



Environment Strategy 2018 - 2030: delivering a better future



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Foreword



Cllr Blake Pain, Lead Member for Environment & Transport

Leicestershire County Council has an established commitment to the environment, being a signatory to both the Nottingham Declaration and Climate Local. We have achieved much in recent years to improve our environmental performance including reducing our greenhouse gas emissions 4 years ahead of target and significantly increasing the generation of renewable energy on our council buildings and land.

However, we are becoming increasingly aware of the existing and future impacts of climate change and the significant decline in the natural environment, and we acknowledge that it is the activities of humankind that are contributing significantly to this situation. As a local authority we must take a leadership role in building on the global and national commitments made to address the situation by working with partners to take action within Leicestershire.

In recent years there have been increasing public calls for action on climate change and the environment, be that in terms of reducing the use of single use plastics, improving air quality, encouraging the use

of low emissions vehicles and improving energy efficiency.

Our new Environment Strategy takes account of the latest information and key drivers for action on the environment and recognises that if we are to make a positive difference to the lives of Leicestershire people we need to protect and enhance the environment and meet the challenges and opportunities of climate change.

This Strategy provides a framework for action up to 2030 for what we can do as a council within our own operations and also where we have control and influence within the County. It also allows us to respond to any changes in circumstances

such as the evolving national policy and legislative position and the improving scientific evidence base.

Delivery of this Strategy will require significant collaborative working within Leicestershire County Council, with the communities of Leicestershire and with partner organisations.

I look forward to supporting this collaborative effort to meet the challenges and opportunities of climate change and our deteriorating natural environment to ensure a better future for the people of Leicestershire for future generations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Blake Pain'.



Executive summary

There are clear drivers for action to protect and improve the environment and to tackle climate change at a global, national and local level. Leicestershire County Council (LCC) is building on its longstanding commitment to the environment and taking action to reduce: the impact of its operations on the environment, its contribution to climate change and to ensure its assets are resilient to the effects of climate change. The Council will also work with partners to protect and enhance the Leicestershire environment and help to deliver sustainable development by recognising and fostering the links between the environment, people and the economy.

These key drivers are highlighted in this Strategy and are informed by an evidence base from which the Strategy was developed. The UK Government recognises the need for international action and has committed to:

- The Paris Agreement of 2015 which requires signatory countries to work together in limiting global temperature rise to below 1.5 to 2°C;

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which emphasises the interconnection between economic development, social equity and inclusion and environmental impacts. It sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that Governments are expected to translate into national action plans, policies and initiatives.

In addition to these global initiatives, the UK Government has a number of strategies to support changes in the way

we use and manage energy, water, resources, land and transport including:

- The Clean Growth Strategy which underlines the role that local government has in delivering and supporting an evolution to a low carbon society;
- The 25-year Environment Plan which recognises that 'natural capital' (the air we breathe, water we drink, soil we cultivate and the ecosystem we rely on), is essential to economic growth and long-term productivity.

This Environment Strategy has been developed based on a review of the global, national and local key drivers. This has highlighted that the policy and legislative position in relation to the environment is currently going through a period of evolution, change and uncertainty as the Government provides more detail on how the Paris Agreement will be applied, what the 25 year Environment Plan will mean for local government and how environmental legislation will be affected by the UK's departure from the EU.

We have also sought to better understand the environmental issues of the Council and the County and identified both how we as a council impact on the environment and why we as a local authority need to take action on environmental issues.

The approach to developing this strategy seeks to ensure that the vision, aims, objectives and targets defined here allow action to be effectively taken both by the Council and within Leicestershire to protect and enhance the environment and to tackle and respond to climate change but also to be able to flex and respond to the expected changing circumstances.

The Strategy runs up to 2030 and covers both the Council's own operations and also where it has control and influence within the county of Leicestershire. The Strategy identifies the legal and statutory duties we must fulfil regarding the environment and climate change, provides opportunities for how to embed environmental sustainability into the Council and sets out what the Council needs to do to fulfil its leadership role in this area.

The Strategy focuses on six key areas:

- Carbon and Climate Change Impacts;
- Resource Use and Low/Zero Carbon Energy;
- Travel and Transport;
- Biodiversity, Habitats and Local Environment;
- Community and Wellbeing; and
- Local Economy.

For each it sets out a series of aims and objectives covering both our internal services and operations and where we have control and influence externally within Leicestershire with consideration for how we can also support wider national and global actions on the environment and climate change.

The Strategy also sets out an initial range of targets particularly for how we can reduce the Council's greenhouse gas emissions. Further work will be needed to develop these and other targets to 2030 and this will be done through the Environment Strategy Delivery Board which will be established to oversee the implementation of the Strategy.

The performance monitoring of the Strategy will be managed through the Council's Environmental Management System (EMS) and existing reporting mechanisms. An annual environmental performance summary report will be published on the Council's website each year.

An initial Action Plan has been developed to support the delivery of the Strategy. Whilst not forming part of the Strategy document itself, it identifies the key areas of activity over the next 1-3 years where known and will be further developed by the Environment Strategy Delivery Board in consultation with both internal and external stakeholders and in response to any updates to government policy and legislation or changes in local circumstances.

Introduction

There is increasing recognition of and commitment to the need to protect, promote and improve the environment at a local, national and global level. The Council is committed to minimising its environmental impacts, protecting and enhancing the Leicestershire environment and helping to deliver sustainable development by recognising and fostering the links between the environment, people and our economy.

This Strategy sets out our vision, aims, objectives and targets which will be used to drive improved environmental performance.

The scope of the Strategy covers both the Council's own operations and also where it has control and influence within the county of Leicestershire. It includes the legal and statutory duties we must fulfil regarding the environment, what we need to do to embed environmental sustainability into the effective and efficient running of the Council and what we need to do to fulfil our leadership role in creating a better environment, improving the health and

wellbeing of people and contributing to the sustainable economic development of the county.

