



CABINET – 24 APRIL 2023

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

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Cabinet of the outcome of consultation on the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy 2022 (LRWS/Strategy) and seek the Cabinet's approval for adoption of the Strategy. The Strategy, attached as Appendix A to this report, sets out how the Leicestershire Waste Partnership (LWP) intends to manage municipal waste in the County up until 2050.
2. The LRWS is a joint strategy for the County Council and the seven Leicestershire District Councils, which collectively comprise the LWP.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Cabinet:
 - a) Notes the findings of the public consultation on the draft Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy;
 - b) Approves the adoption of the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy.

Reasons for Recommendation

4. The consultation exercise has informed the final Strategy.
5. The Strategy provides a policy framework to enable a sustainable system of waste management to be implemented.
6. The Strategy includes objectives and pledges which provide guiding principles and commitments to deliver the waste management service as a whole to meet the overall vision.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

7. Each authority within the Leicestershire Waste Partnership (LWP), which comprises the County Council and the seven district councils in Leicestershire, is being recommended to adopt the final Strategy through their respective governance processes. Six of the partner authorities have already adopted the Strategy and it is anticipated that all will have done so by the end of April.
8. The report was considered by the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 January 2023 and its comments are set out in Part B of this report.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

9. Under the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003, all authorities in two-tier areas are required to have in place a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for the management of municipal waste within their areas.
10. The Resources and Waste Strategy (RWS) for England was published by the Government in 2018. Legislation to enable the policy changes within the RWS are contained within the Environment Act which received Royal Assent on 9 November 2021. The LRWS review considered the potential forthcoming legislative changes and these are reflected accordingly.
11. The 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 and was approved by the County Council in May 2012. The LMWMS covered the period up to 2020.
12. The LRWS supports the objectives of the County Council's Environment Strategy 2018-2030 and the clean, green outcome within the Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026.
13. 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.

Resource Implications

14. The LWP commissioned consultants to undertake a full review of the LMWMS, funded from the pre-existing LWP budget. The 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 Council's budget management process. At present, cost implications remain uncertain although the Government has stated that it is committed to funding new burdens that might be placed on local authorities as a result of new legislation.

15. The Director of Corporate Resources and the Director of Law and Governance have been consulted on this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

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PART B

Background

16. The first Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy (LMWMS) was adopted by the LWP in 2002. In 2006 it was comprehensively reviewed including a public consultation and a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The Strategy was subsequently updated in 2011 to reflect changes in performance and the economic climate but maintained the objectives of the 2006 Strategy.
17. The LWP commissioned consultants Frith Resource Management to undertake a full review of the LMWMS.
18. The Resources and Waste Strategy (RWS) for England was published by the Government 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 reduce food waste.
19. 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.
20. Following on from the publication of the national RWS, two rounds of consultations were released in 2019 and 2021 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 waste 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);
 - b) Reforming the UK packaging responsibility system/Extended Producer Responsibility (UK);
 - c) Consistency in household and business recycling collections (England).
21. To date, the results of the second round of consultations have been published for extended producer responsibility for packaging and the deposit return scheme. Those relating to household and business recycling collections have not yet been published.
22. Legislation to enable the policy changes within the RWS are contained within the Environment Act which received Royal Assent on 9 November 2021.

23. The review of the LMWMS considered the potential forthcoming legislative changes and these are reflected accordingly and, in some instances, caveats have been made due to the continued delay of confirmation of Government policy.
24. It is important to note the Strategy is high-level and therefore non-site specific.

Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy Review Process

25. The purpose of a joint municipal waste management strategy is to:
- a) Identify the baseline position;
 - b) Outline where partners want to be and when by;
 - c) Articulate how this will be achieved.
26. To achieve the above the following steps were undertaken:

Strategy Review Steps	Outputs
Production of a detailed project plan	Project Plan
Project planning, gap analysis, data analysis	Baseline Report
Undertake full Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment	Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment
Agree objectives and options and options assessment criteria	Draft Options Appraisal Report and Draft Headline Strategy
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	Scoping Report and five-week statutory consultation; Draft Environmental Report
Public Consultation	Public Consultation Report
Finalisation of Strategy	Final Headline Strategy
Action Plan	Final Action Plan

Public Consultation

27. Following a stakeholder mapping exercise, public consultation commenced on 31 January 2022 and ran for 12 weeks until 25 April 2022.
28. The full suite of documents for public consultation comprised:
- a) The Draft Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy, which
 - i. Described the approach the LWP would take in delivering recycling and waste management services from 2022 – 2050;
 - ii. Contained the vision, objectives and pledges that sit alongside forthcoming national changes;
 - iii. Included 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, which
 - i. Explored 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. Provided evidence behind the pledges within the draft Strategy.
 - c) The Draft Environmental Report – from the SEA process, which
 - i. Considered the environmental impacts of the alternative ways of delivering the Strategy;
 - ii. Involved a five-week statutory consultation period from July 2021 during which input was received from Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency.
29. In addition to the above, a consultation summary document outlining the main aspects of the Strategy was available to view.
30. The consultation documents were available online via the County Council's 'Have Your Say' webpage and signposted from all the LWP websites. Hard copies were available upon request
31. The consultation comprised a survey (predominately online) consisting of tick box questions and opportunities for 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.
32. 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.
33. The quantitative and qualitative responses to the online questionnaire and responses from groups and organisations to the public consultation are summarised below and presented in the attached Consultation Report (see Appendix B).

Public Consultation Findings

Have Your Say Survey

34. 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.

