivered, identifying areas for improvement to ensure the Council provides high quality services that meet the needs of Leicestershire residents. In practice, they do this by:

Reviewing and commenting on the County Council's budget and strategic policies.

Undertaking pre-decision scrutiny of key matters, making recommendations for improvement wherever possible.

Monitoring and challenging the performance of services and the outcomes delivered for those living and working in Leicestershire.

Providing transparency by holding meetings in public, taking questions from residents and receiving petitions.

## The different types of Scrutiny

Scrutiny balances policy development with ongoing performance and assurance activity across the Council and its partnerships through a continuous process that combines review, challenge, assurance and accountability as outlined below.

## Evidence, plans and proposals

Budget proposals, strategic policies, service plans, performance information and emerging issues are brought forward for review.



## Scrutiny challenge and review

Committees test proposals before decisions are taken, reviews performance and seeks assurance where necessary. It examines whether services are being delivered effectively, efficiently and transparently.



## Outputs and influence

Scrutiny helps shape policy development, supports budget and policy review, submits comments and recommendations to the Cabinet, and seeks further information and assurance where needed.



## Public accountability

Meetings are held in public and questions can be received from residents, supporting openness, transparency and public accountability.

Over half of the reports considered by the Council's Scrutiny Committees have resulted in comments and recommendations being presented to the Cabinet for consideration as part of its decision making process.

Scrutiny Committees have sought to keep abreast of issues, receiving information and updates on a range of topics. They also monitor the Council's performance and seek assurance around service and project delivery.

## Public involvement

Scrutiny committees draw on a wide range of evidence to assess whether Council services and partner activity are meeting the needs of residents and service users.

Scrutiny draws on several complementary sources to provide insight and to strengthen challenge and support informed decision-making.

### External evidence

Partners, stakeholder representatives and external experts contribute evidence to broaden members' understanding.

### Co-opted expertise

The ability to co-opt members on the Children and Family Services Committee adds expertise, allowing for representation from parent governors and Church of England maintained schools.

### Local insight

Members also draw on their knowledge of local communities when questioning Cabinet Lead Members and officers.

Public participation is an important part of the scrutiny process, with a number of routes available for residents and stakeholders to contribute as outlined below:

- Attending a meeting – Members of the public are welcome to attend any public meeting of a Scrutiny Committee, details of which are listed on the [online meeting calendar](#).
- Asking a question – all Scrutiny Committees allow for public questions at the beginning of each meeting. If you wish to ask a question, please see our [online guidance on how to submit a question](#).
- Submitting a petition – all Scrutiny Committees can receive petitions relating to an area that the council has authority over. It can be submitted by anyone who lives, works, or studies in Leicestershire. For further details, see our [online guidance on how to submit a petition](#).
- Identifying issues which a Scrutiny Committee might look at (particularly through a specific review).
- Providing evidence to inform Scrutiny (either in writing or in person).
- Contributing to consultations, surveys, workshops and/or focus groups.

## Public involvement in 2025/26

Below is a summary of the scale of scrutiny activity and public engagement during 2025/26, including meeting volume, reports considered, public questions, webcast views and comments submitted to the Cabinet. These figures provide a concise snapshot of the reach and visibility of the scrutiny process during the year.

Compared with 2024/25, scrutiny activity and public visibility increased significantly in 2025/26. The number of committee meetings rose from 34 to 40, reports considered from 124 to 176, and hours of public debate from 55 to 72. Webcast views saw the most substantial growth, increasing from 2,261 to 8,538, while comments submitted to the Cabinet also rose from 25 to 36.

## Overview and Scrutiny: Public Involvement 2025-26

**40**  
Committee  
meetings held



**72 hrs**  
of public debate

**8,538**  
Webcast  
views



**27**  
Questions  
submitted by  
members of  
the public

**176**  
Reports  
considered



**36**  
Comments  
submitted to  
cabinet



**47** Recommendations made and additional information and assurance sought

# Scrutiny Activity during 2025/26

## Scrutiny Commission

The Scrutiny Commission has continued to provide strategic overview and challenge across the Council's corporate priorities, with a particular focus on financial sustainability, major policy development, and cross-cutting issues affecting residents and services. Full details of the Commission's work can be found on the Council's [website](#).

