

APPENDIX 1 – OFLOG INDICATORS WITH HISTORICAL AND PUBLISHED DATA

OFLOG INDICATORS

The Office for Local Government (OFLOG) was launched during the LGA Conference in Bournemouth in July 2023. The aim of OFLOG is to provide authoritative and accessible data and analysis about the performance of local government, and support improvement.

OFLOG brings together a selection of existing metrics across four initial service areas: Finance; Adults Social Care; Adult Skills; and Waste. Further service areas will be added, and existing areas expanded, as the metrics are developed.

For each service area, please see a table of historical data (Leeds only) and a table providing Core City / CIPFA / Mayoral Combined Authority data (as appropriate) for 2021-22.

1. FINANCE INDICATORS

The indicators below have been selected by Oflog to show information about council finances. They aim to provide contextual information on local authority funding, the constraints they face and their overall financial resilience.

HISTORICAL LEEDS DATA									
Indicator	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of net revenue expenditure			12.2%	14.4%	14.0%	34.2%	27.8%		
Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of service spend			10.5%	12.2%	11.7%	25.8%	21.1%		
Social care spend as percentage of core spending power			73.9%	71.1%	73.9%	75.1%	70.2%		
Debt servicing as percentage of core spending power			8.8%	9.6%	11.1%	15.1%	12.9%		
Total debt as percentage of core spending power				528.9%	526.3%	516.6%	486.8%		
Total core spending power per dwelling	£1,554.55	£1,497.48	£1,517.57	£1,534.13	£1,555.43	£1,637.37	£1,667.58	£1,803.16	£1,971.82
Level of Band D Council Tax Rates	£1,169	£1,216	£1,276	£1,340	£1,393	£1,449	£1,521	£1,567	£1,645
Council tax revenue per dwelling	£894.64	£941.13	£995.43	£1,056.27	£1,118.79	£1,174.03	£1,215.60	£1,278.40	£1,356.74

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OFLOG PUBLISHED DATA 2021-22										
Indicator (click for source data)	Leeds	Birmingham	Bristol	Liverpool	Manchester	Newcastle upon Tyne	Nottingham	Sheffield	Median of Leeds's CIPFA Nearest Neighbours	England median (Unitary, Metropolitan and London Boroughs)
<u>Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of net revenue expenditure</u>	27.8%	100.6%	38.6%	31.9%	74.7%	75.8%	67.7%	68.1%	47.8%	54.9%
<u>Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of service spend</u>	21.1%	78.1%	30.9%	27.6%	71.1%	57.3%	38.4%	48.2%	39.2%	44.6%
<u>Social care spend as percentage of core spending power</u>	70.2%	58.7%	68.4%	67.2%	64.8%	60.3%	70.6%	72.4%	67.6%	66.4%
<u>Debt servicing as percentage of core spending power</u>	12.9%	18.9%	6.4%	16.6%	12.5%	17.8%	31.3%	8.5%	8.1%	9.0%

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Total debt as percentage of core spending power	486.8%	435.8%	215.2%	194.8%	324.1%	368.7%	441.3%	297.7%	210.2%	226.8%
Total core spending power per dwelling	£1667.58	£2200.49	£1922.39	£2133.04	£2030.34	£2013.97	£2013.00	£1884.30	£1833.50	£1885.14
Level of Band D council tax rates	£1521.29	£1507.60	£1846.02	£1801.52	£1496.59	£1792.81	£1898.55	£1702.31	£1636.88	£1554.02
Council tax revenue per dwelling	£1215.60	£1031.63	£1416.48	£1051.20	£957.86	£1096.58	£1179.73	£1157.73	£1193.91	£1293.42

The below commentary relates to 2021-22 figures with additional contextual information provided on reserves, Core Spending Power and debt.