Leicestershire County Council (LCC) has a longstanding commitment to the environment. This includes:

- **2006:** LCC signed up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change;
- **2008:** LCC was accepted into the Carbon Trust's Local Authorities Carbon Management Programme;
- **2009:** The first comprehensive Council-wide Environment Strategy and Action Plan was approved;

- **2011:** LCC established a robust Environmental Management System working to the ISO 14001 standard;
- **2012:** LCC signed up to Climate Local, an Environment Agency supported initiative;
- **2014:** The Council approved the Carbon Reduction Strategy and Implementation Plan focusing on reducing carbon emissions in the County; and
- **2018:** LCC signs up to UK 100 Pledge.

With the making of these commitments, the development of these documents and systems, combined with the hard work of Council staff and partners, we have made visible progress in reducing the Council's environmental impact. Of particular note has been:

- 37% reduction in the Council's own greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) since 2008-09, 4 years ahead of target;
- Significant increase in low/zero carbon energy generation on Council buildings and land. It is currently 11% of all Council building energy consumption (from zero in 2008-09);
- Reduction in business mileage of 1.5 million miles since 2012. This is a saving of more than 400 tonnes of CO₂e; and
- Within the County, domestic GHG emissions have reduced by 20% (against 2005 baseline), with electricity emissions reduced by 40%. Non-domestic (Industrial and commercial) electricity-related GHG emissions have been reduced by 40%, gas emissions reduced by 30% and other fuels also reduced by 30%.

These achievements have been made at a time of considerable financial challenge for the Council, though many of them have contributed to significant financial savings including:

- **£1.1m** saved on electricity bills through the LED street-lighting project;
- **£505,000** saved through reduced business mileage; and
- **£78,000** saved through reduced residual waste and increased recycling performance from Council buildings.

This Strategy replaces the Council's previous Environment Strategy and the Carbon Reduction Strategy; it extends the scope to 2030 and takes into account the latest environmental evidence and developments. It will provide strong guidance for the Council's future actions and enable it to continue its leadership role in this area and help deliver an improved environment for both the people of Leicestershire and those living further afield affected by our actions.

Environment Strategy key drivers

In preparing this Strategy an evidence base was produced which showed that the key drivers for action on the environment come from global, national and local levels. While this has long been the case, events in recent years have strengthened and brought into clearer focus the need for action.

The urgent need for concerted international action on climate change has been recognised by over 170 countries globally. The **Paris Agreement of 2015** requires countries to work together in limiting global temperature rise to below 1.5 to 2°C, the recognised level established by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to limit the risks and impacts of climate change.

The interconnection between economic development, social equity and inclusion and environmental impacts has also been recognised internationally via the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.

It sets out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that Governments are expected to translate into national action plans, policies and initiatives.

The UK Government has committed to action under both the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Its prioritisation of action on climate change can be seen in the **Climate Change Act of 2008**. This sets legally binding greenhouse gas emission reductions targets of at least 80% by 2050 (with an interim target of 26% by 2020) against a 1990

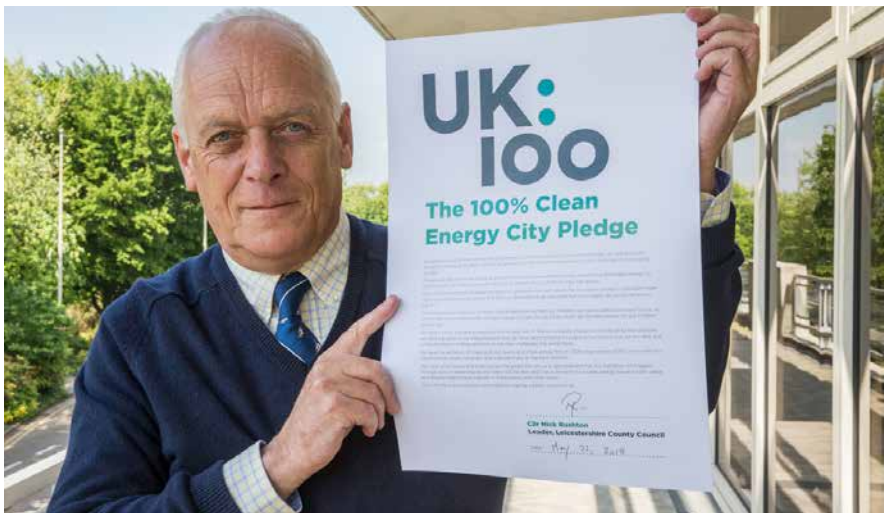
baseline. If this target is to be achieved transformational action is required.

In support of this there are a range of policy initiatives designed to change the way we use and manage energy, water, resources, land and transport. This means contributions from everyone, including local government.

The UK Government's recent **Clean Growth Strategy** underlines the role that local government has in delivering and supporting our evolution to a low carbon society as we respond to these national and international commitments.

“Clean growth is not an option, but a duty we owe to the next generation, and economic growth has to go hand-in-hand with greater protection for our forests and beaches, clean air and places of outstanding natural beauty.”

[Clean Growth Strategy, Theresa May, 2017]



“We hold our natural environment in trust for the next generation. By implementing the measures in this ambitious plan, ours can become the first generation to leave that environment in a better state than we found it and pass on to the next generation a natural environment protected and enhanced for the future.”

[A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment, Theresa May, 2018]

In recognition of this LCC has recently signed up to UK 100 which commits the Council to achieving 100% clean energy by 2050.

The **UK Government's 25-year Environment Plan** recognises that ‘natural capital’ – the air we breathe, water we drink, soil we cultivate and the ecosystem we rely on – is essential to economic growth and long-term productivity. It links to many of the themes in the Clean Growth Strategy. It acknowledges that delivery of the plan will require contributions from everyone, including Local Government. Its six goals are relevant to the impacts that we need to assess as a council in providing our services and fulfilling our broad range of environmental duties and responsibilities:

Goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan

- Clean air;
- Reducing the risks of harm from environmental hazards;
- Clean and plentiful water;
- Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently;
- Thriving plants and wildlife; and
- Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment.

The Government's 25-year Environment Plan promotes the use and management of land in a sustainable manner, the enhancement and recovery of landscapes and the connection of people with the environment to promote health and wellbeing. It also promotes an increase in resource efficiency and a reduction in pollution and waste, securing a clean, productive and biologically diverse sea and ocean and protection and improvement of the global environment. It identifies that one of the key ways this will be implemented and achieved is through better local planning and more effective partnerships.