### Call-in of a Cabinet Decision regarding the Protocol for Flying Flags at County Hall

A special meeting of the Commission was called to consider a Call-in of a Cabinet decision taken regarding the Protocol for Flying Flags at County Hall. The Commission, as part of this item, heard from representatives of the Council's staff networks. The Commission:

- Criticised the absence of prior scrutiny/consultation and emphasised the importance of following democratic processes and transparency. The Commission sought assurances that scrutiny would not be bypassed for future decisions, highlighting the value of scrutiny in improving policy decisions.
- Supported the Call-in reasons, particularly concerns about lack of staff consultation and the need to take proper account of the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Recommended clearer drafting in the policy, criticising parts of the Cabinet's decision as being too vague, suggesting that the policy should specify which flags would be flown to ensure clarity and consistency. The Commission also recommended that the Union Flag be flown in the quadrant whilst no other flags were flown, a recommendation subsequently taken up by the Cabinet.
- Requested the Cabinet reconsider its decision taking account of the comments and recommendations of the Commission and requesting the Cabinet speak with staff working groups and consider any additional comments.



## Local Government Reorganisation

The Commission held special meetings and received three separate reports regarding the Council's proposals for local government reorganisation. It commented on the draft business case, prior to submission to the Cabinet, and provided feedback as part of the Council's response to the Government consultation. Independent councillors and a representative of those political groups that do not have a member on the Commission were invited for this discussion to ensure the views of the whole council could be heard and captured as part of the scrutiny response.

The Commission initially expressed disappointment that only limited details regarding the Council's proposals had been provided when first looking at LGR and so requested further opportunities to scrutinise this given the significance of the issue. The Council held two further special meetings to look at LGR one of which was held in private. To help shape the Council's proposals the Commission:

- Commented that the business case contained too many options, making the appraisal less focused and potentially weakening the preferred case. Some scoring and narrative in the options appraisal were also considered unbalanced, particularly around democratic governance and neighbourhood empowerment which it was suggested should be corrected. The draft was also seen as lacking enough evidence on long-term sustainability, particularly in relation to population growth.
- Requested that the Case for Change be made stronger, especially in showing how proposals would improve services without requiring boundary changes.
- Expressed concern that the draft wording could imply a "takeover" of Rutland and district functions, rather than the creation of a new independent authority. The Commission highlighted the need to maintain local identity, representation, and access to services. There were concerns about the impact of a single unitary council on the local variation of district services, and on maintaining local responsiveness.
- Commented that there was insufficient clarity on how community grants, area committees, planning committees, and community involvement would work in practice.
- Raised concerns about the capacity of parish and town councils to take on devolved services, particularly where councils are small, under-resourced, or non-existent.

## Efficiency Review Outcomes and Proposals

A special meeting was scheduled on 11 May 2026. A published report states it was intended to invite scrutiny feedback ahead of Cabinet consideration and sets out the review's purpose, phases and scope. Again, Independent councillors and a representative of those political groups that do not have a member on the Commission were invited to contribute to this discussion. The Commission:

- Questioned whether the scale, timing and phasing of the proposed savings were realistic, particularly as some proposals remained at an early stage, relied on assumptions about future delivery and were still subject to detailed business case approval.
- Raised concerns about how far the programme depended on future reorganisation arrangements and whether proposals, particularly longer-term investments, would remain viable under any new authority structure.
- Highlighted that implementation costs would be incurred early, while a significant proportion of savings would not be realised until later in the MTFS period, increasing financial risk if delivery slipped.

- In both children's and adults' services, Members sought reassurance that proposals would not lower thresholds, reduce care inappropriately, or place financial considerations above the safety, wellbeing and individual needs of vulnerable people.
- Raised concerns about staff morale during organisational change, the challenge of reducing agency reliance while recruiting and retaining permanent staff, and the capacity needed to deliver transformation successfully.
- Emphasised the importance of ongoing scrutiny, clearer answers on assumptions and risks as proposals progressed, and careful communication with residents and families so proposals were understood as service improvements rather than service reductions.

