



**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 1 MARCH 2022**

**ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE PERFORMANCE  
REPORT TO DECEMBER 2021**

**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 responsible for delivering against the Council's Strategic Plan.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. The updates in this report reflect progress against the Council's Strategic Outcomes Framework within the Strategic Plan to 2022, and the Environment 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 key outcomes: Strong Economy, Wellbeing, Keeping People Safe, Great Communities, Affordable and Quality Homes and supporting corporate enablers.
4. The performance dashboards include several indicators where the Council does not have direct control of delivery, such as air and river quality and biodiversity. The latter examples are pillars within the Environment Strategy but are not directly delivered by the Council. They have been included to provide greater oversight of the environment, inform policy making and help understand what life is like in Leicestershire. They include a mixture of national and locally developed performance indicators. Measuring these may highlight areas for scrutiny of other departments and agencies delivery 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 considering its RAG rating, direction of travel (DOT) and quartile position when compared to other English Counties.
6. For each indicator reported, the dashboard shows information on the latest data against the previous update and target (if available), the RAG rating (Red, Amber or Green) if applicable (see definitions of RAG ratings in Appendix A), the DOT, the trend, and the comparison quartile position, where available.
7. Improvement or deterioration in performance is indicated by the DOT on the performance dashboard. For example, if carbon emissions from Council buildings decline, the DOT will show a green arrow pointing upwards representing an improvement in performance. If the indicator does not have a 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.
8. The Council's performance is benchmarked against 33 English authorities which covers large, principally non-urban geographical areas. Where it is available, the performance dashboards within Appendix B 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 two quarters or more. For clarity, the time-periods the data covers are contained in the performance dashboards (Appendix B).

### **Performance Update – latest data to December 2021**

10. The quarterly performance dashboard shows Environment and Climate Change performance up to December 2021. Overall, there are 29 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 B). This report focuses on the indicators that have been updated, which is 12 this quarter. Where DOT is available: six show performance improvements, two had declined and four remained the same as the previous update.
11. The latest position shows that nine KPIs that have met target or are on track (green), three amber (performance is currently not meeting the target or set to miss the target by a narrow margin) and three KPIs that are rated red (where performance is currently not meeting the target or set to miss the target).
12. Across all KPIs the Council has notably good performance for: 'Carbon emissions per capita (in LA influence)', 'NO<sub>2</sub> exceedances for Leicestershire'

and 'PM2.5 air pollution fine particulate matter.' Most of these were positively impacted during the pandemic as fewer people were on the roads and some businesses had reduced activity during lockdowns, except for 'Carbon emissions per capita' which refers to pre-pandemic data (2019).

13. Where comparative performance is available, the Council is in the top quartile for one indicator, the 'percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+ (new) and in the bottom quartile for two indicators: 'The percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill' and 'the percentage of domestic properties with Energy Performance Certificate rating C+ (existing)'.
14. The updates that follow focus on indicators that have been recently updated that either haven't met their target, have seen a decline in performance or show notable good performance.

### **Strong Economy – Green Economy**

15. This outcome includes indicators that support a greener economy. Within this outcome three indicators were updated in quarter 3 (detailed in the following paragraphs), all of which had seen an improvement in performance. Targets haven't been set for these indicators because the Authority has limited influence over them.
16. 'Electric vehicle charging locations per 100,000 population' improved in performance as charging locations increased by 9.9% from 29 locations per 100,000 in quarter 2 (2021/22) to 32 in quarter 3 (2021/22) and a huge 60.5% increase since the same period last year, when the figure was 20. In terms of comparison with other counties, Leicestershire has now moved up to the second quartile for 2021 (above average) compared to its third quartile (below average) last year.
17. 'Electric vehicle ownership – Ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) rate/10,000 population' also improved in performance by 12% as ownership increased from 68/10,000 in quarter 2 (2021/22) to 77/10,000 in quarter 3 (2021/22). This has doubled since the same period last year, which was 38/10,000. 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 2021.
18. 'Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) exceedances for Leicestershire' declined from three in 2019 to two in 2020, suggesting an improvement in NO<sub>2</sub> air quality performance. Both exceedances were in North West Leicestershire (34 Bondgate and M1 Bridge Copt Oak). NO<sub>2</sub> is a gas that is mainly produced during the combustion of fossil fuels. This indicator is the number of times NO<sub>2</sub> has exceeded 40 micrograms. It is published by district councils in their Air Quality Annual Status Reports. During 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic greatly reduced the number of vehicles on County roads during periods of lockdown

which is likely to have impacted this result along with the increased uptake of electric vehicles.

### **Wellbeing – Air Quality**

19. Inhalation of particulate pollution can have adverse health impacts. The biggest impact of particulate air pollution on public health is understood to be from long-term exposure to fine particulate matter, also known as PM2.5. PM2.5 data describes the annual concentration of human-made fine particulate matter at an area level, adjusted to account for population exposure and is measured in micrograms per cubic metre ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ). 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 burning. Performance on this has improved as total PM2.5 decreased from  $9.92 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  in 2019 to  $7 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  in 2020. Similarly, to  $\text{NO}_2$ , this improvement in performance is likely to have resulted from reduced traffic during lockdowns. Levels of PM 2.5 are generally higher in the west of the County, in Blaby, North West Leicestershire, Hinckley and Bosworth and along the M1 in Charnwood. The M1, East Midlands Airport and various quarries appear to have the most impact on levels. Leicestershire remains in the third quartile (below average) when compared to other counties for 2020.

