

**Economic Development,
Transport and Tourism
Scrutiny Commission**



Date of Commission meeting: 7th December
2022

***LEICESTER AND
LEICESTERSHIRE
ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP
ANNUAL UPDATE***

Useful information

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1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide to the Scrutiny Commission a summary of the LLEP activity over the past 12 months.
- 1.2. A presentation will be given to the Committee at its meeting on 7th December by the Head of LLEP with regard to activities in respect of the LLEP Annual Report (April 2021 to March 2022) and the LLEP Delivery Plan (April 2022 to March 2023). This will be delivered by a video presentation and brief slide overview (attached) of the status of the Delivery Plan (April 2021 to March 2022).

2. Summary

- 2.1. The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership is a partnership between local authorities and businesses that seeks to foster enterprise and innovation in the local area. The LLEP plays a key role in deciding local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and create local jobs.
- 2.2. This report highlights some of the many strands of our work and achievements for 2021/22 and the planned work for 2022/23.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To note the contents and comment on this report.

4. Report/Supporting information including options considered:

- 4.1 The LLEP was incorporated in April 2019 as a company limited by guarantee. Its Board is a business-led partnership of leaders from the private, public and education sectors. The Board is supported by four advisory boards, which provide strategic guidance for its programmes of work set out in the Economic Growth Strategy (EGS).
- 4.2 Advisory Boards also provide oversight of the main Board. As a LEP, it is committed to a policy of openness and transparency. The LLEP's Assurance Framework sets out how it is governed and was updated in line with the National

Local Growth Assurance Framework (September 2021). All Board members and staff adhere to the Nolan principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. Both Board members and staff sign a Code of Conduct and the LLEP maintains a register of interests. It is committed to having a Board which embraces diversity and promotes equality.

- 4.3 A diversity champion, represented by LLEP Board member Rani Mahal, continues to share best practice and encourages diversity and inclusion across the LLEP work streams. In addition, the recently refreshed Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policy includes three key objectives for the diversity champion. These are to actively promote and raise awareness of equality, diversity, and inclusion issues; identify areas in which the LLEP can improve equality, diversity, and inclusion outcomes; and ensure that all decisions take into account and value the communities which the LLEP represents.
- 4.4 In Autumn 2021, the LLEP developed the EGS. The EGS is based on a range of data and research on the current state of the economy, strategies and action plans, and stakeholder aspirations and concerns.
- 4.5 The LLEP EGS seeks to deliver development, building on the successful transformation of the local economy over the past 10 years, as well as recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 4.6 Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, Leicester and Leicestershire generated £24.5 billion in gross value added (GVA), with 42,000 businesses and 538,000 jobs. It is expected to increase to £30.2 billion and 568,000 jobs by 2030. In comparison, the D2N2 area in 2019 had a GVA of £42.9 billion, with 78,460 business and 930,000 jobs.
- 4.7 Building on the global R&D and entrepreneurial expertise of Leicester and Leicestershire's three universities, and excellence in science and engineering, the region is now home to several UK and world-leading centres of new technology and innovation in space and earth observation, sports science, life sciences, IT and cyber technologies, and automotive engineering.
- 4.8 Leicester and Leicestershire is also the UK's central logistics hub, having gained significant jobs and investment due to the area's strategic location. Agriculture and food and drink production remain key sectors in the region, producing £1.8 billion in GVA and accounting for 43,900 jobs. There is an opportunity to further build a sustainable visitor economy, which currently supports 58,000 jobs in Leicester and Leicestershire.

4.9 Key Achievements In 2021/22

4.9.1 Getting Building Fund

In 2020, the Government made £900 million available to LEPs, over a two-year period, through the new Getting Building Fund. This was for investment in local, "shovel-ready" infrastructure projects to stimulate jobs and support economic recovery across the country. The LLEP was allocated £20m from the Fund for a wide-ranging package of projects that will deliver a boost to the local economy. Four projects were chosen

based on their impact on the region's economic growth – both in the short and long-term – and their strategic fit with current economic priorities. These were:

i. St. Margaret's Gateway, Leicester - £10.5m Allocated

a) Work on the new carbon neutral bus station was completed in summer 2022. It is the first bus station in the UK to be built to Net Zero carbon standards. Its design includes LED lighting, mechanical ventilation with heat recovery, air source heat pumps and 750 square metres of solar panels. These will generate enough energy to power the station and feed extra energy back into the grid.

b) There is also increased capacity for national and regional bus services, with the number of bus bays increased from 18 to 24. Electric bus charging points have been installed, and the new building features secure storage for up to 150 bicycles. Other project outputs include: 17 jobs created (including 12 in construction); 8 apprenticeships created; 1,475 metres of cycle lanes created together with 900 metres of pedestrian facilities around the bus station improved to facilitate access.

ii. M1 Junction 23 and A512 Improvements - £1.8m Allocated

a) This project upgraded 2.5km of single carriageway to dual carriageway and remodelled five junctions on the A512. It also constructed a new access roundabout and resulted in improvements to Junction 23 of the M1.

b) By reducing congestion and improving accessibility, the scheme will improve resilience on a key route linking Loughborough with the M1 and the wider Strategic Road Network. The project supports further development of the Loughborough and Leicester Science and Innovation Enterprise Zone, Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Park (LUSEP), and Charnwood Campus. This project will improve access to LUSEP, in particular, as well as bringing job and business opportunities to the area and facilitating planned growth. It will bring forward development of the West of Loughborough Sustainable Urban Extension (WOLSUE) and the smaller Shepshed housing sites. The work was completed in May 2021.

iii. SportPark Pavilion 4, Loughborough - £6m Allocated

a) This project supports the ambition to complete the SportPark development by constructing Pavilion 4 - a 2,000 square metre extension included in the original building design. The previous three pavilions have provided 6,000 square metres of accommodation and have been a great success, achieving very high levels of occupancy, excellent collaboration, and interaction. They have supported the creation of 600 jobs with the SportPark providing the office headquarters for many of the country's top sport's governing bodies and national sports organisations, confirming Leicestershire's leading place in the sports economy. Other project outputs include 65 jobs created, 5 construction jobs created, and 10 businesses assisted to move into the area.

iv. Granby Street/St George Street Regeneration Gateway, Leicester - £1.7m Allocated

a. This project facilitates sustainable travel into and across Leicester city centre by

creating and improving pedestrian/cycle facilities and the public realm. It created four new construction jobs and three apprenticeships. The project has created a gateway to the city centre that will support strong links between the railway station and Leicester's two bus stations. It has also enhanced important links to the Cultural Quarter, improving access to work, leisure, and tourist destinations across the city centre. Around 2,600 square metres of public realm have been improved, as well as 390 metres of footway.

4.9.2 Local Growth Fund

With all Local Growth Fund (LGF) allocations successfully distributed in 2020/21, the LLEP's focus in 2021/22 was to obtain and report on the deliverable outputs and outcomes achieved by each project. Of the LLEP's 20 LGF projects, eight have reported on all deliverables, six of which reported all figures in 2021/22. These are detailed below. A further five projects are expected to provide all output and outcome figures by the end of 2022/23. The remaining projects are continuing to report on outputs, such as new housing and job creation figures, up until 2026.

The six LGF projects completed in 2021/22 are:

i. Market Harborough Line Speed Improvement - £13m Allocated

Improved journey times for non-stop passenger and freight train services through realignment of rail infrastructure, increasing line speeds to up to 85mph. Also, station improvement works, with a new footbridge constructed to improve accessibility.

ii. North City Centre Access Investment Programme, Leicester - £8.96m Allocated

More than 6km of new or resurfaced roads, cycleways, and footways completed. Improved links to Charter Street, with a new bridge constructed.

iii. A50/A6-Leicester North-West Major Transport Investment Corridor - £16.2m Allocated

More than 12km of new or resurfaced roads, cycleways, and footways. A total of 57 pedestrian crossing facilities have been created.

iv. Superfast Leicestershire - £3.1m Allocated

Superfast broadband coverage extended to eligible small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). A total of 5,528 have been supported. Increased broadband coverage in Leicester, from 91.9% to 98.91%.

v. Local Sustainable Transport Fund, Hinckley - £3.64m Allocated

More than 26km of new cycleways, plus 20 pedestrian crossings created.

vi. River Soar Flood Risk Management - £7.5m Allocated

Savings arising from the reduced risk of flood damage have been estimated at £54.9 million. A total of 1,852 homes have been safeguarded.