## The Budget and financial monitoring

The Commission looked at corporate and central elements of the Council's proposed four year Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Commission also considered a number of reports monitoring delivery of the Council's budget and scrutinising the Council's short and medium term financial position, including proposed changes to the capital programme. The Commission:

- Reiterated concerns about the sharp rise in the High Needs Block deficit and the associated risk to the Council. The Commission sort assurances around the approach to resourcing within the MTFs and the need for clarity on Government arrangements, noting this area would be heavily monitored by the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Queried capital programme slippage and requested assurance and lessons would be learnt from projects, noting plans to undertake an internal review.
- Raised concern about costs of secure accommodation placements for children, requesting clarity on numbers affected and costs being incurred.

## Property management, estates, and investments

The Commission received several reports regarding the Council's operation and investment property portfolio and monitored how this was performing during the current year. The Commission:

- Considered the performance of the Corporate Asset Management Plan and the Investing in Leicestershire Programme (IILP). The Commission challenged how comparisons were being presented for investment properties and expressed some disappointment in the level of income generated. The Commission supported the need to explore other diversifiers and sought more information on pooled property fund liquidity risks. The Commission shared mixed views (including concerns) around the risk profile of equities as a potential form of investment in the future.
- Commented on the draft revised IILP Portfolio Management Strategy 2026–2030 and questioned the projected level of income return. The Commission also sought more information on the legal restrictions on investment types.
- Commented on the Council's new Rural Estate Strategy (IILP) 2026–2036 supporting its vision and the aim to support new entrants. The Commission, however, emphasised the need for longterm viability without subsidy and the need to balance retention and development/disposal opportunities. Members also raised concerns about rent increases linked to historic review cycles and welcomed assurance that rent reviews were now up to date and would be maintained on a defined cycle to avoid future spikes.

## Performance, assurance, and customer experience

The Commission received several reports detailing the Council's overall performance across all service areas, including the level of complaints and compliments received from residents and service users. The Commission:

- Welcomed the Annual Performance Report which showed the Council continued to be high performing despite its low funding position. The Commission questioned specific indicators including park and ride performance and adult social care satisfaction survey results and sought additional information on these service areas.
- Considered the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Annual Report 2024/25 noting the use of root cause analysis to identify themes and drive improvements across departments and the corporate complaints function. The Commission challenged the variability in response times and the importance of routing enquiries correctly to avoid unnecessary delay. The Commission emphasised that good communication could prevent escalation
- Received the East Midlands Shared Services annual performance update 2024/25. Members welcomed the positive performance shown and discussed process controls including supplier payment approaches, purchase order compliance, and automation/AI benefits.
- Commented on the performance of Leicestershire Traded Services and submitted proposals to the Cabinet on the future of Beaumanor Hall and Park recognising the sustainability, subsidy and heritage balance that needed to be struck in respect of such a specialist building.

## Governance and standards

The Commission looked at the Council's ethical governance arrangements relating to Member Conduct and reviewed the framework, processes and governance measures currently in place. The Commission:

- Supported the need for greater transparency in complaint outcomes and recommended that a summary of complaints accompany the publication of any public apology made by a member so that the action was meaningful and transparent.
- Submitted recommendations to the Corporate Governance Committee to make training on the Members' Code of Conduct mandatory, with compliance to be monitored and reported annually, recognising the need for target support to address repeat issues and reduce future complaints
- Expressed concern about the effectiveness of current sanctions, noting that these were current limited and not fit for purpose. The Commission supported the need for stronger national reform.

### Next Year...

Over the next 12 months the Commission will continue to monitor regularly delivery of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and will be particularly focused on the outcome of the Efficiency Review and the proposals brought forward to deliver savings that will address the current financial gap faced by the Council alongside demand pressures and rising costs.



# Adults and Communities

This Committee exercised the Scrutiny function in relation to services provided by the former Adults and Communities Department. Full details of the Committee's work can be found on the Council's [website](#).

