

**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 10 NOVEMBER 2022**

**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE 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 Environment and Climate Change 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. Many of the performance indicators included in this report are reported by the Environment Branch of the Environment and Transport Department and several are published by the 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 2018-2022, the environment performance framework and related high-level plans and strategies.

Background

3. This report highlights how a variety of indicators are performing against the Council's key outcomes: Strong Economy, Wellbeing and Opportunity, Keeping People Safe, Great Communities, Affordable and Quality Homes, as well as supporting corporate enablers and includes highlights for the year.
4. A performance dashboard that forms part of the Council's Annual Report 2021/22 Performance Compendium has been appended to this report at Appendix A. The performance dashboards include several indicators for which the Council does not have direct control of delivery, such as for air quality and river quality. These indicators have been included to provide a broader picture of the local environment and comprise a mix of national and locally developed metrics. Reviewing these may highlight areas for scrutiny of delivery by other agencies 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 first quartile is

defined as performance that falls within the top 25% of county areas (the best). The fourth quartile is defined as performance that falls within the bottom 25% of county areas (the worst). The comparison quartiles are updated annually each November.

6. Improvement or deterioration in performance is indicated by the 'direction of travel' arrows on the performance dashboard. For example, if tonnes of carbon emissions from County Council buildings reduces, the direction of travel arrow will point upwards representing an improvement in performance.
7. Appendix B contains a draft of the Environment and Climate Change highlights and once finalised it will be included in the Council's Annual Delivery Report, which will go forward to the Cabinet and Council in due course.
8. Where possible 2021/22 annual data is provided, however there are exceptions where annual data is more infrequent or there are delays in data provision. The performance dashboard in Appendix A provides details of timings of data for each indicator.

Performance Update – Annual Report 2021/22

9. The Annual Report dashboard shows performance for Environment and Climate Change performance up to March 2022. Overall, there are 26 performance indicators included in this report which are aligned with the Council's Strategic Plan Outcomes up to the end of March 2022. However, this report does not cover the refreshed Key Performance Indicators set for the latest Council Plan 2022-26, as they had not been adopted in 2021/22. The dashboards in Appendix A show: the indicator description, the quartile position, the direction of travel of performance, end of year data, target/standard; the previous end of year data, polarity (whether a high or low number is good performance) and commentary.
10. Where a direction of travel is available: 17 show improvements, three have declined and three remain similar to the previous year.
11. Where comparative data is available, the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+ (new homes)' is in the top quartile in 2021/22. Both indicators covering the 'Annual percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill' and 'Electric vehicle charging location per 100,000 population' were in the bottom quartile (fourth quartile) when compared to other English county councils.

Environment and Waste

Waste Management (Great Communities and Corporate Enablers)

12. The following waste performance indicators support the Council's 'Great Communities' outcome except for the two internal waste indicators which cover waste produced by the County Council and support the 'Corporate Enablers' outcome.
13. 'The total household waste per household' declined slightly from 1020kg in 2020/21 to 1014kg in 2021/22 and while this is a positive movement, it results in static performance (less than 1% decline). Household waste is lower than the recent 10-year average of 1071kg. In comparison to other county councils, Leicestershire's performance was below average (in the third quartile in 2020/21).

