

**HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
3 NOVEMBER 2022**

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22

**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 Highways & Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an Annual Performance update on the key performance indicators that the Council is responsible for delivering against the Council's Strategic Plan. Most performance indicators included in this report are reported by the Highways & Transport sections of the Environment & Transport Department, the National Highways and Transport Network (NHT) satisfaction survey results and some are published by government. They include the pre-refreshed indicators that were selected as part of the Strategic Plan 2018-2022.

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 Highways & Transport (H&T) performance framework and related high-level plans and strategies.

Background

3. This report highlights how the Strategic Plan indicators are performing against the Council's key outcomes, Strong Economy and Keeping People Safe, and includes highlights for the year.
4. This report includes Appendix A, containing a performance dashboard covering performance indicator progress within the Council's Annual Report 2021/22 performance compendium. The performance dashboard includes some indicators where the Council does not have direct or a lot of control of delivery, such as satisfaction with local bus services, perception of traffic levels, and congestion. They have been included to provide greater oversight of the wider H&T outcomes in Leicestershire and to help to understand what life is like in the County. They 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 that action by a range of agencies will improve a number of these metrics over time.
5. The Council's performance is benchmarked against 33 authorities which cover large, principally non-urban, geographical areas. Where it is available, the dashboards

indicate which quartile Leicestershire's performance falls into. The 1st quartile is defined as performance that falls within the top 25% of county areas (the best). The 4th quartile is defined as performance that falls within the bottom 25% of county areas (the worst). The comparison quartiles are updated annually in November.

6. Improvement or deterioration in performance is indicated by the Direction of Travel (DOT) on the performance dashboard. For example, if the number of road casualties has fallen the DOT will show an arrow pointing upwards representing an improvement in performance.
7. Appendix B contains a draft of the Transport & Highways highlights (up to October 2022) and once finalised it will be included in the Council's Annual Delivery Report, which will go forward to the Cabinet and the Council in due course.

Performance Update – Annual Report 2021/22

8. The Annual Report dashboard shows H&T performance up to March 2022. Overall, there are 17 performance indicators included in this report which are aligned with the Council's Strategic Plan Outcomes (2018-22). The dashboard in Appendix A shows: the indicator description, the quartile position, the direction of travel of performance, end of year data, target/standard (if applicable), the previous end of year data, polarity (whether a high or low number is good performance), and commentary.
9. Where a direction of travel is available: seven show improvements, nine had declined and one remained the same as the previous update.
10. The Council performs extremely well compared to other English county councils with 12 performance indicators falling within the top quartile. These include: 'Percentage of principal (A class) road network where structural maintenance should be considered', 'Overall satisfaction with the condition of highways (NHT satisfaction survey)', 'Overall satisfaction with traffic levels and congestion', 'Overall satisfaction with local bus services (NHT)', 'Overall satisfaction with cycle routes and facilities (NHT)', 'Overall satisfaction with the condition of pavements and footpaths (NHT)', 'Overall satisfaction with the Rights of Way network (NHT)', 'Total casualties on Leicestershire roads', 'Number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents (KSIs)', 'Total casualties involving road users, walking cycling & motorcyclists (excluding cars)', 'Number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI), walking cycling & motorcyclists (excluding cars)' and 'Road safety satisfaction (NHT)'. Only 'Local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area (millions)' had fallen in the bottom quartile when compared to other English county councils.

Highways and Transport

Strategic Transport Infrastructure (Strong Economy Outcome)

11. Leicestershire has an excellent record on road condition and continues to have some of the best maintained roads in the country. The Council was amongst the highest rated county councils for satisfaction with condition of highways in the NHT Public Satisfaction survey in 2021, in the top quartile. The 'Percentage of the principal (A) class roads within the road network for where structural maintenance should be considered' remained relatively static at 2% during 2021/22 and has met its 2-4% target range. Maintaining this at 2% demonstrates continued good performance.

Good performance is further supported by the fact that this indicator remains in the top quartile when compared to other English county councils in 2020/21.