## Preparation for Adulthood (PfA)

The Committee considered updates on the Council's ongoing work to improve the pathway to adulthood, including progress arising from previous peer review activity. The Committee:

- Received assurance that actions identified through the review were being progressed across both Adults and Children's Services.
- Welcomed joint working between departments to improve outcomes for young people transitioning into adult services.
- Emphasised the importance of a coordinated approach to ensure continuity of care and support.
- Commended the quality of parent carer engagement and emphasised the importance of incorporating feedback.

## Adult Social Care Complaints and Customer Experience

The Committee reviewed the Adult Social Care Statutory Complaints and Compliments Annual Report. The Committee:

- Raised concerns regarding accessibility of services, including difficulties contacting adult social care and reliance on digital channels.
- Emphasised the need for clear communication and timely responses to reduce repeat contact and dissatisfaction.
- Sought assurance that complaints were analysed effectively to identify root causes and drive service improvements.

The Committee also received updates on the Adult Social Care Customer Service Centre and ongoing efforts to improve responsiveness and user experience.

## Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assessment and Improvement Planning

The Committee considered reports relating to the CQC's assessment of the Council's delivery of its Care Act 2014 duties and subsequent improvement planning. The Committee:

- Received an overview of the findings of the CQC assessment and the Department's response.
- Sought assurance that improvement actions were being implemented effectively and monitored.
- Emphasised the importance of demonstrating positive outcomes for service users alongside regulatory compliance.

## Carers and Safeguarding

The Committee considered strategic reports relating to carers and safeguarding arrangements. The Committee:

- Reviewed the draft Leicestershire Carers Strategy 2026–2030, highlighting the importance of recognising and supporting unpaid carers.
- Considered the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report, including priorities around equality, diversity, and improving partnership engagement.
- Raised concerns regarding attendance and engagement across safeguarding partners and the long-term financial sustainability of arrangements.

## Cultural Services, Heritage and Community Provision

The Committee considered reports relating to wider community services delivered by the Department. The Committee:

- Reviewed proposals relating to museum policy, accreditation, and collections management.
- Considered the role of community-based services, including day services, in supporting wellbeing and independence.
- Highlighted the importance of maintaining accessible and inclusive community provision.

### Next Year...

In the coming year, the Committee (renamed the Adults and Cultural Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee) will continue to monitor delivery of the CQC improvement plan and ongoing regulatory assurance activity. It will also review the impact of financial pressures and service transformation on adult social care provision and oversee developments in commissioning, including dementia services and community-based support. The Committee will also consider progress against the Carers Strategy and safeguarding priorities and continue to monitor performance, demand, and customer experience across all service areas.



# Children and Families

This Committee scrutinised services provided by the Children and Family Services Department to children, young people and families as well as education, special needs and safeguarding matters. Full details of the Committee's work can be found on the Council's [website](#).

## SEND and Inclusion

The Committee has continued to scrutinise the provision of services which support the education health and care needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) through the provision of Educational, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The Committee:

- Raised concern about the impact of forthcoming national reforms on the rising demand for EHCPs and SEND services.
- Received assurances that mainstream inclusion was being strengthened and welcomed improved EHCP timeliness through process changes and backlog reduction.
- Welcomed the reduction in SENA complaints and ongoing expansion of specialist provision, while noting continued pressure from rising demand.
- Highlighted concerns about proposed SEND nursery changes, which were not taken forward, and questioned the aims of the Building Education Services Together programme.

## Children in Care and Care Leavers

The Committee received reports on progress achieved against the Department's duties and responsibilities to children in care and care leavers. The Committee:

- Raised concern about rising numbers of children entering care, increased use of residential placements and escalating costs. The Committee received assurance that work was underway to expand fostering, strengthen kinship care and progress Family First reforms to help more children remain safely within their families.
- Welcomed development of in-house residential provision through the Children's Innovation Programme with Barnardo's, aimed at improving care quality, providing more local homes and achieving better value than private provision.
- Raised concern about the number of children in care receiving dental checks and annual health assessments. The Committee received assurance that performance was being addressed and requested a further report on progress.
- Questioned the level of re-referrals to Children's Social Care within 12 months. The Committee was advised that these were monitored closely and could reflect an appropriate response to changing or ongoing safeguarding risks.

