



**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12 MARCH 2025**

**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PERFORMANCE
REPORT TO DECEMBER 2024**

**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 (KPIs), to December 2024, that the Council is responsible for delivering against the Council's Strategic Plan (2024-26).

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 across the Council 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 key outcomes, primarily the Clean and Green outcome.
4. The performance dashboards, appended to this report, include several indicators where the Council does not have direct control of delivery, such as electric vehicle ownership and air quality. The latter examples are within the scope of the Environment Strategy but are not directly delivered by the Council. They have been included to provide a greater oversight of the environment, to inform policy making and to help to 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 policy and funding from the Government. 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 Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rating, and quartile position when compared to other English county councils (where applicable). The dashboards also show trends over time.
6. Coloured DOT arrows (RAG) show whether there has been an improvement or deterioration in performance compared to the previous result, for recently updated data, within the performance dashboards. Up arrows show an improvement in performance, whereas down arrows show a decline in performance, and horizontal arrows show no change. Grey DOTs mean that there is no recent update available. This may be due to the time taken to obtain data from third parties and calculate the results, or because many indicators are updated less frequently, such as annually.
7. The performance dashboards include information on the latest data against target (where relevant) which generates a RAG rating if applicable. Red indicates that close monitoring or significant action is required as the target is not or may not be achieved. Amber indicates that light touch monitoring is required as performance is currently not meeting the target or is set to miss the target by a narrow margin. Green indicates that no additional action is required as the indicator is currently meeting the target or is on track to meet the target.
8. The Council's performance is benchmarked against 32 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 first quartile is defined as performance that falls within the top 25% of county councils (highest performing). The fourth quartile is defined as performance that falls within the bottom 25% of county councils (lowest performing). The comparison quartiles are updated annually.
9. The frequency in which the indicators are reported varies as 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 that the latest data covers are contained in the performance dashboards in the Appendix.

Performance Update – latest data to December 2024

10. The quarterly performance dashboard shows Environment and Climate Change performance up to December 2024. Overall, there are 26 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 within the Appendix. This report focuses on the 16 indicators that have recently been updated. Where a DOT is available for the updated indicators: six showed performance improvement, one had declined in performance and nine remained the same as the previous update.

11. The latest position shows that of the indicators updated which have targets, six KPIs are green (they have met the target or are on track), three are amber (performance is currently not meeting the target or is set to miss the target by a narrow margin) and one is rated red (where performance is currently not meeting the target or is set to miss the target).
12. When compared to other English county councils, out of all the Council's Clean and Green KPIs, there are two indicators which are in the top quartile, which include the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance rating C+ (new homes)' and the 'Total fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 population' (listed in the Appendix with a green first quartile position). There are nine Clean and Green KPIs that perform below average, within the third and fourth quartiles, listed in the Appendix.
13. The following updates focus on the 16 indicators that have been updated by the end of December 2024 (Quarter Three).

Clean and Green Outcome

14. The 'Renewable electricity generated in the area (MWh)' has increased by 12% from 355,263 MWh in 2022 to 398,399 MWh in 2023, demonstrating an improvement in performance since the previous year. When compared to other English county councils in 2023, this indicator remains in the third quartile. Renewable electricity generated includes wind, solar, tidal/wave, small scale hydro, bio energy and others e.g. thermal exchange. The annual district level data is aggregated to provide a Leicestershire total. Data is sourced from the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) and is nine months in arrears.
15. The 'Renewable electricity capacity in the area (MW)' has improved in performance by 27%, from 340 MW in 2022 to 433 MW in 2023. However, this indicator also performs below average when compared to other English county councils (third quartile) in 2023. The Council has limited influence over countywide renewable energy capacity, which tends to change in response to incentive schemes from the Government 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.
16. The Council monitors the energy efficiency of new and existing homes within the County in the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating C+' indicators. There are separate indicators for new build properties and existing properties. The latest data shows that 99% of new homes are relatively energy efficient, with a C+ EPC rating, compared to older homes which are only 52% energy efficient in Quarter Two 2024/25 (most recent). New homes had fairly static performance whilst existing homes had a slight increase in performance (one percentage point) since the previous quarter. The EPC register does not hold data for every domestic and non-domestic building, or every building occupied by public authorities. Buildings only require an EPC when they are sold, let or

constructed. These statistics should, therefore, not be interpreted as a true representation of the whole of the building stock but viewed as part of a wider package of the Government's provision of information on the energy efficiency of buildings. The data is updated quarterly and sourced from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