The Government continues to work on a national **Clean Air Strategy**. This is anticipated to be completed during 2018. A UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) concentrations was published in July 2017. The document notes the impact of poor air quality, not only on life expectancy but also in terms of wider health, productivity and wellbeing. It also notes the wider impact of pollution on the environment.

In the specific case of NO₂ it is noted that impacts relate to relative concentrations and therefore are very localised. It is therefore up to local authorities to develop local plans to manage and reduce NO₂ levels where it is determined to be an issue.

The **2016 State of Nature report** pools data and expertise from over 50 nature conservation and research organisations and gives a cutting edge overview of the state of nature in the UK. Its conclusions include:

- Between 1970 and 2013, 56% of species declined, with 40% showing strong or moderate declines;

- Of the nearly 8,000 species assessed using modern Red List criteria, 15% are extinct or threatened with extinction from Great Britain;
- An index describing the population trends of species of special conservation concern in the UK has fallen by 67% since 1970; and
- The UK has lost significantly more nature over the long term than the global average and is now one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world.

“Escalating pressures, such as climate change and modern land management, mean that we continue to lose the precious wildlife that enriches our lives and is essential to the health and wellbeing of those who live in the UK.”

[State of Nature Report 2016, David Attenborough]

The global scientific community is increasingly reporting on biodiversity loss of such a scale that it is considered that we are on the edge of the sixth mass extinction in Earth's history. The Zoological Society of London analysed 3,000 species and found that 50% of individual animals have been lost since 1970. The International Union for Conservation of Nature report that one in four mammals and one in eight birds face a high risk of extinction in the near future and that the rapid loss of species we are seeing today is estimated by experts to be between 1,000 and 10,000 times higher than the "background" or expected natural extinction rate.

There are a number of pieces of legislation that place particular duties on local authorities regarding the conservation, management and access to the natural environment, for example the **Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981**, **Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW)** and the **Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006**.

At a local level, the **Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan** sets out the commitment to biodiversity and habitats from 2016 to 2026 and provides a framework for action for the county as a whole.

In the context of these drivers, the increasing societal movement to protect and improve the environment and to take action on climate change as well as the Council's leadership role, it is critical that we understand the environmental impacts of our activities and the benefits of having an Environment Strategy.

This Strategy allows us to demonstrate to all our stakeholders that we are an environmentally aware, responsible and committed Council. It allows us to communicate our strategic environmental direction and our environmental aims and objectives to all stakeholders.

Having an Environment Strategy benefits us as a Council by:

- Assisting us to comply with all relevant legislation and environmental laws;
- Supporting our staff in making more sustainable choices, keeping them informed about their environmental roles and responsibilities;
- Allowing us to identify opportunities to invest in initiatives that reduce our environmental impact and, in the longer term, save us money;

- Reducing the risk of environmental incidents that result in negative local impacts;
- Supporting national and international efforts to reduce resource consumption and the generation of waste and to address the loss of biodiversity;
- Improving our reputation;
- Supporting national and international efforts in combatting the impacts of and adapting to climate change;
- Improving the tracking of our environmental performance so we can identify both progress and problems and seek to continually improve;
- Improving the way in which we deliver services to reduce our impact on the environment;
- Reducing the public health impacts of climate change and a deteriorating environment; and
- Supporting efforts to develop a more sustainable economy for Leicestershire.

The Council's overall strategic vision is to 'work together for the benefit of everyone' and to make a positive difference in the lives of the people of Leicestershire. The development of this Environment Strategy and its subsequent implementation will contribute significantly to the achievement of this vision.

The environmental issues and their context

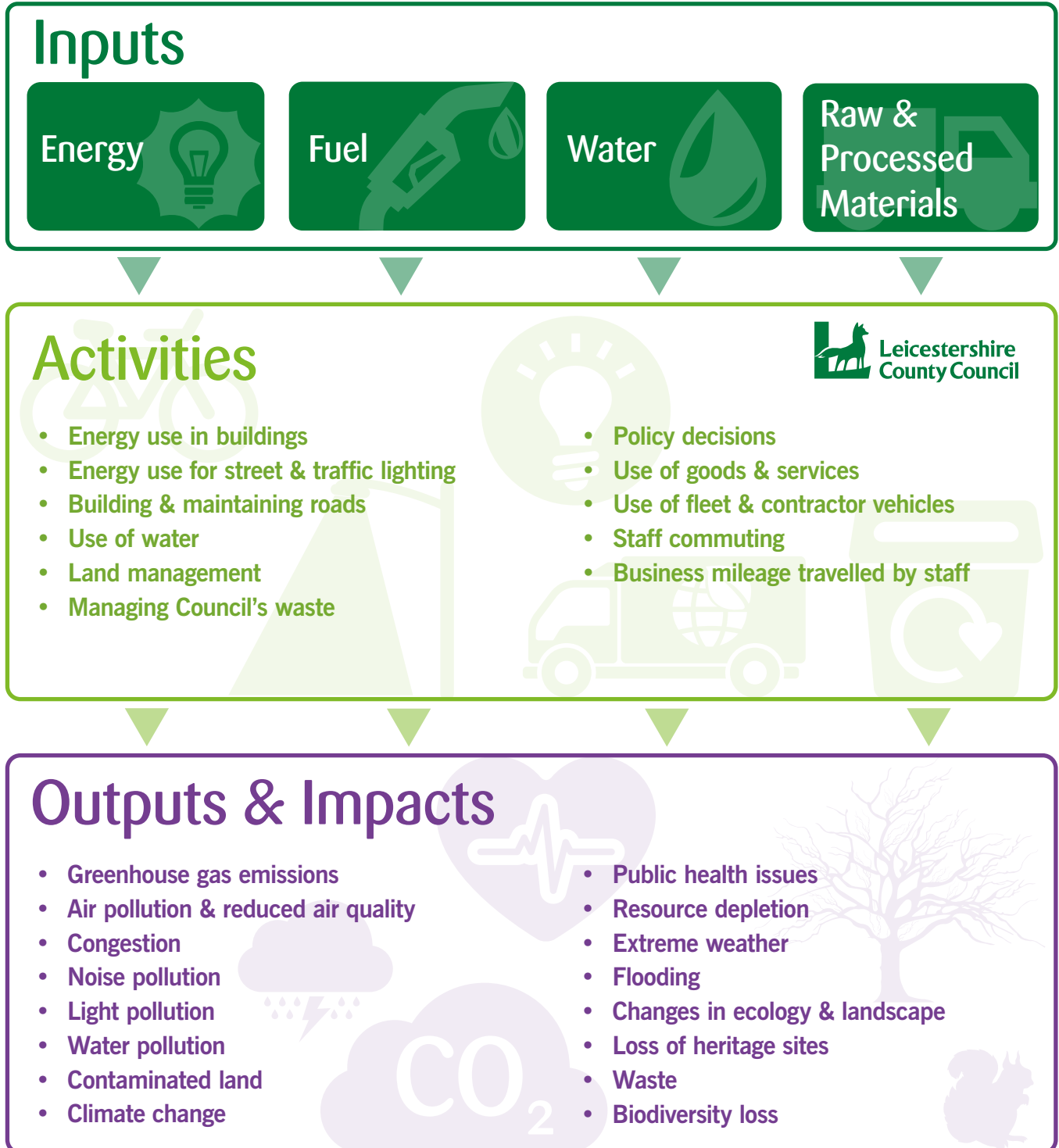
As a County Council we are responsible for:

