

Leicester  
City Council

**MEETING OF THE Economic Development, Transport and Climate  
Emergency Scrutiny Commission**

**DATE:** Wednesday, 12 March 2025

**TIME:** 5:30 pm,

**PLACE:** Meeting Room G.01, Ground Floor, City Hall, 115 Charles Street,  
Leicester, LE1 1FZ

**Members of the Committee:**

Councillor Waddington (Chair)  
Councillor Dr Barton (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Bajaj, Batool, Osman, Porter, Rae Bhatia and Singh Sangha

Members of the Committee are summoned to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed overleaf.

For Monitoring Officer

**Officer contact:**

Ed Brown- Senior Governance Officer, email: [edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk) /  
Julie Bryant- Governance Officer, email [julie.bryant@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:julie.bryant@leicester.gov.uk)  
Leicester City Council, City Hall, 3rd Floor Granby Wing, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ

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- ✓ to ensure that the sound on any device is fully muted and intrusive lighting avoided;
- ✓ where filming, to only focus on those people actively participating in the meeting;
- ✓ where filming, to (via the Chair of the meeting) ensure that those present are aware that they may be filmed and respect any requests to not be filmed.

### Further information

If you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact: **Julie Bryant ([julie.bryant@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:julie.bryant@leicester.gov.uk)) or Ed Brown ([edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:edmund.brown@leicester.gov.uk))**. Alternatively, email [committees@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:committees@leicester.gov.uk), or call in at City Hall.

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## **PUBLIC SESSION**

### **AGENDA**

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#### **1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

To issue a welcome to those present, and to confirm if there are any apologies for absence.

#### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed on the agenda.

#### **3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

[Appendix A](#)

(Pages 1 - 32)

The minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Commission held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January have been circulated, and Members will be asked to confirm them as a correct record.

#### **4. Chair's Announcements**

The Chair is invited to make any announcements as they see fit.

## **5. Questions, Representations and Statements of Case**

Any questions, representations and statements of case submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures will be reported.

The following question and statement were submitted by Mr Wynd:

Approximately a year ago I read a story that Green Party was trying to get funds for a kid's park in Clarendon Park as residents were having to fund it themselves. I'm not sure of the outcome of this whether the council have addressed this open space for the public.

In addition to this I highlight the design of the Rally open space, a path has been put straight through the middle of this instead of widening the old path route.

I was invited to help save Tudor Rally adventure playground along with eight other kids play schemes via a protest. I'm glad to see with the pressure placed on the council they backed down and have now funded these schemes.

The development plans for Beaumont Park, so another loss of open space.

I invite the other councillors to highlight any other loss of open spaces they have encountered. I say this as the council's argument for the market to be left as an open space lacks its validity.

The council announced their original proposition for the new market and convinced the traders to move to Green Dragon Square, they demolished the old market then realised this was a great open space for the public. I'm unsure how they didn't realise this before as I have seen three developments in this meeting where they used footage from the air. Why wasn't this utilised for the market, who knows.

I attended a meeting last year where I highlighted to the attendees that I had seen the Leicester public asking for a larger market/ undercover space. I also voiced this in the last meeting.

In a previous scrutiny meeting it was highlighted that four propositions would be unveiled, this never came to light but in the last meeting I was advised that three other propositions existed and could be considered. It is unclear but seems that none of these propositions were any bigger for the public to vote on.

The council has agreed with themselves that the 1 proposition they put forward was a success and is now pushing forward to the planning stage. The story was run by both the BBC and Leicester Live, and in their Facebook groups the council took a right slating over the proposals, very little agreement with the council's proposals.

I posted in a Leicester based Facebook group about the above and proposition that was going to be implemented and got nearly 500 like reacts indicating they agreed the council had not got this right.



I asked two times this year what was happening over the market and got no response, Then the council announced they were pushing on with their plans. It looks like the decision had already been made.

I have spoken to Leicester Media Online who say they have received a lot of objections about the market. They are awaiting a statement from the council before running a new story.

I have been led to believe that the original petition of 10,000 plus signatures cannot be used as an objection to the plans and feel by dragging of heels on this people have started to give up the fight against the council pushing through this proposal.

I feel a bigger option needs to be considered and proposed by the council. Then the four propositions given to the public to have the final say. I suggest these are also made transparent as to size of stalls, venue etc.

So my question, and so this is documented in black and white.

Because of the above, the lack of support for the proposal I've seen, do you feel you should continue as planned or that a 4th larger proposition be added and it put to the people of Leicester to vote?

And by a vote, I mean a fully transparent, involving all local media, to make the vote easily accessible to all.

## **6. Petitions**

Any petitions received in accordance with Council procedures will be reported.

## **7. Market Place Update**

A verbal update will be given on the Market Place development plans.

## **8. UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

[Appendix B](#)  
(Pages 33 - 44)

The Director of Tourism, Culture and Inward Investment submits a report providing an update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme, including plans for the transition year for 2025-26.

## **9. Skills Bootcamps**

[Appendix C](#)  
(Pages 45 - 54)

The Director of Tourism, Culture and Inwards Investment submits a report following on the impact of the pilot year (2023-24) and an update on the 2024-25 programme.

**10. UKSPF ESOL**

[Appendix D](#)

(Pages 55 - 64)

The Director of Tourism, Culture and Inward Investment submits a report for the Commission to consider and comment upon the development of the UKSPF funded ESOL projects in 2024-25.

**11. Update on Leicester and Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership**

[Appendix E](#)

(Pages 65 - 74)

The Director of Tourism, Culture and Inward Investment and the Director of LLEP submit a report to update the Scrutiny Commission on the work of the Business and Skills Partnership for Leicester and Leicestershire.

**12. Electric Vehicle Charging Points Task Group - Executive Response**

The Chair of the Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Committee will provide a verbal update on the Executive response to the Electric Vehicle Charging Points Scrutiny review report.

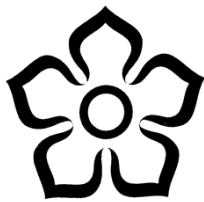
**13. Work Programme**

[Appendix F](#)

(Pages 75 - 80)

Members of the Commission will be asked to consider the work programme and make suggestions for additional items as it considers necessary.

**14. Any Other Business**



Leicester  
City Council

# Appendix A

Minutes of the Meeting of the  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORT AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY  
SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: WEDNESDAY, 8 JANUARY 2025 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Waddington – Chair  
Councillor Dr Barton – Vice Chair

Councillor Bajaj  
Councillor Osman  
Councillor Singh Sangha

Councillor Batool  
Councillor Rae Bhatia

In Attendance

Deputy City Mayor Councillor Cutkelvin  
Assistant City Mayor Councillor Whittle

\* \* \* \* \*

## **112. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Porter.

It was noted that Councillor Rae Bhatia would need to join the meeting later in the proceedings.

## **113. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have had in the business to be discussed.

There were no declarations of interest.

## **114. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

With regard to the record of the meeting held to discuss the Market Place, it was requested that points made about avoiding obstruction of sightlines of locally and nationally listed heritage assets be included in the recommendations and observations.

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Commission held on 6 November 2024 be confirmed as a correct record.

## **115. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None.

## **116. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE**

The following question was presented to the Commission by Mr Nick Wynd:

*Plans for the marketplace seem to be getting smaller than the original proposal. It seems no proposition was ever put forward to include all the traders. When the market moved it was downsized and when it moves back to its original site it will be even smaller. It seems the council are not listening to the public who want a bigger market. As it stands the proposal makes our market the size of Grantham's and they are trying to develop theirs whereas we seem not to want one.*

In response to the question and a supplementary question, the Head of Economic Development noted that:

- The Market Scheme was generating lots of interest.
- A public consultation had been undertaken. This had closed on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024 and had received over 1600 responses with a range of views. The findings from the consultation were currently being analysed. The main comments of the questioner had also been submitted as part of the consultation.
- In terms of the size of the market, the temporary market on Green Dragon Square had the equivalent number of stalls as those occupied in the old market. The old market had a number of empty stalls, with around 250 stalls occupied across the week and the equivalent number of stalls were occupied in Green Dragon Square. The proposed market offers slightly more stalls than at present, and would allow for 288 stalls to be occupied across the week, 48 every day.
- In terms of accommodating all traders, the original scheme was still an option on the table for consideration and no final decision had yet been made.
- The precise configuration of the stalls had not yet been finalised as the scheme would first need to be confirmed, although it was thought that in the proposal with 48 stalls, these would be divided into groups of four.
- There had not yet been a detailed conversation with traders about the size of the stalls in the current scheme being considered, but traders would be consulted in due course.
- In response to the points raised about Grantham market, it was noted that Grantham market only opened on a Saturday, with 30 traders each

Saturday. They were currently developing their market at a cost of £1.8m. In comparison, Leicester City Council was proposing to invest £8-10m on the new Leicester market. It was also noted that Grantham were also looking to create a flexible market space that could also host events and activities, which mirrors the proposed option for Leicester.

- As it was flexible space the proposed scheme would allow for speciality markets and temporary stalls in the adjacent space.
- The current proposal being considered was for 48 covered stalls with flexible space for other markets.

The Chair thanked Mr Wynd for the question and Officers for the response.

*Councillor Rae Bhatia joined the meeting during the consideration of this item.*

## **117. PETITIONS**

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

## **118. DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET 2025/26 AND DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26**

*As the reports on the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme were related, they were taken as one item.*

The Director of Finance submitted a report detailing the proposed Revenue Budget for 2025/26.

The Head of Finance (City Development & Neighbourhoods) gave an overview of the report, key points to note were as follows:

- The medium-term outlook was the most severe ever experienced. The Local Authority, along with many other authorities, would face increasing difficulties with budget balancing.
- The aim of the strategy was to balance budgets up to and including 2027/28.
- Some local authorities had already issued a Section 114 notice and, if successful, the budget strategy would avoid the same outcome for the next three years.
- The decade of austerity up to 2020 was an influencing factor, during this period services other than Social Care had to be reduced by 53%. This had substantially reduced the scope to make further cuts.
- More recent cost pressures included Social Care and Homelessness, which were not matched by an increase in income.
- The Local Authority used one off monies to support budgets for this and last year.

- It was anticipated that there would be a new round of financial constraint following the Chancellor's Budget of October 2024. Central Government understood the position for local authorities and some funding for deprived localities was anticipated. However, funding for protected services, local authorities usually fall within this category, was expected to be cut in the period to 2028/29.
- There were five strands to the strategy:

Strand 1: To release one off monies of £110m to buy time. This included £20m from earmarked reserves and £90m previously set aside to fund the current Capital Programme. This left a gap in funding for already approved schemes. Borrowing would be required which would cost the local authority £5m pounds in interest and debt repayments annually.

Strand 2: Included proposed reductions of £13m in the approved Capital Programme to reduce the amount of borrowing required. The areas covered by this commission would include £1.3m reduction from not proceeding with the planned Malcom Arcade refurbishment. A £3.2m reduction by not committing to any further city centre improvement schemes under Connecting Leicester. A £5.9m reduction from policy provisions including strategic acquisitions and Highways & transport infrastructure.

Strand 3: Included the proposed sale of properties to secure an additional £60m. To use this for the budgets, permission is required from The Secretary of State.

Strand 4: Was to constrain growth in statutory services that are under Demand-led pressure. Much work on this had already been done, cost growth had been reduced by estimates of £99m per year.

Strand 5: Was to make ongoing savings to revenue budget of £20m per year.

- There was a saving target of £4m in the Planning, Development & Transportation Division and a savings target of £2.3m for Tourism, Culture & Inward Investment.
- Those savings would still leave an estimated gap of £90m in year 2027/28.
- The strategy did contain risk, for example it was difficult to predict what new pressures might occur within the Social Care system and with the housing crises.

The Director of Finance submitted a report detailing the proposed Capital Programme for 2025/26.

The Head of Finance (City Development & Neighbourhoods) presented the

report.

Key points included:

- £3.26m was provided for the Highway Capital Maintenance Programme.
- £2.56m was provided for the Transport Improvement Programme.
- £0.40m was provided for Local Environmental Works in wards.
- £0.30m was provided for the Flood & Drainage scheme.
- £0.20m was provided for Front Walls Replacement.
- £0.08m was provided for the Historic Building Grant Programme.
- £0.06m was provided for Southgates Underpass Lighting under the Invest to Save programme.
- Approximately £5m had been allocated to facilitate Capital Assets disposal.

The Commission was invited to ask questions and make comments. Key Points included:

- The draft Local Government Finance Settlement had been received at the end of 2024. Indications were that this is slightly better than anticipated but that it did not fundamentally affect the strategy or the need for savings. A report would go to the Overview Select Committee with further details of the Settlement.
- Pressures mentioned in the previous budget report would have alluded primarily to Social Care and Homelessness, similarly to the current pressures faced.
- Pressures surrounding adult and children's social care were due primarily to the numbers presenting and levels of needs which required meeting. There were generally increasing numbers of people requiring support, with higher cost packages of care.
- In terms of Planning Development and Transportation, there would be a £4m budget reduction.
- There would be a budget reduction of £2.3m for Tourism, Culture & Inward Investment.
- Officers and the Executive were working through savings proposals across the board. These include opportunities to generate additional income alongside ways to be more efficient.
- In response to a query regarding Capital monies that had previously been allocated to the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LEEP), it was clarified that this money had been part of the Growing Places Fund, and whilst it is ring-fenced for economic development and prosperity, there had not yet been any agreement on how this money would be spent. The Council was the accountable body for this money in terms of how it was to be spent across the functional economic area.
- In terms of asset disposal, these would be assets that were underperforming or were surplus to requirements, not assets used in the

delivery of service. When considering assets for disposal, there was consideration of whether income was being generated, and the strategic potential for sites. This included land that may have been held historically but were no longer required. Existing established decision-making processes were in place for asset disposal, and these include assets above £500k being subject to public scrutiny through Executive decisions.

- It was requested that a list of assets under consideration be produced.

The Chair asked that the any points relevant be raised at the Overview Select Committee.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission be taken into account by the lead officers.
- 3) That officers keep members informed on budget ceilings.
- 4) That the need for transparency on asset disposal be noted.
- 5) That the report be brought to Overview Select Committee prior to Full Council.

## **119. ASHTON GREEN DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

The Director of Planning Development and Transportation submitted a report to provide an update on the Ashton Green Development.

The Programme Manager for Planning Development and Transportation presented an overview of the report using the slides attached. Key points to note were:

- Outline Planning Permission was held for 130 hectares of land. This would enable the creation of up to three thousand homes.
- Local Plan examination was considering an eastern expansion along with plans for a secondary school.
- The latest phase of the plan consolidated the previous 15 smaller developments parcelled into 6 or 7 broader developments.
- Regarding timescales, Morris Homes had completed 100 in late 2020 and Phase B, Tilia Homes would have completed 162 of 307 homes.
- The Morris and Tilia Homes would include 30% affordable housing.
- Morris Homes was the selected developer for Phase C. The proposal was for 440 homes. Planning Permission was hoped to be secured this year so that work could commence on site.
- Land had recently been taken to the market and there had been a positive response. This would be reported back at a later date.
- On the western side, Phase F had scope for around 915 homes.
- The high-level land use plan includes housing and large scale employment land.



- Green infrastructure including open space and sustainable drainage areas would be managed by the site wide open space Management company, Meadfleet Limited.
- Service payments would be taken from residents, this would pay towards managing the green spaces.
- The site wide masterplan had been updated bringing everything up to date and highlighting development already achieved.
- A significant amount of highway infrastructure had been delivered, about £25m since 2013. External funding of £10m had been secured from Homes England to open up land for 1,000 homes.
- £5m had been secured from National Highways towards the £10m Anstey/ A46 improvement scheme.
- Traffic calming measures, cycling and walking improvements had been put into place as part of this.
- In Phase A, Morris Homes had created an ecology area and landscaping area.
- There was some small-scale work with volunteers.
- Morris Homes hoped to be on site for November 2025 to commence Phase C. This would create 440 dwellings, of which 132 were allocated affordable housing units.
- In addition to the homes, substantial highway improvements were planned.
- It was acknowledged that overall timescales had seen delays. COVID had impacted significantly amongst other factors.
- Developer bids for Phases D and E had seen a good response and it was anticipated that partners could be announced by Easter 2025. This will enable the creation of about 525 dwellings.
- In 2013, land had been sold to Samworth Brothers who rapidly expanded the site. Around 750 new jobs being created as a result. The Local Authority had played a part in this by building a road extension to the site. It was hoped that similarly, there would be increased employment with future phases of large scale employment land to be released.
- The new Ashton Green Design Guide brought everything up to date and included the development strategies, quality standards information and highway design aspirations.
- Future Phases C2 and C3 will be a mixed-use village centre with shops and commercial buildings. But a critical mass of new homes was necessary before retailers would come on board. Significant ongoing discussion with internal stakeholders was required.

