



**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 2 MARCH 2023**

**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PERFORMANCE
REPORT TO DECEMBER 2022**

**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 the latest performance update on the key performance indicators that the Council is solely or partly responsible for delivering against the recently refreshed and adopted Council Strategic Plan (2022-26).

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The updates in this report reflect progress against the Council's Strategic Outcomes Framework within the Strategic Plan up to 2026, as well as the Environment and Waste performance framework and related high-level plans and strategies which inform the current performance framework and indicators in this report.

Background

3. This report highlights how a variety of Environment and Climate Change performance indicators are performing against the Council's new key outcomes: 'Clean & Green' and 'Strong Economy, Transport & Infrastructure'.
4. The performance dashboards, appended to this report, include several indicators where the Council does not have direct control of delivery, such as air quality and river quality. The latter examples are pillars within the Environment Strategy but are not directly delivered by the Council. They have been included to provide a greater oversight of the environment and inform policy making and help understand what life is like in Leicestershire. They include a mix of national and locally developed performance indicators. Measuring these may highlight areas for scrutiny of delivery by other Council departments, 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. Internal indicators, where the Council has the most control, are identified with an 'L' within the performance dashboards.
5. The Council monitors and assesses its performance by mainly considering its direction of travel (DOT), the RAG rating, and quartile position when compared to other English Counties (where applicable).

6. The direction of travel (DOT) arrows indicates an improvement or deterioration in performance compared to the previous result in the performance dashboards that have been appended to this report. Up arrows show an improvement in performance, down arrows show a decline in performance and horizontal arrows show no change. Grey empty circles mean there is no update. Where there is no 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.
7. The performance dashboards include information on the latest data against target (where relevant) which generates a RAG rating (Red, Amber or Green) if applicable. Red indicates that close monitoring or significant action is required as the target isn't or may not be achieved. Amber indicates that light touch monitoring is required as performance is currently not meeting the target or set to miss the target by a narrow margin. Green indicates no additional action is required as the indicator is currently meeting the target or on track to meet the target.
8. The Council's performance is benchmarked against 33 English county authorities which covers large, principally non-urban geographical areas. Where it is available, the performance dashboards within the Appendix 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 first quartile is defined as performance that falls within the top 25% of county councils. The fourth quartile is defined as performance that falls within the bottom 25% of county councils. The comparison quartiles are updated annually.
9. The frequency in which the indicators are reported varies: some are quarterly, others are annual, and some less frequent. Quarterly updates tend to have a data lag of one quarter or more. For clarity, the time-periods the data covers are contained in the performance dashboards in the Appendix.

Performance Update – latest data to December 2022

10. The quarterly performance dashboard shows Environment and Climate Change performance up to December 2022. Overall, there are 27 performance indicators included in this report which are aligned with the Council's Strategic Plan Outcomes. They are presented in the Environment and Climate Change performance dashboards (Appendix). This report focuses on the indicators that have been updated, which is 20 for quarter 3 (up to December 2022). Where a DOT is available: seven show performance improvements, seven had declined and six remained the same as the previous update.
11. The latest position shows that eight Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that have met target or are on track (green), two are amber (performance is currently not meeting the target or is set to miss the target by a narrow margin) and two KPIs are rated red (where performance is currently not meeting the target or is set to miss the target).
12. Across all KPIs, the Council had notably good performance for: 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+ (new)' buildings, 'Total Business miles claimed' and 'NO₂ exceedances for Leicestershire' during quarter 3.

13. When compared to other English county councils, the Council has three indicators performing above average in the first or second quartiles. The Council performs below average for nine indicators listed within the third and fourth quartiles in the Appendix.
14. The following updates focus on indicators that have been updated in quarter 3.

