



<b>Full Council</b>	<b>Thursday, 23 February 2023</b>	<b>Matter for Information and Decision</b>
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**Report Title:** **Approval of Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy (2022-2050)**

**Report Author(s):** **Jon Wells (Senior Strategic Development Manager)**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To seek approval and adoption of the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy 2022-2050 (LRWS/Strategy). The Strategy sets out how the Leicestershire Waste Partnership (LWP) intends to manage municipal waste up until 2050.
<b>Report Summary:</b>	The key focus of the LRWS/Strategy is to achieve net zero carbon by 2050 in Leicestershire by embracing waste prevention and increasing recycling and reuse. The report provides detail on the consultation process, future approach, strategy headlines, pledges and action plan.
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	<p><b>A. That the Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy 2022 (provided in Appendix 1) is approved by Council.</b></p> <p><b>B. That the Council endorses the continuation of the Leicestershire Waste Partnership but request that it is developed and enhanced to ensure appropriate political, strategic and operational engagement.</b></p> <p><b>C. The Council requests that the Leicestershire Waste Partnership explores collaborative opportunities which have the potential to deliver environmental improvements, whilst helping to reduce costs across the waste system, such that cost shunting is avoided and mutual benefits are shared across all partners.</b></p>
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<b>Corporate Objectives:</b>	Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1) Providing Excellent Services (CO3)
<b>Vision and Values:</b>	"A Stronger Borough Together" (Vision)
<b>Report Implications:-</b>	
Legal:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Political Dynamics (CR3) Reputation Damage (CR4) Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Organisational / Transformational Change (CR8)

	Regulatory Governance (CR6)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	The implications are as set out at section 6 of this report.
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
<b>Statutory Officers' Comments:-</b>	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
<b>Consultees:</b>	Consultees and the consultation process is detailed in Section 3 of this report.
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Report entitled 'Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy' to Policy, Finance &amp; Development Committee 7 December 2021</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Resources and Waste Strategy for England 2018</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Environment Act 2021</a></li> </ul>
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>1.</b> Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy (2022-2050)

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Under the Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003, all two-tier authorities are required to have in place a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for the management of municipal waste within their areas. The LRWS/Strategy sets out how the LWP intends to manage municipal waste in the period up to 2050 and it replaces the Leicestershire Municipal Waste Management Strategy (LMWMS) which was last updated in 2011.
- 1.2 The Government requires a public consultation process as part of any formal review. The Policy, Finance and Development Committee, at their meeting of 7 December 2021, agreed to this approach.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 The LWP commissioned Frith Resource Management to undertake a full review of the Strategy.
- 1.5 The National Resources and Waste Strategy 2018 (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.

- 1.6 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 a target of 65% recycling rate of municipal solid waste by 2035.
- 1.7 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
- 1.8 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.
- 1.9 Legislation to enable the policy changes within the RWS is contained within the Environment Act which received Royal Assent on 9 November 2021.
- 1.10 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.

## 2. Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy Review process

- 2.1 The purpose of a joint municipal waste management strategy is to; identify the baseline position, outline where partners want to be and by when and articulate how this will be achieved. In order to achieve this the following steps were taken:

Strategy review steps	Outputs
Production of a detailed project plan	Project plan produced
Project planning, gap and data analysis	Baseline report
Undertake full equalities and human rights impact assessment	Impact assessment produced
Agree objectives, options and options assessment criteria	Draft options appraisal report and headline strategy

Strategic environmental assessment	Scoping report and 5 week statutory consultation, draft environmental report
Public consultation	Consultation report
Finalise strategy	Final headline strategy
Action plan	Final action plan

### 3. Public consultation

- 3.1 Following a stakeholder mapping exercise, a public consultation commenced on 31 January 2022 and ran for 12 weeks until 25 April 2022. The consultation documents included the following:
- 1) Draft Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy (describes the approach the LWP would take in delivering recycling and waste management services from 2022-2050), draft vision, objectives and 11 pledges that sit alongside forthcoming national changes
  - 2) Draft options appraisal report (to explore current and alternative ways of delivering waste services, associated costs, recycling rates that could be achieved taking on board upcoming national policy changes) and evidence behind the pledges
  - 3) Draft environmental report (to consider the environmental impacts of delivering the strategy)
  - 4) Consultation summary document
- 3.2 The consultation documents were available online, via the Leicestershire County Council's 'Have your Say' webpage and hard copies were made available upon request. The consultation comprised a survey consisting of tick box questions and open comments. Questions sought views on the vision, objectives and pledges and asked a series of questions on waste prevention, reuse and recycling behaviours.
- 3.3 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 was delivered.
- 3.4 The key conclusions from the consultation (mirrored by Oadby and Wigston Borough residents) were as follows:
- 1) The proposed vision and strategy resonated with residents
  - 2) There was limited understanding of the relationship between waste and climate change
  - 3) Residents are enthusiastic about greater engagement in reducing waste and increasing recycling and recognise they play an important role
  - 4) Communication and engagement activities need to be improved and developed
- 3.5 The key themes the consultation highlighted were the need to tackle fly tipping, put more pressure on producers to increase the use of recycled packaging, increase access to sustainable activities e.g. waste prevention and reuse, focus on more engagement and encouragement with the public to aid a greater understanding of climate concerns, concerns about food waste, the need to expand kerbside recycling to include a wider range of materials, garden waste accessibility and cost, fear that restricting residual waste collections

could be counterproductive, a desire to retain fortnightly services in preference to a switch to three weekly and a large recognition that the household waste recycling sites should be increased, and accessibility and communication improved.

#### **4. Changes to the LRWS/Strategy and final pledges**

- 4.1 Following the consultation process the draft LRWS/Strategy document has been revised to recognise the need for future campaigns and initiatives and fly tipping as a specific pledge. The remaining pledges have been altered slightly. The final pledges are detailed 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 Due to the continued uncertainty with regard to government policies, a Local Government finance position statement also been added to the Strategy.

## **5. LRWS/Strategy Action Plan**

5.1 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.

5.2 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 accelerated or delayed implementation of actions, variance in predicted performance of actions or changes in government policy, legislation or regulations for example.

5.3 The Action Plan has been divided into the following themes – reuse/circular economy, recycling, residual waste reduction, partnership working, leading by example, communication and carbon. 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.

5.4 The Action Plan 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.

## **6. Equalities**

6.1 An assessment was carried out of the LRWS/Strategy and this concluded that further

assessments may be required for the delivery of activities and as specific schemes are developed. The key outcome was to ensure the LRWS promotes accessible services, accessible information and appropriate equality training where required.

## **7. Summary**

- 7.1 It is recognised that 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.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 The Strategy highlights that significant legislative changes are on the horizon. In responding to these, the LWP will need to be maintained and enhanced to ensure appropriate political, strategic and operational engagement. As government policy evolves, the partnership will need to explore collaborative opportunities which are most effectively able to deliver the changes required and ensure the balance of risk and reward is shared across both the waste disposal and collection authorities. Innovative collaborative opportunities should be considered which have the potential to deliver environmental improvements, whilst helping to reduce costs across the waste-system, such that cost shunting is avoided and mutual benefits are shared across all partners. 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.