



**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19 JANUARY 2023**

**LEICESTERSHIRE RESOURCES AND WASTE STRATEGY 2022 –  
2050**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee that the review of and public consultation on the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy (previously known as the Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy) is now complete and has been appended to this report as Appendix A. Any final comments from the Committee are welcome so they can be reported when the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy is presented to the Cabinet for approval on 10 February 2023.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. The Leicestershire Waste Partnership (LWP) comprises of the County Council and the seven district councils in Leicestershire. Leicester City Council is an associate member and manages its waste via separate arrangements as a Unitary Authority.
3. Under the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003, all two-tier authorities are required to have in place a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for the management of municipal waste within their areas.
4. The Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy (LRWS) sets out how the LWP intends to manage municipal waste in the period up to 2050. The LRWS replaces the Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy (LMWMS) which was last updated in 2011. The 2011 Strategy, which was approved by the County Council on 23 May 2012, covered the period up to 2020.
5. The LRWS supports the objectives of the Environment Strategy 2018-2030 and the clean, green outcome within the Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026.
6. A public consultation forms part of the process of a formal review of a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy as per Government's guidelines. The Cabinet approved the approach to the public consultation on 14 December 2021.

7. The public consultation commenced on 31 January 2022 and concluded on 25 April 2022
8. A report was presented to the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the consultation exercise on 1 March 2022. Members commented that references to fly-tipping and litter within the Strategy needed strengthening, noted the differences between district kerbside collections and the need to have a common collection regime, to make countywide communication easier.

### **Background**

9. The first Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy (LMWMS) was adopted by the Leicestershire Waste Partnership (LWP) in 2002. In 2006 it was comprehensively reviewed including a public consultation and full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The Strategy was subsequently updated in 2011 to reflect changes in performance and the economic climate since 2006 but maintained the objectives of the 2006 Strategy.
10. The LWP commissioned consultants Frith Resource Management to undertake a full review of the Strategy.
11. The national Resources and Waste Strategy (RWS) was released in 2018. It focuses on known problems with effective solutions that will reduce reliance on single use plastics, cut confusion over household recycling, tackle the problems of packaging and end food waste.
12. The RWS outlines how the Government aims to make the UK more resource efficient and to move towards a circular economy which keeps resources in use for longer. The RWS covers the period until 2050 and includes the Circular Economy Package target of 65% recycling rate of municipal solid waste by 2035.
13. Following on from the publication of the national RWS, two rounds of consultations were released with local authorities identified as key stakeholders. These included proposals that are expected to affect local waste services including mandatory weekly food waste collections, free garden waste collections, the introduction of a deposit return scheme for single use drinks containers, extended producer responsibility for packaging (this is in essence where the full cost of collection, recycling and disposing of packaging is met by the producers of the packaging), and a move towards consistent recycling collections by all local authorities. These three policies are known collectively as the 'Collection and Packaging Reforms' and consist of;
  - a) Deposit Return Schemes (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) – closed June 2021;
  - b) Reforming the UK packaging responsibility system/Extended Producer Responsibility (UK) – closed June 2021;

- c) Consistency in household and business recycling collections (England) – closed July 2021.
14. To date, the results of the second round of consultations have only been published for extended producer responsibility for packaging. They have not yet been published for a deposit return scheme and consistency in household and business recycling collections.
15. Legislation to enable the policy changes within the RWS are contained within the Environment Act which received Royal Assent on 9 November 2021.

### **Public Consultation**

16. Following a stakeholder mapping exercise, a public consultation commenced on 31 January 2022 and ran for 12 weeks until 25 April 2022.
17. The full suite of documents for public consultation comprised of:
- a) The Draft Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy:
    - i. Describes the approach the LWP would take in delivering recycling and waste management services from 2022 – 2050;
    - ii. Contains the vision, objectives and pledges that sit alongside forthcoming national changes;
    - iii. Includes 11 pledges covering; leading by example; waste prevention; reuse; food waste collections; alternative fuels; garden waste collections; consistent collections; extra materials for recycling collections; the national recycling target of 65% by 2035; communications to target recycling behaviour and reduction of waste sent to landfill;
  - b) The Draft Options Appraisal Report:
    - i. Explores the current and alternative ways of delivering the waste services, the associated costs and the recycling rates that could be achieved as well as considering potential implications of upcoming national policy changes;
    - ii. Provides evidence behind the pledges within the draft Strategy;
  - c) The Draft Environmental Report – from the SEA process:
    - i. Considers the environmental impacts of the alternative ways of delivering the Strategy;
    - ii. Involved a five-week statutory consultation period from July 2021 and received input from Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency.