Clean & Green

People act now to tackle climate change

15. The Council monitors the energy efficiency of new and existing homes within the County in the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+' indicators. The latest data shows that 97% of new homes are energy efficient (energy performance certificate rating C+) compared to older homes of which 46% were rated as energy efficient in quarter 2 (2022/23). New homes had remained static in performance since the previous update whilst existing homes saw a slight improvement in performance. Comparisons (2021/22) with other English county councils show that the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance certificate rating C+ (new homes)' falls within the first (top) quartile and the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance certificate rating C+ (existing homes)' falls within the third quartile (below average), indicating that existing homes in the County would still benefit from more energy efficient incentives. The Authority does not have direct control over this, and further improvements will be contingent on national programmes such as grant schemes to improve insulation and energy efficiency. The Council, in partnership with YES Energy Solutions and the district councils, launched the Green Living Leicestershire scheme in 2022. The scheme was designed to help prioritise Leicestershire residents with low incomes to go green, reduce costs and tackle climate change through fully funded home improvements including loft and wall insulation, solar panels, heat pumps and more efficient windows and doors. It follows on from previous successful funding bids, including the Green Homes Grant and Warm Homes Fund.
16. The latest results for the 'Percentage of LCC staff who say the Council is doing enough to reduce its environmental impact (post-training survey)', remained similar to the previous update at 92% in quarter 1 2022/23 and has met it's 80% target showing good performance.
17. The Council's Community Insight Survey aims to understand public perceptions across areas of importance to the Council. It is a telephone survey of 1,600 respondents annually. The quarterly reporting uses rolling 12-month results. The latest results, show that 97% of respondents agreed that 'Protecting the environment is important' in the 12 months to quarter 2 (rolling average) (2022/23), which is a very slight decrease in results since the previous update. In the same period, 65% of respondents think that 'The Council should do more to help protect the environment' (including carbon reduction and helping tackle climate change). This is slightly more than the previous update of 62%.

Nature and local environment are valued, protected, and enhanced

18. Two new KPIs were added this quarter that cover the extent to which the Council's land is in better management for nature. These indicators include 'Hectares of LCC

land in better management for nature' and 'Percentage of suitable LCC land in better management for nature'. They include only available data on the Council's sites that the Council considers suitable to be managed to improve nature. The type of land typically includes Authority owned County Parks, County farms and suitable highway verges. Better management means the Authority has made a conscious choice to consider nature in its design and maintenance and implemented best practice where possible. This new data provides base data from which future performance will be compared.

19. The latest tree planting provisional update shows that 104,279 trees have been planted by the Authority and its partners up to December 2022 and has exceeded its 70,000-planting cumulative target (2022/23), showing excellent performance. A detailed Tree Management Strategy update was provided to this Committee in November 2022.

Resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way

20. The 'Percentage of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling or composting' declined in performance slightly from 43% in quarter 1 2022/23 to 42% in quarter 2 2022/23 and missed its refreshed 45% target resulting in an amber rating. This indicator has remained fairly static over the past year. It lies within the third quartile position (2020/21) in comparison with other English county councils. The Council is working with the Leicestershire Waste Partnership to develop the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy which includes a draft pledge to put in place collection systems to contribute towards the future national target of 65% recycling by 2035.
21. The 'Annual percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill (former NI 193)' met its target of 30% (rated green). Its performance has remained steady at 24% in quarter 2 2022/23 since the previous quarter. Since the same time last year this indicator has seen a steady decline in waste sent to landfill. This is due to the Authority having negotiated an increase in the amount of waste delivered to alternative disposal points. Performance against this indicator was in the fourth quartile in 2020/21, which will be updated in March 2023.
22. The 'Total household waste per household (kg)' slightly improved in performance as waste decreased from 1,014kg in quarter 4 2021/22 to 1,000kg in quarter 1 2022/23 (data is two quarters in arrears) with waste levels declining steadily over the past year. This indicator was in the third quartile for 2020/21 when compared to other English county councils. The Covid-19 pandemic impacted waste patterns and more home working and lockdowns were likely to have led to more household waste during those periods. The recent improvement in performance could be due to people returning to their pre-pandemic routines.
23. The 'Tonnes of waste produced from LCC sites' saw a 12% decline in performance as waste increased from 263 tonnes in quarter 4 2021/22 to 295 tonnes in quarter 1 2022/23. This may be due to more office-based staff returning to their office in contrast to earlier 2020/21 when many officers worked at home because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite this decline in performance this indicator has met its 387 tonnes target and performs better than its pre-pandemic rate, which was typically 482 tonnes between January 2015 and December 2019.

24. The 'Percentage of waste recycled from LCC sites (non-operational)' remained relatively static in performance having changed only slightly from 60% in quarter 4 2021/22 to 61% in quarter 1 2022/23, although it missed its target of 64%. Since quarter 1 2021/22, the recycling rate has increased every quarter as more staff returned to their usual workplace. This also coincides with greater levels of total waste in offices compared to the same time last year. However, the latest data performs slightly better than the pre-pandemic rate which was typically 58% between January 2015 and December 2019.

