

**CABINET – 3 FEBRUARY 2026****CLIMATE RESILIENCE DELIVERY PLAN****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT****PART A****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Cabinet's approval of the Climate Resilience Delivery Plan (Delivery Plan) which is attached as Appendix A to this report.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet approves the Climate Resilience Delivery Plan (Delivery Plan).

Reasons for Recommendation

3. The Delivery Plan (previously the Net Zero Action Plans) has been produced in accordance with the Cabinet's decision from July 2025 to change the focus of activities from carbon reduction to climate adaptation and respond to severe weather events and projects that deliver financial savings or additional social, economic or environmental benefits.
4. The Delivery Plan includes actions reflecting the programme of flood mitigation and climate adaptation and resilience, as agreed by the Cabinet in October 2025.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

5. The Environment, Flooding and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider a Climate Resilience Delivery Plan report on 26 January 2026, and the Committee's comments will be reported to the Cabinet.
6. Subject to the Cabinet's approval, the final Delivery Plan will then be published on the Council's website.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

7. The Delivery Plan supports the delivery of the Environment Strategy 2018-2030 which was approved by the Cabinet on 6 July 2018.
8. A revised Environment Strategy was subsequently adopted by the County Council on 8 July 2020, to account for the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in May 2019. The vision of the revised Environment Strategy is 'Leicestershire County Council will minimise the environmental impact of its activities and will improve the wider environment through local action. We will play our full part to protect the environment of Leicestershire. We will tackle climate change and embed environmental sustainability into what we do.'
9. The Delivery Plan supports the delivery of the County Council's Strategic Plan which was adopted in March 2022. Clean and Green is one of its five Strategic Outcomes, a priority of which is to tackle a changing climate.
10. In December 2022, the County Council adopted the 2030 Net Zero Council Action Plan and the 2045 Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy and Action Plan.
11. Since these commitments were made, the Council has been subjected to an increasingly constrained financial position with a significant deficit forecast. In February 2024, in light of this and the estimated increased resources required to reach net zero, the Cabinet resolved to extend the net zero targets to 2035 for Council operations and to 2050 for Countywide emissions, in line with the national target.
12. In February 2025, the Cabinet approved revised versions of the Net Zero Action Plans which were updated as a result of the change to the associated targets.
13. On 15 July 2025 (the Council being under a new Administration following the elections in May 2025), the Cabinet reallocated £2m from the reserves which had previously been earmarked for carbon reduction work, to flooding mitigation initiatives and adapting Council services to the impacts of severe weather events. The Cabinet also approved a change to the focus of the activities delivered under the Net Zero Action Plans, as requested by the Leader of the Council. At the same time, it was decided that the existing targets surrounding net zero carbon be retained but with a shift in focus outlined within the July Cabinet report.
14. Subsequently, in October 2025, the Cabinet reviewed and approved the proposed £2m programme of flood mitigation and climate adaptation and resilience measures.

Resource Implications

15. The Delivery Plan has been produced assuming that existing levels of revenue resource will continue to be available.

16. This additionally includes £0.3m of the £2m reallocated funding approved by the Cabinet in October 2025 and proposed for inclusion in the 2026-30 Medium Term Financial Strategy process. This will be spent mainly on employing a staff resource to update the climate risk register, identify measures that can form a realistic action plan and to work with high-risk service areas (such as highways and property) to identify and implement mitigation measures to protect assets, save reactive spend and ensure continuous services for Leicestershire residents and businesses.
17. The remainder of the reallocated £2m funding will be spent on working with communities (£0.4m) and effective management and investment in highways drainage assets (£1.3m).
18. The Director of Law and Governance and the Director of Corporate Resources have been consulted on the content of this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

19. This report will be circulated to all Members.

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PART B

Background

20. As agreed by the Cabinet in July 2025, there has been a change of focus in the activities included in the Delivery Plan (previously the Net Zero Action Plan) from carbon reduction to:
 - i. climate adaptation and responding to severe weather events;
 - ii. projects that deliver financial savings; and
 - iii. projects that deliver additional social, economic or environmental benefits, in support of the Council's Strategic Outcomes.
21. Actions reflecting the programme of flood mitigation and climate adaptation and resilience actions, as agreed by the Cabinet in October 2025, have been added to the Delivery Plan.

Delivery Plan

22. Following this change, a number of actions now refer directly to the financial and health benefits of climate change mitigation and adaptation. To support this change in approach, a new column and associated key have been added in which the co-benefits of each action are identified in abbreviated form (e.g. FE for financial efficiency, NB for nature and biodiversity and HW for health and wellbeing).
23. The timeframe has also been updated. Previously, action implementation was identified over a 5-year period, but this has been changed to a 3-year period. This is to align with the programme of flood mitigation, climate resilience and adaptation measures agreed by the Cabinet in October 2025.

Monitoring and Reporting

24. Annual reporting regarding progress on the Delivery Plan will be included within the Environmental Performance and Progress Report, presented to the Environment, Flooding and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis, which will report by exception and summarise the highlights from that year's delivery period.

Equality Implications

25. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) were undertaken in full when the original Net Zero Action Plans were developed and subsequently adopted by the Cabinet. Therefore, as the Delivery Plan has not been substantively altered in scope, it has been agreed with departmental equality officers that additional EIAs will not be required; however, minor changes have been made to the existing EIA (Appendix B) to reflect the changes made to the Delivery Plan.

26. However, it should be noted that the statutorily established Climate Change Committee (the Government's advisory body on climate change science, targets and impacts) recognises that climate change can have a disproportionate impact on groups with different protected characteristics.
27. Decision makers should therefore take account of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). Although not climate specific, this duty requires authorities to consider how their policies affect different groups which can intersect with climate justice concerns.
28. Compliance with the PSED places the County Council (or a third-party exercising function on its behalf) under a duty to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Human Rights Implications

29. No human right implications were found when the original Net Zero Action Plans were developed and subsequently adopted by the Cabinet. There are no changes in the Delivery Plan that would have human rights implications.

Environmental Implications

30. There are likely to be both positive and negative environmental implications linked to the shift in focus of the Delivery Plan. The move away from emissions reduction work may increase risk for the Council in the future.

Health Implications

31. A full Health and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (HIA) was undertaken in 2024 when the Net Zero Action Plans were revised and subsequently adopted by the Cabinet. It was therefore agreed with Public Health officers that an additional HIA will not be required subject to minor changes being made to the existing HIA to reflect the changes made to the Delivery Plan (Appendix C).
32. The HIA describes how many actions of the Delivery Plan could make a positive contribution to health in relation to the priority thematic areas identified within the tool. The broadening of the Delivery Plan to include actions relating to climate change adaptation has additional health benefits by alleviating the impacts of severe weather on Council services and assets that Leicestershire residents and businesses rely upon.

Background Papers

Environment Strategy 2018-2030

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

2035 Net Zero Council Action Plan (2025)

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-03/net-zero-council-action-plan-2035.pdf>

2050 Net Zero Leicestershire Action Plan (2025)

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-07/2050-Net-Zero-Leicestershire-Action-Plan.pdf>

Cabinet report - 15 July 2025

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s190761/FINAL%20Net%20Zero%20Reprioritised%20Cabinet%20150725%20v2.pdf>

Cabinet report – 28 October 2025

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s192485/FINAL%20Flooding%20and%20Climate%20Adaptation%20Cabinet%20281025.pdf>

Appendices

Appendix A: Climate Resilience Delivery Plan

Appendix B: Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix C: Health and Wellbeing Impact Assessment