



Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy (2022-2050)

Corporate Priority:	Excellent services positively impacting on our communities Protect our climate and enhance our rural natural environment
Relevant Ward Member(s):	All Wards
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	
Exempt Information:	No

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the final draft of the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy (LRWS Strategy) 2022-2050. It replaces the previous Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy originally adopted in 2002.
- 1.2 The LRWS strategy has been developed through a collaborative approach between district and county council partners that form the Leicestershire Waste Partnership. It has been finalised further to an extensive public consultation and sets out how the Leicestershire Waste Partnership intends to manage municipal waste up until 2050.
- 1.3 The strategy contains a range of pledges. Some of the pledges contained within the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy can only be implemented if sufficient ongoing additional funding is provided by Government to cover the costs incurred by both the waste disposal and collection authorities respectively.
- 1.4 The LRWS will be considered for adoption by all councils that form the Leicestershire Waste Partnership.

2 Recommendation(s)

That Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1 Reviews the draft Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy 2022 – 2050 (Appendix A) and provides comments for consideration by Cabinet

3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy has been developed over a long period of time, through a collaborative approach between Leicestershire County Council and the District and Borough Councils (Leicestershire Waste Partnership). It has been finalised further to an extensive public consultation and sets out how the Leicestershire Waste Partnership intends to manage municipal waste up until 2050.
- 3.2 The results from the public consultation exercise have been incorporated and a final Strategy produced.
- 3.3 The Strategy provides a policy framework to enable a sustainable system of waste management to be implemented.
- 3.4 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. Importantly, some of the pledges contained within the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy are caveated and can only be implemented if sufficient ongoing additional funding is provided by Government to cover the costs incurred by both the waste disposal and collection authorities respectively. These caveats are important as without ongoing funding assurances, there would be significant financial burdens and risks to local authorities.
- 3.5 The Strategy sets out the broad direction for delivery of service development. Further work is required on the details before any major changes can be introduced.
- 3.6 Each authority within the Leicestershire Waste Partnership (LWP), which comprises the County Council and the seven district councils in Leicestershire, is in the process of seeking adoption of the final Strategy. For Melton Borough Council, the strategy will be considered by Cabinet and a recommendation made to Full Council. Scrutiny Committee comments will be considered by Cabinet.

4 Background

- 4.1 The first Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy (LMWMS) was adopted by the Leicestershire Waste Partnership (LWP) in 2002. In 2006 it was comprehensively reviewed including a public consultation and full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The Strategy was subsequently updated in 2011 to reflect changes in performance and the economic climate since 2006 but maintained the objectives of the 2006 Strategy.
- 4.2 The LWP commissioned consultants Frith Resource Management to undertake a full review of the Strategy.

- 4.3 The national Resources and Waste Strategy (RWS) was released 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 end food waste.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 Following on from the publication of the national RWS, two rounds of consultations were released 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;
- Deposit Return Schemes (DRS) (England, Wales & NI) – closed June 2021
 - Reforming the UK packaging responsibility system/Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) (UK) – closed June 2021
 - Consistency in household and business recycling collections (England) – closed July 2021
- 4.6 To date, the results of the second round of consultations have only been published for extended producer responsibility for packaging (pEPR). They have not yet been published for a deposit return scheme and consistency in household and business recycling collections.
- 4.7 Legislation to enable the policy changes within the RWS are contained within the Environment Act which received Royal Assent on 9 November 2021.
- 4.8 The review of the LMWMS has 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.
- 4.9 It is important to note the Strategy is high-level and therefore non-site specific.
- 4.10 Further clarity from 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 modelled 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.
- 4.11 Scrutiny members received a briefing on the draft strategy ahead of public consultation, in October 2022. Feedback was shared with Cabinet in November 2022 ahead of Cabinet consideration of the draft strategy.

5 Main Considerations

5.1 **Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy Review Process**

5.2 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.

5.3 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 5-week statutory consultation; Draft Environmental Report, Public Consultation Report
- Finalisation of Strategy Final Headline Strategy
- Action Plan
- Final Action Plan

6 **Public Consultation**

6.1 Public consultation on the draft strategy commenced on 31 January 2022 and ran for 12 weeks until 25 April 2022.

6.2 The full suite of documents for public consultation comprised of:

6.2.1 **The Draft Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy**

- Described the approach the LWP would take in delivering recycling and waste management services from 2022 – 2050
- Contained the vision, objectives and pledges that sit alongside forthcoming national changes
- 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

6.2.2 **The Draft Options Appraisal Report**

- Explored the current and alternative ways of delivering the wastes services, the associated costs and the recycling rates that could be achieved as well as considering potential implications of upcoming national policy changes

- Provided evidence behind the pledges within the draft Strategy

6.2.3 The Draft Environmental Report – from the SEA process

- Considered the environmental impacts of the alternative ways of delivering the Strategy
- Involved a five-week statutory consultation period from July 2021 and received input from Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency

6.3 In addition to the above, a consultation summary document outlining the main aspects of the Strategy was available to view.