The economy and infrastructure are low carbon and environmentally friendly

25. The 'Electric vehicle charging locations per 100,000 population' indicator improved in performance by 15%, from 33 in quarter 1 2022/23 to 38 in quarter 2 2022/23. This represents a 20% increase since the same period last year, when the figure was 31 per 100,000 population which indicates an improvement in the sectors infrastructure supporting greater renewable solutions over the year. However, in terms of comparison with other counties, Leicestershire is in the fourth quartile (bottom) for 2022 (from third quartile in 2021). Whilst the Government currently expects the transition to EVs to be led by industry and consumers, the Authority has played an active role in supporting residents in switching to electric vehicles. The Authority has installed electric vehicle charge points at our Park and Ride sites. The Authority has also secured almost £1million of Government's first portion of Local electric vehicle infrastructure (LEVI) funding along with four other local authorities and Midlands Connect. It's expected that this support from Government will attract additional private sector investment, with cumulative funds being used to deliver around 100 public charging points across the county over the next 12-18 months. The Council also: supports emerging district and borough council planning policies, which encourage developers to consider EV infrastructure as part of new housing or employment developments; takes opportunities to press the Government to set out a national approach and standards for EV charging infrastructure, which is appropriately funded; review what trial schemes other authorities have introduced, or are currently piloting, to learn from their experiences; and explore with partners, options for encouraging the take up of Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEVs) in the County.
26. The 'Electric vehicle ownership – Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) rate/10,000 population' improved in performance by 11% as ownership increased from 109/10,000 in quarter 1 2022/23 to 121/10,000 in quarter 2 2022/23. This has increased by 57% since the same period last year, which was 76/10,000. This continues to demonstrate a significant 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 2022 (the percentage of licensed ULEVs of all licensed vehicles in the County is approximately 1.5%). Whilst there appears to be growing consumer interest to run an electric car there remains several barriers that deter them from switching in the short term that are not within the authority's control. Though they are cheaper to run, EVs are more expensive to buy than other vehicles. Their higher upfront cost, battery range and concerns about access to reliable charging infrastructure and perceived complexity of transitioning remain barriers for many. The rising cost of living is also likely to be a factor in slowing the uptake of ULEVs this year.

27. The 'Renewable energy (electricity) generated in the area (MWh)' indicator has declined by 11% from 365,411 MWh in 2020 to 326,437 MWh in 2021. This indicator has been affected by changes in the Regional Renewable National Statistics for the years 2019 and 2020. This has resulted in the suppression of generated results for Leicestershire districts and a corresponding drop in generation (due to small number of companies generating renewable electricity). The energy types suppressed were; Anaerobic Digestion, Landfill Gas, Inshore wind, Plant Biomass and Sewage gas. So it could be that the data could still be as high as 528,302 MWh, which was the last figure available prior to suppression of that data, but we are unable to report this. When compared to other English county councils in 2020 this indicator was in the third quartile.
28. The 'Renewable energy (electricity) capacity in the area (MW)' has improved in performance from 329 MW in 2020 to 333 MW in 2021. Since 2018 this capacity has begun to plateau. 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 the 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 2018-30.
29. The 'Amount of renewable energy generated as a % of consumption' for the Authority had static performance at 11% in quarter 1 2022/23 since the previous update. It has not yet met its target of 27.8% resulting in a red RAG rating. The largest contributor to renewable energy generation is the biomass boiler at County Hall, which provides approximately three-quarters of the total renewable energy generated. This result has been influenced by the fact that during 2021-22, work took place as part of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to expand the biomass network and install a thermal heat store, alongside the replacement of a safety component to the boiler. As a result, the biomass boiler was out of commission for a significant part of the year, resulting in less renewable energy generated. The work on the biomass boiler and the installation of additional solar panels on County Hall and other corporate Council buildings have increased the potential renewable energy generation by over 1,000,000 kWh per year, which is expected to lead to a significant improvement in this KPI in future.
30. Particulate matter is everything that is in the air that is not a gas. Some particulates can be toxic and due to their small size can enter the bloodstream and be transported around the body, causing serious impacts to health. Around half of UK concentrations of particulate matter come from anthropogenic sources (i.e. originating in human activity) such as domestic wood burning and tyre and brake wear from vehicles. 'PM2.5 Air pollution fine particulate matter (micrograms per cubic metre, ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$))' increased from $7 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2020 to $7.7 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in 2021 showing a slight decline in performance. This compares to the England rate of at $7.35 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (2021). However, Leicestershire still performs above average when compared to other English county councils (second quartile) in 2020. This recent change is likely to be due to the bounce back effect as the economy and society has opened up following the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. Exceedances of the national annual average concentration levels for particulate matter are found mostly around the perimeter of the city boundary as well as routes north to Loughborough, Coalville, Ashby-de-la-