17. Comparisons with other English county councils for 2022/23 show that the 'Percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance certificate rating C+' for 'new homes' falls within the first (top) quartile in 2023/24. Energy efficiency of 'existing homes' are second quartile in 2023/24. Both had above average comparative performance in 2023/24. The Authority does not have direct control over these indicators, but it does have some influence in terms of local initiatives: for example, the Home Energy Retrofit Offer supports residents with advice on what can be done to homes to keep them warm and cut energy bills, which is provided by the Warm Homes team in Public Health and the Green Living Leicestershire group. The Warm Homes service launched its Home Energy Retrofit Offer project in 2024 to offer personalised energy and retrofit advice to homeowners in hard-to-reach communities. It also continues to deliver the Home Upgrade Grant Phase Two, with an estimated maximum of 173 homes supported by March 2025 and an anticipated capital budget up to £2.5m.
18. The 'Amount of renewable energy generated as a percentage of consumption' remained static at 15% in Quarter Two 2024/2. This internal KPI has not yet met its target of 32.5% which has resulted in a red RAG rating. This is expected to improve over the coming year following improvements to the biomass boiler and the solar panels and their management.
19. Air quality performance improved slightly as PM2.5 declined from 8.9 µg/m³ in 2022 to 7.7 µg/m³ in 2023 for Leicestershire (excluding Leicester). Compared to other English County Councils, Leicestershire remained in the 4th quartile in 2023 (lowest performance). Despite this, PM2.5 within Leicestershire is still within the UK target of 10 µg/m³. However, these latest results exceed the World Health Organisation's recommendations of 5 µg/m³. Inhalation of particulate pollution can have adverse health impacts. This data describes the annual mean concentration of fine particulate matter at an area level, adjusted to account for population exposure and it is measured in micrograms per cubic metre (µg/m³). According to data from the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the major sources of primary PM2.5 are combustion in the energy industries, road transport (both exhaust and non-exhaust emissions), rail and air transport, residential sources, and small-scale (waste and wood burning stoves) burning. The Council's Public Health Department lead on Air Quality work for the County Council and work in partnership with district councils and other health bodies. The Leicestershire Air Quality and Health Partnership was formed in 2020, it was created following recommendations from a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment undertaken in 2019 on air quality and health. The Partnership consists of officers from the County Council and all of the district councils (which have a statutory duty to monitor air quality), the Integrated Care Board, and representatives from the University of Leicester. The group has established a

new Air Quality and Health Action Plan for 2024-25, which will enable, facilitate and monitor collective action on air quality and health across the County Council, the district councils and the NHS partners. Progress against this will be monitored by the partnership. The Director of Public Health signed-off the district councils Annual Status Reports prior to the submission to the DEFRA, and they could ensure that different health and active travel considerations were reflected in the reports.

20. The County Council's gross 'greenhouse gas emissions' remained similar to the previous year at 9,351 tCO_{2e} (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) in 2023/24 (internal data). It has met its refreshed target as the latest results are lower than 9,892 tCO_{2e}, resulting in a green RAG rating. The County Council's 'net' greenhouse gas emissions were 9,282 tCO_{2e} for this period.
21. 'Total business miles claimed ('000s of miles)' improved in performance as miles claimed reduced from 4.8m miles in Quarter Two 2024/25 to 4.7m miles in Quarter Three in 2024/25 (internal data). It is currently much lower than its target (5.3m), resulting in a green RAG rating showing good performance. It also performed better than its long-term average of 5.6m miles since 2012.
22. The 'Hectares of LCC land in better management for nature' indicator was updated for 2023/24 and has declined by 3% leaving 3,736 ha in better management for nature, despite this slight decline in performance it continues to have met its target (3,641 ha). The change is due to 118ha of land being disposed of by the Council. This internal data includes a combination of the Council's land, including country parks, rural and urban highway verges, county farms and playing fields. It is based on the best available data of the amount of Council land that is in better management for nature. Namely, there is a conscious decision to manage the land with nature in mind.
23. The 'percentage of suitable Council land in better management for nature' remained the same as the previous year at 97% for 2023/24 and has met its target (95%), demonstrating very good performance (internal data). (This is the above figure from paragraph 22 presented as a percentage of the total amount of suitable Council land).
24. Leicestershire is one of the least wooded areas of the Country, currently with only around 6% woodland, which is well below the national average of 10% for England. As a major landowner in Leicestershire, the Council has identified areas of its own landholdings where trees, woodlands and hedgerows can be planted to increase overall tree coverage. The Council made a pledge for an 'ambitious project to plant 700,000 trees' by 2032, which is the equivalent of one for every resident of Leicestershire. This equates to 70,000 trees planted each year. To help achieve this pledge, the Tree Management Strategy and Planting Action Plan was updated in 2021 to ensure the delivery of the pledge over a 10-year period. The latest tree planting provisional update shows that 437,284 trees have been planted by the Council and its partners up to December 2024, since July 2021, and this has greatly exceeded its cumulative target of 210,000 for 2024/25 (data derived from LCC & partners). The latest result is over half of its 2032 target, showing excellent performance.