- **Complying with legislation relating to the environmental impacts arising from our day to day activities, such as heating and powering our offices, using vehicles and generating waste;**
- **Carrying out statutory and non-statutory duties to enable effective management of certain environmental impacts arising from the activities of Leicestershire residents and businesses, such as air pollution from local transport and the reduction, recycling and disposal of household waste; and**
- **Enforcing environmental legislation on businesses, such as in relation to product packaging, banned substances and energy certificates.**

In addition to these responsibilities our actions are influenced by our wish to improve the efficiency of the Council, meet the financial challenges we are facing, be responsive to governmental policies and show leadership and provide a good example to the community.

In Figure 1 we illustrate how our use of resources and energy in the delivery of some of our Council activities has both environmental outputs and impacts.

Figure 1 Illustrative diagram of some of the adverse environmental impacts of council activities



We have carried out an assessment of the rationale for us to take action on environmental issues, taking into account our duties and responsibilities and the threats that environmental issues pose to the effective delivery of our services. This rationale is set out in Appendix 1.

Purpose of this document

The Council recognises the inter-dependency between environmental, social and economic well-being and the essential role it plays in balancing this inter-dependency through service delivery and in our wider leadership role. This Environment Strategy sets out the scope of our roles and responsibilities and states our vision, aims, objectives and targets. These will drive action to ensure we are meeting our environmental obligations, embedding environmental sustainability into the effective running of council services and fulfilling our leadership role in a way that recognises and minimises our environmental impact, improves the wellbeing of people and contributes to sustainable economic development.

Scope

The Environment Strategy recognises that the Council has different levels of control and influence in managing and protecting the environment, minimising its global environmental impacts and meeting the challenges and opportunities of climate change. The scope of the Strategy covers both the Council's own operations and also where it has control and influence within the county of Leicestershire.

The scope includes:

- The legal and statutory duties that we must fulfil regarding the environment and the national response to climate change;
- What we need to do to embed environmental sustainability into the effective and efficient running of council services; and
- What we need to do to fulfil our leadership role in a way that recognises and minimises environmental

impacts, improves the health and wellbeing of people and contributes to the sustainable economic development of the county.

The Strategy also recognises the environmental issues that affect the Council and its ability to provide services and meet its obligations. The most significant issue is that of climate change and the related impacts such as an increase in the frequency and intensity of storms, flooding and heatwaves, prolonged cold periods and changes in pests and diseases.

These impacts are expected to include; damage to infrastructure and property, making the movement of people and goods more difficult, an increase in human death, disability and injury, and greater food shortages and rising food prices.

This Strategy coordinates the Council's overall approach to environmental management, recognising that there are a number of separate strategies and plans that deliver aspects of our environmental duties, responsibilities and commitments.

This Strategy is not a static document and it will be updated every five years. This five year timeframe is consistent with 'stocktakes' as agreed in the Paris Agreement and the timeframes used for the UK Government's carbon budgets. It will allow the Strategy to respond to changes in environmental policies and the wider context and circumstances in which it operates.



Our Vision

“Leicestershire County Council will minimise the environmental impacts of its own activities and will contribute to the improvement of the wider environment through local action. We will continue to play a significant role in protecting and enhancing the environment of Leicestershire, meeting the challenges and opportunities of climate change, and seeking to embed environmental sustainability into both social and economic development in the county.”

[Leicestershire County Council]

Our Aims

Our aims define what we as Leicestershire County Council want to achieve through the Environment Strategy.

Carbon and Climate Change Impacts

- A. Reduce our own greenhouse gas emissions and those of the wider county where we have influence; and
- B. Take action to adapt to climate change and to minimise the impacts of extreme weather events across the county.

Resource Use and Low/Zero Carbon Energy

- C. Reduce resource requirements and make more sustainable use of the resources consumed;
- D. Reduce the amount of waste produced and minimise its environmental impact by applying the waste hierarchy in the priority order of: prevention, preparation for reuse, recycling, other recovery and disposal; and
- E. Increase and support wider use and generation of low/zero carbon energy.

Travel and Transport

- F. Reduce the environmental impacts of travel and transport.