1.1 Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of net revenue expenditure

- Leeds has the twelfth lowest percentage (27.8%) of the local authorities. This therefore puts Leeds in a high-risk position.
- Leeds has the worst figure out of the Core Cities and West Yorkshire councils.
- Grant Thornton’s Annual Audit Report for the year ended 31st March 2021 recommended that “the Council should consider the adequacy of its current level of General Fund Reserves and Balances to ensure these remain adequate for its needs and potential unforeseen events.”
- Whilst the council maintains a robust approach towards its management of risk, and especially in the determination of the level of reserves that it maintains, it is recognised that our reserves are lower than those of other local authorities of a similar size. Consequently, the Medium Term Financial Strategy provides to improve this position with a £3m annual contribution to the General Reserve from 2024/25 onwards. As a result, the balance on the General Reserve is projected to be £45.2m by 2026/27 and £48.2m by 31st March 2028.

Additional context: Reserves exist because councils are responsible for setting and managing their own budgets and for forward planning, which means they have to prepare for future eventualities. The ability to hold reserves means councils are not under pressure to spend money during a single financial year in order to get it used up – it can be carried forward into the following year. The reserves represent amounts carried forward from one year to the next.

Councils hold reserves for three main purposes:

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- To provide for financial risks, so that any unbudgeted future events can be funded without the need for immediate cuts in services. This is the equivalent of household savings set aside 'for a rainy day'
- To set aside funding for future projects. Not everything the council wants or needs to do can start immediately and some programmes take more than one year. Reserves enable councils to set money aside to ensure these priorities can be funded.
- Because funding has been provided for specific purposes - often by central government. This can be called 'ringfencing'. The money can only be used for that purpose and, unless it can be spent immediately, it needs to be set aside for later.

Councils often ' earmark' reserves for specific purposes, or have those purposes decided for them (in the case of ringfenced money). They also leave a proportion of reserves 'unallocated' or 'non-ringfenced' because some financial risks cannot be foreseen and money needs to be kept aside for these eventualities.

It is largely up to councils how much they keep in reserves and how much they earmark. Councils may therefore have different approaches to how they distinguish between ' earmarked' and 'unallocated' reserves. The level of a council's reserves will also depend upon its needs, the risks it faces and what it wants to do. For example, a council with ambitious plans may have higher risk, and so keep a higher level of reserves; while one with policies that largely avoid risk may have lower levels. It can also depend upon the decisions the council has made in the past. The level of reserves that need to be held is therefore largely a matter of judgement.

Councils need to keep a prudent level of reserves to provide for risks, although it is difficult to judge this without knowing the future. A level that is 'too high' would lock away public money that could possibly be spent in other ways, but councils with 'too low' a level are taking a chance that nothing will happen which costs them the whole of their reserves.

One of the biggest financial risks facing councils is that government funding is only announced one year at a time. Councils could keep lower levels of reserves if they were given certainty of funding for a period into the future.

1.2 Non-ringfenced reserves as percentage of service spend

- Leeds has the seventh lowest percentage (21.1%) of the Local Authorities; again, this puts the Authority in a high-risk position.
- Leeds City Council has the worst figure out of the Core Cities and West Yorkshire councils.

1.3 Social care spend as percentage of core spending power

- Leeds has the 56th highest percentage (70.2%) of the Local Authorities.
- Leeds has the second highest position out of the Core Cities (Nottingham – 55th) and West Yorkshire councils (Bradford – 42nd).
- The proportion of Core Spending Power allocated to social care spending is a measure of how much a council has allocated to these services but also an indication of how much funding it has available for other services.

Additional context: Core Spending Power (CSP) is a government measure of the resources available to local authorities to fund service delivery. CSP includes: Settlement Funding Assessment which is made up of Baseline Funding from Business Rates and Revenue Support Grant (RSG); government assumptions about the council tax growth in Leeds and increases in core council tax and the adult social care precept; and some other grants. However, it excludes several important elements that may be contributing to the funding of an authority, including schools' grants, investment income, service income and housing rents. It therefore does not include all funding

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streams for local government and, over time, existing grants have been rolled into the total making it a difficult comparative measure to use over a number of years.

The largest single element in CSP is the Council Tax requirement estimated by government at the time of the preceding Settlement. Since the Referendum Limits on council tax were introduced in 2012/13, this element has largely been determined by the government's ability to only allow council tax to be increased by a certain amount. As such, those councils that have had historically relatively low levels of council tax have not been able to correct any imbalance by taking action but are 'locked into' relatively low levels of council tax. This includes Leeds.

The second largest element of the CSP measure is Settlement Funding Assessment. This is fundamentally a measure of relative resources and needs and that exercise was last carried out in 2013/14. Leeds (and indeed the rest of West Yorkshire, excluding Bradford) has historically done very badly from the formula used in that assessment but because it has not been updated since, Leeds again finds itself 'locked into' a very low starting point.

1.4 Debt servicing as percentage of core spending power

- Leeds has the 34th highest percentage (12.9%) of the Local Authorities.
- Leeds has the third lowest position within the Core Cities and the second highest position out of the West Yorkshire councils (Bradford – 33rd).
- Where a council finances capital spending by borrowing or credit, it will incur costs on its budget over the period of the loan or credit arrangement. These figures demonstrate how much the council is paying in relation to servicing its debt compared with its Core Spending Power, recognising the fact that current residents are getting the benefit of investments in assets made several years ago.

1.5 Total debt as percentage of core spending power

- Leeds has the 6th highest percentage (486.8%) of the Local Authorities and this puts the Authority in a high-risk position.
- Leeds has the highest position out of the Core Cities and West Yorkshire councils.
- This is a measure of capital indebtedness that the council has built up over many years of capital financing decisions.

Additional context: The Council recognises the importance of investing in the assets and infrastructure of Leeds and has therefore prioritised an amount of revenue budget for this purpose. The Council will take advantage of opportunities as they arise to convert its short-term borrowing position to the longer term mitigating the risk to interest rate increases for the Council over the longer term.

Looking forward, the Medium-Term Financial Strategy places constraints on the level of debt that the council can afford. As such only those capital schemes supported by a robust business case and that meet the Council's priorities will progress. However, the strategy allows for an additional increase in debt where the additional debt cost is met from schemes that generate greater savings, avoid revenue costs, or provide income streams. We will continue to explore and take advantage of investment opportunities as they arise, these will also be subject to robust business case review in line with financial and governance procedure rules. All decisions that require borrowing are taken within the context of the capital and investment strategy which provides the framework for how capital expenditure, capital

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financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.

New schemes proposed for addition to the council's capital programme are evaluated and prioritised against the authority's strategic priorities and with regard to the impact of borrowing on the council's revenue budget position.

1.6 Total core spending power per dwelling

- Leeds has the 121st highest figure (£1667.58) of the 149 Local Authorities.
- This gives Leeds City Council the lowest position out of the Core Cities and West Yorkshire councils. The council's position is significantly lower than the other Core Cities with the next Core City being Sheffield with rank 65. The West Yorkshire councils are more comparable with the exception of Bradford with rank 38.

1.7 Level of Band D council tax rates

- Leeds has the 80th highest figure (£1521.29) of the 152 Local Authorities.
- This gives Leeds City Council the third lowest position out of the Core Cities and West Yorkshire councils. The council's position is significantly lower than a number of the other Core Cities with Bristol, Liverpool and Newcastle having the rankings 4,7 and 8 respectively.
- Ensuring affordability of council tax is a strategy the council has pursued, however the referendum limit which caps council tax increases has contributed to this position. The indicator demonstrates the council's ability to generate resources from council tax, and also emphasises that the authority is reliant on short-term funding such as grants. This is a national issue: for example, much of the funding available for Social Care has been provided on an annual specific grant basis, sometimes without any certainty for future years.

1.8 Council tax revenue per dwelling

- Leeds has the 81st highest figure (£1215.60) of the 128 Local Authorities for the eighth indicator for 2021/22.
- Leeds has the second highest position out of the Core Cities and third highest position of the West Yorkshire councils.
- The city has a relatively high proportion of dwellings in lower bands for council tax when compared to the national profile which explains its relatively low position nationally. The higher the proportion of dwellings in lower bands the lower the revenue per dwelling. However, when compared to authorities in the Core Cities, Leeds and Bristol stand out as having a relatively higher taxbase than the rest and therefore tends to raise more council tax per dwelling than these comparators.
- This relatively strong taxbase when compared to the Core Cities has a secondary impact in that Leeds is assessed as having relatively high resources within the formula that determines Settlement Funding Assessment and has done so since 2013/14. Therefore, when compared with the Core Cities, Leeds City Council receives comparatively less Settlement Funding Assessment to support the Council Tax Revenue raised in the city.

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Conclusion: The OFLOG indicators are a benchmarking tool, similar to the CIPFA Resilience Index indicators and other benchmarking indicators that Finance already update and monitor as a Council. As such, the outcome of the OFLOG exercise has not provided new information, merely highlighting existing available intelligence. It should be noted that factors like the characteristics of residents and areas can also have a large influence on a council's activity and performance.

Leeds City Council maintain a robust approach towards its management of risk, and especially in the determination of the level of reserves that it maintains, it is recognised that our reserves are lower than those of other local authorities of a similar size. Within Leeds we have a large asset base, which requires investment to maintain, but should not be to the detriment of service provision. As such, the financial strategy places constraints on the level of debt that the council can afford. In addition, the strategy allows for financial sustainability measures outside of the use of reserves. These measures all support the future sustainability of the council but are not directly measurable through the OFLOG indicator matrix.

2. ADULT SOCIAL CARE INDICATORS

The seven adult social measures included in the OFLOG local authority indicator set are established national indicators. Published guidance is available online as are comprehensive indicator results and analysis, including underlying data trends and benchmarking. This can be accessed through such as the NHS Digital Adult Social Care Data Hub and through LGInform.

While these are national measures with a prescribed methodology the following should be noted when considering performance and when making comparisons with other authorities:

- National data collection is developing, this includes a shift towards more person level data being submitted by local authorities and less indicator-based returns.
- Three provisional measures are available for 2022/23, national publication of these and two others will happen in the autumn. The two indicators based on the carers survey are available every two years.
- Four indicators are based on surveys, these are nationally prescribed paper surveys administered locally. Cohorts and response rates may vary across authorities and influence results.
- Two survey measures, on quality of life are compiled nationally based on combining multiple survey question responses that have been submitted by local authorities.

National measures including staff turnover and adjusted quality of life require significant national manipulation of the underpinning data in their production. This is intended to enhance comparability through adjusting and standardising the source data, which may involve combining multiple data sources.

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HISTORICAL LEEDS DATA								
Indicator	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (provisional)
Requests resulting in a service	1358.4	1343.6	1479.2	1580.5	1972.1	1610.9	1735.4	1657.1
Workforce turnover rate							30.4	
People in adult social care quality of life		0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4		0.4	
Carers of people in adult social care quality of life		7.4		7.5			7.4	
Short term service provision	69.8%	54.9%	59.5%	60.6%	65.7%	71.9%	71.4%	70.6%
People who use services who found it easy to find information	77.6%	75.7%	74.1%	69.8%	71.5%		57.8%	71.8%
Carers who found it easy to find information about services		64.5%		65.4%			57.1%	

OFLOG PUBLISHED DATA 2021-22											
Indicator (click for source data)	Value Range	Leeds	Birmingham	Bristol	Liverpool	Manchester	Newcastle upon Tyne	Nottingham	Sheffield	Median of Leeds's CIPFA Nearest Neighbours	England median
Requests resulting in a service		1735 per 100,000 population	1328 per 100,000 population	1245 per 100,000 population	1960 per 100,000 population	4437 per 100,000 population	2713 per 100,000 population	1934 per 100,000 population	2092 per 100,000 population	2026 per 100,000 population	1709 per
Workforce turnover rate		30.4%	33.5%	33.7%	21.4%	25.0%	26.3%	22.9%	32.8%	28.3%	28.7%
People in adult social care quality of life	-0.8 to 1.0	0.406	0.402	0.394	0.4	0.365	0.401	0.392	0.324	0.407	0.409

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Carers of people in adult social care quality of life	0 to 12	7.4	6.7	7.2	6.5	6.9	7	6.9	7.3	7.3	7.2
Short term service provision		71.4%	41.4%	61.3%	69.7%	37.5%	80.1%	50.7%	48.1%	72.7%	76.3%
People who use services who found it easy to find information		57.8%	55.8%	62.1%	68.5%	59.4%	64.1%	67.0%	60.1%	64.5%	65.3%
Carers who found it easy to find information about services		57.1%	48.5%	61.8%	50.0%	46.0%	48.6%	53.1%	53.3%	57.9%	57.3%

2.1 The proportion of requests for support to the LA which result in a service

This measure includes a broad range of services from long term care in nursing and residential through to short term care such as reablement and the provision of equipment. Caution is advised on the consistency of services included and data availability between authorities. This includes where some needs may be being met through community/third sector provision, including council funded/supported provision. Leeds rate of requests resulting in a service was the 5th lowest rate of 16 CIPFA comparators and the third lowest among core cities.

2.2 Staff turnover in the workforce

(The proportion of directly employed staff in the formal care workforce leaving their role in the past 12 months)

The 2021/22 rate was 30.4%, equating to approximately 5,500 leavers with the majority of leavers being people involved in direct care 4,500 . This is a broad Skills for Care overview of the care workforce across public, private and third sectors and across provision and service type. Multiple data sources are used. While the Leeds rate is slightly above CIPFA and national medians of 28.3% and 28.7% it can be viewed as largely consistent, and reflective of the recruitment and retention challenges facing the sector. For 21/22 Leeds staff turnover was the 8th highest out of 16 CIPFA comparators.

2.3 Adjusted social care-client quality of life

This indicator is based on the annual personal social services adult social care survey, collating questions relevant to quality of life and weighting for the level of personal needs of the people who responded to the survey. Leeds results are consistent with comparator averages. 2022/23 results will be published in October.

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2.4 Quality of life of carers

This indicator is based on the personal social services adult carers survey; this survey happens every 2 years and there was no survey in 2022/23. Relevant questions are collated to produce the quality-of-life measure. Government statisticians note that the indicator does not, at present, identify the specific contribution of councils' adult social care services towards quality-of-life outcomes for carers. 2021/22 results placed Leeds 3rd highest of 16 CIPFA comparators for carers quality of life.

2.5 Outcome of short-term services

This indicator considers a specific reablement cohort of people who received short-term services, people who previously were not receiving services and where no further request was made for ongoing support. The indicator is influenced by the volumes and make up of those being put forward for reablement services. 2022/23 provisional results are stable within a percentage point of the 2021/22 result. For 2021/22 Leeds ranked 9th of 16 CIPFA comparators, confirmed national results will be available in the autumn.

2.6 Proportion of people who use services who find it easy to find information

The 2021/22 survey saw a national decline in the proportion of people who find easy to find information about services, potentially due to Covid related disruption. The impact in Leeds was greater than regional and national with proportion of service users who find it easy to find information in 2021/22 declining to 58%. Provisional 2022/23 survey results show a return to pre-Covid levels with 72% of service users finding it easy to find information. Access to information for both existing and potential service users is a key priority with clear signposting and access to advice and support.

2.7 Proportion of carers who find it easy to find information

The 2021/22 national survey saw a national decline in the proportion of carers who find easy to find information about services, potentially due to Covid related disruption. The impact in Leeds was similar to regional and national with the proportion of service users who find it easy to find information in 2021/22 declining from 65% to 57%. Leeds ranked 9th of 16 CIPFA comparators. Access to information for both existing and potential carers is a key priority with clear signposting to advice and support.

3. ADULT SKILLS INDICATORS

The indicators below shows data about the skills, qualification and training of residents for mayoral combined authorities only.

Councils know how vital it is for residents to have the skills to get on in life and in the workplace. They have a direct role to ensure there are a sufficient number of post-16 places, help 16- and 17-year-olds that have left learning to reintegrate into education, employment or training, and provide adult and community education.

But this is not the full picture. Across any one council area, many other organisations provide skills and training from schools, further education colleges, universities, adult education centres, independent training providers and national agencies, each of whom are in most cases funded by national government. Knowing what is on offer and how to access it can be confusing, so councils are keen to coordinate provision.

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While they have no formal coordination role, councils can use their convening power, local leadership, knowledge and governance mechanisms (e.g. employment and skills boards) to encourage collaboration between organisations. Devolved areas like mayoral combined authorities and the Greater London Authority have devolved functions over the adult education budget (AEB) and join up provision through systems leadership across their area. Many councils and devolved areas also have discretionary or devolved employment and skills services to help connect provision.

Because of this complicated picture, it is often not appropriate to conclude the performance of a council simply based on a comparison of its data with others of the same type, as it is important to understand the wider range of organisations delivering skills, the characteristics of the area and its population as well.

HISTORICAL WEST YORKSHIRE DATA								
Indicator	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
19+ further education and skills achievements per 100,000 population			5148	4864	4031	3533	3572	
19+ further education and skills achievements per 100,000 population (excluding apprenticeships)			4463	4469	3701	3144	3222	
Adults with a Level 3 or above qualification	50.5%	50.0%	51.4%	52.0%	52.0%	57.8%	57.9%	

OFLOG PUBLISHED DATA 2021-22			
Mayoral combined authority name	<u>19+ further education and skills achievements per 100,000 population, 2021-22</u>	<u>19+ further education and skills achievements per 100,000 population (excluding apprenticeships), 2021-22</u>	<u>Adults with a Level 3 or above qualification, 2021</u>
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	2,204	1,919	64.0%
Greater London Authority	3,831	3,626	71.4%
Greater Manchester	3,485	3,144	57.9%
Liverpool City Region	4,355	4,002	58.8%

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North East	4,574	4,196	50.3%
North of Tyne	3,435	3,097	59.8%
South Yorkshire	2,966	2,658	56.8%
Tees Valley	5,635	5,248	55.5%
West Midlands	3,977	3,669	54.9%
West Yorkshire	3,572	3,222	57.9%
West of England	2,145	1,844	70.2%

4. WASTE INDICATORS

The indicators in this section relate to the generation of household waste and the rates of recycling.

The factors that affect the amount of waste and recycling rates are complex. Performance can be influenced by council decisions, for example, whether they choose to collect food waste, collect all types of plastic, collect general waste on a weekly or fortnightly basis and invest in waste prevention. However, differences between councils may not simply be due to performance, but also to circumstances outside authorities' control. For example, research has shown the following:

- waste infrastructure, such as size of bin, amount of internal or external storage a resident has to keep waste, type of bin and method of collection are also important
- number of different types of materials collected, and proximity to recycling centres affect recycling levels
- housing type has a big impact on recycling rates, with flats and high-density housing often having lower rates; and houses producing more garden waste.

And socio-economic factors include:

- level of occupancy of households
- levels of education or income
- how normalised the behaviour is across the community
- levels of satisfaction derived from recycling
- concern for the public good.

As a result, it is often not appropriate to conclude the performance of a council simply based on a comparison of its data with others of the same type; it is also important to understand the characteristics of the area and its population as well.