14. 'Tonnes of waste produced from LCC sites' has almost doubled in 2021/22 since the previous year, from 133 tonnes in 2020/21 to 263 tonnes in 2021/22. This is likely due to more office-based staff returning to their office in contrast to 2020/21 where many officers worked at home during the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite this decline in performance this indicator has met its 399 tonnes target.
15. The 'Annual percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill' has reduced from 28% in 2020/21 to 25% in 2021/22 resulting in an improvement in performance which has met its 30% target. This is due to the Council having negotiated an increase in the amount of waste delivered to different disposal points which diverts waste that would have been landfilled into alternative treatment. This approach is expected to help reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill in future years. Leicestershire is in the fourth quartile for this indicator compared to other English county councils for 2020/21.
16. The 'Percent of waste recycled from LCC sites (non-operational)' improved in performance since the previous update from 48% in 2020/21 to 60% in 2021/22, although missed its target of 63.23%. During 2021/22, more staff returned to their offices and places of work compared to the previous year when the Covid-19 pandemic limited employees working in their usual workplace. As a result, more waste was being generated in Council sites and, consequently, more has been recycled.
17. The 'Percentage of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling or composting' remained static at 43% in 2021/22 since the previous year and has missed its 50% target. Compared to other county councils, Leicestershire is below average (in the third quartile 2020/21). During the year, the Council continued to support residents in reducing their waste through the SHIRE environment grants, which supported projects to minimise household waste and encouraged reuse in order to reduce the amount of waste thrown away. The Council offered a range of educational activities to promote waste reduction, recycling and reuse (see Appendix B for further Annual Report highlights).
18. 'Total fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 population' increased from 5.5 in 2019/20 to 8.6 in 2020/21. Despite this decline in performance this indicator performs above average when compared to other English county councils in 2020/21.

Renewable energy

19. The 'Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) deployment data (Domestic) per 10,000 population' provides a useful insight into how sustainable Leicestershire households are in terms of heating. It improved in performance by 16% in 2020/21 since the previous year as it increased from 18 (2020/21) to 21 (2021/22) per 10,000 population. Since this is beyond the direct control of the Council, a target has not been set. However, the Council is involved in a range of initiatives to help better insulate homes (see Appendix B). In 2020, this indicator was in the third quartile, which is below average, when compared to other English county councils. The RHI supports the installation of renewable and low-carbon-heating by individual households. RHI payments are made over a seven-year period and, in most cases, are estimated using values from the dwelling's Energy Performance Certificate.

Statistics for the RHI details the number of applications and accredited installations, by local authority, on the domestic schemes so far.

20. 'Renewable energy capacity in the area (MW)' has remained steady at 326 MW in 2020 when compared to the previous year and capacity has begun to plateau in recent years. In 2020, this indicator performs below average when compared to other English county councils (third quartile). The Council has limited influence over countywide renewable energy capacity, which tends to change in response to government incentive schemes and the wider energy market. Although this indicator is not within the Council's control, progress is monitored in line with the objectives outlined in the Council's Environment Strategy 2018-2030.
21. 'Renewable energy generated in the area (MWh)' has improved in performance (4%) from 537,711 MWh in 2019 to 561,237 MWh in 2020. Similar to renewable energy capacity, generated energy has also begun to plateau in the area in recent years and it performs below average when compared to other English county councils in 2020 (third quartile).
22. The 'Amount of renewable energy generated as a percentage of consumption' was introduced following the Council's pledge to use 100% clean energy by 2050 as part of the UK100 campaign. The 'Amount of renewable energy generated as a % of consumption' improved in performance from 13% in 2019/20 to 14% in 2020/21. Despite this improvement, it has not yet met its target of 20%. This could be due to reduced efficiency of solar panels over time, panels needing cleaning or an increase in total electricity consumption.

Reducing Carbon Emissions (Great Communities)

23. The Council reports against several carbon emissions indicators relating to the Council's performance and these are listed below. Not all data for the emissions indicators is available for 2021/22 and this Committee will receive the Annual Greenhouse Gas (GHG) and the Year End Environmental Performance report at its meeting in January 2023, which will cover 2021/22 results. Many of the updates below covering 2020/21 data were reported as part of a comprehensive update on the Council's 2020-21 GHG emissions and progress against the Council's net zero targets, presented to the Committee at its meeting in January 2022.
24. In 2020/21, Carbon emissions from the Council's buildings have reduced by 11% and is well ahead of its target. This was due to significant reductions in electricity emissions associated with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Council operations, a reduction in carbon intensity of grid electricity, improved energy efficiency and renewable energy investments across the Council's property estate.
25. Carbon emissions from Council streetlighting and traffic signals have improved in performance by 8% as carbon emissions declined from 2,004 tonnes in 2020/21 to 1,849 in 2021/22. As the National Grid continues to decarbonise electricity supply, performance on this indicator is expected to continue to improve over the long-term. There are also ongoing measures to save energy, such as the programme of dimming down lights across the County.
26. Carbon emissions from Council's fleet increased by 13%, from 2,079 tonnes in 2020/21 to 2,341 tonnes in 2021/22 displaying a decline in performance and has