Biodiversity, Habitats and Local Environment

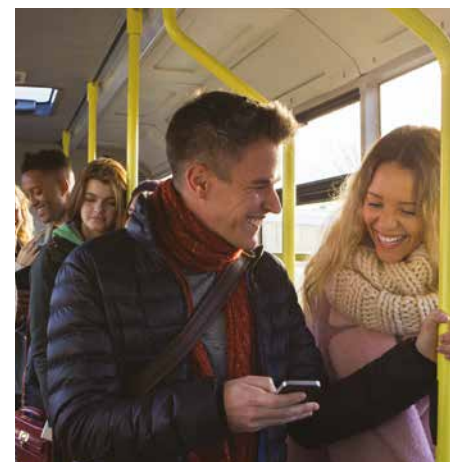
- G. Have due regard for biodiversity throughout all our activities and seek to improve the biodiversity value of our own land and influence improvements in the wider county;
- H. Support the creation, protection, enhancement and management of sustainable green infrastructure;
- I. Reduce pollution and contamination; and
- J. Conserve and enhance the character, diversity and local distinctiveness of Leicestershire landscapes and towns, and provide opportunities for public access and the enjoyment of green spaces.

Community and Wellbeing

- K. Support the Leicestershire community in reducing environmental impacts and in enhancing green infrastructure for health and wellbeing benefits;
- L. Protect people from harm caused by climate change and the deteriorating condition of the environment; and
- M. Demonstrate and promote environmental good practice to show community leadership.

Local Economy

- N. Support action for the development of a low carbon circular economy; and
- O. Support action for sustainable development and growth.



Our Objectives

The objectives support and expand upon the aims set out previously, and have been set by:

- i. Considering the environmental impacts of our actions when carrying out our responsibilities and duties and when delivering our services (internal objectives);
- ii. Considering how our actions, within the limits of our control and influence, impact on the wider environment (external objectives); and
- iii. Considering the contributions that we can provide in supporting wider national and global actions.

Our overall objectives are listed in Table 2.

Table 2 Internal and external objectives for each aim:

Aims	Internal Objectives	External Objectives
Carbon and Climate Change Impacts		
A. Reduce our own greenhouse gas emissions and those in the wider county where we have influence	A1. The Council's greenhouse gas emissions are reduced.	A2. Contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions across the County.
B. Take action to adapt to climate change and to minimise the impacts of extreme weather events across the county	B1. The Council increases its resilience to the existing and predicted changes in climate.	B2. The Council contributes to increasing the resilience of the County to the existing and predicted changes in climate.
Resource Use and Renewable Energy		
C. Reduce resource requirements and make more sustainable use of resources consumed	C1. The Council's procurement of goods, works and services is environmentally sustainable.	C3. Seek opportunities and work with partners to encourage resource efficiency across the county.
	C2. The Council improves the efficiency of the resources it uses.	

Aims	Internal Objectives	External Objectives
Resource Use and Renewable Energy (continued)		
D. Reduce the amount of waste produced and minimise its environmental impact by applying the waste hierarchy in the priority order of: prevention, preparation for reuse, recycling, other recovery, disposal	D1. The amount of waste produced from Council sites and services is minimised.	D3. Residual waste per household is reduced.
	D2. The percentage of Council waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting is increased.	D4. The percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting is increased.
E. Increase and support wider use and generation of low/zero carbon energy	E1. The Council increases its own use and generation of low/zero carbon energy.	E2. Work with partners to support the wider use of low/zero carbon energy in the County.
Travel and Transport		
F. Reduce the environmental impacts of travel and transport	F1. Reduce the mileage travelled in delivering Council operations and services.	F4. Work with partners to reduce greenhouse gas and other pollutant emissions from the local transport network.
	F2. Increase the proportion of the Council's fleet that consists of less polluting and more efficient vehicles.	
	F3. Support sustainable travel options for Council staff commuting to work.	
Biodiversity, Habitats and Local Environment		

Aims	Internal Objectives	External Objectives
G. Have due regard for biodiversity throughout all our activities and seek to improve the biodiversity value of our own land and influence improvements in the wider county	G1. Improve the biodiversity of Council managed land and assets.	G4. Work with partners to support wider biodiversity improvements across Leicestershire.
	G2. The Council will manage its land with nature conservation designations (SSSIs and LWS) to maintain their biodiversity value.	
	G3. The Council seeks to demonstrate and support environmentally sustainable farming practices on its farms.	
H. Support the creation, protection, enhancement and management of sustainable green infrastructure	H1. The Council will create, protect, enhance and manage sustainable green infrastructure on its estate.	H2. The Council will support the creation protection, enhancement and management of sustainable green infrastructure in Leicestershire.
I. Reduce pollution and contamination	I1. The Council reduces polluting emissions and contamination from its operations.	I2. The Council reduces pollution and contamination in Leicestershire through its Trading Standards service and other areas of control and influence.
J. Conserve and enhance the character, diversity and local distinctiveness of Leicestershire landscapes and towns, and provide opportunities for public access and enjoyment of green spaces	J1. The Council will respect, conserve and enhance the character, heritage and accessibility of the Leicestershire landscape on its estate.	J2. The Council will work with partners to support action that respects, conserves and enhances the character, heritage and accessibility of the Leicestershire landscape and towns.
Community and Wellbeing		

Aims	Internal Objectives	External Objectives
K. Support the Leicestershire community in reducing environmental impacts and in enhancing green infrastructure for health and wellbeing benefits	K1. Utilise opportunities through the development and delivery of council services to reduce environmental impacts and enhance green infrastructure for health and wellbeing benefits.	K2. Work with partners and communities in Leicestershire to reduce environmental impacts and enhance green infrastructure for health and wellbeing benefits.
L. Protect people from harm caused by climate change and the deteriorating condition of the environment	L1. Utilise our statutory and non-statutory duties as appropriate, to protect people from harm caused by climate change and the deteriorating condition of the environment.	L2. Work with partners to protect people from harm caused by climate change and the deteriorating condition of the environment.
M. Demonstrate and promote environmental good practice to show community leadership	M1. Embed environmental good practice into the procurement and delivery of council services.	M2. Make others aware of our environmental performance and share good practice.
Local Economy		
N. Support action for the development of a low carbon circular economy	N1. Support a low carbon circular economy through the procurement and delivery of council goods and services.	N2. Work with partners to advance opportunities that support a low carbon circular economy in Leicestershire.
O. Support action for sustainable development and growth	O1. Support sustainable development and growth through the procurement and delivery of council goods and services.	O2. Work with partners to advance opportunities that support sustainable development and growth in Leicestershire.