Members were invited to comment and ask questions, Responses were as follows:

- Regarding bus services, it was hoped that provision could be balanced with housing numbers and testing would need to be done. Outline planning permission was to come. The Local Authority was looking at

bus subsidies across the city so Ashton Green could come into these considerations.

- Highway capacity had been considered jointly by both Leicester City and Leicestershire County Councils at the start of the project. Discussions had included the potential for connecting with the A46 but the National Agency had opposed this. There were substantial improvements made to Anstey Lane down to the A46 which would benefit the surrounding network.
- Discussions could take place with the bus companies about extending existing bus services, but again this would depend on capacity of dwellings.
- To date, the focus had been on building housing in line with the set government timescales. Large developers tended to offer speed of delivery but future opportunities could be looked at for smaller developers. This however could present challenges in terms of infrastructure. Local apprenticeships were a consideration particularly on smaller developments.
- An update on ESOL Skills Bootcamps would be coming to scrutiny in March 2025. It would be possible to look at opportunities for local construction workers at that point.
- Regarding questions from Climate Action Leicester it was noted that:
  - The original 2011 planning consent required all homes to be delivered to the former level 4 code Staple Homes Standard. Currently progress fell in line with the Future Homes Standard emissions target for 2050.
  - There was a functioning cycle route in place connecting the development to Beaumont Leys Shopping Centre. Wider cycle routes were embodied in the programme to consider cycle connectivity within and outside of the development.
  - Cycle routes connecting to the new secondary school were in consideration.
- A County Council development (Broadnook) was in close proximity to Ashton Green and communications were in place between the authorities and District Council to consider cumulative impacts. Large sites tended to come with considerable green space which created buffers and major conservation opportunities.
- Discussions on the secondary school included placement and road access.

#### AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That comments made by members of this commission to be taken into account by the lead officers.

- 3) For continued liaisons with local Councillors regarding issues impacting on local and future residents.
- 4) Formal responses to be shared back regarding questions from Climate Action.
- 5) Climate Action points to be taken into consideration.

## **120. EXAMINING BUS LANE OPERATING HOURS - INFORMAL SCRUTINY**

The Chair submitted a report providing an overview of the Commission's examination of the policy regarding the operating hours of bus lanes in Leicester.

The Chair thanked the officers, members and stakeholders who had been involved in the review.

It was noted that once the report had come through the Commission, it would be presented to the Executive. There would then be a timeframe for the Executive to respond.

AGREED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That the report be presented to the Executive and the response from the Executive be brought back to the Commission.

## **121. WORK PROGRAMME**

Members of the Commission were invited to consider content of the work programme and were invited to make suggestions for additions as appropriate to be brought to future meetings.

In response to a point raised about post-LLEP arrangements, it was clarified that other business support programmes were available. It was requested that information be sent to all members so that it was known where support could be found.

The work programme was noted.

## **122. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no further items of urgent business, the meeting finished at 19:06.



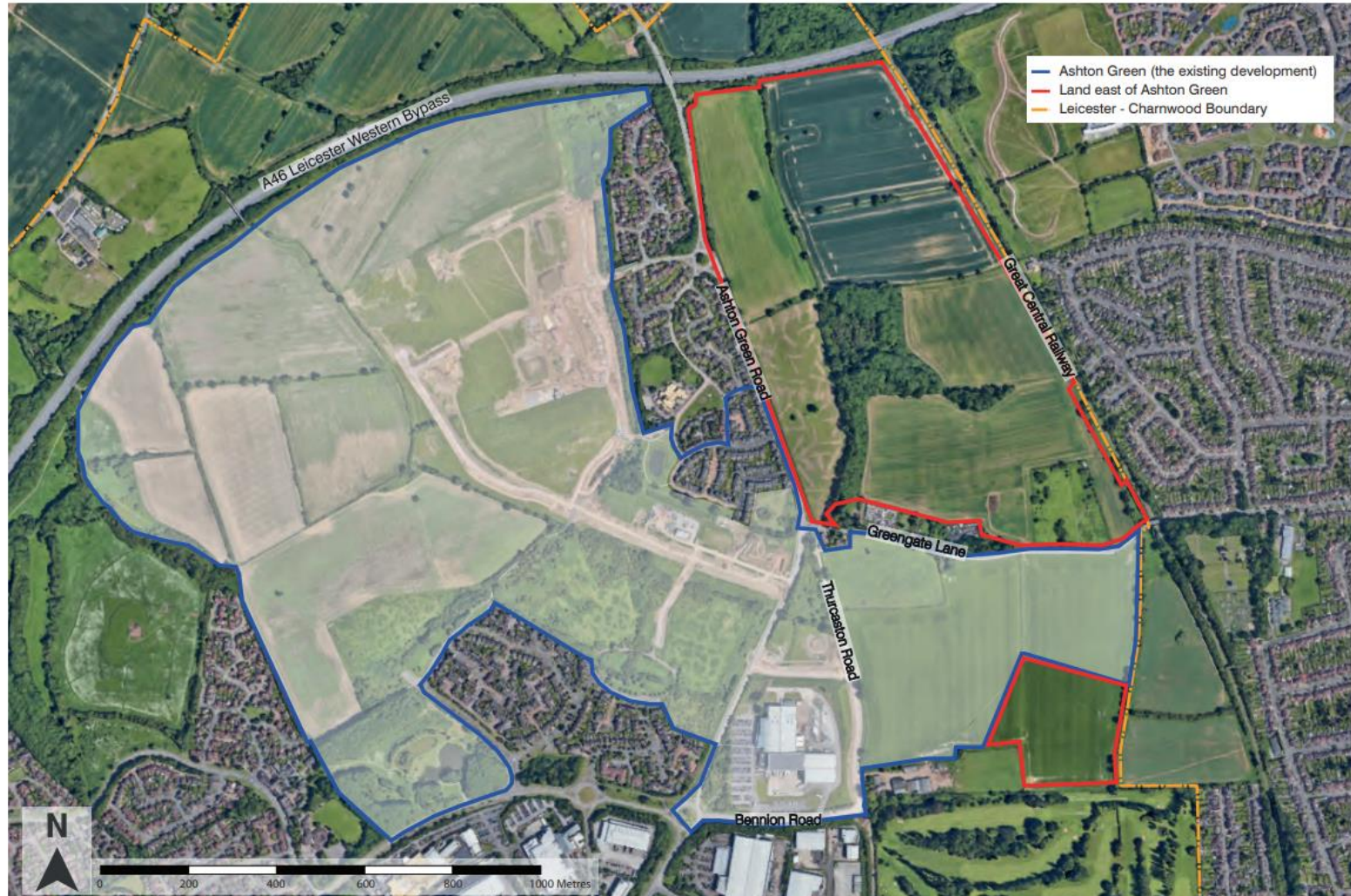
# Ashton Green development update



**EDTCE Scrutiny Commission – 8 January 2025**



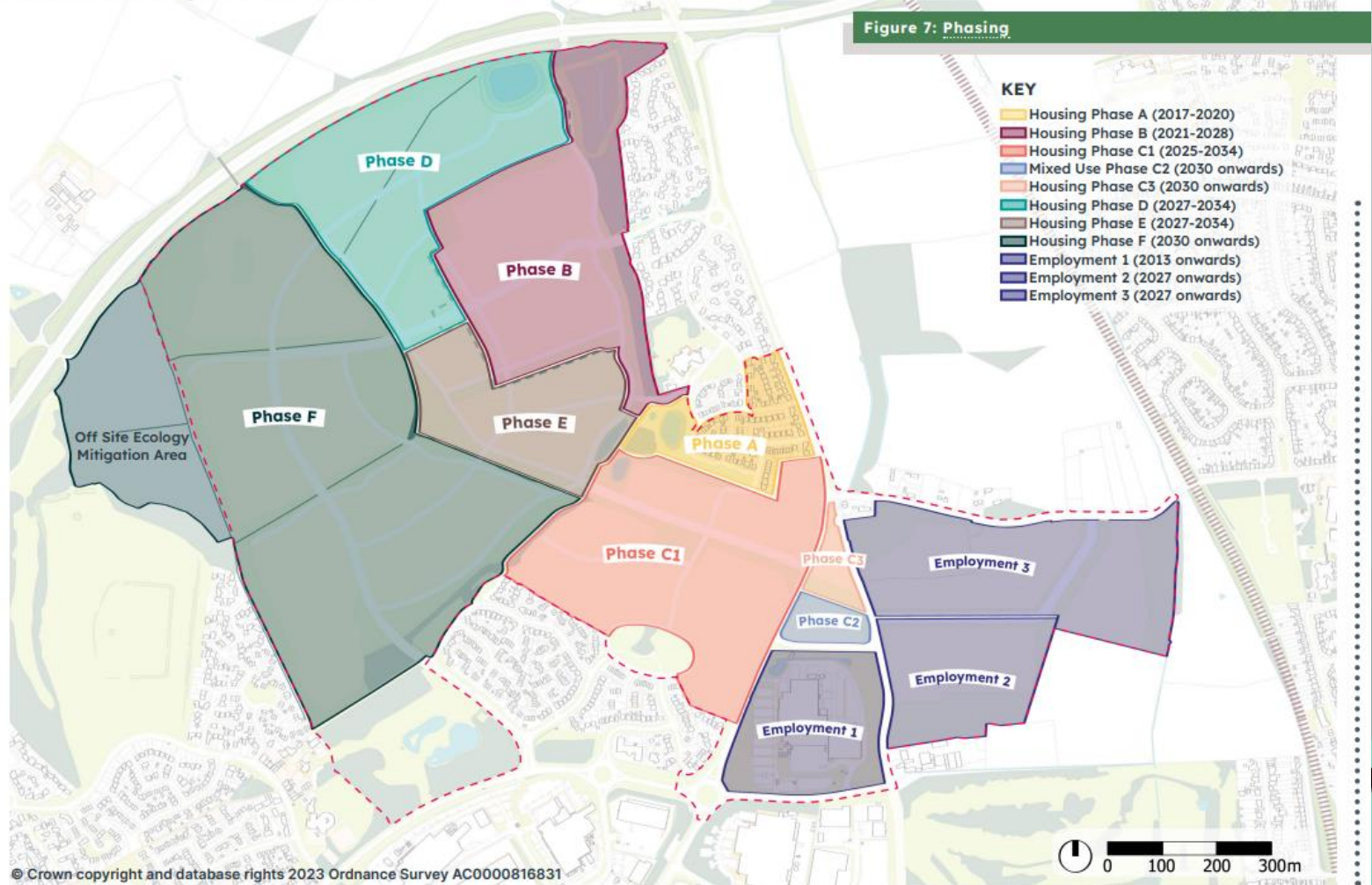
# Ashton Green site plan including the proposed eastern expansion



Location map showing Land east of Ashton Green and the Ashton Green development

# Ashton Green phasing plan 2024

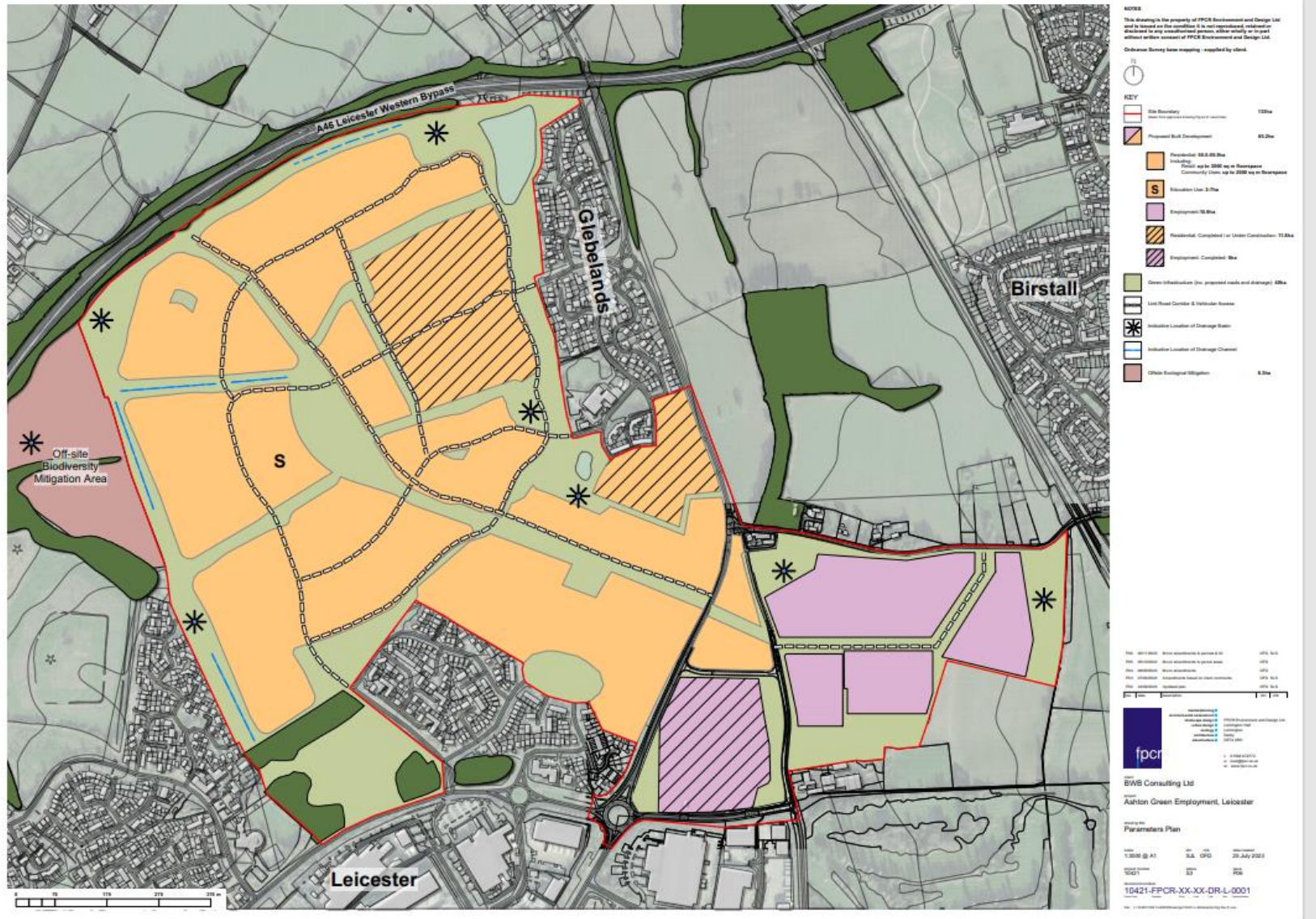
Ashton Green Design Guide | LCC | 2024





# Land use plan 2024

14





# Indicative Masterplan 2024



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10421  
Ashton Green Employment, Leicester  
BWB Consulting Ltd

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10421-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-L-0002 P03

FPCR Environment and Design Ltd  
10421-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-L-0002 P03



# Phase A, Morris Homes, Glebelands Park

## All 100 dwellings completed by late 2020

16





# Phase B, Tilia Homes, Verdant Rise

## 162 of 307 dwellings completed to date





# Phase B additional photos

18





# Phase B additional photos



# Enabling Infrastructure Since 2013

- Major internal spine roads to access housing Phases C, D & E and highway improvements to the eastern employment land.
- A46/Anstey Lane off-site highway works.
- Bennion Road extension (Employment Land Phase E1).
- Cycling, walking, traffic calming and bus interchange improvements
- Phase A enabling works.
- **Circa £25m to date (£16m external funding)**