12. The 'Percentage of the non-principal (B & C) class roads where structural maintenance should be considered' improved in performance as it declined from 4% in 2020/21 to 3% in 2021/22 and is fewer than its target. However, the long-term trend is still one of a declining road condition with more roads needing structural maintenance and the department is expecting further decline in future performance as decreasing funding available for road maintenance is expected to result in greater challenges to maintaining these roads. In terms of how this indicator compares against other English county councils it has dropped into the 2nd quartile for 2020/21, this is the first decline in the Council's quartile position since 2016/17, although it continues to remain above average performance. The data is derived from surveys to a quarter of the road network therefore in reality the trend needs to be considered over a 4+ year timescale.
13. The latest update for 'Overall satisfaction with the condition of highways,' derived from the NHT Survey Report 2021 declined by 5 percentage points from 37% in 2020 to 32% in 2021, which is the first decline in performance since 2017. Despite appearing a low figure, low satisfaction levels are typical across the country, and the Council remains significantly above the average satisfaction scores for other participating authorities and in the top quartile for 2021.

Traffic speeds and public perceptions (Strong Economy Outcome)

14. Average vehicle speeds are used as a proxy measure for peak time congestion. The 'Average vehicle speeds during the morning peak (7am-10am) on locally managed 'A' roads in Leicestershire' indicator showed an increase in average speed from 31.1mph in 2019 to 32.5 mph in 2020. This increase is almost certainly because of reduced traffic levels due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Data covers the academic year. This indicator falls within the 3rd quartile in 2020, below average, when compared to other English county councils.
15. Satisfaction with traffic levels and congestion is derived from the NHT satisfaction survey. The NHT Public Satisfaction Survey collects public perspectives on, and satisfaction with, H&T Services in Local Authority areas. The 'Overall satisfaction with traffic levels and congestion (NHT)' saw a small decline in performance (2 percentage points fall) as satisfaction levels fell from 40% in 2020 to 38% in 2021. This is slightly above the typical satisfaction rate of 37% since 2016. Traffic levels in 2021 increased which may have contributed to lower satisfactions levels. Despite this small dip in performance, it remains in the top quartile when compared to other English county councils in 2021.

Sustainable travel (Strong Economy Outcome)

16. 'Local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area (millions)' increased by 84% from 3.8 million in 2020/21 to 7 million in 2021/22 demonstrating the beginning of a return to more typical pre-pandemic behaviours however, this is still only about half of the pre-pandemic journeys undertaken. Passenger numbers started to increase more from the middle of the year onward but were particularly low at the beginning of the year due to the various stages of the Covid-19 pandemic. This

indicator remains in the fourth (bottom quartile) when compared to other English county councils in 2020/21.

17. Results from the 2021 NHT survey show that satisfaction with local bus services has declined again slightly from 57% in 2020 to 54% in 2021. Satisfaction with bus services has been declining since 2016. Despite this slight decline in performance, it remains in the top quartile when compared to other English county councils for 2021.
18. The 'Number of park and ride journeys' increased by a significant 464% from 65,629 journeys in 2020/21 to 369,990 journeys in 2021/22, showing signs of recovery. Passenger numbers were significantly impacted by the pandemic, the data shows that more people have returned to the park and ride services increasingly over the past 12 months. However, this is still a long way from its pre-pandemic normal of 882,601 total journeys in 2019/20.
19. The 'Overall satisfaction with cycle routes & facilities (NHT)' was the only NHT Key Performance Indicator within the corporate set that saw an improvement in satisfaction and performance having increased by 4 percentage points from 34% in 2020 to 38% in 2021. It remains in the top quartile when compared to other English county councils in 2021.
20. The 'Overall satisfaction with the condition of pavements and footpaths (NHT)' declined in performance as satisfaction fell from 65% in 2020 to 62% in 2021 (3 percentage points fall). The Council remained significantly above the average satisfaction scores for participating authorities and remains in the top quartile when compared to other English county councils in 2021.
21. The 'Overall satisfaction with the rights of way network (NHT)' declined in performance as satisfaction fell from 54% in 2020 to 50% in 2021 (4 percentage points fall). Despite this decline it remains in the top quartile when compared to other English county councils for 2021.
22. The Authority monitors the impact of transport on carbon emissions within the County. Whilst it has limited control, where possible it does seek to improve green outcomes for Leicestershire through a variety of schemes, initiatives, and internal ways of working. The most recent update for 'Carbon emissions (estimates) from transport within LA influence (Kt)' showed a large improvement in performance as emissions fell by a noteworthy 17% from 1,210 Kt in 2019 to 1,005 Kt in 2020. This data is two years in arrears, and it is significantly influenced by the large reduction of vehicles on the roads during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns in 2020. Under non-pandemic circumstances, it would be expected to see a decline in emissions equal to or fewer than 2.5% in 2020 based on the previous four years data. The average pre-pandemic rate between 2013 to 2019 was 1,209 Kt which was significantly higher than the 2020 results. It continues to perform above average when compared to other English county councils (2nd quartile in 2020). This data is sourced from the published subset from the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

