



**ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 4 MARCH 2021**

**ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT PERFORMANCE
REPORT TO DECEMBER 2020**

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

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the latest performance update on the key performance indicators that E&T are responsible for delivering against the Council's Strategic Plan up to December 2020.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The updates in this report reflect progress against the Council's Strategic Outcomes Framework within the Strategic Plan to 2022; and the Environment and Transport performance framework and related high-level plans and strategies. Revised and updated versions of the Strategic Plan and Environment Strategy were agreed at the County Council meeting in July 2020 and place greater emphasis on delivery of environmental priorities. The refreshed documents have also informed updating of the performance framework and indicators in this report.

Background

3. The report highlights how a variety of indicators are performing against the Council's key outcomes: Strong Economy, Wellbeing, Keeping People Safe, Great Communities, Affordable and Quality Homes and supporting corporate enablers.
4. The performance dashboards include several indicators where the Council does not have direct or a lot of control of delivery, such as for air and river quality and biodiversity. They have been included to provide greater oversight of the environment and help understand what life is like in Leicestershire and include a mixture of national and locally developed performance indicators. Measuring these may highlight areas for scrutiny of other agencies delivery or the need for lobbying to influence government policy and funding. It is expected action by a range of agencies will improve a number of these metrics over time. Internal indicators, where the Council has the most control, are in bold within the performance dashboards in Appendix B.

5. The Council monitors and assesses its performance by considering its RAG rating, direction of travel (DOT) and quartile position when compared to other English Counties.
6. For each indicator reported the dashboard shows information on the latest data against the previous update and target (if available), the RAG rating (Red, Amber or Green) if applicable (see definitions of RAG ratings in Appendix A), the DOT, the trend, and the comparison quartile position, where available.
7. Improvement or deterioration in performance is indicated by the DOT on the performance dashboard. For example, if the number of road casualties has fallen the DOT will show a green arrow pointing upwards. If the indicator does not have a DOT arrow, this is because no update is available. This may be due to the time taken to obtain data from third parties and calculate the results or because some indicators are updated less frequently e.g. annually.
8. The Council's performance is benchmarked against 33 English authorities which covers large, principally non-urban geographical areas. Where it is available the performance dashboards within Appendix B indicate which quartile Leicestershire's performance falls into. The Council's quartile position provides insight into how this indicator compares to other county councils in England. The 1st quartile is defined as performance that falls within the top 25% of county councils (the best). The 4th quartile is defined as performance that falls within the bottom 25% of county councils (the worst). The comparison quartiles are updated annually.
9. The frequency in which the indicators are reported varies; some are quarterly, others are annual, and some data even less frequent. In many cases there is at least a data lag of two quarters or more. For clarity, the time-period the data covers is contained in the performance dashboards (Appendix B).

Performance Update – latest data to December 2020

10. The quarterly performance dashboard shows Environment and Transport performance up to December 2020. Overall, there are 38 performance indicators included in this report which are aligned with the Council's Strategic Plan Outcomes. They are presented in the E&T performance dashboards (Appendix B). This report focuses on the indicators that have been updated, which is 31 this quarter. Where DOT is available: 18 show performance improvements, nine had declined and four remained the same as the previous update.
11. Where comparative performance is available the Council is in the top quartile for 14 indicators (listed in Appendix B with green 1st quartile positions). The Council is in the bottom quartile for two indicators; 'The percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill' and 'the percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+ (existing)'.

12. The updates that follow focus on indicators that either haven't met their target, have seen a decline in performance or notable good performance.

Strong Economy – Transport & Green Economy

13. This outcome includes indicators that support a greener economy in addition to the typical transport and highways indicators that have been historically reported on. Within this outcome 13 indicators were updated in quarter 3. Where targets are set six indicators had met their targets and three had not yet achieved them. The latest NHT data release which allows comparison of the Authority's performance with other English County Council's revealed strong performance for transport and highways indicators with eight indicators in the top quartile (the best). Only four indicators within this outcome performed below average (3rd or 4th quartile). (See Appendix B).
14. Six indicators saw an improvement in performance within this outcome, represented by green DOT arrows in the dashboards, five have declined in performance and two have remained the same.
15. Of the indicators that received an update six have so far met their target, which include both indicators for percentage of principal and non-principal road network where structural maintenance should be considered and 'Overall satisfaction with local bus services', 'Local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area', 'Overall satisfaction with Rights of Way network (NHT)' and 'Average vehicle speed – weekday morning peak on locally managed 'A' roads'.
16. The following updated indicators have shown a noteworthy change in performance since the previous update.
17. The 'Number of park and ride journeys' has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 crisis. Journeys have increased since the previous update from 1,490 in quarter 1 to 15,933 in quarter 2, which are both significantly below normal pre-pandemic levels of on average 230,000 journeys per quarter.
18. The 'Overall satisfaction with cycle routes & facilities (NHT survey)' saw a slight decline in performance due to a change in satisfaction from 38% (2019/20) to 34% (2020/21) resulting in missing its 47% target. Despite this, performance remains in the top quartile when compared to other English County Councils for 2020. The Council is progressing a new Walking and Cycling Strategy to seek further improvements in this area.
19. A notable improvement in performance is for the 'Overall satisfaction with the Rights of Way network (NHT survey)' as satisfaction increased from 46% (2019/20) to 54% (2020/21) resulting in improved performance and meeting its target (53%). It remains in the top quartile when compared to other English Counties. During the Covid-19 crisis in 2020 more people walked generally and were likely to have more fully utilised the Rights of Way network in their area, which could have positively contributed to this result.
20. The 'Overall satisfaction with the condition of pavements & footpaths (NHT survey)' also saw an improvement in performance since the previous year from 62%

(2019/20) to 65% (2020/21), which may have also been a consequence of people walking more in their locality during the Covid-19 crisis. This indicator remains in the top quartile for 2020.

21. The '% of businesses saying that a reduction in traffic congestion would significantly benefit their business' increased from 28% in 2017 to 53% in 2020. This implies that respondents believe congestion has become more of a concern since the previous survey results. Please note however that the LLEP business survey had slightly reworded their question on their recent survey, though it fundamentally asked the same thing than in the previous survey.
22. Perceptions on traffic congestion is also gathered by the NHT survey and results for 2020 showed an improvement on the year from 32% (2019/20) to 40% (2020/21) for 'Overall satisfaction with traffic levels & congestion'. This contrasts with the past four years where satisfaction had steadily declined. It now falls in the top quartile when compared to other English County Councils. This improvement is also likely to have been influenced by the reduction of traffic on Leicestershire roads during 2020, particularly during periods of lockdown as well as the implementation of a number of major road schemes aimed at helping to reduce congestion levels at key well used pinch-points on the network.
23. 'Electric vehicle ownership – Ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) rate/10,000 population' improved in performance as ownership increased from 34/10,000 in quarter 2 to 39/10,000 in quarter 3 resulting in an increase of 5.6% over the quarter and a significant 43% increase since the same period last year. This demonstrates an increasing momentum of people moving from fossil fuelled vehicles to more sustainable electric alternatives. However, Leicestershire remains in the third quartile (below average) when compared to other Counties for 2020
24. 'NO2 exceedances for Leicestershire' declined from eight in 2018 to three in 2019 demonstrating an improvement in air quality performance. Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is a gas that is mainly produced during the combustion of fossil fuels. During 2019 the UK experienced slower economic growth which may have contributed to a reduction in the production of NO₂ via fewer emissions from cars, trucks and buses, power plants, and off-road equipment within the locality. As previously mentioned, electric vehicle ownership has also increased over recent years, which may also have contributed to reduced NO₂.

Wellbeing – Air Quality

25. There are no updates to report against within this outcome this quarter. An update on the quartile position for 'PM 2.5 air pollution fine particulate matter' is expected in the next few months.

Keeping People Safe – Road Safety

26. The department continues to support the Keeping People Safe outcome primarily through its road safety initiatives. In quarter 3 six indicators were updated. Both of

the indicators with targets, 'Total casualties on Leicestershire roads' and the 'Number of people killed or seriously injured' and had met their targets. Of the five indicators with quartile comparisons four of them performed well and all five are in the top quartile when compared to other English County Councils. Since the previous update, all indicators had improved in performance except for the 'Number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI), walking, cycling & motorcycles (excluding cars)'. The road casualty data should be treated with a degree of caution due to the possibility of underreporting of accidents following changes to police reporting procedures (This was reported to this committee in more detail in the 'Road casualty reduction in Leicestershire' report on 4 June 2020 with an updated position being reported to this meeting).