# Main spine roads for Phases C, D & E

21





# A46 / Anstey Lane off-site highway works





# Cycling, walking, public transport improvements and other enabling works





# Phase C, Morris Homes 440 dwellings on-site from 2025



24



# Phase C, Morris Homes draft landscaping plan Oct 2024

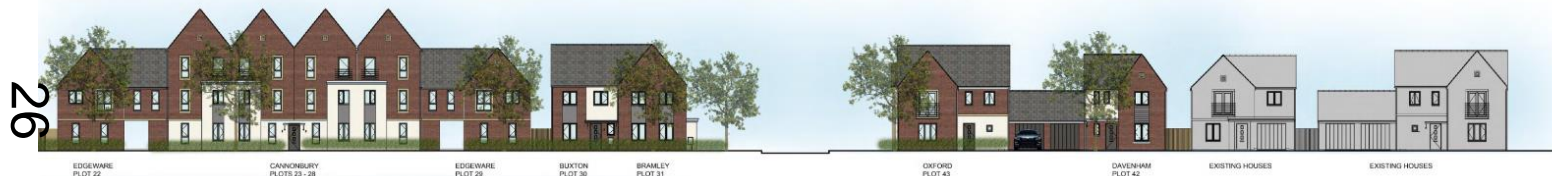
25



# Phase C, Morris Homes street scenes examples, Oct 2024



SECTION A - A

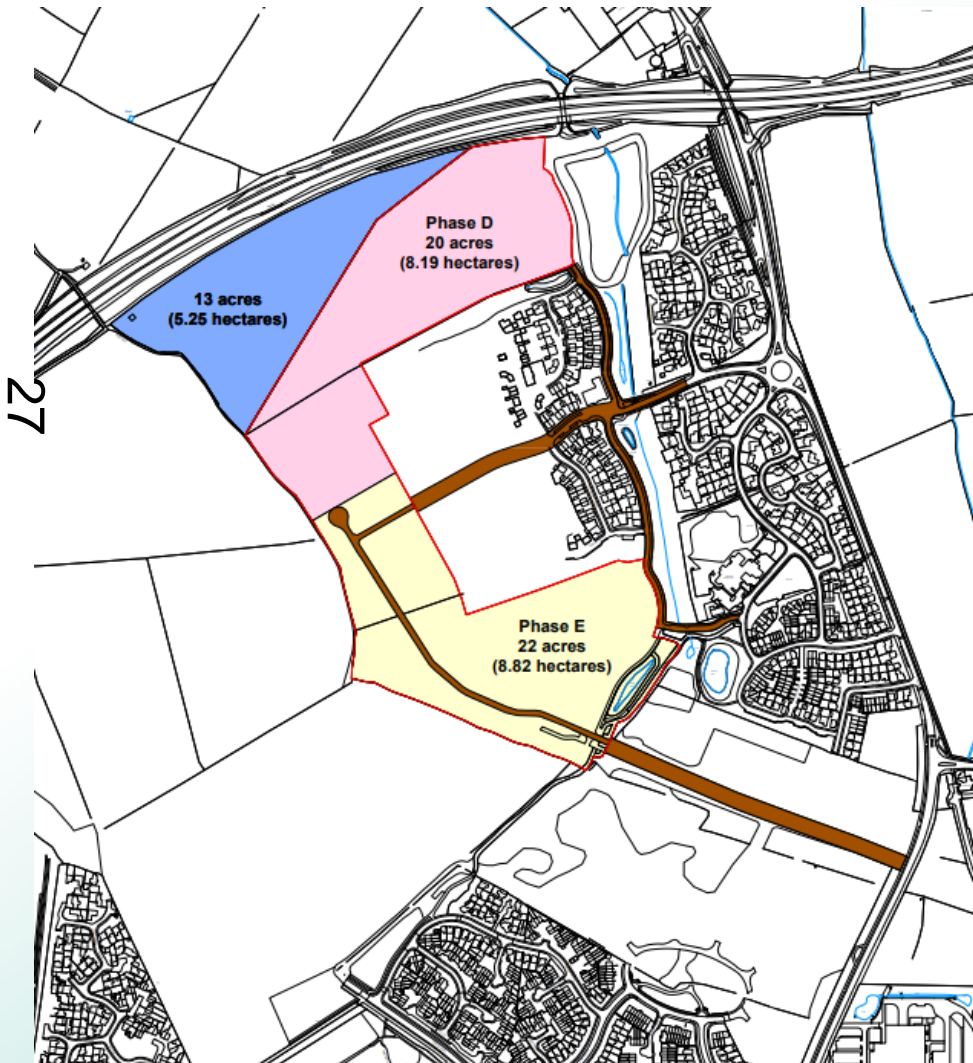


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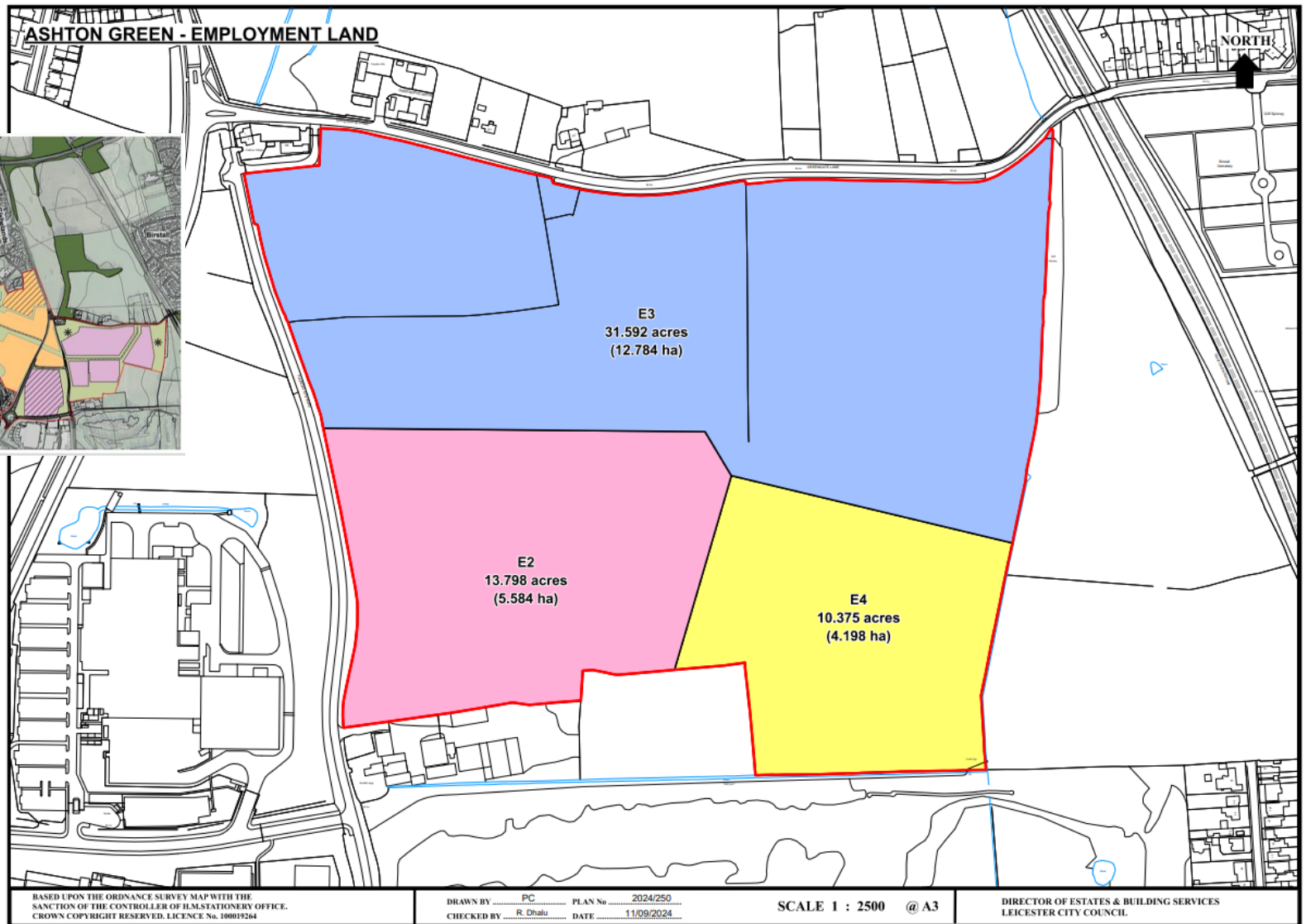


# Phases D & E – developer bids Dec 2024

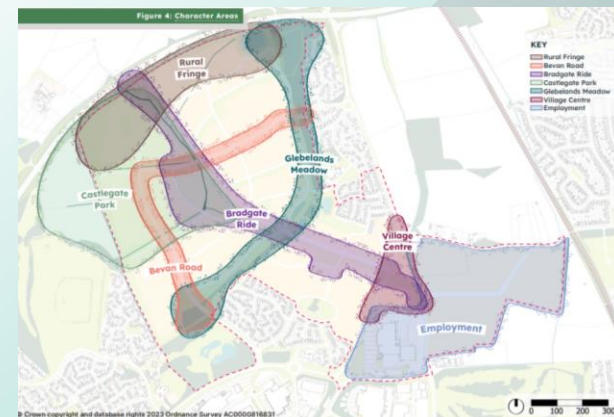
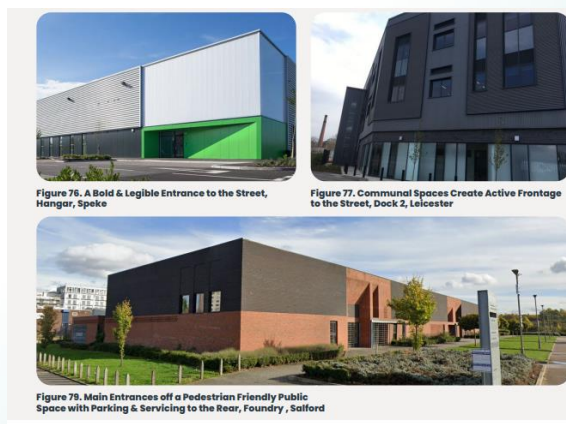
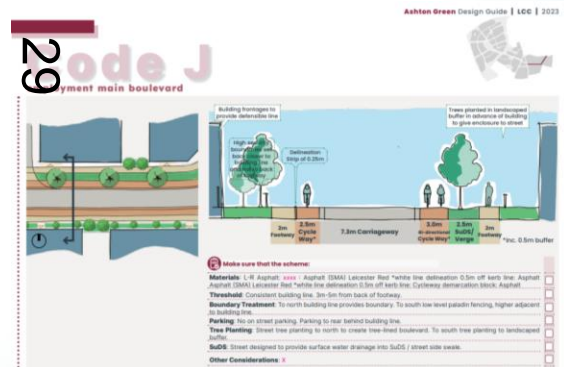


- 22.3 ha gross (55 acres)
- 13.95 ha net (34.5 acres)
- c.525 dwellings (37.6 dph)
- 30% affordable housing

# Large scale employment land opportunities





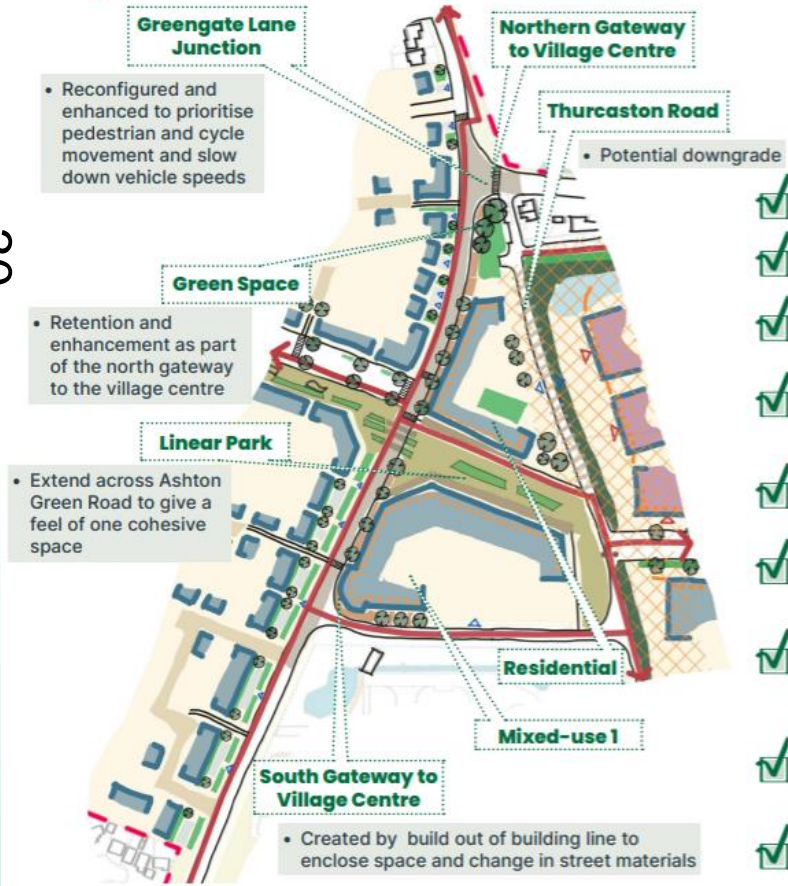




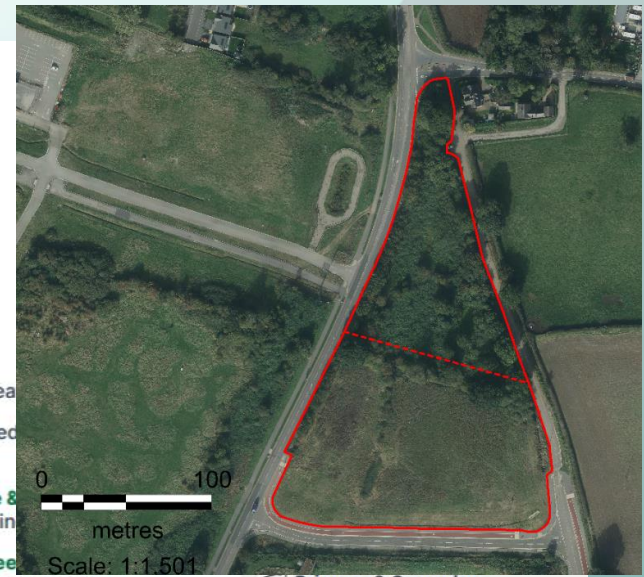
# Phases C2 & C3 – future mixed-use commercial village centre

30

## 5.3.4. village centre



- ✓ **Tree Planting to Front Gardens** - Create a place, prioritise pedestrians and cyclists and reduce vehicle speeds.
- ✓ **Junctions & Crossings** - Prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement.
- ✓ **Generous Thresholds to Mixed-Use & Employment** - Provide activity and vitality to the linear park.
- ✓ **Features Within & Along Ashton Green Road** - Create a place, prioritise pedestrians and cyclists and reduce vehicle speeds.
- ✓ **Servicing, Access & Parking** - Located to rear, maximise active frontages along Ashton Green Road and Linear Park.
- ✓ **Shared Space for Cyclists & Pedestrians** - Designs to avoid conflict using signage and cycle parking.
- ✓ **Tree Planting & SuDS Features to East of Ashton Green** - Located as close to carriageway as possible with large tree species to provide street enclosure and assist place-making.
- ✓ **Fully Designed Landscape Scheme** - Incorporate innovative solutions for planting and SuDS features within the easement to the Ashton Green Road frontage.
- ✓ **Crossing Points** - Connecting to adjacent residential development and direct.