## Education

The Committee received reports relating to the Departments work regarding education sufficiency, school place planning, and admissions. The Committee:

- Raised concern about increased phase transfer allocations, linked to rising demand for secondary places, changes in the independent sector and inward migration from neighbouring authorities.
- Received assurance that the sustainability of rural schools, including risks of closure and community impact, would be reviewed through a three-year School Reorganisation Project.
- Raised concern about a projected shortfall of around 2,000 secondary places within two years. The Committee was advised that this would be addressed through capital investment, school expansions and, where necessary, new school provision.
- Welcomed development of a new planning obligations policy to better reflect school building costs, including inflation, and provide greater flexibility to support SEND provision, including in mainstream settings.
- Raised concern about growing demand for support for children facing barriers to attendance, including those with medical needs, children missing education, exclusions and elective home education. The Committee noted the rising cost pressures and anticipated national policy changes in this area.
- Received assurance that, although the Council had limited powers to monitor elective home education, its internal policy had been reviewed to strengthen support for families as numbers continued to rise.

## Families First Reforms

The Committee received a report regarding national reforms for children's services, Keeping Children Safe, Helping Families Thrive, and details of the proposed programme of work to design and deliver the reforms across Children and Family Services in Leicestershire. The Committee:

- Received assurance that the Department was taking proactive steps to prepare for the reforms, including work on workforce data and partnership arrangements, with a continued focus on early support and better long-term outcomes for children and families.
- Questioned how the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant would support additional preventative activity. The Committee welcomed the new funding, while noting uncertainty over whether it would be sufficient to deliver the reforms in full.

### Next year...

The Committee will continue to monitor performance against the Department's safeguarding duties and its responsibilities relating to Education, SEND and inclusion, Children in Care and Care Leavers. It will also receive reports on rural schools, child exploitation, Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), children and young people Not in Education or Training (NEET), and the Oakfield Short Stay School.



# Highways, Transport and Waste

This Committee scrutinised the Council's highways, transport and waste services. Full details of the Committee's work can be found on the Council's [website](#).

## Highways safety, maintenance and asset investment

The Committee considered several reports, reviewing data and interventions aimed at improving road safety outcomes. The Committee:

- Reviewed Road Casualty Reduction activity taking place in Leicestershire report and examined trends in collisions and how resources were targeted to support casualty reduction.
- Commented on the Highways and Transportation Capital Programme and Works Programme 2026/27, which set out planned investment and delivery priorities for the coming year. The Committee considered how the programme aligned with strategic priorities and local need, including highway condition and maintenance requirements.
- Scrutinised the Council's processes for pedestrian crossing assessments and supported improvements to ensure decisions were transparent, evidencebased and aligned with national guidance.
- Considered the outcome of the street lighting dimming trial, providing comments to Cabinet on the future approach to street lighting.

## Drainage and environmental resilience

Drainage and its impact on flooding remained a significant area of scrutiny for the Committee which looked at the Council's Highways Drainage Programme and Works. The Committee:

- Noted the scale and complexity of the Council's drainage responsibilities, including asset management such as gully cleansing.
- Looked at programme updates to scrutinise how drainage works were prioritised and delivered across the County.
- Sought further information on maintenance regimes to provide assurance to residents affected by flooding thought to be linked to drainage issues.

## Strategic transport planning and network development

The Committee has continued to play a key role in shaping the Council's long-term transport strategy. A significant report considered during the period was Delivering the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2025–2040 – Next Steps, including development of the Enabling Travel Choice Strategy (ETCS) and MultiModal Area Investment Plans (MMAIPs). The Committee:

- Commented on the long-term delivery and phasing of LTP4, noting the importance of flexibility and alignment with available funding.
- Highlighted the importance of understanding differing transport needs across urban and rural communities and the need to improve engagement with residents on local areas of concern.
- Considered the Council's new Healthy Streets approach, focusing on how transport planning can support healthier and more connected communities.
- Looked at the Council's Home to School Transport annual performance and raising concerns about operational pressures and supporting future priorities.

## Major infrastructure and service delivery projects

The Committee received updates on major infrastructure delivery, including the Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (MMDR), to which members undertook a site visit. This was a significant long-term project which is now completed. The Committee:

- Noted progress, recognising the scheme's long development period and importance to the local area but raising concerns about rising costs that are typically faced in respect of such long-term schemes.
- Requested a future evaluation report to capture lessons learned from the scheme, recognising that some factors, such as the weather and global inflation and cost rises were outside the Council's control.