Road Safety (Keeping People Safe Outcome)

23. Overall, Leicestershire is a high performing authority which is reflected in the fact that all five road casualty indicators are in the top quartile when compared to other English county councils, for the latest data (2020 and 2021). While every effort is

made to capture collision data as accurately as possible, there are factors outside of the control of the Council that can affect data quality. For a collision report to be submitted to the Council, it must relate to a collision either attended by a Police Officer or reported to a police station. Only in these circumstances will the Police send a collision report to the Council for validation. The Road Casualty Reduction in Leicestershire report covered casualty data in more detail in March 2022 for this committee. The annual results have been included in the paragraphs below.

24. There was a 5% increase in 'Total casualties on Leicestershire roads' from 878 in 2020 to 925 in 2021, demonstrating a decline in performance. This rise in casualties is likely to reflect the increase in vehicles on the County's roads in 2021 following the lockdowns in 2020. Over the longer term this indicator has performed well, and the latest result is lower (performing better) than the pre-pandemic average level from 2015 to 2019 which was approximately 1,368 casualties. It remained in the top quartile compared to other English county councils for 2020. The data should be treated with a degree of caution due to possible underreporting of accidents following changes to police reporting procedures in 2017 (reported to the Highways & Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the 'Road casualty reduction in Leicestershire' report in March 2022) and some issues with the new reporting of collisions in the Police Pronto System earlier this year which could have underreported on casualties. The Police are trialling new methods to ensure more accurate reporting of road accidents in the future.
25. The 'Number of people killed or seriously injured (KSIs)' on Leicestershire roads improved in performance slightly as the number of KSIs fell from 208 in 2020 to 203 in 2021. This is below the pre-pandemic average of 216 casualties (2015 to 2019). The Council was in the top quartile compared to other English county councils in 2020. Similarly to the above, this data should be treated with caution.
26. 'Total casualties involving road users, walking cycling & motorcyclists (excluding cars)' increased from 234 in 2020 to 253 in 2021 resulting in an 8% decline in performance. This remains fewer than the average pre-pandemic level (since 2015), which was 370 annual casualties. The Council remained in the top quartile compared to other English county councils in 2020. Similarly, to the above, this data should be treated with caution.
27. The 'Number of people killed or seriously injured (KSIs), walking, cycling & motorcyclists (excluding cars)' increased from 88 in 2020 to 104 in 2021 resulting in an 18% decline in performance. Traffic levels started to return to more typical pre-pandemic levels in 2021, especially in comparison to the previous year, and this may have been a contributing factor as vulnerable road users were encountering more vehicles on the roads than during lockdowns which raised the probability of more road incidents. The 2021 KSI result is the same as the average pre-pandemic total since 2015, suggesting KSI rates have returned to what is expected in a typical year. Similarly to the above, this data should be treated with caution.
28. The road safety satisfaction indicator declined in performance slightly as levels fell from 59% in 2020 to 57% in 2021. This is likely to be directly linked to the increase in traffic on County roads in 2021 compared to the very low traffic levels in 2020. It remains in the top quartile when compared to other English county councils for 2021, which reflects the Council's continued efforts in ensuring all its schemes promote good road safety.

Background papers

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

Road Casualty Reduction Report 2022 (Data covers 2020)

National Highways and Transport Network (NHT) satisfaction survey 2021, Available on request.

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

There are no equality or human rights implications.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Highways & Transport Annual Report Performance Dashboard, 2021/22

Appendix B – Highways & Transport Annual Report highlights (up to October 2022).

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