Environment Strategy Targets

Here we set out the high-level environmental targets of the Council for the next 12 years where possible. Where this has not been done we will work with colleagues and partners to develop targets up to 2030 and to develop additional targets for the range of environmental aspects such as resource use, biodiversity, pollution, health and wellbeing and the local economy. It is important that any targets are ambitious yet realistic and this will take further discussions, analysis and agreement to accomplish.

Achievement of these targets will be supported by a prioritised Action Plan. We will also establish a suite of supporting targets where appropriate. These will be set out within the Action Plan. Where possible, when setting the targets, a baseline of our performance as at 2016-17 has been established.

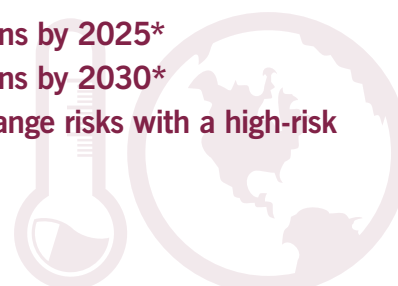
As a minimum, we aim to reduce our own GHG emissions in line with the UK Government's carbon budgets, as vital steps towards supporting the government's long-term target of an 80% reduction in GHG emissions by 2050 (measured against a 1990 baseline).

To support the government targets, we commit to:

Climate Change

- 30% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from LCC operations by 2025*
- 38% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from LCC operations by 2030*
- Continuous improvement in reducing the number of climate change risks with a high-risk score (15 or more)

* compared to 2016-17 baseline levels



In order to achieve these overall GHG emissions targets, initial supporting targets have been set for specific council operations where these emissions arise. We have also set initial additional targets that will contribute to reducing the level of GHG emissions from within Leicestershire where we have a level of control and influence to do so. As these and other targets are further developed and refined the suite of targets will be updated accordingly.

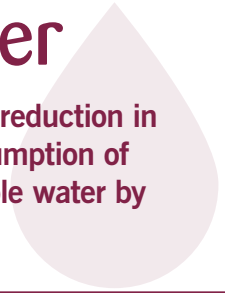
Waste

- 10% reduction in waste produced from LCC sites by 2021*
- 70% of source-separated office waste from LCC sites reused, recycled or composted by 2030
- 50% of household waste sent for reuse or recycling by 2020



Water

- 10% reduction in consumption of potable water by 2021



Transportation

- 11% reduction in total business mileage claimed by 2023*
- Improvement in greenhouse gas emissions from transport (A Roads, Minor roads and other)



Energy

- 15% of energy consumed to be from low/zero carbon energy generated on Council land and properties by 2021
- 100% clean energy by 2050
- Increased low/zero carbon energy generating capacity in Leicestershire (target TBD)



Environmental Performance

- Monitor the agreed KPIs and provide regular performance reports to internal stakeholders
- Produce an annual report on the Council's overall environmental performance



* compared to 2016-17 baseline levels

We will periodically review these targets to consider relevant updates provided by the UK Government, and ensure that the targets represent a continuous improvement in our performance.

Monitoring and managing change

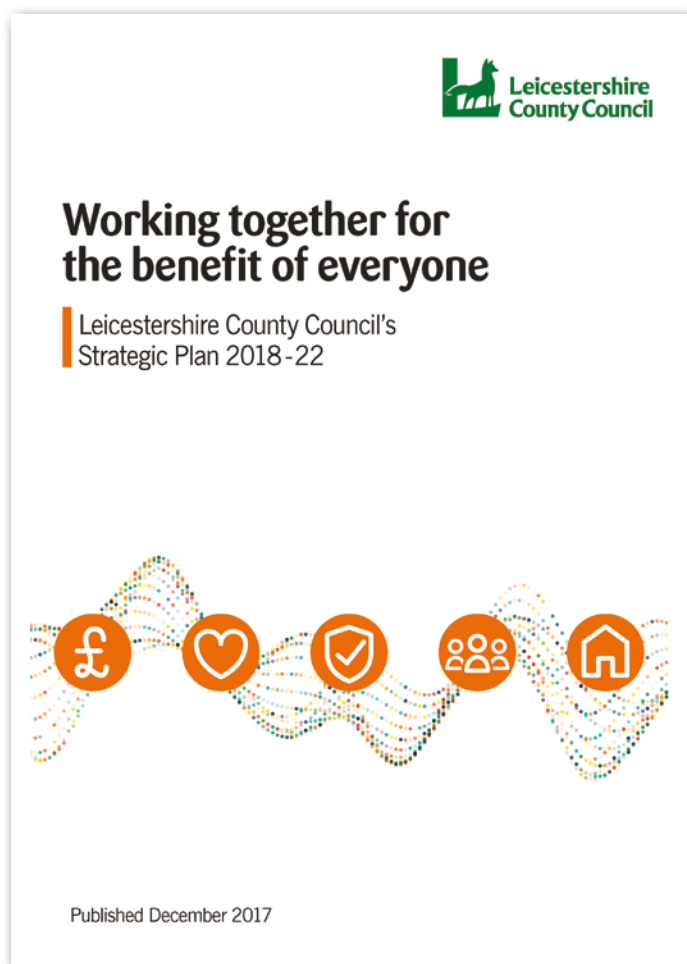
Performance monitoring of the Strategy will continue to be managed through the Council’s Environmental Management System, (which has been developed in line with ISO 14001 requirements), together with a number of supporting performance management systems. This will include performance monitoring of the high level targets set out in the Strategy and the additional supporting targets and KPIs which form part of the Action Plan.

Where targets, KPIs or monitoring systems have yet to be established these will be developed through the Action Plan process in consultation with relevant officers and partners. In particular we will develop additional targets and KPIs to support environmental aspects such as resource use, biodiversity, pollution, health and wellbeing and the local economy. This will allow the targets to be measurable and monitored throughout the life of the strategy to demonstrate progress and achievement.

Progress towards the targets using the KPI data will be regularly reported to a range of internal stakeholders. In addition, an environmental performance summary report will be published on the Council’s website each year.