6.4 The consultation documents were available online, with hard copies available upon request. Social media posts were shared to encourage feedback from residents.

6.5 The consultation comprised a survey (predominately online) consisting of tick box questions and 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.

6.6 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.

6.7 The quantitative and qualitative responses to the online questionnaire and responses from groups and organisations to the public consultation are included as a background paper to this report.

7 Public Consultation Findings

7.1 Have Your Say Survey Results

7.2 A total of 5233 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 years old and those over the age of 85 years.

7.3 The majority of the respondents were supportive of the strategy 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”

7.4 83% of respondents also agreed with the pledges and an analysis of the open text comments revealed that fly-tipping was the most common issue, followed by residents wanting more pressure placed on producers to make their packaging recyclable and products more easily repairable. Other comments referred to increasing education and

engagement, so people have a better understanding of link between waste and climate change.

- 7.5 In regard to behaviours, 38% of respondents said that they currently compost 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).
- 7.6 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, for example smells and hygiene.
- 7.7 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%).
- 7.8 Overall, the majority (64%) of the respondents agreed with the draft Strategy to some extent.

8 Other Consultation Activity

- 8.1 A company called Community Research were commissioned to explore residents' views of the draft Strategy. An online forum was conducted with 25 Leicestershire residents taking part and completing a series of tasks including polling questions, discussion boards and self-filmed videos.
- 8.2 Key conclusions included that the vision and strategy resonated with residents and addressed many of their concerns; and that residents are enthusiastic about greater engagement in reducing waste and recycling and recognise the key role they have to play.
- 8.3 Presentations were provided to various groups in order to capture their views and these included Leicestershire Equalities Group, Leicestershire Parish Clerks and County Youth Council for Leicestershire.
- 8.4 Consultation comments included the need for strengthened references to fly-tipping and litter within the Strategy, noted the differences between district kerbside collections and to look to have a common collection regime to make county wide communication easier.

9 Overall Findings

- 9.1 The results to the survey were analysed and the key conclusions were:
- The proposed Vision and Strategy resonate with residents
 - The understanding of the relationship between waste and climate change is limited.
 - 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).

- Communications and engagement activities need to be developed bearing in mind learning from behavioural science, addressing the environmental, personal and social factors that can affect behaviour

9.2 The key themes that have been highlighted in the consultation responses together with the issues and considerations that have been raised are summarised below. These are not presented in an order of priority:

- Tackling fly-tipping - an area of concern for residents.
- Putting pressure on producers – residents would like to see producers take more responsibility and use recyclable packaging for their goods.
- Increased access to sustainable activities – recognition of these to be accessible and affordable for all, especially waste prevention and reuse.
- Engagement and encouragement – respondents like to be kept informed and suggested potential for incentives for rewarding positive behaviours.
- Educating residents - suggested that efforts need to be made to encourage understanding the issue of waste and its relationship to climate change.
- Concerns with food waste collections - respondents were generally positive on the introduction of food waste collections but there were concerns raised of how it works in practice, for example smells and hygiene.
- 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.
- Accessibility of garden waste collections – residents were generally satisfied with the service, but a reoccurring theme was accessibility to this service and charging.
- Restricted residual waste collection and household size – residents from larger households raised concerns on restricted residual waste. Overall, the option of a fortnightly collection with a smaller size bin was more favourable (39%) than a three-weekly collection with a current size bin (16%).
- 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

10 Changes to the Strategy

10.1 Findings from the consultation exercise will be utilised to help inform future initiatives and campaigns.

10.2 A key theme which came out of the consultation exercise, which is not dealt with by the pledges, is fly-tipping. Leicestershire Waste Partnership has therefore committed to address this and added an additional pledge (pledge 2 below)

10.3 Minor modifications have been made to the remaining 11 strategy pledges, but it is not considered that these existing pledges require substantial alteration.

10.4 The final pledges are set out below:

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.

- 10.5 In the period during the public consultation the Government released its 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 options appraisal due to the continued uncertainty around the Government's preferred approach, however the future waste and recycling projections were updated to take account of this amendment.
- 10.6 Due to the continued uncertainty regarding Government policies a Local Government finance position statement also been added to the Strategy on Plan.
- 10.7 A further step in the review process is produce an Action Plan. The Action Plan provides a route map for delivering the vision, objectives and pledges set out in the Strategy. It provides a clear direction of travel to ensure that resources and waste are managed effectively.
- 10.8 The Action Plan will guide the implementation of the Strategy and will be subject to regular review and monitoring. Changes may be made to the Action Plan in response to (for example):
- Accelerated or delayed implementation of actions
 - Variance in predicted performance of actions
 - Changes in Government policy, legislation or regulations; or
 - Other changes in circumstances
- 10.9 The Action Plan has been divided into the following themes:
- Reuse/Circular Economy
 - Recycling (performance & collections)
 - Residual Waste Reduction
 - Partnership Working
 - Leading by example
 - Communication
 - Carbon
- 10.10 Some of these themes contain overlapping elements. Each action within the plan details what action is to be taken, how this relates to either an objective or pledge of the Strategy, by whom and when.
- 10.11 The Action Plan associated with the Resources and Waste Strategy is high level but builds on the objectives and pledges of the Strategy. There may be further (more detailed) actions for example: a procurement plan; individual Council action plans; business cases, or communications plans.