missed its 1,828 target. Emissions rebounded in 2021/22 to their highest level since 2017/18, whilst the target was tightened leading to a significant overshoot and worsening trend. The Department is exploring options to improve performance from new alternative low emission fuels such as Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil.

27. The 'Total Carbon emissions from County Council sites (non-operational)' for 2020/21 improved in performance by 48% as emissions reduced from 10,540 tonnes in 2019/20 to 5,472 tonnes in 2020/21 achieving its 14,403 tonnes target. This was largely due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Council operations and the significant shift to home working of Council staff.
28. The latest data for 'Carbon emissions per capita (in LA influence)' shows an improvement in performance as carbon emissions declined from 4.7 tonnes per person in 2019 to 4.2 in 2020 and has met its 4.8 tonnes target. This is a measure of estimated carbon dioxide emissions per head of population within the Council's influence. The Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns were likely to have greatly influenced this fall in emissions. Despite this improvement in performance, it remains below average when compared to other English county councils during 2020. Data, which excludes emissions from motorways, diesel railways and net emissions from land use, land-use change and forestry on the grounds that these are outside of local authority control, is provided by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and is two years in arrears.
29. The 'Total LCC greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions' have reduced during 2020/21 by 19% since the previous year and was well ahead of its target, showing good performance. This was greatly influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic. A comprehensive update on the Council's 2020-21 GHG emissions and progress against the Council's net zero targets was presented to the Committee at its meeting in January 2022.
30. The latest available data for 'Total Business miles claimed' is 2,606,000 miles for 2020/21 having declined significantly from 5,560,000 miles in 2019/20, showing an improvement in performance. This was largely due to fewer staff travelling during the Covid-19 pandemic. The latest data for 2021/22 will be reported to the Committee in the Year End Environmental Performance Report in January 2023.

Right infrastructure for Sustainable Clean Growth (Strong Economy)

31. 'Electric vehicle ownership – Ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) rate/10,000 population' improved in performance as ownership increased from 60/10,000 in 2020/21 to 96/10,000 2021/22 (rolling 12 months data to March 2022), resulting in an increase of 59%, demonstrating a significant improvement in performance over the year. This reveals an increasing momentum of people moving from fossil fuelled vehicles to more sustainable electric alternatives. However, Leicestershire continues to remain in the third quartile (below average) when compared to other English counties for 2022. Leicestershire's overall rate of car ownership was 5,568 per 10,000 population in 2021 and ULEVs represent 1.7% of overall car ownership.
32. Electric vehicle charging locations have seen a 47% improvement as they increased from 23 per 100,000 population in 2020/21 to 34 per 100,000 population in 2021/22. The 'National Chargepoint Registry (NCR)' was established by the Government in 2011 to provide a public database of publicly funded charge points across the UK in

support of the Government's objective to promote the use and sales of ULEVs. This data covers all publicly funded charging locations in the County and does not include charging points that are privately funded. Results use the latest population estimates to determine locations per 100,000 people. Despite this improvement in performance, this indicator is in the bottom (fourth) quartile when compared to other English county councils in 2022.