27. Good performance was noted for the 'Total casualties on Leicestershire roads' which fell by 19% since the previous quarter, which is likely to reflect the reduced volumes of road vehicles and therefore road accidents on Leicestershire's roads during lockdown periods in 2020. In contrast however, 'The number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) walking, cycling & motorcycling (excluding cars) rose by 5% since the previous update' which might be expected to some extent as more people substituted using their vehicles in favour of walking and cycling during 2020.
28. 'Environmental risks managed' reduced by 58% since the previous year falling from 12 to 5 in 2019/20. The Department has adopted an ambitious zero target for this indicator that they don't anticipate will be achieved for several years, since significant investment is required to reduce the remaining environmental risks to zero. Over the past decade risks have been reduced from 100 to the current rate demonstrating excellent performance over time. This was reported in more detail to the Committee as part of the Environmental Performance Report 2019-20 in January 2021.

Great Communities – Waste, Energy and Winter Maintenance

29. The Department supports the Great Communities outcome through its waste management, energy initiatives and winter maintenance. Of the five indicators updated in quarter 3 two indicators have improved in performance, two indicators have declined in performance and one indicator has remained the same. Indicators that met their targets were 'CO₂ emissions per capita (in LA influence)' and 'Winter gritting'. Three waste indicators, the 'percentage of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling or composting', the 'percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill' and 'Total household waste per household' had not met targets. Of the seven quartiles available covering all these indicators all performed below average when compared to other English County Councils. Many of these comparisons cover 2018/19 data, more up-to-date comparison data is expected in the next few months.
30. The 'percentage of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling or composting' fell slightly from 46% in quarter 4 to 44% in quarter 1 (data is two quarters in arrears) and missed its 50% target. It lies within the 3rd quartile position (2018/19). The indicator has not met target due to: national

issues, seasonal fluctuations in garden waste, economic factors, as well as issues specific to Leicestershire such as the closure of the Cotesbach Mechanical Biological Treatment plant (MBT) and service changes across the county. Most of the factors identified are beyond the sole control of the Council, limiting the opportunity to mitigate the impacts.

31. The 'percentage of local authority collected waste landfilled' improved slightly from 32% in quarter 4 to 31% in quarter 1 and has nearly met its 30% target. This indicator had experienced a loss of alternative (non-landfill) disposal points, which was outside of the Council's control. The authority has negotiated an increase in the amount of waste delivered to alternative disposal points which is expected to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill in future years. Performance against this indicator remained in the 4th quartile in 2018/19, with an update expected in the next few months.
32. Performance improved slightly for 'Renewable energy generated in the area (MWh)' by 1% since the previous year. After four years of improved performance for this indicator it now appears to be levelling off. In 2019 this fell into the 3rd quartile when compared to other English County Councils. The Council does not have direct control over this but does support a range of energy initiatives throughout the County e.g. financial support for biomass boilers for community groups and services.

Affordable and Quality Homes

33. As part of supporting the Council's Affordable and Quality Homes outcome the Council monitors both the energy efficiency of new and existing homes within the County. The latest data shows that 98% of new homes are relatively energy efficient compared to older homes where only 37% are energy efficient. Recent comparisons (2020) with other English County Councils show that the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance certificate rating C+ (existing homes)' falls within the 4th (bottom) quartile and 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance certificate rating C+ (new homes)' falls within the 1st (top) quartile, indicating that existing homes in the County would benefit from more energy efficient incentives. The Authority does not have direct control over this and further improvement may well be contingent on national programmes such as grant schemes to improve insulation and energy efficiency.

Corporate Enabler: County Council Environmental Impact

34. The Department supports the Corporate Enabler outcome largely through its environmental initiatives. Seven indicators were updated in quarter 3. Overall nine indicators had met target and only one had not. Five indicators had improved in performance, one had declined in performance and one remained the same. The Council continues to show good overall performance for most indicators within this outcome.

35. The '% of waste recycled from LCC sites (non-operational)' declined in performance slightly since the previous update from 60.5% (Q1 2020/21) to 59.1% (Q2 2020/21) and just missed its target of 62.3%. Measures are in place to improve future performance.
36. The Authority has performed well on reducing its 'Tonnes of waste produced from LCC sites' as waste fell by 18% since the previous update and 'Total business miles claimed' also fell by 17% since the previous update. As these results covered quarter 2 and quarter 1 respectively, it is likely that these reductions are likely to have been influenced by the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis alongside the Councils improvement initiatives, as there were fewer staff generating waste in Council offices and sites and fewer staff travelling for work.

Background papers

Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Outcomes Framework and Strategic Plan 2018-22.

NHT (National Highways & Transport Network) Survey results for 2020.

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

There are no specific equal opportunities implications to note as part of this performance report.

Appendices

Appendix A. Definitions of RAG ratings.

Appendix B. Strategic Plan Performance Dashboards by Outcomes (Environment and Transport Performance) to December 2020.

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