### **Keeping People Safe – Environmental risks**

20. The Department continues to support the Keeping People Safe outcome primarily through its environmental risks monitoring. There are no further updates for this indicator and the Council's 'Environmental risks managed' remain at a low rate of five.

### **Great Communities – Waste and Energy**

21. The Department supports the Great Communities outcome through its waste management and energy initiatives and evaluates performance through public opinion and wider County indicators. Of the six indicators updated in quarter 3, one indicator improved in performance, three indicators remained the same and two declined, detailed below. Indicators with a green RAG rating include 'Annual percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill' and 'Carbon emissions per capita (in LA influence)'.
22. Of the eight comparable indicators, all performed below average when compared to other English county councils, except for 'Carbon emissions per capita (in LA influence)' and 'Total fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 population' (second quartile).
23. The 'percentage of household waste sent by local authorities across Leicestershire for reuse, recycling or composting' remained similar to the previous quarter, 44% in quarter 1 (data is two quarters in arrears) and missed its 50% target, resulting in an amber rating. It lies within the third quartile position (2020/21). This indicator has remained static over the past year. Over recent years it has been particularly impacted by national issues, the pandemic,

seasonal fluctuations in garden waste, economic factors, as well as issues specific to Leicestershire such as the closure of the Cotesbach Mechanical Biological Treatment plant (MBT) and service changes across the County. Most of the factors identified are beyond the sole control of the Council, limiting the opportunity to mitigate the impacts. The Council is currently 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 national target of 65% recycling by 2035.

24. The 'annual percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill' indicator met its target of 30% (rated green). Performance has remained steady at 28% in quarter 1 since the previous quarter (data is two quarters in arrears). In recent years, performance against this indicator has been affected by a loss of alternative (non-landfill) disposal points. The Authority has negotiated an increase in the amount of waste delivered to alternative disposal points which has begun to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. Performance against this indicator remains in the fourth quartile in 2020/21.
25. The 'Total household waste per household (kg)' indicator saw a slight (2%) decline in performance as waste increased from 1,020 kg in quarter 4 2020/21 to 1,043 kg quarter 1 in 2021/22 (data is two quarters in arrears). This remains in the third quartile for 2020/ 21 when compared to other English county councils. The pandemic has impacted waste patterns and more home working and lockdowns are likely to have led to more household waste during those periods.
26. Total fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 population increased significantly from 5.5 during 2019/20 to 8.6 during 2020/21. Factors affecting fly tipping levels are complex and the impact of the pandemic is not fully understood. National research suggests that deprivation levels and urban-rural classification may have significant association with levels of fly-tipping. This remains in the second quartile for 2020/21 when compared to other English county councils.
27. 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 survey results tell us that 98% of respondents agree that 'protecting the environment is important' in the 12 months to quarter 2 (2021/22), while 64% of respondents think that the Council should do more to help protect the environment (including carbon reduction and helping tackle climate change) in the same period. Both results are statistically similar to the previous quarter's results.

### **Affordable and Quality Homes**

28. As part of supporting the Council's Affordable and Quality Homes outcome, the Council monitors both the energy efficiency of new and existing homes within the County. The latest data shows that 99.7% of new homes are energy efficient (energy performance certificate rating C+) compared to older homes of which only 40% are rated as energy efficient in quarter 2 (2021/22). Both new

and existing homes have seen a small improvement in performance since the previous quarter. Comparisons (2020/21) with other English county council's 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 fourth (bottom) quartile, indicating that existing homes in the County would benefit from more energy efficient incentives. The Authority does not have direct control over this, and further improvement may be contingent on national programmes such as grant schemes to improve insulation and energy efficiency.

### **Corporate Enabler: County Council Environmental Impact**

29. The Department supports the Corporate Enabler outcome largely through its environmental initiatives. There are no new updates to report this quarter due to staff capacity issues arising from difficulties in recruiting to a vacant post within the Environment Policy and Strategy Team.

### **Background papers**

Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Outcomes Framework and Strategic Plan 2018-22

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/about-the-council/council-plans/the-strategic-plan>

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>

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

None.

### **Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

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

### **Appendices**

Appendix A - Definitions of RAG ratings

Appendix B - Strategic Plan Performance Dashboards by Outcomes (Environment and Climate Change Performance) to December 2021

### **Officers to Contact**

Ann Carruthers

Director, Environment and Transport Department

Tel: (0116) 305 7000

Email: [Ann.Carruthers@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Ann.Carruthers@leics.gov.uk)

Nicola Truslove  
Business Partner, Business Intelligence Service  
Tel: (0116) 305 8302  
Email: [Nicola.Truslove@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Nicola.Truslove@leics.gov.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank