

Leicester  
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED: All

Cabinet

7<sup>th</sup> March 2005

---

## LEICESTER'S ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

---

### Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture

#### 1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report gives details of Leicester's Environment Strategy as developed by the Leicester Environment Partnership (LEP) on behalf of the Leicester Partnership. It seeks the endorsement of the City Council to the strategy and sets out where the council can make a contribution towards its implementation.

#### 2 Summary

- 2.1 The Leicester Environment Strategy is the first comprehensive environmental strategy for Leicester supported by all of the main environmental organisations in the city. It is overarching, and under this will sit a number of other, more specific environmental strategies. The European Commission have already noted this strategy as best practice in their recent proposal to require all major cities in Europe to have such an urban environmental plan.
- 2.2 The Strategy sets out a comprehensive vision covering 7 elements relating to environmental awareness, pollution, transport, resources, waste, wildlife and enjoyment of the local environment (which are detailed in appendix 1). These visionary statements are supported by strategic aims, objectives and targets which detail how Leicester should respond to these environmental issues.
- 2.3 The strategy links directly to the delivery of the Corporate Plan: specifically the Strategic Objective  
*"to improve our environment to make local neighbourhoods and the city centre places for people to be proud of."*  
and the key priority to  
*"Make our city's developments sustainable so that we do not close down choices for our children and grandchildren."*
- 2.4 Officers of the council have been widely involved during its development, primarily at the Leicester Environment Partnership, the Leicester Partnership and internally through the Sustainable City Officers Group and Corporate Directors Board.
- 2.3 The Strategy sets out the changes needed if the community living and working in Leicester is to achieve an environmentally sustainable way of life. It embodies the principle of "think global, act local" - whilst it is vital to create a quality environment locally, the Strategy also highlights the state of the global environment and how the community of Leicester must accept its responsibility to reduce its detrimental impacts on the wider world.

- 2.4 Environmental organisations and specialists alone cannot achieve all the changes needed; it requires commitment from all the organisations, businesses and decision-makers who will shape the future of Leicester plus the support and involvement of the community at large. Leicester has a good track record in delivering innovative environmental work, as recently demonstrated through the Sustainable Energy Beacon Status Bid reaching the final selection stages. This document invites everyone in Leicester to contribute to the Leicester Environment Strategy by committing to the simple actions listed in the summary.
- 2.5 The next steps of the Strategy will be to develop a series of action plans and a monitoring strategy so that progress can be evaluated. This work will be undertaken by the Leicester Environment Partnership, with Environ and the City Council as lead organisations. The Sustainable City Officers Group (SCOG) are engaging departments to consider their input to the strategy action plans. These departmental perspectives are included in the Supporting Information.

### **3 Recommendations**

Members are recommended to:

1. Endorse the strategy
2. Agree to the preparation of action plans and monitoring arrangements to ensure the effective delivery of the strategy. The action plans will detail information about partners delivering plans, targets and timescales.

### **4 Financial & Legal Implications**

#### *Financial Implications*

- 4.1. The City Council's contributions towards the delivery of the Environment Strategy will come from existing departmental resources. Any variations will be determined in budget strategy discussions.
- 4.2 The Service Level Agreement for Environ has been reduced by one half in the last financial year. The Environment Team has submitted a European bid, which if successful will deliver £15,000 pa to pay for time from Environ's directors to develop this work. The outcome of this bid will be known in May 2005.

*Author Alan Tomlins*

#### *Legal Implications*

- 4.3 None directly arising from this report.

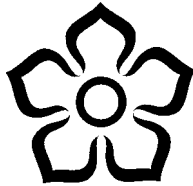
*Author Joanna Bunting*

#### **Report Authors**

Anna Dodd/Carol Brass  
Environment Team Leader  
Ext 8136  
E-mail. [Dodda001@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Dodda001@leicester.gov.uk)  
[Bras001@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:Bras001@leicester.gov.uk)

## DECISION STATUS

<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Reason</b>	N/A
<b>Appeared in Forward Plan</b>	N/A
<b>Executive or Council Decision</b>	Cabinet



Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED: All**

**Cabinet**

**7<sup>th</sup> March 2005**

---

**LEICESTER'S ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY**

---

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**Report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration and Culture**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Leicester Environment Strategy is the first comprehensive environmental strategy for Leicester supported by all of the main environmental organisations in the city. The strategy has been produced by the Leicester Environment Partnership, in consultation with other organisations and the public. The LEP is a thematic partnership of the Leicester Partnership, and the strategy will therefore inform the work of the wider partnership in the city. It is overarching, and under this will sit a number of other, more specific environmental strategies, such as the Climate Change Strategy. The European Commission have already noted this strategy as best practice in their recent proposal to require all major cities in Europe to have such an urban environmental plan.
- 1.2 The Strategy sets out a comprehensive vision covering 7 elements relating to environmental awareness, pollution, transport, resources, waste, wildlife and enjoyment of the local environment (which are detailed in appendix 1). These visionary statements are supported by strategic aims, objectives and targets which detail how Leicester should respond to these environmental issues.
- 1.3 The strategy links directly to the delivery of the Corporate Plan: specifically the Strategic Objective  
*"to improve our environment to make local neighbourhoods and the city centre places for people to be proud of."*  
and the key priority to  
*"Make our city's developments sustainable so that we do not close down choices for our children and grandchildren."*  
The strategy will also link with other strategies within the Leicester Partnership, to ensure that environmental issues are addressed across the wide remit of the Partnership.
- 1.4 Officers of the council have been widely involved during its development, primarily at the Leicester Environment Partnership, the Leicester Partnership and internally through the Sustainable City Officers Group and Corporate Directors Board.
- 1.5 The Strategy sets out the changes needed if the community living and working in Leicester is to achieve an environmentally sustainable way of life. It embodies the principle of "think global, act local" - whilst it is vital to create a quality environment locally, the Strategy also highlights the state of the global environment and how the

community of Leicester must accept its responsibility to reduce its detrimental impacts on the wider world.

- 1.6 Environmental organisations and specialists alone cannot achieve all the changes needed; it requires commitment from all the organisations, businesses and decision-makers who will shape the future of Leicester plus the support and involvement of the community at large. This document invites everyone in Leicester to contribute to the Leicester Environment Strategy by committing to the simple actions listed in the summary. Promotion of the strategy is already underway following its launch by the LEP. Currently the Mercury are promoting the actions that will arise through the strategy through a series of articles with the strap line "Our Environment, Our Future".
- 1.7 The next steps of the Strategy will be to develop a series of city wide action plans and a monitoring strategy so that progress can be evaluated. This work will be undertaken by the Leicester Environment Partnership, with Environ and the City Council as lead organisations. It will involve key partners across the city, through the Leicester Partnership, for example the Primary Care Trusts. This report simply considers the City Council's input to the strategy. The Sustainable City Officers Group (SCOG) are engaging departments to consider their input to the strategy action plans. These departmental perspectives are included in the report below.

## **2. Report**

- 2.1 This report provides an initial overview of how Leicester City Council departments can contribute to the Leicester Environment Strategy.

### **Regeneration and Culture Department**

- 2.2 This Department can contribute to all 7 of the Environment Strategy visions covering environmental awareness, pollution reduction, transport provision, wise resource use, waste management, wildlife protection and public access to the environment. Many of these contributions will come from the normal day-to-day delivery of services. Some will come from direct service provision and some by influencing or controlling the actions of others. Divisional Business Plans set out how services will be provided including an assessment of environmental considerations. The only objectives that the Department cannot realistically contribute to, are those relating to:

- sewage treatment (obj 2.4.1);
- discharges in to the River Soar and Grand Union Canal (objs 2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.5.3); and
- increased penalties for failure to comply with legislation on spilled hazardous material (obj 2.6.2).

### **Housing Department**

- 2.3 The housing service provides many services that support Leicester's Environment Strategy as follows:
- housing assists sustainable communities and improves external appearance of properties
  - window and door double glazing reduces noise and energy consumption as well as reducing crime and fear of it
  - loft insulation programme for all tenures improves energy efficiency (£500k per annum)

- local Housing Officers reduce the need for transport and new computer systems that allow Housing Benefit, etc. to be dealt with locally
- Neighbourhood Nuisance Unit deals with Anti-Social Behaviour and reduces the fear of crime, helping to sustain communities
- Supporting Tenants and Residents (STAR) provides Benefit and financial advice to sustain tenancies and thereby reduce turnover
- CCTV monitoring centre monitors x cameras in residential areas
- District heating system provides energy efficient Combined Heat and Power
- Energy advice provides to home owners, general public, business and the Council for its own premises
- Grants to owner occupiers for more energy efficient heating systems and windows.

### **Resources, Access And Diversity Department**

2.4 Resources Access & Diversity department supports the Leicester Environmental Strategy in many ways, including:

- Free or low-cost environmental advice and training to local business through a programme of tenant induction which includes environmental advice from Property Services.
- Property Services supports aims such as 2.3.1 "introduce and enforce a policy of no bonfires (in gardens and industrial land) with cultural exceptions" through arrangements under which services occupy property.
- 2.8.2 "implement a programme of decontamination to clean up all identified sites" – supported through regeneration and development, together with implementation of the Leicester Better Building Standard.
- Energy consumption is monitored in Leicester City Council buildings and work taken to address deficiencies, as resources become available.
- Use of sustainable construction materials
- Working to create a recycling centre for construction and building waste
- Active involvement to "persuade local developers and builders to actively support recycling" through the Council's procurement of construction and also through the East Midlands Local Government Client Steering Group for Constructing Excellence.