18. In addition to the above, a consultation summary document outlining the main aspects of the Strategy was available to view.
19. The consultation documents were available online via the County Council's 'Have Your Say' webpage and signposted from partner websites. Hard copies were also available upon request.
20. The consultation comprised a survey (predominately online) consisting of tick box questions and open comments. Questions sought views on the vision, objectives and pledges within the draft Strategy and asked a series of questions on waste prevention, reuse and recycling behaviours.
21. A wide range of communications were used to promote the survey utilising online and printed media. Presentations were given to specific groups and an online forum and workshop was delivered by Community Research, an independent research marketing firm.
22. The quantitative and qualitative responses to the online questionnaire and responses from groups and organisations to the public consultation are presented in the appended Consultation Report (see Appendix B).

### **Public Consultation Findings**

#### **Have Your Say Survey**

23. A total of 5223 responses to the online survey were received. Almost two thirds of the respondents were female (63%). Compared to the known population of Leicestershire (Census 2011) this shows that females were overrepresented and males underrepresented. Almost half (45%) of respondents were aged between 45-64 years. Underrepresented age groups in respect to population include 15-24 year olds and those over the age of 85 years.
24. The majority of the respondents were supportive of the vision with 83% in agreement: "To work towards a circular economy and contribute to achieving net zero carbon by 2050 in Leicestershire. This means fully embracing the waste hierarchy by preventing waste and keeping resources in circulation for as long as possible, through reuse, repair and recycling, to realise their maximum value whilst minimising environmental impacts".
25. Also, 83% of respondents agreed with the pledges, and an analysis of the open text comments revealed that fly-tipping was the most common issue, followed by residents wanting more pressure placed on producers to make their packaging recyclable and products more easily repairable. Other comments

referred to increasing education and engagement so people have a better understanding of link between waste and climate change.

26. Regarding behaviours, 38% of respondents said that they currently compost at home with 70% expressing an interest in taking part in reuse activities such as using an online platform for selling goods and taking items to a Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC).
27. For food waste collections, respondents were generally positive on the introduction of food waste collections (65% of respondents stated they did not see any barriers to participating in a weekly food waste collection service) but there were concerns raised of how it works in practise e.g., smells and hygiene.
28. Evidence shows that delivering the highest recycling rates and reducing carbon emissions can best be achieved by restricting general rubbish capacity (either through distributing smaller bins or collecting the waste less frequently) alongside adding more recycling services including weekly food waste collections. Respondents were asked which service configuration they would prefer. Overall, the option of a fortnightly collection with a smaller bin size was more favourable (39%) than a three-weekly collection with a current size bin (16%).
29. Overall, the majority (64%) of the respondents agreed with the draft Strategy to some extent.

### **Other Consultation Activity**

30. A company called Community Research was commissioned to explore residents' views of the draft Strategy. An online forum was conducted with 25 Leicestershire residents taking part and completing a series of tasks including polling questions, discussion boards and self-filmed videos.
31. Key conclusions included that the vision and strategy resonated with residents and addressed many of their concerns; and that residents are enthusiastic about greater engagement in reducing waste and recycling and recognise the key role they have to play.
32. Presentations were provided to various groups in order to capture their views and these included Leicestershire Equalities Group, Leicestershire Parish Clerks and County Youth Council for Leicestershire.
33. A report was presented to the Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the consultation exercise on 1 March 2022. Members commented that references to fly-tipping and litter within the Strategy needed

strengthening, noted the differences between district kerbside collections and to look to have a common collection regime, to make county wide communication easier.