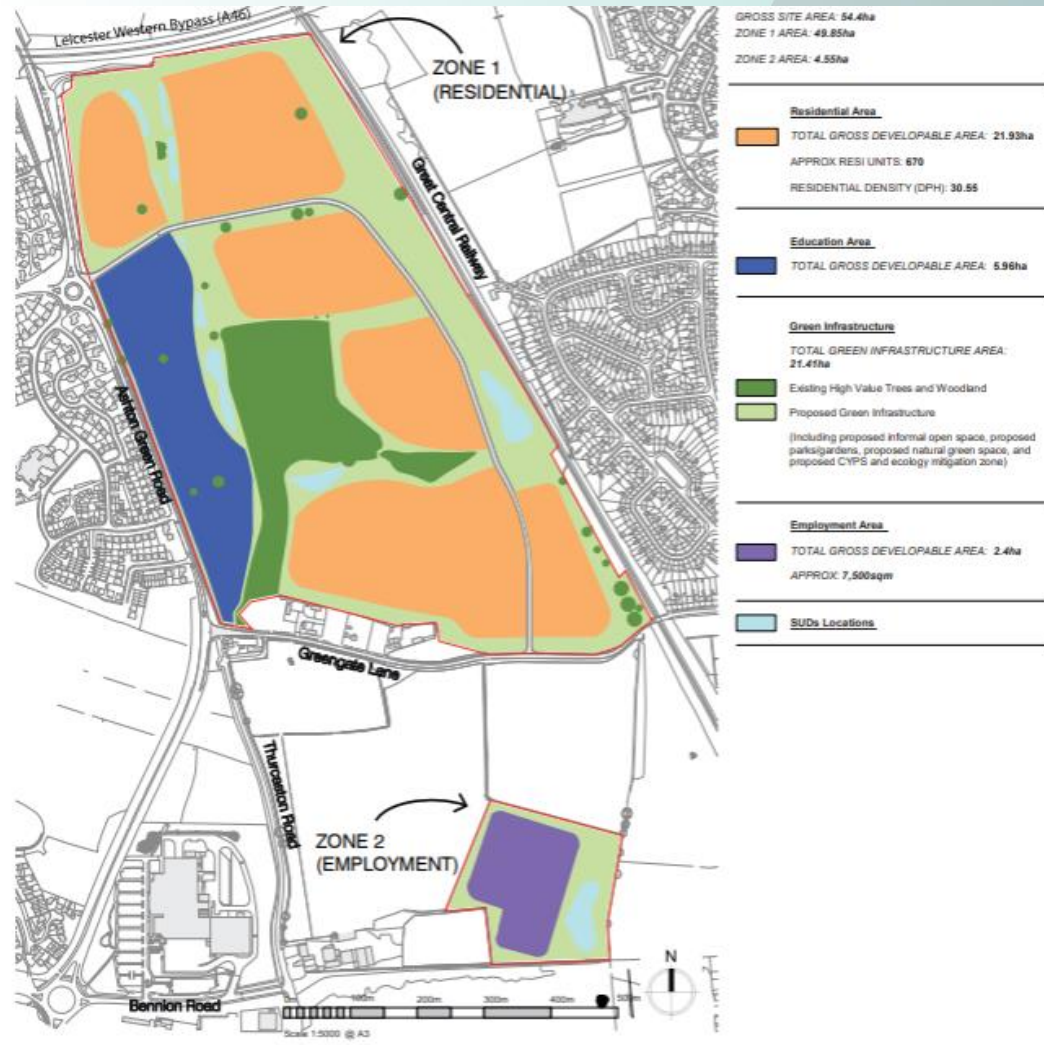


- Primary & Secondary Streets
- Tertiary Streets
- HGV Movement (employment)
- HGV Emergency Access (employment)
- Segregated Cycle Route
- Recreational Cycle & Horse Riding Route
- Landscape Green Infrastructure
- Green Edge/ Buffer
- Sensitive Hedgerow & Biodiversity Value
- Wildlife Corridor Biodiversity Value
- Community Orchard/ Garden
- Existing & Potential SuDS Feature
- Future SuDS Feature/ Rain Garden



# Land East of Ashton Green

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## **UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

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Economic Development, Transport and Climate  
Emergency (EDTCE) Scrutiny Committee  
12<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Lead director/officer: Mike Dalzell

### Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report authors: Joanne Ives Regeneration Programmes & Projects Manager/ Peter Chandler, Head of Economic Regeneration
- Author contact details: joanne.ives@leicester.gov.uk/peter.chandler@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: 1

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This briefing provides an update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme, including plans for the transition year for 2025-26.

## 2. Summary

2.1 To note the progress of the UKSPF programme running until March 2025.

2.2 To note the planned arrangements for the transition year between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

## 3. Recommendations

3.1 Members are invited to comment on the report and the interventions being delivered

## 4. Report/ Supporting Information

### Background

4.1 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was intended by government to replace the previous regime of European Union Structural Funds (ESIF) that have operated for many years. ESIF programmes typically supported individuals to improve skills and gain jobs using European Social Fund resource (ESF) and drive business growth using European Regional Development Funds (ERDF).

4.2 The comparative loss of resource for the city as a result of the new UKSPF approach is circa 50% so there has been much less resource overall to allocate.

4.3 As per government guidance the city council submitted a UKSPF Investment Plan in summer 2022 for a UKSPF programme over three financial years for a total value of £9.193m. This was approved by government in December 2022. The predetermined financial profile is shown below and demonstrates that the programme is heavily backloaded to the final year 2024/25.

**Table 1: Original UKSPF Financial Profile**

Year	Capital	Revenue	Total
2022/23	£111,567	£1,004,098	£1,115,665

2023/24	£290,074	£1,941,257	£2,231,331
2024/25	£1,169,217	£4,676,870	£5,846,087
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,570,858</b>	<b>£7,622,225</b>	<b>£9,193,083</b>

4.4 An evaluation was undertaken that reviewed previous EU funded projects and economic data, and this was used to inform the UKSPF Investment Plan. The programme also needed to deliver across three investment themes and deliver a mix of capital and revenue spend, including a minimum capital allocation. The programme allocation across themes originally agreed with government is as follows, after including for Council programme management costs:

**Table 2: Original Investment Plan Allocation by Theme**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Investment Plan Allocation</b>
Communities & Place	£2,871,058
Business Support	£3,053,249
People & Skills	£2,901,053
<b>Total</b>	<b>£8,825,360</b>

### **Current Progress - Finance**

4.5 The current programme is nearing completion at the end March 2025, and delivery is via commissioned activity and internal projects. Financial performance at the end of December 2024 is as follows:

**Table 3: Spend to December 2024**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Total Revised Allocation</b>	<b>Spend to Dec 24</b>	<b>Remaining</b>
Communities & Place	£3,131,685	£2,080,417	£1,051,268
Business Support	£3,178,586	£2,150,622	£1,027,964
People & Skills	£2,515,089	£1,747,958	£767,131
<b>Total</b>	<b>£8,825,360</b>	<b>£5,978,997</b>	<b>£2,846,363</b>

4.6 From the above, this shows a significant amount at December 2024 remaining to be achieved by end of March 2025. A number of these largely relate to capital spend and will be evidenced and reported at the year end.

4.7 As a grant-funded programme under which a significant proportion of expenditure is outside the control of the local authority, there exists the potential for project underspends. These are being managed to minimise the risk of repaying funds to central government. All external projects are proceeding well and are on target to achieve spend, and it is anticipated that total spend across the programme will be fully achieved by the end of March 2025.

### **Current Progress - Deliverables**

4.8 Across the programme more than 25 individual projects have been supported across the themes. This includes 17 projects being delivered by external organisations/ consortia,

and more than 30 external organisations have been involved in the delivery of the programme. The following outlines the type of projects supported and activities achieved to date.

- **Communities & Place**
  - Internal projects: supporting the Festivals and Events; Inward Investment and City Centre teams to deliver event management and city promotional and engagement activities.
  - External projects include support for 2 projects providing advice to households around debt, finance/budgeting, energy efficiency measures and digital inclusion; digital support for voluntary / community sector organisations, support for Community Asset Transfers to invest in sustainability improvements and help with ongoing viability
- **Business Support**
  - Internal projects include supporting current staff within LCC to provide business support to businesses linked to managed workspaces; delivery of the Employment Hub service providing support to businesses looking to recruit apprenticeships, jobs and work experience especially linking to those most disadvantaged, support for graduate retention
  - External projects include support for businesses in Leicester with advice in relation to business sustainability; support around low carbon including decarbonisation plans, dedicated support for black owned businesses and social enterprises; support for manufacturing businesses, development of creative industry networks
- **People & Skills:**
  - Internal projects: part funding for delivery of the Construction Hub supporting individuals into the construction industry
  - External projects; support for Economically Inactive individuals to move into employment; delivery of ESOL; sector skills training in hospitality, retail, textile and creative sectors

4.9 Across these projects, up to December 2024 the programme has supported the following:

**Table 4: Outputs/ Outcomes Delivery to December 2024**

Communities & Place Theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1638 households engaged to receive energy efficiency advice. Of these 1111 have implemented energy efficiency measures</li> <li>• 290 people experiencing increased confidence and resilience following support (through addressing barriers related to skills e.g. digital, and circumstances e.g. homelessness, health and access to services etc).</li> <li>• 3293 increased visitor numbers</li> <li>• 25 premises improved with digital connectivity</li> </ul>
Business Support Theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 587 businesses engaged for business advice, guidance of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 138 jobs safeguarded</li> <li>• 54 businesses improved productivity</li> <li>• 70 businesses adopting new to the firm technologies or processes</li> <li>• 192 jobs created</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

People & Skills Theme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 774 Economically inactive individuals supported with life and interpersonal skills to move them forward to engage with labour market of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 287 undertaken job search activities</li> <li>○ 48 moved into employment</li> <li>○ 605 reporting increased employability through interpersonal skills development</li> <li>○ 117 engaged in life skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 841 individuals engaged to support with basic skills or skills training of which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 730 have gained a sector specific qualification (i.e. construction, fashion)</li> <li>○ 575 have gained a basic skills qualification</li> <li>○ 34 gaining licences to work in construction</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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4.10 All projects are continuing to deliver activity until the end of March 2025. As such note that the outputs and outcomes reported above are not the final results for the programme, and these will not be known until the end of April 2025.

### **Transition Year 2025-2026**

4.11 Central Government has confirmed a transition year for UKSPF for 2025/26 ahead of more fundamental change to economic development funding in subsequent years. What that future alternative programme might look like is currently unclear. Guidance has been issued which allows no UKSPF underspend to be carried forward from the current 2024/25 year, hence the need to draw a line under current delivery activity to the end of March 2025.

4.12 Although the national allocation for the transition year 2025/26 is at 60% of the 2024/25 grant funding level, the city allocation is circa 75% of that for 2024/25. So there has been some redistribution in favour of the city although total sums remain well below what was previously supported under the previous European Union regime. The total UKSPF allocation for Leicester city for 2025/26 is £4,356,020.

4.13 Government guidance has confirmed the priorities of the existing UKSPF programme need to be followed in 2025/26 i.e. similar themes and broadly similar output and outcome measures. The existing distribution methods also remain, with Leicester City Council and District councils retaining a UKSPF allocation in the transition year.

4.14 Given the late notice of the funding allocation from Central Government, there has been no time to run new funding calls for delivery of the single year programme for entirely new activities. There has also been no time to conduct a detailed evaluation of current delivery, particularly as this does not finish until March 2025. An evaluation of this is being planned for late Spring/ Summer 2025 to inform future priorities.

4.15 The 2025-26 allocation is being allocated across the programme themes as follows:

**Table 5: Transition Year 2025/26 Allocation by Theme**

Theme	Investment Plan Allocation
Communities & Place	£1,576,138

Business Support	£1,540,401
People & Skills	£1,084,481
Management Fee	£155,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,356,020</b>

4.16 Despite the lower level of UKSPF funding in the transition year, the UKSPF programme for 2025/26 will continue to fund commissioned projects at 80% of their 2024/25 allocation. Note this is slightly more than the overall 75% funding allocation to Leicester. This will avoid dismantling provision and will continue delivery of vital support to local communities and businesses.

4.17 The programme allocation for 2025/26 enables the continued delivery of the programme, including the following:

- Continued funding for internal project delivery: Festivals and Events; Inward Investment and City Centre teams to deliver event management and city promotional and engagement activities; delivery of the Employment Hub, support for Graduate retention, business support and the Construction Hub
- Further capital funding to support new Community Asset Transfers to invest in sustainability improvements and help with ongoing viability
- Continued funding for externally commissioned projects at 80% of their 2024/25 budget, for the following organisations/ consortia:
  - Business Support: East Midlands Chamber, The Race Equality Centre, Exemplas, NBV Enterprise, University of Leicester/CASE, Leicester Social Economy Consortium: continuing advice in relation to business survival; support around low carbon including decarbonisation plans, dedicated support for black owned businesses and social enterprises; support for manufacturing businesses
  - People: Zinithya Trust, Reaching People, Futures, BYCS, Twin Training, LCC's Adult Education service: continuing delivery of support for households around debt/ cost of living/ energy efficiency/ digital and ESOL
  - Skills: Fashion Enter, Volunteer It Yourself, Voluntary Acton Leicester, LCC's Connexions service: continuing delivery of sector skills training
  - Creative networks: Artreach, HQ Familia, Opal 22, Phoenix and a new fashion/ textiles network

4.18 This approach has been welcomed by external delivery partners, who recognise the lower level of available funding but the desire to continue delivery as much as possible. The final funding allocation and outputs/ outcomes are being negotiated and agreed with each delivery partner, and will be subject to subsidy control and contract variation. It is anticipated that contracts for delivery will be in place by the end of March 2025.

4.19 The programme also has a requirement for a minimum spend on capital projects, and options for this are being explored.

### **Case Studies**

Appendix 1 provides a sample of a few case studies from the projects.



## **6. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications**

### 6.1 Financial implications

This report outlines the UK Shared Prosperity grant funding to the Council from 2022/23 to 2025/26, which is being used to support revenue and capital schemes, both internal and external to the Council. Close monitoring of expenditure is required to ensure that grant conditions are met and that the risk of repayment is minimised.

Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance  
24<sup>th</sup> February 2025

### 6.2 Legal implications

The UKSPF government funded scheme to date moving on from the former EU funded schemes and the transitional 2025/26 scheme provides economic support and much needed growth and regeneration opportunities and assistance for individuals and businesses in the local area.

Any individual grants and distribution of those funds to organisations and individuals will need to need to comply with the Council's own Contract Procedure Rules to ensure monies are properly spent in accordance with imposed grant terms and conditions with performance and successful outcomes monitored for completion of projects to the satisfaction of the Council to meet 2024/25 government grant allocations as funding may not be carried over during the forthcoming transitional period.

Steven Lowry-Smith

21.2.2025

### 6.3 Equalities implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. The paper provides an update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme, including plans for the transition year for 2025-26.

Under UKSPF local authorities are being encouraged to tackle inequalities, increase opportunities and improve public services. This can include people with protected characteristics, those living in poverty and furthest away from the jobs market. The council has duties under the Equality Act, and must therefore consider how investments and decisions will tackle inequalities, prevent discrimination and foster good relations with different communities.

The fund is designed to help deliver enhanced outcomes and recognises that support is needed in boosting core skills and supporting adults to progress in work. The initiatives aim

to help reduce the barriers some people face to employment and support them to move towards employment and education and provide people with the skills needed to progress in life and work. Targeting adults with no or low-level qualifications and upskilling the population along with supporting disadvantaged people to access the skills they need to progress in life and into work and reducing levels of economic inactivity should lead to positive impacts for people from across many protected characteristics and help to foster good relations. The initiatives support the council to embed equality, diversity and inclusion and tackle local inequalities, increase opportunities and improve public services for those living in poverty and furthest away from the jobs market.

Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

#### 6.4 Climate Emergency implications

The SPF programme is making a positive contribution to addressing the climate emergency through supporting individuals with energy efficiency and supporting businesses with developing carbon reduction plans. For this reason, the programme is included in the Climate Ready Leicester Plan.

We would encourage the Economic Development Service to continue supporting these activities into 2025/26 if possible. Subject to the priorities and level of funding available in any future replacement of the SPF, it is to be hoped that there will be the opportunity to fund further projects supporting both businesses and individuals in areas relating to the climate emergency – particularly energy efficiency and carbon emissions reduction.

Duncan Bell, Change Manager (Climate Emergency). Ext. 37 2249.  
24.02.25

#### 6.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None

#### **7. Background information and other papers:**

#### **8. Summary of appendices:**

Appendix: Case Studies

#### **9. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?**

#### **10. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?**

No

## Case Studies

The following are a selection of a few case studies from the projects.

### **Company E: From Concept to Market**

Manager M had always been passionate about health and wellness. As an advocate for optimal nutrition, he recognised a glaring gap in the supplement market—an all-in-one superfood supplement that combined convenience with scientifically backed benefits. With this vision in mind, M founded Company E, determined to bring his idea to life.

However, like many start-ups, M faced a mountain of challenges. The supplement industry was highly competitive, filled with established brands and countless products vying for consumer attention. How could Company E stand out? How could he validate his product's efficacy and gain consumer trust? Most importantly, how could he navigate the intricate landscape of business development, regulatory compliance, and marketing?

It was at this crucial juncture that Manager M sought the expertise of NBV Enterprise Solutions Ltd. Their structured advisory approach would prove to be the catalyst for transforming Company E from a mere concept into a thriving business.

NBV's Business Adviser, R, guided M through product validation, forming a partnership with De Montfort University (DMU) for scientific testing, enhancing credibility, and securing funding. They advised on regulatory compliance, refining packaging for safety and marketability.

Using a business model canvas, M identified his target market (professionals 25-45), developed a subscription pricing model, and refined Company E's value proposition. R supported the creation of a research-backed marketing strategy, premium branding, and strategic health clinic partnerships.

Key developments included launching an e-commerce platform, hiring content creators, implementing social media strategies, and engaging customers effectively. Future plans focused on growth, intellectual property protection, and influencer marketing.

### **Success & Future Growth**

Through dedicated business advisory and structured support, Company E transformed from an ambitious idea into a fully-fledged, market-ready brand. NBV Enterprise Solutions played a critical role in navigating the complexities of product development, regulatory compliance, and market positioning, ultimately setting the company on a trajectory for long-term success.

M's journey with Company E is a testament to the power of structured business guidance, strategic planning, and perseverance. With a solid foundation in place, the brand is now ready to make its mark in the health supplement industry, bringing innovative, science-backed nutrition to consumers worldwide.

# Leicester Employment Hub Case Study: Local Electrical Company Takes Chance on New Employee

***Company K Electrical & Suppliers has seen the potential in their new employee despite him not meeting their initial job description.***

Company K was looking to recruit a fully qualified electrician including NVQ Level 3 with at least 1 years experience in the trade and approached the Leicester Employment Hub for support with this. As a long-term family run business KGL was looking for the right person to fit in.

When Z from the Employment Hub started working with K she could see that he would need someone he could rely on, who would take their role seriously, as big changes such as a headquarters move due to building damage and a small team meant that K's time and desire to grow his business needed to be balanced perfectly.

Z met A through her employment engagement with Shaw Trust, an education and employment charity working with job seekers. He was the perfect fit for the role; good character, strong work ethos and experience. However, due to moving out of the UK a number of years ago, when he returned he decided to complete his level 3 qualification and needed more experience to do so. She worked with A to ensure his CV was reflective of his skillset and ensured he has all certificates for previous qualifications, ready to send to K.

After introducing K and A, K happily offered A the job, starting the following week. Since then, K expectations have been surpassed and he's very happy that giving someone who needed the opportunity more than others has paid off so well:

'We probably would have looked past this person because they hadn't completed their NVQ Level 3 qualification, but because she'd taken the time and initiative to speak with them and spoke about her confidence in their ability we took a closer look and now it's as if he's been a part of the team forever when it's only been a couple of weeks in reality!

The service has been absolutely excellent, quick and a lot easier than I thought. Z found a perfect candidate who slotted in perfectly. Our apprentice has taken to working with him over his own training provider even! Z's made things as easy as possible for us. I really appreciate her coming out to see us and she got a good understanding of who we are and what we're about so she could choose not just the right skillset, but the right personality to gel with our small but family orientated businesses.'

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## **VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR CASE STUDY**

### **Finding stability and a place to call home**

Living in temporary accommodation since August 2023 and bidding for council properties but not getting anywhere, our client was only working part time and not being good with his finances, he was finding it tough to survive.



He wondered whether he would be better off working full time and wanted to move out as soon as possible so he could be independent.

The client had suffered from a traumatic past, as he was accused of crimes he did not do and was wrongfully jailed. He also had to move to Russia with his family and then due to issues there, he came to the UK without his family. Without the digital and financial skills, and confidence he received from Reaching People's support, he would not have been able to move forward.

### **Saying yes to support**

The client describes how his advisor provided him with endless support: "My advisor helped me to see that there were also other options for alternative housing outside of the council bidding system, which I did not know about. They helped me to register and apply for properties with Belgrave Neighbourhood Co-Operative Association and with Platform Housing.

"I was offered a flat at De Montfort House and they helped me with everything from taking me to the property with my belongings, applying for grants and registering for all my bills.

"I got the essential items and they also were successful in obtaining £500 for flooring which helped a lot. They also helped me with completing a better off calculator so I understood how much I would be better off financially from working full time.

"They gave me a blanket, a cold weather pack and some energy saving light bulbs which has helped me save money through my gas and electric bills."

### **Securing independence**

The client continues: "The biggest outcome was that I was able to move into my own property and feel confident that I was going to be able to manage this. I am now independent and getting on with my life. My advisor got me a grant also for a television, which has really helped with making my flat a home."

The client was also given a sim card which he explained helped him to save money and that the data was helpful, as he did not have access to the internet in his flat.

### **Support was invaluable**

The client was grateful to the advisory service as he says: "I would not have been able to move on from temporary accommodation. Also, I have never had my own tenancy, so the support was invaluable.

Overall he says: "I received support and advice when I did not think anyone cared. My English is also very bad and my advisor spent a lot of time translating everything, every step of the way, so I understood everything that was going on. I appreciate all of the time and energy that was put into me, that helped me with my future. It was a very trustful and caring experience and I will never forget it."





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# Skills Bootcamps

EDTCE Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: 12/03/2025

Lead director/officer Mike Dalzell

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## Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Kerry Gray / Joanne Ives
- Author contact details: Kerry.gray@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: 1

### 1. Summary

In 2023 Leicester City Council assumed the role of Lead Accountable Body for the procurement of Skills Bootcamps across Leicester and Leicestershire. This report provides details of the impact of the pilot year (2023-24) and an update on the 2024-25 programme.

2023-24		
Performance Measure	Target	Outturn
Participants	200	198
Completers	157	155
Positive employment outcome	116	106

2024-25 (to Jan 25)		
Performance Measure	Target	Progress
Participants	541	234
Completers	433	91
Positive employment outcome	352	52

### 2. Recommendation(s) to scrutiny:

EDTCE Scrutiny Commission are invited to:

- Consider and comment upon the development of the Skills Bootcamp programme.

### 3. Detailed report

#### 3.1 Skills Bootcamps

Skills Bootcamps are a national Department for Education programme, commissioned locally by Leicester City Council on behalf of Leicester City and Leicestershire. An officer group comprising economic regeneration and adult skills leads for City and Council oversees the programme. The Leicester City Economic Regeneration team are responsible for contracts and commissioning, reporting and programme management. The Leicester City Adult Education team oversee the quality of the Bootcamp delivery.

Skills Bootcamps are designed to be short intensive courses intended to:

- re-train existing staff to boost productivity or respond to changing requirements
- train potential staff for new roles and sectors of high demand

- upskill self-employed people to increase productivity and develop their businesses.

Bootcamps are required to be at least 60 hours long and delivered over a maximum of 16 weeks. They are normally at Level 3 (A Level standard) or above and are mapped to Apprenticeship standards.

All bootcamp providers must ensure there are real job openings and a guaranteed interviews for each participant.

The programme is paid on results with 30% of funding associated with a positive employment outcome within 6 months of completing the bootcamp:

- additional responsibilities at work using the skills developed in the Bootcamp
- new job related to the skills developed on the Bootcamp is secured
- increased self-employed business related to the skills developed on the Bootcamp

### **3.2 2023-24 (Wave 4)**

Three training providers were commissioned to provide Skills Bootcamps in the 2023-24 pilot. 57% (£486K) of the allocated £615K was earned by the providers.

Provider	Bootcamp Title	No of starts	No of positive outcomes	%
Annica Training	Digital Marketing	138	66	48%
Construct Training	Construction	29	14	48%
Twin Training	Cyber Security	33	26	79%

#### **3.2.1 Geographic distribution**

While learners were engaged from across the region, most County residents enrolled on the Anicca Digital Marketing Bootcamp, whereas most of the other learners were city residents. This reflects the recruitment and delivery strategies of the providers. Construct Training delivered on-site in Beaumont Leys and while Twin Training delivered their course online, they have a well-established, city focussed, referral relationship with city Job Centres through their Restart programme.

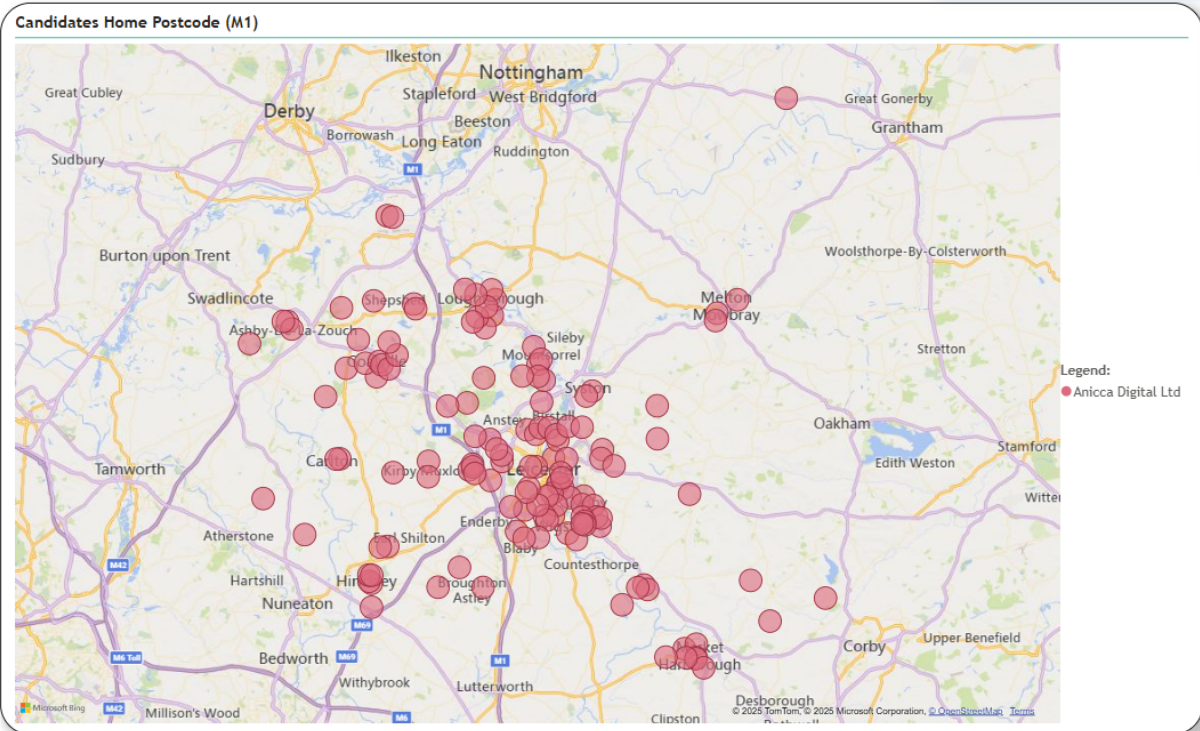


Figure 1: Home postcodes of Digital Marketing learners

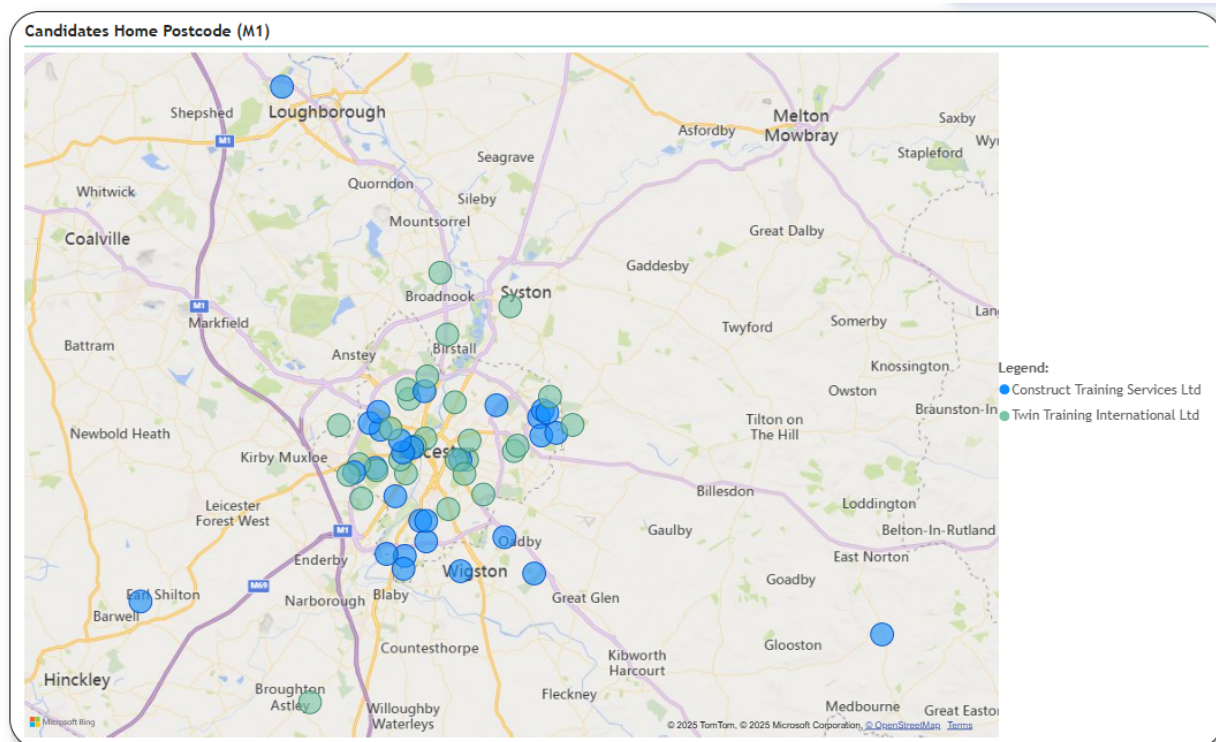


Figure 2: Home Postcodes of Construction and Cyber Security learners

### 3.2.2 Demography

Of the 198 participants overall

- 41% were White British,
- 22% Asian/Asian British and
- 14% were Black / African/Caribbean /Black British.



- 49% were female
- 18% declared a disability.
- 33% were under 30
- 22% were over 50

#### Demography of Leicester City participants

- participants (36%) were city residents. Of these:
  - 33% were White British,
  - 28% Asian/Asian British and
  - 17% were Black / African/Caribbean /Black British.
- 29% were female
- 12.5% declared a disability.

### 3.2.3 Employment Status

Employment status of participants reflects the nature of employment in the targeted sectors. 44% of participants were self-employed and they were all participating in the Digital Marketing Bootcamp. All the Cyber Security participants were unemployed at the start, with two thirds having been unemployed for more than 12 months. 79% of those learners secured employment, as a result of completing the Bootcamp.

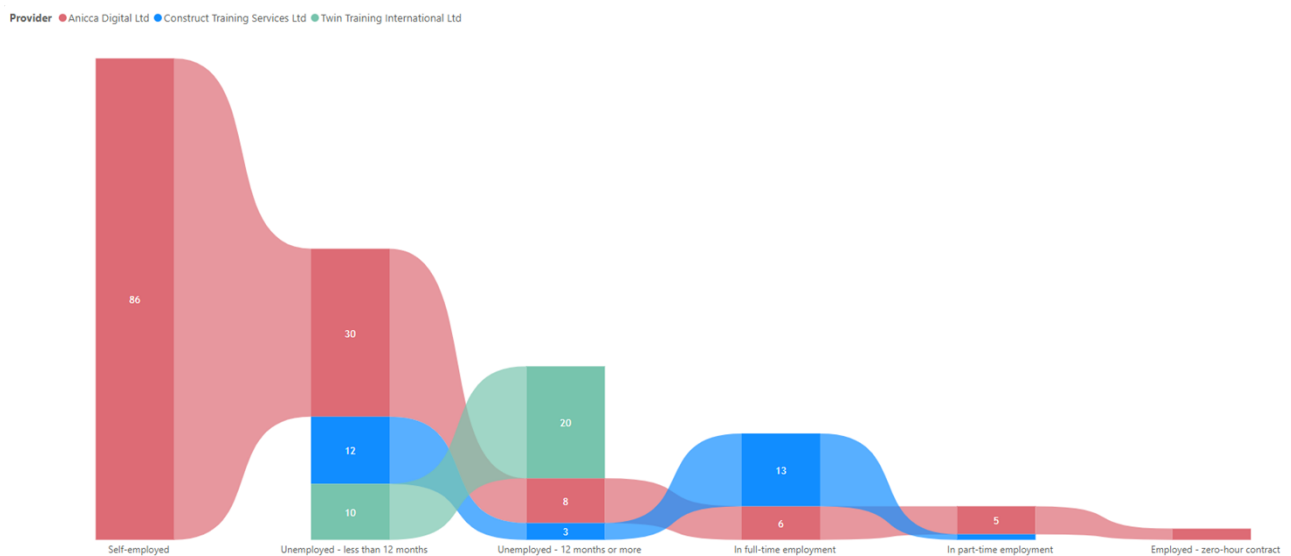


Figure 3: Employment status prior to start

### 3.2.4 Prior Levels of Education

On Digital Marketing, Level 5 (undergraduate level), 57% already had qualifications at Level 5 or above. Many were recent graduates looking to augment their CV. However, the remaining 59 learners were achieving their first undergraduate level qualification.