## Waste and resource management reforms

Following the expansion of the Committee's remit, Members considered national policy changes affecting waste services. The Committee received a report on Collection and Packaging Reforms, outlining forthcoming Government changes, including deposit return and producer responsibility schemes. The Committee:

- Considered the implications of reforms for local service delivery and residents.
- Emphasised the importance of effective communication and public awareness as new arrangements are introduced.
- Requested further reporting on the introduction of food waste collections and associated service changes.

### Next year...

The Committee (which will be renamed the Growth, Highways, Transport and Waste Overview and Scrutiny Committee) will continue to monitoring highways performance, safety and asset condition, including delivery of the capital programme and casualty reduction activity. It will be scrutinising the delivery of LTP4 and associated strategies to improve connectivity and access across the County and will take a close look at the financial sustainability of services through the MTFS and its impact on delivery. The Committee will also monitor the implementation of waste reforms and new service models, including food waste collection.



# Environment, Flooding and Climate Change

This Committee scrutinised the Councils green agenda focussing on local nature recovery and biodiversity, flood risk and climate resilience. The Committee acts and serves as the Council’s Flood Risk Management Committee, monitoring relevant activity and partnerships in this area. Full details of the Committee’s work can be found on the Council’s [website](#).

## Local Nature Recovery, Biodiversity and the Natural Environment

The Committee considered strategic reports relating to local nature recovery, biodiversity and the natural environment. The Committee:

- Welcomed the final Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), noting that it set out meaningful priorities capable of delivering tangible benefits for the local environment, highlighting the importance of meaningful engagement and deliverable funded projects through a future delivery plan.
- Considered a refreshed draft ‘Action for Nature’ strategic approach and supporting action plan, noting the challenges of biodiversity measurement, the role of community participation, and practical delivery questions such as land management approached and chemical weed control regimes.
- Received a dedicated Biodiversity report, supporting continued oversight of biodiversity delivery and evidence gathering through corporate reporting.
- Reviewed the refreshed draft Tree Management Strategy, discussing the Council’s developing nursery capacity (including tree stock to support ash dieback replacement and highway schemes), how value and condition are assessed, and wider practical matters such as inspection regimes on specific assets.

## Climate Change, Flooding and Resilience

The Committee considered reports relating to climate resilience and local flood risk management. The Committee:

- Scrutinised the Climate Resilience Delivery Plan, including practical proposals linked to flood risk and adaptation.
- Supported stronger clarity and record-keeping around Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), recognising the operational benefits of improved asset information, whilst noting the challenges around SuDS ownership/management (including private management companies) and the importance of using the planning process to strengthen future information and accountability.
- Took public questions, specifically on the reallocation of £2m to flood mitigation initiatives, noting that proposals (including intended outcomes) were to be shaped and reported to the Cabinet later in the year.
- Considered a substantive Local Flood Risk Management Strategy Update, including an accompanying strategy action plan, and used the update to scrutinise progress and ensure strategic actions remained aligned to emerging flood risk pressures and delivery capacity.

## Waste and Emissions / Regulatory Change

The Committee received an update on the Government's plans to incorporate Energy from Waste and waste incineration facilities into the UK Emissions Trading Scheme from 2028 and the possible implications for the Council as waste disposal authority. The Committee:

- Noted the need for ongoing work with district councils (waste collection authorities) to support planning for emerging legislative change.
- Discussed the risk of additional future costs if waste is not correctly managed and directed into more expensive disposal routes.
- Recognised the reforms could represent some of the biggest sector changes in decades, with greater clarity expected as national policy develops.

## Environmental Performance

The Committee received regular Environment and Climate Change Performance Reports. The Committee:

- Explored issues including the assumptions and limitations of environmental measurement and sought assurance around evidence quality and monitoring approaches.
- Considered operational implications of decarbonisation activity (including fleet transition considerations and fuel choices), and requested follow-up where risks were identified.