### **Overall findings**

34. The results to the survey were analysed and the key conclusions were:
- a) The proposed Vision and Strategy resonate with residents.
  - b) The understanding of the relationship between waste and climate change is limited.
  - c) Residents are enthusiastic about greater engagement in reducing waste and increasing recycling and recognise they have a key role to play (community initiatives and collective action).
  - d) Communications and engagement activities need to be developed bearing in mind learning from behavioural science, addressing the environmental, personal and social factors that can affect behaviour.
35. The key themes that have been highlighted in the consultation responses together with the issues and considerations that have been raised are summarised below. These are not presented in an order of priority:
- a) Tackling fly-tipping - an area of concern for residents.
  - b) Putting pressure on producers – residents would like to see producers take more responsibility and use recyclable packaging for their goods.
  - c) Increased access to sustainable activities – recognition of these to be accessible and affordable for all, especially waste prevention and reuse.
  - d) Engagement and encouragement – respondents like to be kept informed and suggested potential for incentives for rewarding positive behaviours.
  - e) Educating residents - suggested that efforts need to be made to encourage understanding the issue of waste and its relationship to climate change.
  - f) Concerns with food waste collections - respondents were generally positive on the introduction of food waste collections but there were concerns raised of how it works in practise e.g., smells and hygiene.
  - g) Expanding kerbside recycling - to reduce the amount of residual waste, respondents were keen for the introduction of a wider variety of materials collected at the kerbside.

- h) Accessibility of garden waste collections – residents were generally satisfied with the service but a reoccurring theme was accessibility to this service and charging.
- i) Restricted residual waste collection and household size – residents from larger households raised concerns on restricted residual waste. Overall the option of a fortnightly collection with a smaller size bin was more favourable (39%) than a three-weekly collection with a current size bin (16%).
- j) Improving HWRCs - levels of satisfaction with HWRCs were high although some respondents did raise concerns regarding short opening hours, too few HWRC sites and inaccessibility.

### **Changes to the Strategy**

- 36. Findings from the consultation exercise will be utilised to help inform future initiatives and campaigns.
- 37. A key theme which came out of the consultation exercise is fly-tipping and litter. LWP has therefore committed to address this and added an additional pledge (pledge 2 below).
- 38. Minor modifications have been made to the remaining 11 pledges. The final pledges are:
  - 1) All councils within the Partnership will review their purchasing activities and internal waste management services to seek to promote waste prevention, reuse and recycling to support the objectives of this Strategy and lead by example.
  - 2) Environmental crime, particularly fly-tipping, does not recognise council boundaries. The Partnership will work together to reduce fly-tipping and litter across Leicestershire and educate residents, businesses, or anyone disposing of rubbish, about their legal duty of care to dispose of their rubbish responsibly.
  - 3) The Partnership pledge to support and encourage waste prevention activity across LWP. This will include working with stakeholders, residents and communities to prevent unnecessary waste arising, for example through food waste reduction campaigns such as Love Food Hate Waste.
  - 4) The Partnership pledge to continue delivering reuse services and expand activities where practicable, working in partnership with other stakeholders and to signpost to places that advocate for waste prevention and reuse, in support of developing a circular economy. This includes a pledge to continue to improve the collection of items for reuse at Household Waste

Recycling Centres and explore the development of reuse shops at suitable sites.

- 5) The Partnership will implement and promote separate food waste collections to all households, subject to confirmation of the national policy, legislation and the provision of total ongoing Government funding. This will be as soon as possible when contracts and circumstances dictate. The County Council will procure anaerobic digestion capacity to treat the collected food waste in a manner that contributes to effective carbon emissions reduction across the County and improves soil quality.
- 6) The Partnership will explore the use of alternative fuels for collection vehicles and the transportation of waste and resources to further reduce carbon emissions of the service and improve air quality.
- 7) The Partnership will continue to offer a garden waste collection system to Leicestershire residents. This will follow national guidelines as to the form of the collection and will be subject to legislation and total ongoing Government funding. The Partnership will continue to procure composting capacity to treat the collected garden waste in a manner that supports carbon reduction and improves soil quality.
- 8) The Partnership shall ensure that the full range of recyclables (as specified by the Government and subject to funding) are collected from residents (and businesses where applicable) across Leicestershire by 2025, or as soon as possible when contracts and circumstances allow.
- 9) The Partnership shall continue to explore the viability of adding extra materials to recycling collections (e.g., for batteries, small electric goods or clothing) striving to continually improve Leicestershire's recycling performance.
- 10) The Partnership will put in place collection systems to contribute towards the achievement of the national 65% recycling target by 2035. This may include restricting residual waste capacity to encourage greater materials separation, carbon savings and resource recovery. Improvements in materials recovery at Household Waste Recycling Centres will also contribute towards the national target.
- 11) The Partnership will continue to allocate a communications budget sufficient to help promote good recycling behaviour and support resource recovery to progress the circular economy and low-carbon objectives of this Strategy.
- 12) The County Council will reduce waste sent to landfill to less than 5% by 2025, well in advance of the 10% national target by 2035. The County Council will undertake future procurement processes for residual waste treatment (alternatives to landfill) in line with the vision and objectives of this Strategy.