How the Environment Strategy contributes to the Council's Strategic Plan

Leicestershire County Council recently launched its Strategic Plan 2018-22 entitled 'Working together for the benefit of everyone'. The Strategic Plan takes an outcome based approach which focusses on the difference the Council wants to make. In doing so it has developed five strategic outcomes essential for achieving the vision of a good quality of life in Leicestershire.



The Environment Strategy will cut across each of the strategic outcomes and will contribute to the achievement of the outcomes. The table below summarises some of the key strategy contributions:

Table 1 Key contributions of the Environment Strategy to the Strategic Plan 2018-22 outcomes.

Strategic Plan Outcome	How Environment Strategy contributes
<p>Strong Economy</p> <p>Leicestershire's economy is growing and resilient so that people and businesses can fulfil their potential.</p>	By contributing to a reduction in carbon emissions and helping to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change which are predicted to have significant negative impacts on the economy.
	By identifying local business opportunities that will arise from the move towards a low carbon future e.g. renewable energy, sustainable transport, smart technologies, research and development.
	By seeking to address concerns around energy security and energy costs by identifying opportunities for local energy generation and distribution.
	By supporting the more sustainable use of resources and greater resource efficiency and enabling reductions in costs for businesses.
	By supporting efforts that recognise the valuable contribution that the natural environment makes to the economy particularly the rural, leisure and tourism economies.
	By supporting work to reduce biodiversity loss and increase biodiversity where possible and therefore supporting the local agriculture and food industries that depend on biodiversity.
	By identifying business opportunities that will arise from the move towards a circular economy.
<p>Wellbeing and Opportunity</p> <p>The people of Leicestershire have the opportunities and support they need to take control of their health and wellbeing.</p>	By supporting the creation, protection, enhancement and accessibility of sustainable green infrastructure which provides natural environments for people to enjoy and contribute towards their health and wellbeing.
	By taking action to mitigate and adapt to climate change and therefore contribute to reducing the risks from climate change on people's health and wellbeing particularly from severe weather events and disease.
	By supporting action to improve air quality and therefore reducing the health impacts associated with poor air quality.
	By taking action which will reduce biodiversity loss and help mitigate the consequences of food shortages and related health effects.

Strategic Plan Outcome	How Environment Strategy contributes
Keeping People Safe People in Leicestershire are safe and protected from harm.	By taking action to mitigate and adapt to climate change and therefore contribute to reducing the risk of harm to people from climate change for example flooding and heatwaves.
	By supporting action to improve air quality and therefore contributing to reducing the number of deaths associated with poor air quality.
	By taking action to reduce pollution and contamination where possible and to mitigate their impact therefore reducing the risk of harm to people.
Great Communities Leicestershire communities are thriving and integrated places where people help and support each other and take pride in their local area.	By supporting communities to reduce their environmental impacts.
	By identifying opportunities for communities to support each other in mitigating and adapting to climate change.
	By working with communities to create, protect, enhance and manage local green infrastructure and biodiversity.
	By supporting communities with the move towards low emissions vehicles and technologies.
	By supporting opportunities for communities to be more self-sufficient and sustainable.
	By working with partners to support action that respects, conserves and enhances the character, heritage and accessibility of the Leicestershire landscape and towns.
Affordable and Quality Homes Leicestershire has a choice of quality homes that people can afford.	By encouraging the provision of low carbon housing which can be cheaper to build and run.
	By encouraging the construction of more sustainable and lifelong housing.
	By supporting residents to be more resource efficient in terms of energy and water use therefore reducing the cost of running a home.
	By encouraging the provision of housing that enables more sustainable access to local services, green spaces, transport and employment and minimises and/or mitigates the impact of developments on the natural environment.

In order to achieve its overall strategic vision of 'Working together for the benefit of everyone' the Council has committed to a set of guiding principles which will shape its approach and define how it works as an organisation to achieve this vision. These principles include a commitment to contribute positively to the environment. This Strategy provides a framework for how this commitment will be achieved.

Governance

Ongoing delivery of the Environment Strategy will be overseen by chief officers sitting as the Corporate Management Team (CMT).

The Environment Strategy will be implemented by the Environment Strategy Delivery Board, chaired by the Assistant Director for Environment & Waste. Board members will be drawn from relevant Heads of Service, Team Managers or officers involved directly in specific projects/initiatives set out in the Action Plan. The board will engage with external partners to support the delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan and will promote partnership working where appropriate. Membership therefore remains flexible to the priorities outlined in the Action Plan which will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Environment Strategy Delivery Board will establish project-specific task & finish groups to drive progress which will be reported to the Environment & Transport Lead Member and to CMT, while the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee will review performance periodically.

With CMT's support, specific activities and programmes of work supporting the aims and objectives of the Environment Strategy will be the responsibility of relevant service area leads. This will reflect specific actions within the different service areas and wider initiatives with strategic partners and others.



Appendix 1 Summary of Council's rationale for taking action on environmental issues

Environmental Issue	Description	Rationale for Action
Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Climate Change	<p>The release of GHG into the atmosphere, mainly from the use of fossil fuels, results in them acting as a thermal blanket around the Earth. This in turn is causing an increase in average global temperatures and resulting in changes to the climate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased risk of disruption to our critical services from extreme weather events; • Vulnerable people in the community are particularly susceptible to the effects of climate change; • Increased risk of damage to the Council's highway assets; • Support our responsibilities as the Lead Local Flood Authority; • Responsibility to play an active role in helping to meet national and international carbon reduction targets; and • Need to support the local economy in moving to a low carbon future and minimise the financial and reputational costs that would otherwise occur.