Zouch, East Midlands Airport, Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough, Lutterworth, East Shilton and Hinckley, equating to 22% of the total land area of Leicestershire.¹ 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 2018-30 and the Improving Air Quality and Health plan across Leicestershire 2020-24: a multiagency partnership for joint action, which has identified a range of partnership actions to help improve air quality in the County.

31. 'Total LCC greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions' (gross) have increased during 2021/22 by 8% since the previous year, up to 10,152 tCO₂e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) in 2021/22, showing a decline in performance over the year. However, it has met its target as the latest results are fewer than 12,797 tCO₂e. This indicator was greatly influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic and the removal of restrictions has directly affected emission levels. The rise in Council emissions was expected following the return of many Council services and operations post-Covid-19, particularly with fleet and business travel emissions. Streetlighting, traffic signals and building electricity emissions continued to reduce. Overall, emissions remain 13% lower than 2019-20 (pre-Covid-19 pandemic) and Council emissions have now reduced by 71.7% since the 2008-09 baseline year. The Council's Greenhouse Gas Report 2021-22, presented to this Committee in January 2023, provided a comprehensive update on emissions and progress against the Council's net zero targets.
32. The 'Total business miles claimed ('000s of miles)' indicator improved in performance in quarter 2 2022/23 as claims fell by about 3% since the previous quarter to 3.9m miles claimed. It is currently much better than its target (5.5m) and has improved in performance since the same time last year (4m miles claimed) but it is expected to rise over the year as business returns to normal levels of activity.

Strong Economy, Transport & Infrastructure

33. The 'NO₂ exceedances for Leicestershire' indicator covers the number of times NO₂ has exceeded 40 µg/m³ (micrograms per cubic metre). NO₂ is a gas that is mainly produced during the combustion of fossil fuels. The data is published by district councils in their Air Quality Annual Status Reports. The Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010 require that the annual mean concentration of NO₂ must not exceed 40 µg/m³ and that there should be no more than 18 exceedances of the hourly mean limit value (concentrations above 200 µg/m³) in a single year. 'NO₂ exceedances for Leicestershire' reduced from two in 2020 to none in 2021 suggesting good NO₂ air quality. The previously reported two exceedances that were reported in the previous quarter update that arose in North West Leicestershire have fallen below 40 (µg/m³). The Council does not have direct control over this indicator but it does form part of the Improving Air Quality and Health plan partnership that aims to address these air quality issues.

Background papers

Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Outcomes Framework and Strategic Plan 2022-2026

¹ Earth sense report 2022 commissioned by Public Health

<http://cexmodgov1/documents/s168909/Appendix%20A%20-%20LCC%20Strategic%20Plan%202022-26.pdf>

Leicestershire Insight Survey results

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/r.i.team.leicestershire.county.council/viz/LeicestershireInsightSurvey/Introduction>

Tree Management Strategy 2020-2025

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2021/2/16/Tree-Management-Strategy-2020-2025.pdf>

Tree Management Strategy update 2022

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s172042/Tree%20Management%20Strategy.pdf>

Leicestershire Resources & Waste Strategy 2022-50

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s174244/Appendix%20A%20Leicestershire%20Resources%20And%20Waste%20Strategy%202022%20-%202050%20FINAL.pdf>

Environment Strategy 2018-30

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

Earth sense report 2022 commissioned by Public Health, available on request from Public Health.

Improving Air Quality and Health across Leicestershire 2020-24: a multiagency partnership for joint action

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s157169/Appendix%20A%20Air%20Quality%20and%20Health%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

Greenhouse Gas Emissions report 2021-22

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s174203/GHG%20Report%202021-22%20-%20E%20Scrutiny%20-%20190123.pdf>

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Equality Implications

34. There are no specific equality implications to note as part of this performance report.

Human Rights Implications

35. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Appendix

Strategic Plan Performance Dashboards by Outcomes (Environment and Climate Change Performance) to December 2022

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