### Next year...

The Committee will continue to monitor performance and maintain a focus on flood risk management and climate resilience delivery, develop further scrutiny around biodiversity and delivery measurement, and keep under review the medium-term financial sustainability of environment, flooding and climate change services within the MTFS framework.



# Health

This Committee reviewed and scrutinised matters relating to the planning, provision, and operation of health services in the County of Leicestershire. Full details of the Committee's work can be found on the Council's [website](#).

## Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust

The Committee has spent a significant amount of time scrutinising the work of Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) who provide mental health, learning disability and community health services. The Committee:

- Reviewed LPT's new strategy 'Together we Thrive' and raised concerns some patients might have about the move towards greater use of online and digital forms of communication.
- Questioned LPT about the provision of mental health and early intervention services available locally, welcomed that the number of people waiting for Talking Therapy was falling and that the therapy appeared to be having a positive effect, but expressed concerns about the wait times for the more specialist therapy.
- Reviewed the results of Care Quality Commission inspections into LPT and gained assurances from LPT as to how they intended to address shortcomings identified in the inspection reports particularly around waiting times.

## Access to Primary Care

The Committee has reviewed the provision of primary care services in Leicestershire and in particular the ability of patients to gain an appointment with a local GP or other primary care professional in a timely manner. The Committee:

- Examined the ratio of GPs to patients and raised concerns that there was no national guidance on this.
- Raised concerns that the lack of access to primary care was displacing demand elsewhere and putting pressure on other services such as the Emergency Department, but gained assurances that capacity for same day primary care appointments was being increased;
- Examined data for the number of patients that did not attend (DNA) primary care appointments that they had booked and sought assurances about the processes in place for managing DNAs.
- Brought representatives of the Integrated Care Board and local members from the Melton area together to discuss why there is only one GP Practice for the whole of the Melton area and what can be done to alleviate this problem.

## Public Health

The Committee has learnt about the work of the Public Health Department within Leicestershire County Council and how it complements the other Council departments and prevents service demand arising elsewhere. The Committee:

- Examined the proposed Public Health Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2026/27 to 2029/30 and welcomed that the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) had given provisional Public Health Grant allocations for the next three years rather than the usual one-year settlement.
- Noted that the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) took into account census data and population figures when allocating funding to Public Health departments but raised concerns that funding would not keep up with population and housing growth.
- Requested a more detailed report on the metric 'HIV late diagnosis in people first diagnosed with HIV in the UK' which was rag rated red for the period 2021-23 and received assurances regarding the actions underway to improve HIV diagnosis across Leicestershire.

## Elective Care, Diagnostics and Cancer treatment

The Committee receives regular performance reports in relation to NHS metrics, and members noted that the targets for elective care, diagnostics and cancer operations at University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust were not being met. Therefore, the Committee requested a more detailed report on the reasons behind the failure to meet the targets. The Committee:

- Noted the context around the performance including the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in Leicestershire, the industrial action being taken by NHS Staff and the fact that other NHS Trusts were also performing poorly against these metrics.
- Raised strong concerns about the length of the waiting lists and a lack of overall progress and asked for the improvement plan to be shared with the committee.
- Received assurances that whilst on a waiting list cancer patients were assessed and prioritised based on a mixture of need and risk but also the length of time they had been waiting.

### Next year ....

The Committee (renamed the Health and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee) intends to look into the patient experience of discharge from hospital, vaccines and immunisations, and how the recent restructure of NHS bodies such as the Integrated Care Board is bedding in.

# Joint Health Scrutiny

Health Overview and Scrutiny members have also taken part in meetings of the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Joint Health Scrutiny Committee and considered agenda items relating to the proposed closure of St Mary's Birth Centre in Melton, access to dental services, and how the NHS is bringing patient data together into one Shared Care Record.

# Contacts

## The Overview and Scrutiny Team

If you would like to feed into the scrutiny process or suggest a topic for scrutiny's attention, you can get in touch with the Scrutiny Team at [democracy@leics.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@leics.gov.uk).

Alternatively, you can contact the officer that supports a specific Committee as detailed below.

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## **Leicestershire County Council Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2025/26**

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Democratic Services

Chief Executive's Department

Leicestershire County Council

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