33. The Council is working to provide better data on biodiversity in the County and monitors the ecological status of Leicestershire rivers which provides a snapshot on how biodiverse they are. The Environment Agency (EA) provides data on 'Leicestershire rivers (excluding Leicester) in good ecological status' which was 9.4% in 2019. In 2019, the EA changed its methodology for assessing river quality data and adopted a much more rigorous methodology in surveying the status of rivers which now covers new substances, new standards, and improved techniques and methods. It is, therefore, not possible to reliably compare 2019 data with previous results. The EA is yet to provide the Council with more recent updated data on rivers.
34. Similarly to the above, the EA has also applied their new methodology to reporting of 'Leicestershire rivers (excluding Leicester) in good chemical status' data. This has resulted in no rivers in Leicestershire having a good chemical status in 2019, which was when the most recent data was available. In fact, no surface water bodies nationally have met the criteria for achieving good chemical status.
35. 'NO₂ exceedances for Leicestershire' reduced from three in 2019 to two in 2020 suggesting a slight improvement in NO₂ air quality performance. Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is a gas that is mainly produced during the combustion of fossil fuels. This indicator is the number of times NO₂ has exceeded 40 micrograms which is published by district councils in their Air Quality Annual Status Reports. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdowns would have impacted NO₂ in the County, as it disrupted people's ability to travel. As previously mentioned, electric vehicle ownership has also increased over recent years, which may also have contributed slightly to the reduction in NO₂ levels.
36. The percentage of respondents of the Council's annual Community Insight Survey who 'think the Council should do more to help protect the environment' declined from 68% in 2020/21 to 60% in 2021/22, which may suggest respondents felt this was slightly a lower priority than in the previous year.

Health and Wellbeing

37. Inhalation of particulate pollution can have adverse health impacts. The biggest impact of particulate air pollution on public health is understood to be from long-term exposure to fine particulate matter, also known as PM_{2.5}, which increases the age-specific mortality risk. This data describes the annual concentration of human-made fine particulate matter at an area level, adjusted to account for population exposure and is measured in micrograms per cubic metre (µg/m³). The major sources of primary PM_{2.5} are combustion in the energy industries, road transport (both exhaust and non-exhaust emissions), rail and air transport, residential sources, and small-scale waste burning. Performance on this improved notably since total PM_{2.5} reduced from 9 µg/m³ in 2019 to 7 µg/m³ in 2020, which performs better than England at 7.53 µg/m³ (2020) and above average when compared to other English county councils (second quartile) in 2020. The Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns in

2020 resulted in far fewer vehicles on Leicestershire's roads which would have reduced PM2.5. However, these latest results still exceed the World Health Organisation recommendation of less than 5 µg/m³. The highest levels in the County in recent years have been present in Blaby, North West Leicestershire and along the M1. Both the M1, East Midlands Airport and various quarries appear to have the most impact on levels. This data is also reported by the Council's Public Health service.

Energy Efficient Homes (Quality Homes)

38. 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. In 2021/22 'The percentage of properties with Energy Performance certificate rating C+ for existing homes' was 41%, an improvement in performance from the previous year of 36%. Leicestershire's quartile performance for this improved from fourth (worst) quartile in 2020/21 to third quartile in 2021/22 compared to other English county councils. The Council has limited influence over these indicators, although it is involved in a range of initiatives to help better insulate homes (see Appendix B).
39. 'The percentage of domestic properties with energy Performance Certificate rating C+ for new homes' increased slightly to 99% in 2021/22 from 97% in 2020/21 showing a slight improvement in performance. Leicestershire is in the first (best) quartile for this indicator when compared to other English county councils for 2021/22.

Background papers

The Strategic Plan 2018-2022

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s152296/Appendix%20A%20-%20LCC%20Strategic%20Plan%202018-22.pdf>

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s152296/Appendix A - LCC Strategic Plan 2018-22.pdf>

Environment Strategy 2018 – 2030: delivering a better future

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2020/7/13/Environment-Strategy-2018-2030-delivering-a-better-future.pdf>

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Equalities and Human Rights Implications

40. There are no equality or human rights implications.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Environment and Climate Change Annual Report Performance Dashboard, 2021/22.

Appendix B – Environment and Climate Change Annual Report highlights (up to October 2022).

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