Environmental Issue	Description	Rationale for Action
Air Pollution	Increasing level of pollutants in the air that we breathe from road traffic, industrial processes and combustion of fuels for heating and electricity generation, resulting in serious public health impacts. Air pollution emanating in Leicestershire also affects people across a much wider area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased costs for Public Health due to rise in illnesses caused by air pollution. • Increased costs for Social Services supporting people living with debilitating diseases caused by air pollution. • Increase in deaths linked to air pollution. • The Council, in its role as the Highway Authority, has a statutory duty to address air pollution from traffic. • The Council contributes to local air pollution through the operation of its buildings and vehicles. • Responsibility to prevent harm.
Waste & Resources	The economy and society consume resources (e.g. energy, water, land, materials) in order to meet the needs of an increasing growing population. This consumption causes a reduction in finite resources and a loss of, and damage to, natural resources. It also results in the production of an increasing amount of waste throughout the whole system. This largely linear economic model has significant environmental impacts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is the statutory Waste Disposal Authority responsible for the recycling and disposal of the county's household waste; • The Council is responsible for preparing a Minerals and Waste Local Plan to control the development of waste and minerals sites in the county; • The Council's Trading Standards service is responsible for enforcing some waste regulations eg. Packaging Regulations; • The Council uses a significant amount of resources and produces waste both from its offices and through its operations; • It costs an increasing amount of money to manage the Council's and County's waste; and • Need to support the move to a circular economy that maximises the value of resources and minimises the environmental costs.

Environmental Issue	Description	Rationale for Action
Water & Land Pollution and Nuisance (noise, dust, vibrations, odour)	<p>The release of pollutants and contaminants into water and land can pose a major health threat to humans and biodiversity. The use of machinery, equipment and products can also cause a nuisance by creating noise, dust and other impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council carries out activities that carry a risk of spillages and subsequent pollution; • The Council is legally required to ensure the safe use of fuels and chemicals, to prevent pollution events and to have procedures in place for dealing with spillages; • Reputational and financial cost of dealing with a pollution event; and • The Council has a responsibility to avoid or minimise the nuisance caused to local people by its actions.
Biodiversity Loss	<p>There has been a major increase in the scale of biodiversity loss caused mainly by climate change, deforestation and habitat loss, overexploitation, invasive species, pesticides and pollution.</p> <p>This is also leading to a decline in ecosystem functioning and stability - resulting in reduced crop yields, increased soil erosion, loss of dependable water supplies, a decline in pollinators and ever more serious assaults by pests. This in turn leads to increased air pollution, reduced food production and a lowering of human life expectancy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has a statutory responsibility to take due regard of biodiversity in all of its decisions and activities; • The Council has specific responsibilities to care for its land where it has been designated as important for wildlife; • As a significant landowner in Leicestershire, the Council has an opportunity to make a positive contribution to biodiversity protection and improvement; • Leicestershire is a rural county and the food sector is one of the county's main industries so will be affected by any reductions in crop yields and difficulties in food production; • Leicestershire has a number of significant natural assets such as the National Forest and Charnwood Forest which contribute to the local rural, leisure and tourism economy. These need to be protected and enhanced; and • To protect Leicestershire residents from the consequences of food shortages and the health effects of biodiversity loss.

Environmental Issue	Description	Rationale for Action
Landscape & Heritage	The quality of the local landscape and the built environment are major contributors to health, wellbeing and quality of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has a responsibility to provide a quality environment for Leicestershire residents through its role as the Highways Authority, its responsibility to control waste and minerals sites and management of its own land and buildings etc; and • The Council manages several Country Parks that provide important accessible green spaces for leisure and contact with nature.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO ₂ e)	Is a standard unit for measuring carbon footprints. It expresses the impact of each different greenhouse gas in terms of the amount of CO ₂ that would create the same amount of warming.
Circular Economy	A more resource efficient alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) where resources are used for as long as possible, the maximum value is extracted whilst in use, then products and materials are recovered, regenerated or recycled at the end of their service life.
Clean Growth Strategy	The UK's strategy for clean growth including opportunities for the UK and next steps to meet the future carbon budgets.
Climate Change Act 2008	The Act ensures that the net UK carbon account for all six Kyoto greenhouse gases for the year 2050 is at least 80% lower than the 1990 baseline. The Act aims to enable the United Kingdom to become a low-carbon economy and gave ministers powers to introduce the measures necessary to achieve a range of greenhouse gas reduction targets.
Climate Change Risk Register Score	All Council services and operations are subject to a Climate Change Risk Assessment based on a number of factors including criticality of the service, direct impacts from severe weather and vulnerable service users. The Climate Change Risk Register score is used to highlight any high risks to be reviewed further.
Climate Local	Climate Local was an LGA initiative launched in 2012 which was supported by the Environment Agency Climate Ready service. The aim was to drive, inspire and support council action on climate change.
Environmental Management System	Refers to the management of an organisations environmental programmes in a comprehensive, systematic, planned and documented manner. In the UK, the Environmental Management Systems standard is based on ISO 14001.

Term	Definition
Euro VI standard	The most recent vehicle emissions standard which sets the level of emissions of carbon dioxide and a range of other pollutants that all new cars must meet.
Greenhouse Gases	Constitute a group of gases which contribute to global warming and climate change. Includes carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, sulphur hexafluoride, perfluorocarbons, and nitrogen trifluoride.
Green Infrastructure	The network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities. We also include 'blue infrastructure' (landscape elements linked to water) within our use of this phrase.
International Union for Conservation of Nature	A membership Union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.
ISO 14001	Is the international standard that specifies requirements for an effective environmental management system. It provides a framework that an organisation can follow, rather than establishing environmental performance requirements.
Low Carbon Economy	An economy based on low carbon power sources that therefore has a minimal output of greenhouse gas emissions into the biosphere, reducing the principle cause of man-made climate change.
Natural Capital	The world's stock of natural assets which includes geology, soil, air, water and all living things.
Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change	A declaration signed by over 300 councils in the year 2000 signalling their political commitment to tackling climate change.
Paris Agreement	Is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) dealing with greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance starting in 2020. It aims to respond to the global climate change threat by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.
Potable Water	Water that is safe to drink or to use for food preparation.
Sustainable Development Goals	In 2015, countries adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Each goal has specific targets to be achieved over the next 15 years. These goals are known as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Acronyms

CMT	Corporate Management Team
CO ₂	Carbon Dioxide
CO ₂ e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
CRoW	Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000
EMS	Environmental Management System
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LCC	Leicestershire County Council
LED	Light Emitting Diode
LWS	Local Wildlife Sites
NERC	Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TBD	To Be Developed