### **Social Care and Health**

2.5 The Corporate Director has established a "virtual health team" with the Director of Public Health for Leicester's two Primary Care Trusts and representatives from key departments. It is intended that this feed into a co-ordinated programme to address public health issues in the City linked to the recent Public Health White Paper. Preliminary work has identified air quality as a key part of the strategy. While there are no other specific objectives in this report which the department will lead on, every effort will be made to assist corporate colleagues with objectives relevant to all. The department will also consider ways of publicising these environmental objectives amongst its large workforce, to hopefully influence their actions both at work and at home in actively caring for the environment.

### **Chief Executives Department**

- 2.6 The Chief Executive's Office, through the Communications Unit, could contribute to objective 1.4.2 - *ensuring that the local media give environmental coverage a high profile* and objective 1.4.3 - *ensuring that there is good marketing and publicity for all environmental schemes that seek participation from the community.*

### **Education & Lifelong Learning Department**

- 2.7 At this stage, there is no definite commitment from the department to anything in the environment strategy which has not already been made a target within EMAS. However managers are currently considering how the various areas outlined in the strategy can be addressed through their business plans.

This strategy, and particularly vision 1, highlights the importance of environmental education to citizenship programmes in Leicester schools. It is imperative, therefore, that the good practice developed through such initiatives as EMAS in schools (a targeted, NRF funded project) is mainstreamed across all city schools. There is a clear leadership role here for the local authority.

The EMAS work, for example, takes a whole school approach which encourages the involvement of parents and the wider community as well as giving pupils opportunities for discussion, awareness raising and practical action. The potential of citizenship or civic education to improve outcomes for children and young people and, at the same time, promote community involvement in education and schools is currently under-exploited in Leicester. This aspect of the environment strategy, perhaps managed as part of a 'making a positive contribution' work programme for children and young people, could help to redress that. Moreover, the successful adoption of EMAS principles by all city schools would go some way to contributing to the reduction in environmental impacts detailed in the remainder of the strategy (especially visions 4, 5, and 6).

The prospect of the Building Schools for the Future investment programme provides an ideal opportunity for the city to lead the way with its Better Building standard. The BSF project board needs to consider the feasibility of this and ensure that it is engaged with at an appropriate point in the planning process.

School travel planning is an area which is currently managed outside of the department. On the face of it, there is a need to ensure join-up between this work and school organisation projects such as BSF in order to keep opportunity costs to a minimum.

## **3. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **Financial & Legal Implications**

#### *Financial Implications*

- 3.1. The City Council's contributions towards the delivery of the Environment Strategy will come from existing departmental resources. Any variations will be determined in budget strategy discussions.

3.2 The Service Level Agreement for Environ has been reduced by one half in the last financial year. The Environment Team has submitted a European bid, which if successful will deliver £15,000 pa to pay for time from Environ's directors to develop this work. The outcome of this bid will be known in May 2005.

*Author Alan Tomlins*

*Legal Implications*

4.4 None directly arising from this report.

*Author Joanna Bunting*

**4. Other Implications**

4.1 OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	PARAGRAPH REFERENCES WITHIN SUPPORTING PAPERS
Equal Opportunities	Yes	There are implications for marketing, dissemination and involvement of organisations and individuals in the Strategy, as well as for delivery of specific actions
Policy	Yes	This work supports the implementation the LCC corporate environmental policy.
Sustainable and Environmental	Yes	Assists in setting priorities within the environmental agenda
Crime and Disorder	Yes	Possible joint actions with Crime and Disorder partnership
Human Rights Act	No	
Older People on Low Income	No	Yes – possible links with fuel poverty projects

4.2 Risk Assessment Matrix

Risk	Likelihood L/M/H	Severity Impact L/M/H	Control Actions (if necessary/or appropriate)
1 – Insufficient capacity within the Council to deliver an action programme.	L	H	Many actions will come from normal day-to-day delivery of services.
2 – Budget reductions reduce the Council's capacity to deliver once an action programme has been established.	L	L/M/H	Would have to prioritise work.
3 – Limited co-operation of other organisations in the delivery of the Strategy.	L	L/M/H	Further funding is sought from EU LIFE programme for the Env Team to work with other organisations to help; overcome barriers such as lack of co-operation.



---

L - L - Low  
Low M -  
M - Medium  
Mediu H - High  
m  
H -  
High

**5 Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972**

Leicester Environment Strategy October 2004 [www.environmentcity.org.uk](http://www.environmentcity.org.uk)

**6 Consultations**

**Consultee**

(Finished strategy) All departments through SCOG reps

(During development) All departments through SCOG reps

**Date Consulted**

Nov/Dec 2004

Throughout 2003