On Cyber Security, Level 3 (A Level), 80% had qualifications at Level 2 or below.

On Construction, Level 2 (GCSE level), 34% had no qualifications and only 4 (14%) had qualifications above Level 2.

### 3.3 2024-25 (Wave 5)

#### 3.3.1 Progress to date

The allocation for 2024-25 is £1.7M. To date, ten colleges and training providers have been commissioned to provide 12 Skills Bootcamps in 2024-25.

Provider	Bootcamp Title	Target starts
Annica Training	Digital Marketing	130
Construct Training	Construction	45
Fashion - Enter	Garment Production	30
Fashion - Enter	Sewing & Repair	20
Skills 4 Pharmacy	Pharmacy	40
Moulton College	Agriculture	50
Moulton College	Solar Installation	50
NW&SL College	Teaching	50
Peterborough Environment City Trust	Environmental Management	40
SMB College	Agriculture	15
Tech Educators	Software Development	40
Twin Training	Cyber Security	60

All 2024-25 Bootcamps must complete delivery by the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2025 and positive outcomes reported within 6 months of completion (31<sup>st</sup> September 2025)

To date 235 starts (43% of target) and 52 positive outcomes (16% of target) have been reported. 25% of funding allocated has been earned.

There was a delay to confirmation of funding and therefore finalising procurement which has resulted in some providers reducing the number of cohorts they will be able to complete within the timeframe.

Some providers are new to the delivery of Skills Bootcamps and have found it harder than they anticipated to recruit learners so far.

### 3.3.1 Geographic distribution

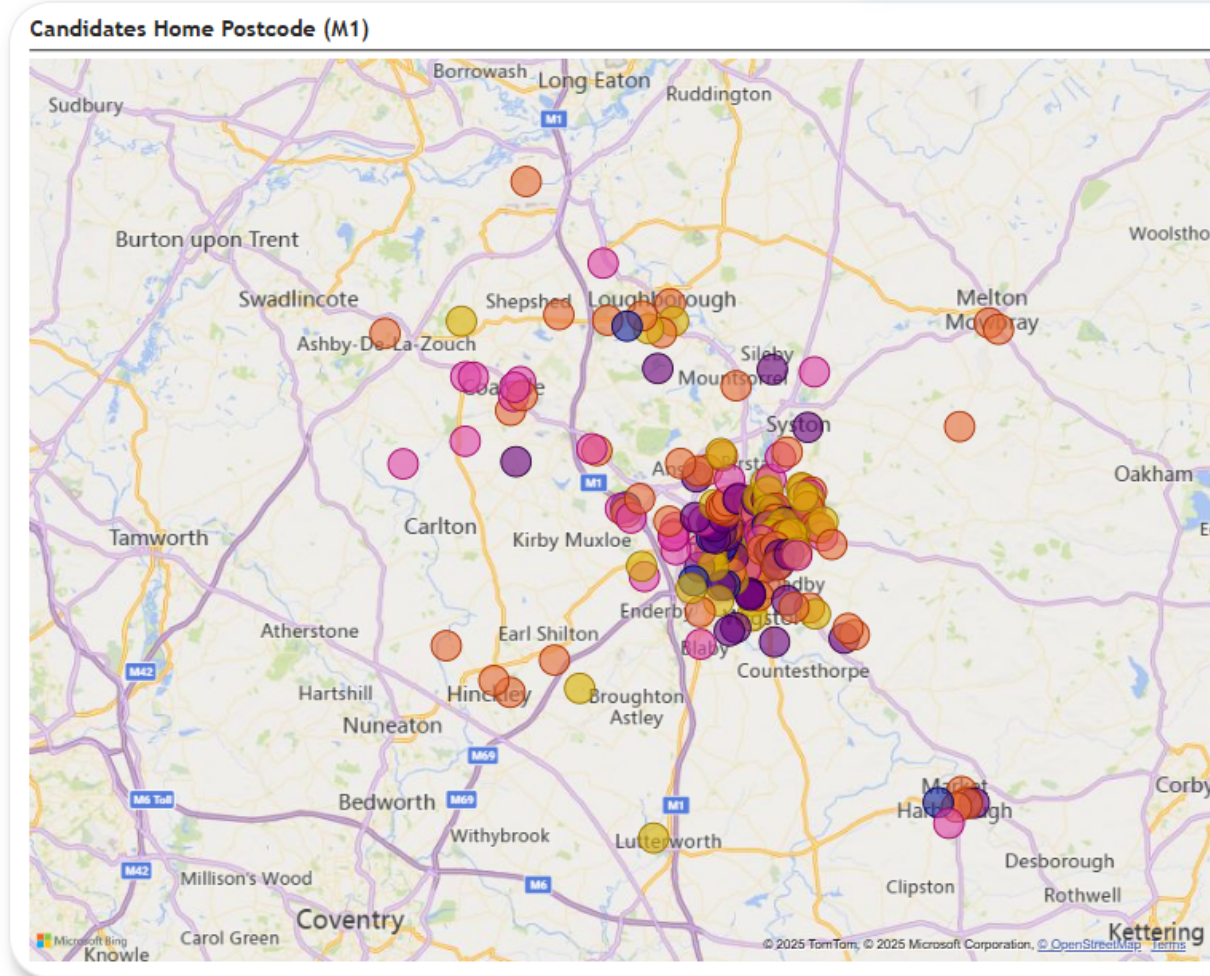


Figure 4: Home postcodes of 2024-25 learners

### 3.3.2 Demographics

Of the 235 participants recruited so far:

- 35% Asian/Asian British,
- 26% were White British
- 15% were Black / African/Caribbean /Black British.
- 43% were female
- 18% declared a disability.
- 37% were under 30
- 11% were over 50

Demography of Leicester City participants

141 participants (60%) were city residents. Of these:

- 46% were Asian/Asian British
- 21% were Black / African/Caribbean /Black British.
- 13% White British
- 47% were female
- 17% declared a disability.



- 45% were under 30
- 7% were over 50

### **3.3.3 Employment Status**

- 38% Unemployed more than 12 months
- 36% unemployed less than 12 months
- 15% self employed
- 11% employed

### **3.3.4 Prior Educational Attainment**

- 33% have a prior qualification at Level 5 (undergraduate) or above
- 27% have qualifications at Level 3 (A Level) or Level 4 (Foundation degree)
- 32% have qualifications at Level 2 (GCSE level) or below
- 3% have no qualifications or Entry level qualifications

## **3.4 Case Study – Twin Training Cyber-Security**

A learner was referred via a job centre as a Universal Credit claimant who had been unemployed for nearly 3 years. He had previously done an Access to Higher Education: IT diploma. and wanted to explore this sector further.

Prior to starting the course he had personal soft skills that he wished to improve, such as IT skills, self-confidence, and interview skills as he had been out of work for so long. His main goals were to improve on these skills, gain confidence and go back into sustainable work.

Since leaving the project, he has gained a permanent full-time role with Nationwide Building Society as a Business Intelligence Specialist within their IT and Digital team. This has far surpassed his expectations as his confidence was lost after being out of work for so long. The biggest benefit he experienced was the support from the tutor and mentor on an individual basis which improved his confidence massively. He would now consider further training in the future should he be able to do it in the evenings after work or in his own time.

## **3.5 2025-26 Wave 6**

Funding has recently been confirmed for the 2025-26 financial year. The intention is to slightly amend the application and delivery management processes to address some of the delivery challenges in 2024-25 and in response to some DfE changes. A two-stage application process will enable initial applications to be screened before detailed applications are invited. This will enable quicker processing of applications and allow for new providers to access the programme, in year, if funds allow. New providers may be funded to deliver a pilot Bootcamp, and subsequent allocations will be subject to successful delivery of the pilot.

## 4. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

### 4.1 Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications arising from this report. As Accountable Body for the grant funding, the Council is responsible for the financial management of the grant on behalf of the ultimate recipients (the service providers). Providers are paid in arrears based on performance delivery, so there is no financial risk to the Council in a situation of grant repayment.

Signed: Jade Draper, Principal Accountant

Dated: 25/02/2025

### 4.2 Legal Implications

All procured and appointed providers of the Skills Bootcamps courses and workshops including for the latest 2024-25 financial year must comply with any of the individual grant funding requirements in relation to Council specified performance targets and desired outcomes in order to receive the full funding allocations in the different skills categories.

Additionally providers and colleges will need to encourage accessibility of the learning opportunities to participants to satisfy the scheme's objectives and comply with any mandatory terms and conditions as to payment of grant to recipients stipulated by the Council under the Council's Constitution including its Contract Procedure Rules where appropriate.

Signed: *S. Lowry-Smith* - Steven Lowry-Smith - Contracts & Procurement Solicitor

Dated: 27 February 2025

### 4.3 Equalities Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

This report provides details of the impact of the pilot year (2023-24) and an update on the 2024-25 programme Skills Bootcamps across Leicester and Leicestershire. There are no direct equalities implications arising from the paper.

Skills Bootcamps have been developed in partnership with local employers, providers, and authorities to help fill skills gaps and vacancies in local areas.

Accessible initiatives that are designed to help learners develop their skills and equip them with the knowledge to find a job or apprenticeship should lead to positive impacts for people

from across all protected characteristics. These are likely to support positive equalities outcomes and provide an opportunity to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Giving people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills, gain knowledge and experience and fast-track to an interview or progress in their current role can also help improve vocational skills. Some people may not be able to afford similar commercial courses to that offered by Skills Bootcamps, having free courses should make them more accessible.

Signed: Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

Dated: 21 February 2025

#### **4.4 Climate Emergency Implications**

Wave 5 of the bootcamps includes courses on solar installation, environmental management and sewing and repair. These should help individuals to benefit from new opportunities in the 'green' economy, as well as opportunities to progress into new roles in the 'mainstream' economy which require green skills. It should be noted that the skills bootcamps are included in the council's Climate Ready Leicester Plan for this reason.

Signed: Duncan Bell, Change Manager (Climate Emergency). Ext. 37 2249

Dated: 24.02.25

#### **4.5 Other Implications**

Signed:

Dated:

### **5. Background information and other papers:**

### **6. Summary of appendices:**



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# UKSPF ESOL

EDTCE Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: 12/03/2025

Lead director/officer Mike Dalzell

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### Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Kerry Gray / Joanne Ives
- Author contact details: Kerry.gray@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: 1

## 1. Summary

As part of the 2024-25 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programme, two ESOL projects were commissioned to provide flexible ESOL learning opportunities targeting economically inactive people.

Theme	Lead	Partners	Allocation
ESOL/ Basic Skills	Leicester City Council – Leicester Adult Education	Leicester Museums and Art Galleries, Libraries and Neighbourhood services Community venue partners - PYCA, Shama Women's Centre, Somali Development Service, Wesley Hall, Sikh Community Centre, Leicester Turkish Community Education Centre, Community Shop at Stocking Farm	£275,000
ESOL/ Basic Skills	Twin Training	None	£275,000

Project targets:

Number of people supported to access basic skills (ESOL)

- Adult Education – 266 individuals
- Twin Training – 194 individuals
- Total – 460 individuals

The 2024-25 projects, due to complete by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2025, have already successfully provided learning to 487 residents.

For the transition year of 25-26, these successful projects have been extended, with an allocation at 80% of the projects' 24-25 funding approved (subject to contract).

## 2. Recommendation(s) to scrutiny:

EDTCE Scrutiny Commission are invited to:

- Consider and comment upon the development of the UKSPF funded ESOL projects in 2024-25.

## 3. Detailed report

### 3.1 Adult Education – Everyday English

Everyday English is an innovative ESOL programme led by Leicester Adult Education and delivered in partnership with local community organisations aimed at engaging and supporting Leicester residents with limited English skills. The project started in December 2023 and is due to end in March 2025. The total amount of the grant is £275,000.

The project entails:

- Everyday English ESOL classes (20 GLHs) delivered by Leicester Adult Education and partners.
- Enrichment activities that entail visits to the local museums and taking part in social and creative activities to boost participants' confidence and increase their independence.
- Support some learners who do not meet ESFA funding rules (e.g. asylum seekers) to access mainstream ESOL classes.
- Caseworker to support some economically inactive learners to remove barriers, raise awareness of existing services and promote further learning opportunities.

#### 3.1.2 Positive outcomes

- Strengthened partnership work.
- Provided many learners with the opportunity to start their learning journey resulting in improved English language skills and increased confidence.
- Supported more than 80 learners who are not eligible to join mainstream ESOL provision accelerating their integration.
- Increased awareness of local services and knowledge of local heritage and cultural sites through the enrichment programme.

#### 3.1.3 Key outputs to date

	Total project target	Output so far	Progress
Everyday English	266	342	achieved
Enrichment activities	160	153	on track
Learners supported onto a course through financial support	80	84	achieved

Everyday English classes are being delivered by Leicester Adult Education and a selection of the partners already engaged in Multiply. Partners engaged in delivery of Everyday English classes are Shama Women's Centre, SOCOPA, PYCA, BYCS, Wesley Hall and Somali Development Services (SDS).

The enrichment programme included a wide range of activities such as:

Visit Newarke Houses Museum	Visit Leicester Museum	Guided Tour - Belgrave Hall
Guided Backstage Tour - The Curve	Visit the Christmas markets	Creative Textiles
Visits to voluntary organisations	Creative Writing – Sharing Stories	Creative Crafts

Learners benefit immensely from the opportunity to use English in real life situations.

*“The activities helped me to practice English and saw different places in my city. I learnt something new from these activities. It was really helpful, and I feel more confident to join different classes in the future. Thank you for giving me a great opportunity to learn something new. I really appreciate it”.* Mina UKSPF learner

### 3.2 Twin Training

The project supports individuals with ESOL needs and who are actively seeking employment:

- to access one to one support to find employment
- build CV and work portfolio
- explore their skills/goals/the local labour market
- access ESOL courses pre-entry to Entry Level 3
- improve basic skills (English, Maths and IT)
- gain employability skills
- learn new life skills
- gain qualifications in money management and pre-vocational qualifications

#### 3.2.1 Key outputs to date

	Total project target	Output so far	Progress
People accessing Basic Skills courses	194	145	on track
People gaining a qualification	145	145	achieved
People engaged in life skills support	89	117	achieved

#### 3.2.2 Twin Training Case Study

Insert

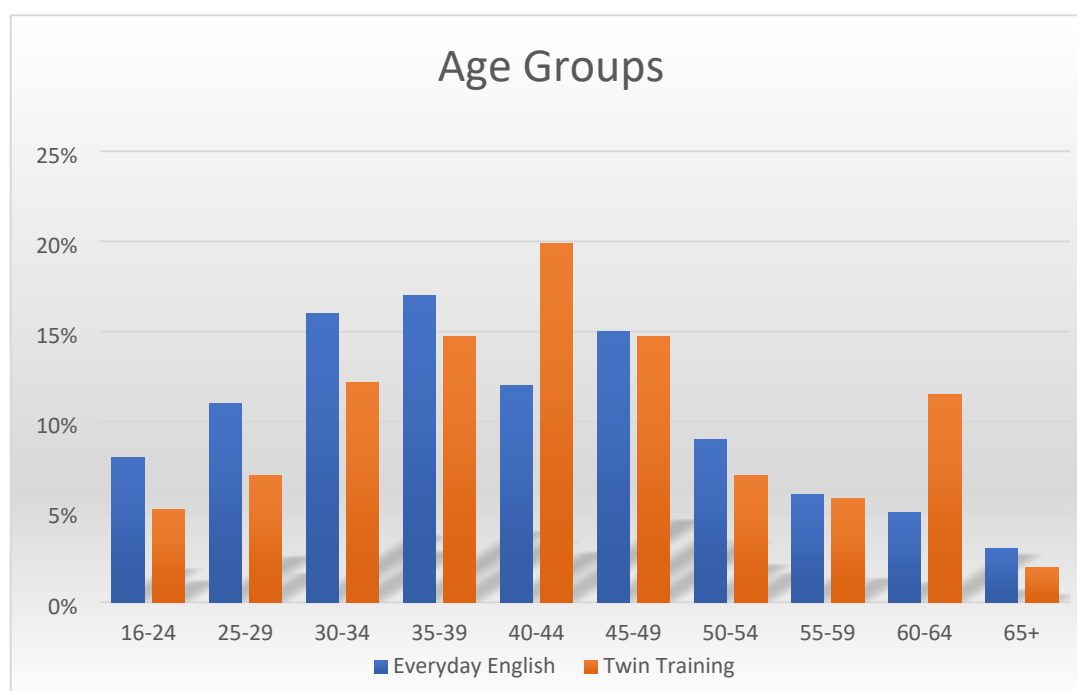
### 3.3 Participants

The higher levels of participation by women is typical of ESOL provision and reflects the higher proportion of women who come to the UK as spouses and the higher likelihood that men will be learning English in a work context.

Twin Training specifically targeted participants who were unemployed and seeking employment.

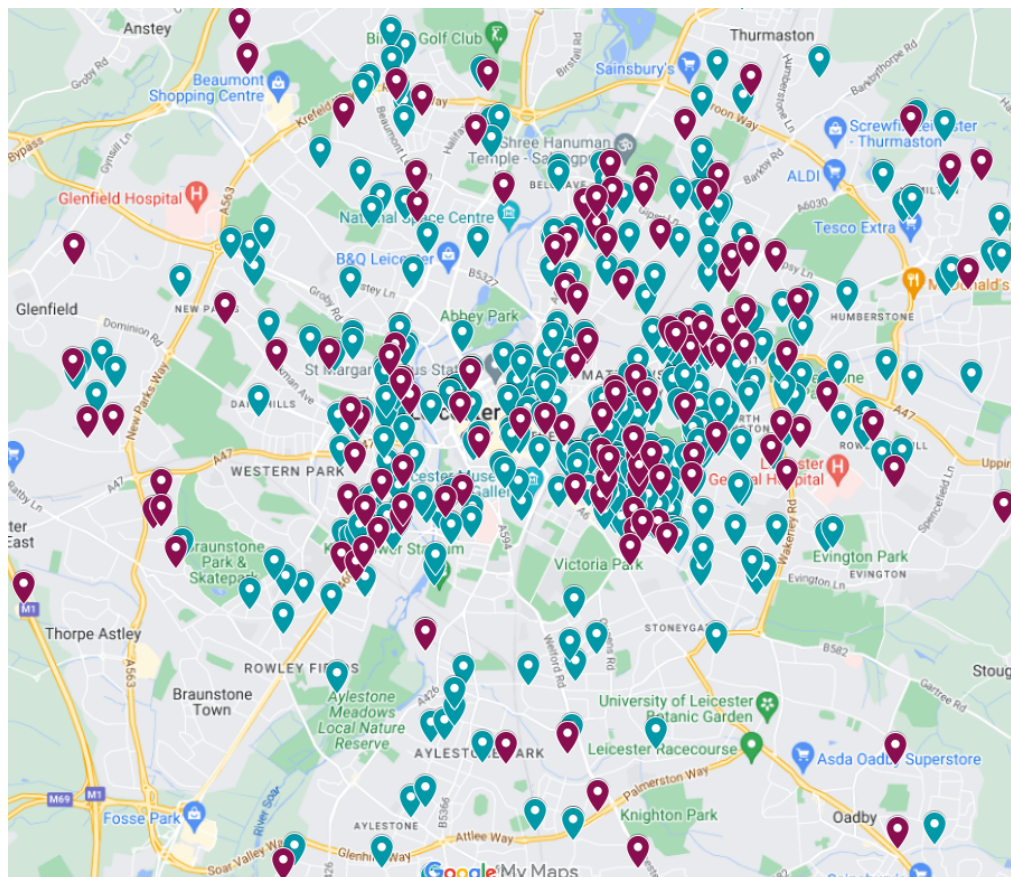
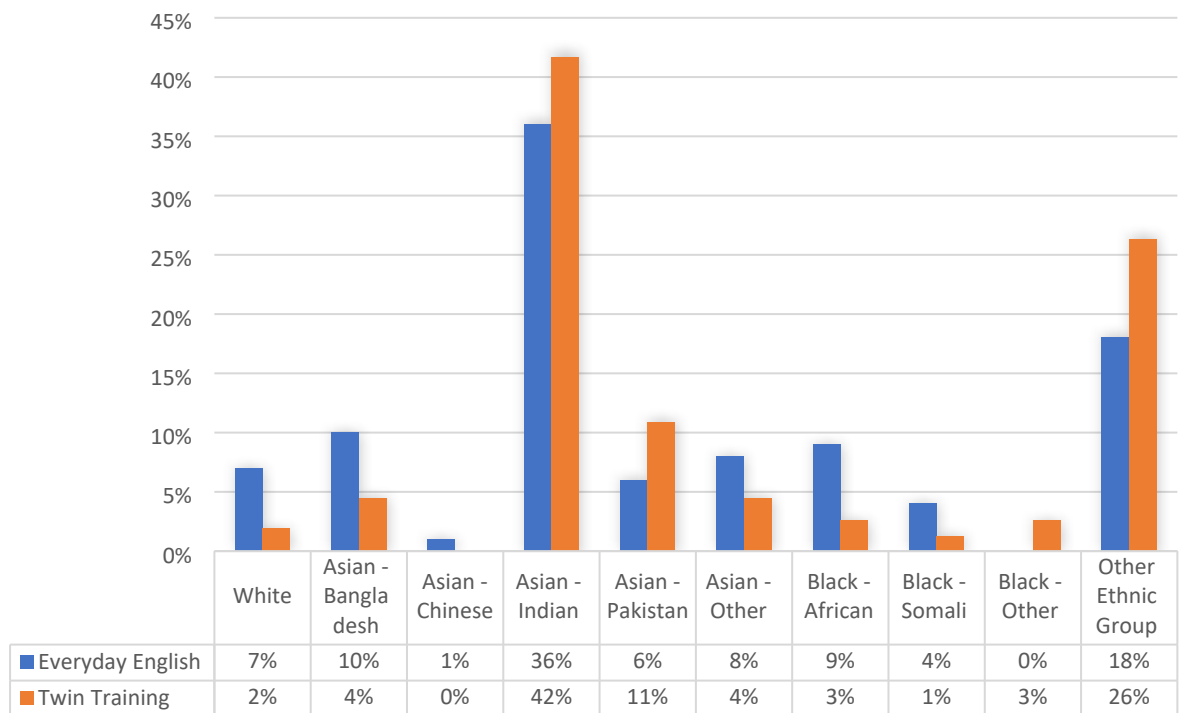
Gender	Everyday English	Twin Training
Male	16%	31%
Female	83%	69%
Prefer not to say	1%	0%

Employment status	Everyday English	Twin Training
Employed	10%	3%
Unemployed	36%	94%
Economically inactive	54%	3%





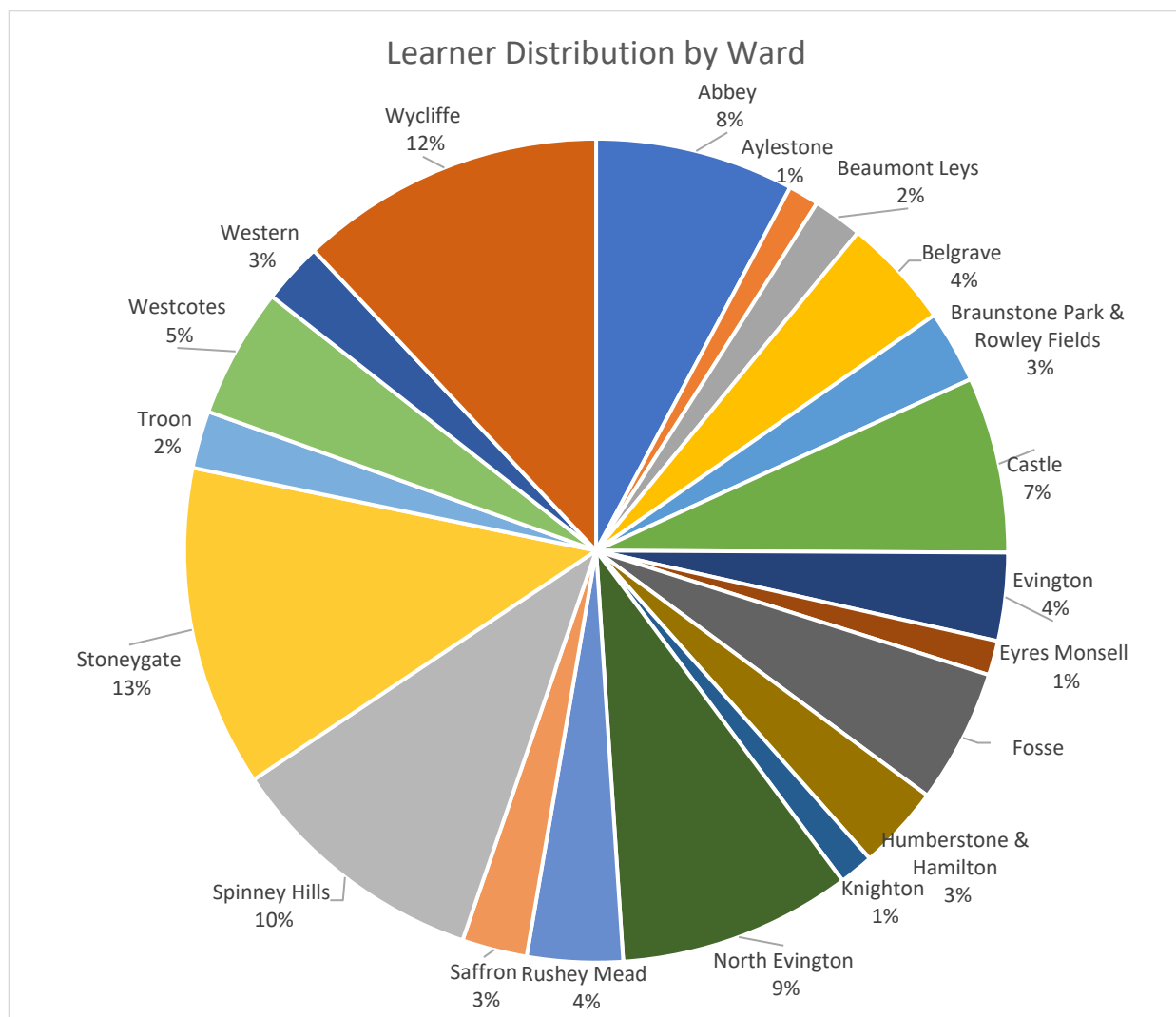
## ETHNICITY



Twin Training



Everyday English



#### 4. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

##### 4.1 Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications arising from this report. As Accountable Body for portions of the grant funding, the Council is responsible for the financial management of the grant on behalf of the ultimate recipients (the service providers). Providers are paid in arrears based on performance delivery, so there is no financial risk to the Council in a situation of grant repayment.

Signed: : Jade Draper

Dated: 03/03/2025

## 4.2 Legal Implications

The UKSPF government funded scheme to date 2024/25 (moving on from the former EU funded schemes) and the transitional extended 2025/26 scheme provides economic support and much needed learning, growth and regeneration opportunities and assistance for individuals and businesses in the local area.

Any individual grants and distribution of those funds to organisations, educational businesses and individuals will need to need to comply with the Council's own Constitution including its Contract Procedure Rules (where relevant) to ensure monies are properly spent in accordance with any imposed grant terms and conditions for expenditure, performance and successful outcomes monitored for completion of projects to the satisfaction of the Council to meet 2024/25 and subsequent transitional year 2025/26 government grant allocations.

Steven Lowry-Smith

Signed: *S.Lowry-Smith*

Dated: 28.2.2025

## 4.3 Equalities Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

This report provides details about the development of the UKSPF funded ESOL projects. There are no direct equalities implications arising from the paper.

The themes under the UKSPF aim to support councils to embed equality, diversity and inclusion and tackle local inequalities, increase opportunities and improve public services for those living in poverty and furthest away from the jobs market.

Accessible initiatives that are designed to help learners develop their skills and equip them with the knowledge to find a job or apprenticeship should lead to positive impacts for people from across all protected characteristics. English language skills are critical to support a range of social and economic outcomes, including social and economic integration, social mobility, wellbeing and participation in society. These are likely to support positive equalities outcomes and provide an opportunity to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Giving people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills, gain knowledge and experience and fast-track to an interview or progress in their current role can also help improve vocational skills. Some people may not be able to afford similar commercial courses, having free courses should make them more accessible.

Signed: Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh

Dated: 24/02/2025

#### **4.4 Climate Emergency Implications**

There are no significant climate emergency implications associated with this report.

Signed: Duncan Bell, Change Manager (Climate Emergency). Ext. 37 2249

Dated: 24.02.25

#### **4.5 Other Implications**

Signed:

Dated:

**5. Background information and other papers:**

**6. Summary of appendices:**





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# **Update on Leicester and Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership**

EDTCE Scrutiny Commission

Date of meeting: 12/03/2025

Lead director/officer: Mike Dalzell and Phoebe Dawson

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### **Useful information**

- Ward(s) affected:
- Report author:
- Author contact details:
- Report version number:

## **1. Summary**

The purpose of this report is to update the Scrutiny Commission on the work of the Business and Skills Partnership for Leicester and Leicestershire.

## **2. Recommendation(s) to scrutiny:**

EDTCE Scrutiny Commission are invited to:

- Note the progress made in the transition of core LEP functions into the two Upper-Tier authorities
- Note the ongoing development of the Business and Skills Partnership and Business board.

## **3. Detailed report**

In April 2024 the former LLEP team transitioned to the Leicester and Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership (LLBSP) and the LEP board was disbanded.

During 2024/25 the government provided transition funding to support the establishment of a Business Board and to continue with government funded priority programmes. These are as follows:

- a) Supporting business representation through the establishment of a Business Board
- b) Supporting the designated Enterprise Zones, which include sites in the County at MIRA Technology Park (MIRA) near Hinckley and at Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Park (LUSEP) and Charnwood Campus in Loughborough;
- c) Skills and apprenticeships, including the work of the Leicester and Leicestershire Careers Hub;
- d) The Business Gateway Growth Hub and Create Growth;
- e) Local economic growth planning.

Following the previous government's decision to shift economic functions and business representation from LEPs to local government, guidance was provided for local authorities collaborating within a prospective devolution deal geography or functional economic area. This includes establishing or maintaining an Economic Growth Board (or a similar entity) comprising local business leaders and relevant representative bodies.

These boards serve two key purposes: (a) representing local business perspectives in regional decision-making and (b) working with local leaders to develop a comprehensive economic strategy for the area.

The guidance given stated that Business representative boards should follow certain key principles to ensure effective business involvement in local decision-making. They should engage business representative organisations such as the local Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses, or the designated Employer Representative Body (ERB) leading the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). Additionally, they should include a diverse range of businesses reflecting local economic strengths and priorities, ensuring representation across different sizes and geographic areas, including urban, and rural to promote a diversity of voices.

Operating across Leicester and Leicestershire, the Business Board serves as a strong business voice, supports the delivery of Government initiatives, and acts as an enterprise advocate on the regional and national stage.

Mr. Andy Reed OBE has been appointed as the Chair of the newly established Business Board, where he will play a key role in shaping economic strategy for Leicester and Leicestershire.

Mr. Reed previously served as Chair of the LLEP. With extensive experience in business and stakeholder engagement, his appointment ensures continuity in providing strategic advice to both Councils.

Recruitment of Business Board members began in the summer of 2024, attracting 15 applications. After shortlisting and interviews, a panel of senior officers from both the City and County Councils selected four private sector members. Their decision was subsequently ratified by both the City Mayor and Acting Leader of the County Council.

Alongside the four private sector members, the Business Board includes one representative from the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and one each from the higher and further education sectors.

The Business Board is also composed of five business and employer representative organisations, including the Institute of Directors, Federation of Small Businesses, and Make UK, as well as a representative on behalf of the district councils (Mr Jewel Miah). There is also a senior officer observer from Rutland Council.

The Business Board meets every two months to provide guidance to the Acting Leader of the County Council and the City Mayor on economic development needs. Additionally, the two leaders hold bi-monthly meetings with the Chair of the Business Board as the LLBSP Executive to shape and steer the forward agenda and agreed Board outcomes. It is the intention for these meetings to move to a quarterly cycle from 1 April 2025.

The Business Board has met twice so far, with agenda items including Board induction, an overview of the LLBSP, and most recently, a presentation on the potential devolution of adult skills.

A secretariat team, operating under the LLBSP and hosted by the City Council, provides support to the decision-makers and the Business Board.



## **Enterprise Zones**

In March 2023, the LLEP Board asked that an impact assessment of the Enterprise Zones (EZs) in Leicester and Leicestershire be undertaken. The impact assessment was to cover the period 2012 - 2022 for MIRA and 2017 - 2022 for LUSEP and the Charnwood Campus. The LLEP commissioned the County Council Business Intelligence team to undertake this work.

The assessment has shown that the EZ's have collectively created 6,107 jobs (direct and indirect) with an additional 2,456 construction jobs, created £357.3m Gross Value Added (direct and indirect) for Leicester and Leicestershire, and attracted £163.8m public and £141.8m private investment. This report is a useful tool for partners looking to attract investment into Leicester and Leicestershire. It has supported the LLBSP response to the Government's Industrial Strategy Green Paper which highlights several of our EZ key sectors as high growth/priority sectors for the UK.

The projects funded through the Enterprise Zone Retained Business Rates fund via the LLEP are reaching completion. Of the 10 projects, two have final claims expected to be submitted this financial year and the remainder are either in monitoring or fully closed. Projects have predominantly been capital based, although some revenue activity has been supported. These have included a redevelopment project on the Charnwood Campus to upgrade unused highly specialised laboratory space, creating a world-class biochemistry building, a project to convert an existing building at MIRA into a low carbon research centre and install transformational charging and testing infrastructure for electric and hydrogen vehicles, and a start-up business support project delivered by Loughborough University open to individuals across Leicester and Leicestershire.

The post-LLEP arrangements for the EZ programme are under discussion by the City and County Councils, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, and Charnwood Borough Council. These will dictate the EZ Retained Business Rates fund's future administration and financing decision-making processes. The LLBSP is providing support to these discussions.

EZ Implementation Groups are responsible for overseeing the implementation plans of their respective EZ sites. Each group meets four times annually. To facilitate more cooperation and learning across the sites, the LLBSP will be hosting additional meetings this year. These will centre on the net zero agenda and innovation ecosystems.

In collaboration with the Leicester and Leicestershire Place Marketing Team, development of an event to promote the region using the Enterprise Zone sites at UK's Real Estate Investment & Infrastructure Forum (UKREiIF) Industry Conference 2025 is underway. Using innovative sectors to generate long-term growth with the help of public-private partnerships will be the main emphasis of this showcase event.

## **Skills and apprenticeships**

The LLBSP aims to enhance economic growth by focusing on skills development and employment support. Collaborating with employers, educational institutions, local authorities, and voluntary services, the LLBSP aims to create a robust talent pipeline tailored to the diverse needs of the local economy.

Key initiatives undertaken by the LLBSP in the realm of skills development include:

- **Strategic Collaboration:** Partnering with the East Midlands Chamber to advance the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and working alongside local authorities to support UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) programmes
- **Apprenticeships and Training:** Promoting and facilitating apprenticeship opportunities, traineeships, and T Levels to provide practical experience and bridge the gap between education and employment.
- **Employer Engagement:** Encouraging businesses to offer work placements, internships, and industry placements, thereby fostering early engagement with potential future employees and addressing sector-specific skills challenges.

### **Careers Hub**

The Careers Hub engages with local schools and colleges, employers, and careers-education providers to improve careers education related outcomes for young people, especially the disadvantaged. It aligns this work against the Gatsby Benchmarks for Good Careers Guidance which define what world class careers education looks like. The Hub is above national average in seven of the eight benchmarks and has been acknowledged as progressive and leading the way on creating the national blueprint for careers education.

The Hub provides training, support, and best practices in careers education and demonstrates the impact of this on career readiness, employment outcomes and “Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) reduction.

The Hub is funded through the LLBSP with match funding in full or part for all staff. It operates through a grant funding agreement with the Careers and Enterprise Company who are the national body for careers education.

The strategic priorities of the Careers Hub are:

- Raising the quality of careers provision in schools and colleges, against the Gatsby Benchmarks, through training for the education workforce, targeted support, and quality assurance.
- Driving positive experiences with employers by stimulating and providing more high-quality experiences with employers for students and teachers in the classroom and the workplace.
- Boosting Skills Pathways - Amplifying apprenticeships, technical (T Level) and vocational routes and aligned to the knowledge, skills and behaviours businesses articulate they need in their workforce.
- Tackling disadvantage through target interventions for economically disadvantaged young people (those in receipt of free school meals) and those who face barriers to education, employment or training.
- Connecting careers provision in schools and colleges to the needs of local economies as articulated through local growth plans the Local Skills Improvement Plan.

In addition to its core work, the Careers Hub has delivered a range of additional projects supporting disadvantaged young people. These include “Unbox Your Future” (a workplace experience project for c3,000 young people), “We Discover Effective

Transitions” (a SEND research project building confidence and transition opportunities), and “We Discover Digital” (an immersive sector project connecting young people with industry pathways). The Hub has also become England's first pilot Logistics Beacon Hub, collaborating with sector industry partners to enhance career sector depth and breadth, upskill educators, parents and carers.

Looking forward, and in line with governments direction of travel, the Hub will continue to elevate careers education with an increased focus on strengthening careers leadership through peer and expert reviews, further develop our work with parents and carers on supporting their young people and stimulate further high-quality workplace experiences.

### **Business Gateway Growth Hub**

The Business Gateway Growth Hub actively supports businesses in Leicester and Leicestershire through various initiatives. These include the following:

- Collaboration on the Leicestershire Innovation Festival 2024: The festival attracted over 1,000 attendees during a fortnight of events, celebrating innovation across the region.
- Supporting UKSPF funded ‘Leicestershire Business Advice Service’ through engagement and referrals.
- Active promotion of government initiatives impacting small and medium sized enterprises such as the Fair Payment Code, consultation on copyright laws and the promotion of skills bootcamps.
- Highlighting practical initiatives such as winter proofing your business and supporting mental health in the workplace.
- Raising awareness of fraud through international fraud week and highlighting common scams tactics used in the run up to the self-assessment deadline.

Looking ahead, the Business Gateway Growth Hub plans to continue its support for local businesses with Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland with the following upcoming events and programs:

- Workshops and Events: A series of workshops and events are scheduled, covering topics such as business networking and growth strategies.
- Offering businesses personalised one-on-one support through a business navigator and working in collaboration with the National Business Support Helpline.

Additionally, the Business Gateway Growth Hub is awaiting the publication of the Small Business Strategy and the launch of the Business Growth Service, which is anticipated by summer 2025.

### **Create Growth**

The East Midlands Create Growth Programme (EMC<sup>2</sup>) has been actively supporting creative businesses in the region. Launched in November 2022, the programme began accepting applications in January 2023 and commenced its first cohort in May 2023. The initiative is funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and is designed to run until the end of 2025.

EMC<sup>2</sup> offers a comprehensive business support programme aimed at making creative sector businesses investment ready. This includes a combination of workshops, peer support, and mentoring tailored to the specific needs of high-growth potential creative businesses. Participants engage in either in-person or virtual workshops and receive bespoke mentoring, focusing on areas such as intellectual property, business models, revenue streams, and access to new markets. The programme also provides opportunities for businesses to meet investors and bid for funding from Innovate UK.

The programme is open to creative sector businesses based in Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Rutland, and Lincolnshire. Eligible industries include advertising and marketing, architecture, crafts, design and designer fashion, film, TV, video, radio, photography, IT, gaming, software and computer services, publishing, museums, galleries and libraries, and music, performing and visual arts.

DCMS has recently announced that the Create Growth programme will be extended for a fourth year, running until March 2026.

### **Economic Growth Planning**

In October 2024 the Government released a Green Paper on the new Industrial Strategy, outlining a vision for a modern approach. A 10-year plan designed to provide the certainty and stability businesses need to invest in high-growth sectors that will fuel our growth mission.

In November the LLBSP hosted an interactive consultation on the Green Paper. Local business leaders, education providers, and key stakeholders gathered to share their insights and priorities.

The event covered topics critical to the local economy, including key sectors for growth, workforce skills, infrastructure needs, innovation, and international opportunities. Attendees provided valuable input that helped guide LLBSP in crafting a response that reflected Leicester and Leicestershire's strengths and aligns with the national goals.

Whilst the outcome of the consultation is awaited and the launch on the UK's Industrial Strategy, the LLBSP is currently reviewing key data on employment, business growth, and sector performance, using sources such as Midlands Engine reports, and ONS data. Key sector strengths are being identified, including advanced manufacturing, logistics, creative industries, and the low-carbon economy, while also gaining insight into local challenges like skills shortages, infrastructure requirements, and post-pandemic recovery trends.

Within the next 12 months the LLBSP will engage stakeholders and secure buy-in by leveraging partnerships with the local councils, universities, and major employers. This will include consultation with businesses and communities to align the strategy with real-world needs and develop public-private collaboration to maximise investment and resource-sharing.



## **4. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications**

### **4.1 Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications related to this report, but it should be noted that all funds and contracts from the former LLEP strategic body have now passed to the Council. The Council is now directly responsible for all ongoing financial matters.

The LLEP funds now held in the Council's reserves are being used to sustain the activities of the LLBSP until 31/3/26. It is to be determined how any future LLBSP activities will be funded beyond this date.

Signed: Stuart McAvoy, Head of Finance

Dated: 28/2/25

### **4.2 Legal Implications**

Further to the Secretary of State's 'Guidance for Local Enterprise Partnerships and local and combined authorities: integration of LEP functions into local democratic institutions' dated 4 August 2023, and the Government's sponsorship and funding of LEPs ceasing on 31 March 2024, the City Council, alongside the County Council, as the upper tier local authorities in the functional economic area previously covered by the LLEP, took over the delivery of continuing functions previously performed by the LLEP effective from April 2024. The LLBSP and Business Board form part of the new arrangements as set out in this update report.

Signed: Kevin Carter, Head of Law – Commercial, Property and Planning

Dated: 3/3/25

### **4.3 Equalities Implications**

The report provides an update to the Scrutiny Commission on the work of the Business and Skills Partnership for Leicester and Leicestershire.

The Leicester and Leicestershire Business and Skills Partnership (LLBSP) is a collaborative initiative designed to enhance economic growth, business development, and skills improvement within the Leicester and Leicestershire region. There are no direct equality comments arising from the report. Initiatives that aim to drive forward regeneration and growth in the local economy should lead to better prospects.

Signed: Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh Ext 37 4148

Dated: 28 February 2025

### **4.4 Climate Emergency Implications**

There are no climate emergency implications arising directly from this report, but it is worth noting the importance of aligning economic development, business support and skills activities with the council's strategic approach to decarbonisation, climate resilience and adaptation. There are benefits to be had in terms of economic growth, employment opportunities and poverty reduction from grasping the opportunities around developing the 'green economy'. In addition, there is a need to support business with both the transition to a net zero economy and with becoming resilient to the impacts of climate change.

There is already good work represented in the Climate Ready Leicester Plan on green skills development and supporting the greening of the tourism sector, for example. The LLBSP will have an important role in linking the economic and climate agendas moving forward to maximise the opportunities for both.

Signed: Duncan Bell, Change Manager (Climate Emergency). Ext. 37 2249

Dated: 28/02/25

#### **4.5 Other Implications**

Signed:

Dated:

### **5. Background information and other papers:**

In the Spring Budget of March 2023, the Chancellor announced that the Government was "minded" to withdraw central core funding for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) starting in April 2024. This decision was officially confirmed in August 2023. The Government also indicated that funding for several key LEP functions - such as business representation, strategic economic planning, and the delivery of government programs (where directed) - would be transferred to Upper Tier Local Authorities (UTLAs), where these functions are not already managed by combined authorities or the Greater London Authority. The expectation was for UTLAs to collaborate across functional economic areas.

In January 2024 the Mayor authorised the Chief Operating Officer and Strategic Director to take any operational, governance and regulatory steps that may be required to finalise the transition of the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) to the upper tier local authorities.

This work was supported by a Transition Board, led by senior representative from City and County Council, and LLEP. This board supported the management of the transition of the core LLEP functions to the Upper-Tier authorities, with the City Council remaining as the accountable body.

### **6. Summary of appendices:**

None



**Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency Scrutiny Commission (EDTCE)**  
**Work Programme 2024 – 2025**

Meeting Date	Item	Recommendations / Actions	Progress
18 July 2024	1) An overview presentation of EDTCE services and key issues. 2) Terms of Reference. 3) 24-hour Bus Lanes – informal session scope. 4) Worker Exploitation – Informal session scope.	1a) EDTCE to have oversight of decision-making process regarding marketplace. 1b) Issue of air quality to be engaged with. 1c) Report on implications of new government to come to the Commission once they were clearer.  3a) Gain information on whether government funding can be used to increase bus services. 3b) Dates for meetings and relevant stakeholders to be identified for task group  4) Members of Culture and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny to be invited to task group.	1a) Reports have come to EDTCE.  1b) Considered at meeting on 28 August.  1c) Added to workplan TBA.  3a) Task group complete.  3b) Task Group complete.  4) Members invited.

Meeting Date	Item	Recommendations / Actions	Progress
<b>28 August 2024</b>	1) Levelling up - Workspace Update – including sustainability of buildings. 2) Rally Park Update. 3) Market Place – Questions to City Mayor. 4) Electric Vehicle Charging – Informal Scrutiny Report. 5) Air Quality Report	2) Breakdown and further details of paths, plants, surfacing material and lighting to be shared with the Commission. 3) Report regarding option taken to come to the Commission to include more information to be given on option of partially covering square and potential ways to manage ASB in the area.  5a) Signalling and Smart Controllers to be looked into and taken forward when opportunities arise. 5b) Members to engage with consultation with schools on green energy products.	3) Report brought to scrutiny.
<b>6 November 2024</b>	1) 20mph review – Executive Response 2) Market Place report 3) Heart of Leicester Plan 4) Bus Lanes Informal Scrutiny – Verbal Update	2) Meeting to be set up for scrutiny to have oversight. 3a) Consideration should be given in the plan to the evening economy 3b) Consideration of proposed development areas referred to in Heart of Leicester Presentation to be considered by the Commission. 3c) Need for additional bike stands noted – reference made to planned secure bike parking facilities. 3d) Paving reinstatement on Marble St to be looked at.	2) Meeting has taken place. 3a) Noted. 3b) Added to workplan TBA. 3c) Noted. 3d) Noted.



Meeting Date	Item	Recommendations / Actions	Progress
<b>8 January 2025</b>	1) Draft General Revenue Budget and Draft Capital Programme 2025/26 2) Ashton Green development update 3) 24-Hour Bus Lanes – Informal Scrutiny Report.	1a) Members to be informed about assets being considered for disposal. 1b) Members to be kept informed of budget ceilings. 2a) Officers to liaise on buses and transport. 2b) Bootcamps item for March meeting to include possibility of construction bootcamps in the context of this development. 2c) Formal response regarding efficiency standards to be shared. 2d) Interaction to continue between officers and residents and Councillors	2c) Response shared. 2d) Ongoing.
<b>12 March 2025</b>	1) Market Place – Verbal Update 2) Skills Bootcamps 3) ESOL 4) Post-LLEP Arrangements and Economic Strategy Refresh. 5) Shared Prosperity Fund – Programme Report. 6) EV Charging Task Group – Executive Response	2) Raised at meeting on 31st January 2024. It was mentioned that delivery would be tracked over the next 18 months. Also to include possibility of bootcamps for construction in the context of local developments. 3) To be brought to commission prior to going out to public consultation.	

Meeting Date	Item	Recommendations / Actions	Progress
23 April 2025	1) 20mph Update. 2) Electric Vehicle Strategy 3) Bio-Diversity Net Gain 4) Connecting Leicester programme – Local Transport Fund 5) Waterside Visit – feedback 6) Inward investment and place marketing 7) Flooding update. 8) Worker Exploitation Task Group Recommendations	8)Members from Culture and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny who were involved in the group to be invited.	

#### Forward Plan items (suggested topics)

Topic	Detail	Proposed Date
Local Plan Modifications Consultation.		
Levelling up - Railway Station update.		
Bus Partnership Plan	Postponed from 12 March	
Development Areas in Heart of Leicester Plan		

City Centre Maintenance	To include delivery bike regulation, retail and hospitality, and issues around development and the areas that need it.	
Local Plan	To be considered by scrutiny following the report from the inspectors. Likely to be in 2024/25 municipal year.	
Budget reductions and areas under review	Requested at meeting of 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2024 when discussing Revenue Budget.	tbc
Implications of new government	Requested at meeting of 18 July 2024	