11 Options Considered

- 11.1 The Leicestershire Waste Partnership could choose not to adopt this strategy given the absence of clarity from Government. Further clarity from Government is needed to fully understand the impact of the potential policy changes which may be the most significant seen for many years.
- 11.2 However, the options modelled 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. It has been agreed that to progress with the adoption process, subject to the pledges being caveated where required, is appropriate.

12 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

- 12.1 Each authority within the Leicestershire Waste Partnership (LWP), which comprises the County Council and the seven district councils in Leicestershire, is in the process of seeking adoption of the final Strategy.
- 12.2 For Melton Borough Council, the strategy will be considered by Cabinet and a recommendation made to Full Council. Scrutiny Committee comments will be considered by Cabinet.
- 12.3 Implementation and communication will be overseen by the Leicestershire Waste Partnership.

13 Financial Implications

- 13.1 Due to the continued uncertainty regarding Government policies a Local Government finance position statement also been added to the Strategy:
- 13.2 This Strategy has been published during a time of uncertainty in regard to the Government's progression of the implementation of the national Resources and Waste Strategy (Our Waste, Our Resources: A Strategy for England). The Resources and Waste Strategy was released on 18 December 2018 and sets out how Government will preserve material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy.
- 13.3 Three significant consultations took place during 2019 including Consistency in Household and Business Recycling Collections in England, a Deposit Return Scheme and Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging. Further secondary consultations took place in early 2021 and subsequent changes from 2024/25 could include mandatory household food waste collections, restrictions on garden waste charging and the introduction of a deposit return scheme for drinks containers. At this present time Government has not released the outcomes from two of the consultations, therefore there remains uncertainty in regards to forthcoming legislation and future funding mechanisms.
- 13.4 All councils are facing challenging financial outlooks. The pressures of high inflation levels, coupled with an ever-increasing demand for core services, is presenting a challenge across the whole local government sector.
- 13.5 In acknowledgement of this some of the pledges contained within the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy are caveated and can only be implemented if sufficient ongoing additional funding is provided by Government to cover the costs incurred by both the waste disposal and collection authorities respectively.

Financial Implications reviewed by: Director for Corporate Services

14 Legal and Governance Implications

- 14.1 Legislation to enable the policy changes within the Recycling Waste Strategy (RWS) are contained within the Environment Act which received Royal Assent on 9 November 2021.
- 14.2 The review of the LMWMS has 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. It is important to note the Strategy is high-level and therefore non-site specific.
- 14.3 Each authority within the Leicestershire Waste Partnership (LWP), which comprises the County Council and the seven district councils in Leicestershire, is in the process of seeking adoption of the final Strategy.
- 14.4 For Melton Borough Council, the strategy will be considered by Cabinet and a recommendation made to Full Council. Scrutiny Committee comments will be considered by Cabinet.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Monitoring Officer

15 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 15.1 An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) Screening was undertaken and concluded that the review of the LMWMS was subject to a full 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.
- 15.2 This EHRIA has enabled the LWP to assess whether the new LRWS 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 the LRWS promotes accessible services, accessible information and appropriate equality training where required.

16 Community Safety Implications

- 16.1 None arising directly from this report.

17 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 17.1 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. This vision of the strategy is particularly pertinent:

“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”

18 Risk & Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	Preparedness for significant changes in national policy	Significant	Critical	Medium
2	Affordability of implementing significant legislative and national policy changes	High	Critical	High
3	Delayed outcomes from Government consultation	Significant	Critical	Medium

		Impact / Consequences			
		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/ definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High				
	5 High			2	
	4 Significant			1, 3	
	3 Low				
	2 Very Low				
	1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	Engage in consultations and ensure consideration the impact of these significant changes to national policy. Ensure strategy pledges are sufficiently caveated to be clear that implementation of changes with significant resource implications will be subject to full and ongoing government funding. Strategy development to progress, overseen by Leicestershire Waste Partnership.
2	Ensure strategy pledges are sufficiently caveated to be clear that implementation of changes with significant resource implications will be subject to full and ongoing government funding.
3	Leicestershire Waste Partnership in place to monitor updates, consider implications and advise on next steps or risks as required.

19 Background Papers

- 19.1 Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy, Consultation Feedback:
<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/have-your-say/you-said-we-did/engagement-2022>
- 19.2 Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy, Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment

20 Appendices

- 20.1 Appendix A: Leicestershire Resources and Waste Management Strategy 2022 – 2050

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