39. During the public consultation period, the Government released a response to its extended producer responsibility for packaging consultation and has confirmed that glass, which was originally to be included in the proposed deposit return scheme, will now be part of extended producer responsibility for packaging. No further modelling was undertaken within the options appraisal due to the continued uncertainty around the Government's preferred approach, however, the future waste and recycling projections were updated to take account of this amendment.
40. Due to the continued uncertainty regarding Government policies, a Local Government finance position statement has also been added to the Strategy. This statement outlines that some of the pledges within the Strategy can only be implemented subject to additional funding being provided by the Government.

### **Action Plan**

41. A further step in the review process is to produce an Action Plan. The Action Plan provides a route map for delivering the vision, objectives and pledges set out in the Strategy. It provides a clear direction of travel to ensure that resources and waste are managed effectively.
42. The Action Plan will guide the implementation of the Strategy and will be subject to regular review and monitoring. Changes may be made to the Action Plan in response to (for example):
  - a) Accelerated or delayed implementation of actions;
  - b) Variance in predicted performance of actions;
  - c) Changes in Government policy, legislation or regulations; or
  - d) Other changes in circumstances.
43. The Action Plan has been divided into the following themes:
  - a) Reuse/Circular Economy;
  - b) Recycling (performance and collections);
  - c) Residual Waste Management;
  - d) Partnership Working;
  - e) Lead by Example;
  - f) Communication Actions;
  - g) Carbon.

44. Some of these themes contain overlapping elements. Each action within the plan details what action is to be taken, how this relates to either an objective or pledge of the Strategy, by whom and when.
45. The Action Plan associated with the Resources and Waste Strategy is high level but builds on the objectives and pledges of the Strategy. There may be further (more detailed) actions, for example: a procurement plan; individual Council action plans; business cases; or communications plans.

### **Resource Implications**

46. The public consultation exercise was funded from a pre-existing Leicestershire Waste Partnership budget.
47. The future adoption of the vision, objectives and pledges will not result in any direct financial implications for the County Council at this stage. However, implementation of the Strategy options which mirror Government regulations and legislative policies, will have a financial implication which will be considered as part of the budget management process.
48. At present, cost implications remain uncertain although the Government has stated that it is committed to funding new burdens placed on local authorities.
49. The Director of Law and Governance and the Director of Corporate Resources have been consulted on the content of this report.

### **Timetable for Decisions**

50. The Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy will be presented for adoption at the Cabinet on 10 February 2023.
51. It is expected that all partner authorities will adopt the Strategy during the early part of 2023.

### **Conclusions**

52. It is recommended that the committee notes the results of the public consultation as provided above and in the appended Consultation Report (Appendix B), and provides any final views on the final draft Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy (Appendix A).

### **Background papers**

Report to the County Council on 23 May 2012: Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy Update 2011:

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieIssueDetails.aspx?IId=31065&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI31186>

Report to the County Council on 14 December 2021: Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy – Public Consultation:

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=6449>

Report to the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 March 2022, Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy – Public Consultation:

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=6753>

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

None

### **Equality and Human Rights Implications**

53. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) Screening was undertaken and concluded that the review of the LMWMS was subject to a full EHRIA. This EHRIA provides a strategic framework and further EHRIAs will be undertaken, where appropriate, for delivery of activities, and as specific schemes are developed.
54. This EHRIA has enabled the LWP to assess whether the new LRWS discriminates or has any adverse impact on any particular community or group of people within Leicestershire. The key outcome of the EHRIA is for the LWP to ensure the LRWS promotes accessible services, accessible information and appropriate equality training where required.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A: Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy

Appendix B: Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy Action Plan Timeline

Appendix C: Consultation Report (this report also contains several appendices which have not been attached but can be provided for further detail if required)

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