35. 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"
36. Also, 83% of respondents agreed with the pledges set out in the draft Strategy. An analysis of the open text comments revealed that fly-tipping was the most common issue of concern, and that many respondents wanted to see more pressure placed on producers to make their packaging recyclable and products more easily repairable. Other comments referred to increasing education and engagement on waste matters so people have a better understanding of link between waste and climate change.
37. Regarding behaviours, 38% of respondents said that they currently composted 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).
38. 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.
39. 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%).
40. Overall, the majority (64%) of the respondents agreed with the draft Strategy to some extent.

Other Consultation Activity

41. Community Research was commissioned to explore residents' views of the draft Strategy and conducted an online forum with 25 Leicestershire residents. Participants completed a series of tasks including polling questions, discussion boards and self-filmed videos.
42. Key conclusions included that the vision and draft Strategy resonated with residents and addressed many of their concerns; and that residents are

enthusiastic about having a greater engagement in reducing waste and recycling and recognise the key role they have to play.

43. The Council provided presentations to various groups in order to capture their views and these included the Leicestershire Equalities Group, Leicestershire Parish Clerks and the County Youth Council for Leicestershire.

Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee

44. 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. The differences between district kerbside collections were noted and that a common collection regime would make county-wide communication easier.
45. The Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a further report on 19 January 2023. This advised members of the outcome and analysis of the public consultation and sought any further comments from the Committee before the Strategy was presented to the Cabinet for approval.
46. Members welcomed the Strategy and the partnership working which had taken place to produce it. Comments raised included:
- a) That there would be advantages to waste collection and disposal being carried out by one unitary authority but that this was not being proposed in the Strategy;
 - b) That new Pledge 2 covered environmental crime and fly-tipping and that partnership working was needed in this area;
 - c) Pledge 11 stated the Partnership would allocate a communications budget to help promote good recycling behaviour - it was noted that this work would be funded through existing budgets;
 - d) That the Government was proposing that weekly food waste collections be introduced but there was currently no further detail as to when this would start and how funding would be allocated.
47. The Committee resolved that the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy be supported.

Overall findings

48. The consultation findings are detailed in Appendix C to this report and a summary of the key conclusions is given below.
- 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, and addressing the environmental, personal and social factors that can affect behaviour.
49. The key themes that have been highlighted in the consultation responses together with the issues and considerations that have been raised are summarised below (note that these are not 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) Food waste collections – overall support for their introduction but concerns raised
 - 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.
 - 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

50. Findings from the consultation exercise will help inform future initiatives and campaigns.
51. A key theme which came out of the consultation exercise, which was not dealt with by the pledges included in the draft Strategy, is fly-tipping. The LWP has therefore committed to address this with an additional pledge (no. 2 below) in the final document.
52. 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.
53. During the public consultation period on the draft Strategy, 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 Strategy Options Appraisal due to the continued uncertainty around the Government's preferred approach, but the future waste and recycling projections were updated to take account of this amendment.
54. Due to the continued uncertainty regarding Government policies, a Local Government finance position statement also been added to the Strategy, clarifying that some of the pledges can only be implemented if additional funding is provided by the Government. Since the draft Strategy was considered by the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 January a further amendment has been made to the document, acknowledging that where funding is provided which requires allocation across the Partnership, this will be calculated on a basis that is acceptable to all Partners to ensure legally compliant, cost effective and timely distribution.

Action Plan

55. The Strategy is supported by an Action Plan which provides a route map for delivering the vision, objectives and pledges set out in the Strategy, giving a clear direction of travel to ensure that resources and waste are managed effectively.

56. The Action Plan will be subject to regular review and monitoring by the LWP. Changes may be made to the Action Plan by the LWP 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.
57. The Action Plan is 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;
 - g) Carbon.
58. Some of these themes contain overlapping elements. Each action within the Plan details what is to be done, how the action relates to either an objective or pledge of the Strategy, which partner/partners are responsible and when it will be undertaken.
59. The Action Plan is high- level and there may be further (more detailed) actions for example: a procurement plan; individual partner Council action plans; business cases; or communications plans.

Conclusion

60. It is recognised that further clarity from the Government is needed to fully understand the impact of the potential policy changes which may be the most significant seen for many years. The options which were appraised and which support the Strategy provide a reasonable guide to the magnitude of changes that might be expected and are subject to forthcoming legislation and future funding mechanisms.
61. The Strategy sets the LWP in a robust policy position for an imminent period of substantial change (2023 – 2027) and longer-term goals and will help deliver on Net Zero priorities.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

62. The review of the LMWMS was subject to a full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (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.
63. This EHRIA has enabled the LWP to assess whether the new Strategy 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 that the LRWS promotes accessible services, accessible information and appropriate equality training where required.

Environmental Implications

64. The key conclusion from the SEA was that the Strategy seeks to improve on the baseline situation through improved resource management and continued movement of waste management practices in Leicestershire following the waste hierarchy, including waste prevention and reuse. This is consistent with good practice in terms of resource and waste management. The Environmental Report (Appendix D) documents the SEA process.

Background Papers

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

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ielssueDetails.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 \(item 90\)](https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=6449 (item 90))

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 \(item 47\)](https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=6753 (item 47))

Report to the Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 January 2023: Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy 2022-2050

[https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=1292&MIId=7147&Ver=4 \(item 10\)](https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=1292&MIId=7147&Ver=4 (item 10))

Appendices

Appendix A: Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy

Appendix B: Action Plan Timeline

Appendix C: Consultation Report

Appendix D: Environmental Report

Appendix E: EHRIA

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