4.9.3 Growing Places Fund

Progress continues to be made on the Repurposed Growing Places Fund (GPF) funding of £1.6m. This was allocated in 2020/21 to aid economic recovery following the Pandemic.

This supports:

- i. An Employment and Skills Fund to address digital poverty and enhance NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) support
- ii. Business Grants for SMEs
- iii. Place marketing and tourism promotion
- iv. SME (Kickstart) extension
- v. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program (REAP) seed corn funding delivery
- vi. Low Carbon delivery.

All the scheme projects became operational during 2021-22.

4.9.4 Business Rates Pooling

This unique fund retains and combines the business rates growth funding from all nine local authorities and is administered by the LLEP to invest in economic development priorities, driving productivity and growth across Leicester and Leicestershire. A total of £24.4m of funding was approved to support projects in 2021/22. The following projects were completed in 2021/22.

- i. Connected Market - £337,500

The emphasis of this project was on improving Leicester's retail offer by creating enhanced links between important areas of retailing in the city centre. There was particular consideration of areas where a significant proportion of the businesses are small independent units. This will increase footfall around these businesses and improve links to larger retail areas nearby.

- ii. Phoenix 2020 - £400,000

Phoenix is a centre for film and digital arts. Phoenix 2020 is a major scheme to safeguard and double its economic and cultural contribution and attract £4.5M investment. £400k requested for the Roof Terrace element will create a major visitor destination. Extra income generated (£160k per year by year 5) will secure Phoenix's contribution and enable city council savings (£80k per year by year 5).

- iii. Leicester Museums & Galleries Development Programme -£2,500,000

A £2.5m investment programme in the expansion and refurbishment of Jewry Wall Museum to create a national quality Roman Leicester Museum.

4.9.5 Enterprise Zones

- i. Loughborough and Leicester Science and Innovation Enterprise Zone

Leicester Waterside - Development of a new place marketing proposal for the Pioneer Park area commenced in summer 2021. Part-funded by the LLEP, it will create a distinctive destination to attract business investment and job creation by raising the profile of the site. Work will be completed and launched in 2022/23.

Several companies and organisations have already located to Space Park Leicester, including Earthsense, which develops services to provide air quality monitoring on the back of cutting-edge research, and Rolls-Royce, which moved a team onto the site to push forward its work on nuclear power for space travel. The Government-backed Satellite Applications Catapult expanded into the site, further demonstrating its commitment to supporting and accelerating the growth of the space industry in the UK.

At LUSEP, Loughborough University, in partnership with Charnwood Borough Council, launched a business start-up accelerator programme. It will help local people work on unique, early-stage products or services. The two-year Restocking the Business Base programme is delivered by LUinc. (Loughborough University's incubator) and part-funded by £314,000 from a Covid-19 Recovery Fund created using Enterprise Zone Business Rates. It supported 24 pre- and emerging start-ups in its first year, with recruitment of further cohorts underway.

Charnwood Campus was awarded £3.14m, facilitated through an agreement with Charnwood Borough Council, to part-fund the refurbishment of a substantial three-storey, state-of-the-art laboratory facility for tenant Charnwood Molecular. Awarded from the Enterprise Zone Business Rates Reinvestment Fund, it supported the company's expansion on to the site, creating around 300 jobs.

ii. MIRA Technology Park Enterprise Zone

MIRA Technology Park welcomed Viritech and AIMMO to site. Viritech is developing one of the world's first hydrogen hypercars. It is the start point for a cleantech revolution based on zero emissions hydrogen powertrain development. The technology will extend into HGV solutions and marine, aerospace, and power generation. AIMMO offers one of the fastest and most accurate AI modelling and automated data labelling technologies. It is used extensively in the autonomous driving sector.

Evans Randall Investors signed a joint venture agreement with HORIBA MIRA to become the exclusive developer for MIRA Technology Park. They will oversee the next phase of development, which will deliver up to 4m sq. ft of new space with a total GDV of up to £500m, encompassing R&D, office, and industrial facilities. This next phase will include projects funded through LLEP Enterprise Zone Business Rates Reinvestment.

Octopus Hydrogen and Octopus Renewables announced plans to develop a green refuelling forecourt on site providing hydrogen and EV charging facilities. On-site generation will supply sufficient green hydrogen to support the equivalent of 60 cars' worth of fuel per day. High-power EV chargers will deliver up to 300kW and build upon the existing network of more than 70 charging points already onsite.

4.9.6 East Midlands Freeport

The East Midlands Freeport was announced as a successful freeport bid by the UK

Government in March 2021. As the UK's only inland Freeport, it will drive economic regeneration across the East Midlands, focused on creating thousands of jobs, boosting skills and accelerating the region's commitment to decarbonisation and Net Zero through low carbon energy investments.

Progress on the Freeport during 2021/22 has mainly been around establishing the legal foundations. A confidential outline business case was submitted to the Government by the Freeport in September 2021, with formal approval secured in March 2022.

The LLEP's work considering the decarbonisation of the logistics sector, referred to in the Zero Carbon section of this report below, is one example of how the LLEP is preparing for the next stage of Freeport development which will see the site become operational. The demand for LLEP activity around the Freeport is expected to increase during 2022/23 and beyond as the legal and procedure stages are completed and the port becomes active and open for businesses later this year.

4.9.7 Zero Carbon

Government legislation is to reduce carbon emissions in the UK by 78% by 2035 and reach Net Zero by 2050. The LLEP aims to support local businesses as they reduce energy usage and transition to a greener, healthier, and more sustainable economy

i. Business Support

The LLEP has used £20,000 re-purposed GPF in June 2021 to commission a low carbon digital platform pilot from Zellar. This provided 100 free licences to support businesses in reducing their carbon usage, help them switch to greener energy sources, and become greener and more sustainable. The project is expected to run for approximately 12 months. By March 2022, 93 businesses had signed up, with 43 having already calculated their current carbon emission usage and begun to take action. Of them, 10 have appointed a sustainability officer. The LLEP Business Gateway Growth Hub team also undertook Low Carbon Literacy Training to strengthen their knowledge in providing informative business support.

ii. Transport And Logistics

The area has seen a huge boom in the logistics sector in recent years. Although this brings economic opportunities, it is also a potentially high-carbon sector. Together with Midlands Connect and the Midlands Net Zero Hub, the LLEP has supported or commissioned several studies in 2021/22, aiming to better understand the needs, gaps, and potential of a decarbonised logistics sector and the infrastructure needed to achieve it.

The UK hosted the international COP-26 event in Glasgow in November 2021. The LLEP was invited as part of the Midlands Green Regional Roadshow event, to demonstrate the work it is doing in the Midlands to reduce carbon emissions. The presentation included a film on the new zero carbon St. Margaret's Gateway project (described at Section 15).

4.9.8 LLEP Business Gateway Growth Hub

The Business Gateway Growth Hub provides a 'wraparound service' of virtual business support, selected from a wide range of local and national support and funding, for existing and start-up businesses. It aims to develop and enable entrepreneurial, resilient and high growth businesses to thrive and grow by providing specialist 1-to-1 business support, and interactive workshops and webinars. Stakeholder engagement is undertaken to deliver best practice business and mentoring support across a range of business sector.

The Hub supported more than 1,500 small businesses - with a combined turnover more than £2 billion - during 2021/22. It also helped hundreds more people in Leicester and Leicestershire as they started out on their own during that period. The Growth Hub is part European funded.

The Hub is an integral part of the LLEP EGS. Services provided included:

- Core information for online and offline business support
- Localised intensive advice for SMEs
- Access to finance through a dedicated grant scheme
- Business-related events, strategic, technical and specialised workshops
- Enhanced assistance, including an Investor Readiness programme and property support.

The Growth Hub's annual report to Government demonstrated its positive impact on local enterprise as the region emerged from the COVID-19 lockdown:

522 businesses - with a combined turnover of £1.15 billion and employing 4,148 people - received medium density support

1,013 businesses - with a combined turnover of £1.12 billion and employing 11,412 people - received high density support

344 individuals were helped to start a business through a range of grants and programmes

A further 1,144 businesses received 'light touch' support after contact with Growth Hub advisers.

The Growth Hub worked on numerous partnership projects during 2021/22. One programme, created with De Montfort University, offered workshops and 1-1 support in basic business skills for individuals looking to set up a sustainable business in the community. It provided access to prototyping machinery and academic support and led to 16 potential businesses.

Other partnership projects included:

- The launch of The Fashion Technology Academy in Leicester to help train people in the skills needed for the fashion and textiles industry
- Progressing the LLEP Innovation Board and Steering Group (a consequence of the MIT REAP initiative referred to at Section 23) to devise interventions for businesses to promote innovation and productivity
- Encouraging businesses with international trading by working closely with colleagues at the Department of International Trade to promote export and trade support
- Working with British Business Bank in promoting the £250m Midlands Engine

Investment Fund (MEIF). This led to 71 investments in 42 companies totalling £15.35m.

The Growth Hub worked with district councils on an innovative programme linking Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) offers to a support programme for businesses which had been trading for less than 36 months. It aimed to support 150 businesses and delivered 172.

Data submitted to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), enables Government to assess progress and identify best practice and local innovation. More than 90% of a sample of 67 businesses which participated in a Growth Hub Customer Satisfaction Survey said they would not only use the service again but would also recommend it to other businesses

4.9.9 Innovation Strategy

An innovation strategy has been developed as part of the ongoing implementation of MIT REAP recommendations (described at Section 23). The Innovation Steering Group developed a 'Beacons and Bootstraps' approach to encouraging a culture of innovation and engagement with business support. The strategy aims to grow the Leicestershire economy by between 5% and 10% over the next five years. Findings from research undertaken for the Innovation Strategy fed directly into the LLEP Covid Recovery Cell and, ultimately, informed the Innovation pillar of the EGS.

Activities are being developed by the Innovation Board, chaired by Dr Nik Kotecha OBE DL, to drive the agenda forward by building collaborations, growth and opportunities to safeguard the future prosperity and productivity of the region's businesses.

One of the key outputs of MIT REAP was that there should be measurable outputs for the Innovation pillar work. A dashboard has been developed to track the annual performance of the region's innovation ecosystem. This will support development, implementation and monitoring actions and match to priorities of the EGS. The dashboard has a simplified and robust range of metrics which cover the five key innovation themes identified in the MIT REAP study. Metrics also align with the key actions that the Innovation Board is looking to influence.

The fourth Innovation Festival launched in February with a packed event at Space Park in Leicester. An extended fortnight-long schedule of events commenced with an event on the theme of innovation and sustainability. The festival was the most successful to date, with 25 events attracting 967 registrations and 726 attendees. The festival featured the fourth annual LeicestershireLive Innovation Awards. Nemaura was named Innovator of the Year and has been invited to join the Innovation Board. Plans are now underway for the Innovation Festival 2023

Developing Skills

4.9.10 Careers Hub

All state-maintained schools and colleges in the region are now part of the Enterprise Adviser Network and Careers Hub, an increase from the beginning of the year from 20

schools to 90. Enterprise Coordinators work with more than 80 Enterprise Advisors, supporting careers leaders in every school and college to make high-quality, 21st Century careers education a reality for everyone, everywhere. The two-year We Discover project seeks to support young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) to transition into high-quality education, employment, or training. It is an innovative and intensive programme of activities which seeks to ensure young people can make informed choices and will have routes to job and skills progression when they transition to their next step.

i. Virtual Insights

Working with local employers including Cadent, Lendlease, Cavendish Nuclear, and Leicester City FC, the Careers Hub created more than 200 virtual insight experiences for students in Leicester and Leicestershire. These interactive live sessions involve employees ranging from senior managers to apprentices working in these companies. Young people had the chance to hear first-hand about career pathways and ask questions.

ii. Bright Green Futures

As part of our low carbon work, the LLEP launched a Careers Hub climate action strategy entitled Bright Green Futures, which provides all young people with the chance to become agents of change, creative problem solvers and future leaders. It also saves schools money and reduced carbon footprints

iii. Cornerstone Employers

Our group of Cornerstone Employers, who are made up of flagship business from the area, continues to grow. It is focused on supporting the Careers Hub on 'We Discover' and a digital skills awareness project linked to the Digital Skills Partnership (see Section 57 below).

iv. Apprenticeships And Technical Education Project

Working in partnership with all local FE colleges, the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce and the Government's Behavioural Insights Team, the LLEP launched an innovative project to support parents and carers of Year 10 students to explore and better understand traineeships, T-levels, and apprenticeships. This included providing parents with 'conversation starters' to help them better engage with their children on careers education while helping parents and carers to build their own knowledge. The Careers Hub is one of the first in the country to develop a progressive careers curriculum for schools which is underpinned by a full resource library to help integrate careers into the curriculum and the classroom

4.9.11 Skills Advisory Panel

- The Skills Advisory Panel brings together members of the business community, education, and voluntary sector to better understand and address local skills challenges. It approved funding for three strands of work focussed on improving

access to the workforce:

- Kickstart extension programme - to support young people stay longer in a work placement and increase the chances of fulltime employment
 - NEET reduction programme - for young people aged 16-18
 - Digital Poverty - seven projects have been funded to support access to devices, connectivity, and skills. Projects cover a wide portfolio of ideas, including laptop recycling, creation of digital hubs in communities and digital buddies to provide one-to-one support.
- i. A Digital Skills Partnership has been established by the LLEP and has engaged more than 70 partners across the County. Sub-groups were established to consider inclusion, support for employees and SMEs, and the workforce of the future. The LLEP's skills team also chair several working groups to drive forward actions to support and address skills challenges:
- The European Social Fund Provider Forum
 - Education-Business Links group
 - Apprenticeship Provider Forum
 - East Midlands Enterprise Gateway resources Task and Finish group
- ii. The LLEP Apprenticeship Strategy was published in March 2022. It outlines actions to be taken to raise awareness of apprenticeships for both young people, adults and businesses. The LLEP Careers Hub has secured funding to boost the local Apprenticeship Ambassador Network to champion apprenticeships in the classroom.
- iii. The LLEP has supported the development of an LSIP, which is being led by the East Midlands Chamber and is expected to form a key part of business-led skills decision-making in the future.

4.9.12 Partnership Working and Stakeholder Consultation

As part of ongoing stakeholder engagement activities, the LLEP works with a range of businesses, universities, industry bodies, financial institutions, local authorities, as well as colleagues from City and County, health and wellbeing teams, tourism and hospitality, Inward Investment.

Regular meeting with the Chief Executives and Chairs of the 38 LEP Network members ensures access to the latest intelligence and provide opportunities for cross-border working.

The LLEP Business Gateway Growth Hub Board and LLEP Innovation Board provide the forum for regular updates, information sharing and intelligence gathering. There also regular calls for comment via the LLEP website and newsletters and weekly reporting to BEIS of local business intelligence gathered by LLEP Growth Hub team

4.9.13 Business Tracker Survey

The latest LLEP Business Tracker survey was launched in the week commencing 10th

October 2022. Questions were updated to capture the latest information on the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, skills needs, recruitment, digital transformation and environment and carbon impact, and Import and Export. The survey seeks to understand the impact of Covid, Brexit and the cost-of-living crisis and how it will affect business day-to-day trading.

5. Background information and other papers:

[Economic Growth Strategy](#)

[LLEP-Annual-Report-FINAL.pdf](#)

[Annual Report and AGM April 2021 – March 2022](#)

[LLEP-Delivery-Plan-5-7-22.pdf](#)