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HISTORICAL LEEDS DATA							
Indicator	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Household waste recycling rate	38.4%	37.9%	38.4%	38.7%	38.2%	35.1%	36.0%
Residual household waste (kg per household)	553.8	561.2	554.5	515.2	527.6	566.3	559.2
Recycling contamination rate	7.1%	6.5%	7.7%	6.6%	7.2%	7.5%	7.7%

OFLOG PUBLISHED DATA 2021-22										
Indicator (click for source data)	Leeds	Birmingham	Bristol	Liverpool	Manchester	Newcastle upon Tyne	Nottingham	Sheffield	Median of Leeds's CIPFA Nearest Neighbours	England median
Household waste recycling rate	36.0%	22.8%	45.6%	22.9%	39.7%	36.7%	25.3%	32.1%	38.9%	41.9%
Residual household waste (kg per household)	559.2	685	440.3	635.6	425.6	515.7	615.7	515	537.1	502.4
Recycling contamination rate	7.7%	8.5%	0.0%	17.8%	5.9%	6.9%	16.0%	0.7%	6.5%	5.6%

DEFRA sub contract Jacobs to collate the waste/recycling data and discussions with Jacobs suggest many councils do not record or report the same data and so the figures provided cannot be directly compared with any accuracy. This particularly relates to the contamination figures. Jacobs intend to discuss this with DEFRA if they are intending to use this as an indicator.

4.1 Household waste recycling rate

Some clarity is needed from DEFRA on this metric which may also impact the contamination metric (metric 3 below). The uncertainty arises from a need to confirm whether we are measuring what has been “**collected** for recycling” or what has been “**sent** for recycling”.

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This metric is defined as waste that has been “**sent** for recycling” which is the same definition as the NI192 indicator; and on reviewing the data collected for core cities, this does indeed appear to all be NI192 recycling data from Waste Data Flow. (The 36% reported for Leeds reflects what has been **sent** for recycling; if it were what has been **collected**, the figure would be approximately 39.1%.)

However, the NI192 metric excludes contamination; the contamination is included in what has been **collected** for recycling.

Metric 3 is defined as “an estimated proportion that is rejected of the total amount of household waste **sent** for recycling”; but this does not match the use of the NI192 **sent** for recycling figures in metric 1 as these already exclude contamination. So the resultant figures for metric 3 would all be zero on this basis.

This suggests OFLOG assume that metric 1 includes the contamination (so it should actually be what has been “**collected** for recycling”) and then metric 3 would need the description changed to contamination in what has been “**collected** for recycling”.

Or alternatively, they do mean NI192 data should be used for metric 1 (so the existing definition is correct) but they need to make clear that metric 3 cannot be contamination from what has been **sent** for recycling (as it already excludes it), so must be contamination from what has been **collected** for recycling.

4.2 Residual household waste (kg per household)

4.3 Recycling contamination rate

(Please note the points made in paragraph 4.1 regarding the clarity needed around definitions of these metrics. This metric is currently defined as “an estimated proportion that is rejected of the total amount of household waste **sent** for recycling”.)

The contamination figure is misleading without further context. As well as some differences between councils in what they include in their reported figures, this figure includes all recycling waste streams. In addition to the percentage of materials that typically collect in a green bin (or equivalent) which are taken for sorting then recycling, it also includes food, glass and garden too. This means there will be certain differences between core cities. For example, the overall Leeds contamination is probably a lot lower than Liverpool because we presumably collect much more garden waste than they do and there is typically very little contamination recorded in garden waste. The extraordinarily low contamination figures for Bristol and Sheffield may be accounted for because of both these factors. Contamination could be masked by:

- The amount of glass, food and / or garden waste collected; or
- The way materials are collected – If these are already separated by the householder it means they send it direct for recycling rather than sorting and so the contamination is not recorded.

For those authorities with higher contamination, the opposite must be happening. They probably don't have extensive garden collections, or collect food and glass to help dilute the figures.