A detailed Tree Management Strategy Annual update was provided to the Committee on 2 November 2024

25. The 'Percentage of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling or composting (former NI 192)' remained similar to the previous quarter at 44% over a 12-month rolling period up to and including Quarter One 2024/25 (data is two quarters in arrears) and narrowly missed its 45% target. It lies within the third quartile position using latest 2022/23 published data compared to other English county councils. This indicator has had relatively static performance over the past year ranging between 42% and 44%. The Council adopted the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy in April 2023, which includes a pledge to put in place collection systems to contribute towards the future national target of 65% recycling by 2035. (Source: WasteDataFlow). These include future waste reforms such as mandatory weekly food waste collections from all households by 31 March 2026 and an extended producer responsibility scheme for packaging which, by making producers responsible for their packaging throughout its whole life cycle, will encourage the use of more easily recycled materials.
26. The 'Annual percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill (former NI 193)' remained similar to the previous quarter at 12%, 12 month rolling period up to and including Quarter One 2024/25, and slightly missed its more challenging refreshed target of 10%. Since the same time last year waste landfilled has decreased by 43% (from 21% in Quarter One 2023/24) showing a significant improvement in performance over the year. When compared to other English county councils, this indicator remained in the fourth (bottom) quartile in 2022/23. In order to achieve an average position when compared to the other English county councils, performance would have to meet a more challenging 5% landfill rate. Through the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy, the Council is committed to reducing waste to landfill to less than 5% by 2025, well in advance of the national target of 10% by 2035. A new energy from waste contract started in April 2023, and it is expected that this will further reduce the amount of municipal waste being sent to landfill this year. (Source: WasteDataFlow).
27. The 'Total household waste per household (kg)' remained relatively static in performance at 963 kg over the 12-month rolling period up to and including Quarter One 2024/25 (data is two quarters in arrears). In comparison to other English county councils, Leicestershire's performance was below average as it is in the third quartile for 2022/23 (same as the previous year's quartile). (Source: WasteDataFlow).
28. The results on the 'Percentage of staff who say LCC is doing enough to reduce its environmental impact (post training survey)' remained relatively static at 90% for Quarter Two 2024/25. It has met its target (90%) showing overall good performance. This is from internal data taken from the post training survey and reported quarterly.

Strong Economy, Transport and Infrastructure

29. The 'NO₂ exceedances for Leicestershire' indicator shows the number of times nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) has exceeded the annual mean air quality objective of 40µg/m³. NO₂ is a gas that is mainly produced during the combustion of fossil fuels. In 2023 only one NO₂ exceedance was reported in Blaby showing an improvement in performance since the previous year when 3 exceedances were reported. (Since 2019 this indicator has ranged from 0-3). Data is sourced from the district councils Air Quality Annual Status Reports.

Background Papers

Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Outcomes Framework and Strategic Plan 2024-2026

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/LCC-Strategic-Plan.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>

Environmental Performance Progress Annual Report 2023-24

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s187765/01.%20Final%20Annual%20Environmental%20Performance%20and%20Progress%20Update%20Report%202023-24%20E%20Scrutiny%20220125.pdf>

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report 2023-24

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s187768/Appendix%20B%20-%20Leicestershire%20County%20Council%20Greenhouse%20Gas%20Report%202023-2024%20-%20E%20Scrutiny%20220125.pdf>

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 Annual Update 2024

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s186296/Tree%20Management%20Strategy%20Annual%20Update.pdf>

Leicestershire Air Quality and Health partnership Action Plan 2024-2028

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s187233/Air%20Quality%20FINAL.pdf>
<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s187241/Appendix%20-%20AQ%20and%20Health%20Partnership%20Action%20Plan%20FINAL%20DRAFT%202024-28.pdf>

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Equality Implications

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

Human Rights Implications

31. There are no human rights implications arising from this performance report.

Appendix

Strategic Plan Performance Dashboards by Outcomes covering Environment and Climate Change Performance to December 2024

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