



Economic Development, Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission

Date of Commission Meeting: 16 June 2021

Economic Recovery Plan

Report of the Director of Tourism, Culture and Investment

Useful information

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Suggested content

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report is a further update noting progress against the economic recovery plan that was launched in October 2020. It concentrates on selected key areas including the progress being made to generate new entry to employment opportunities within the council; marketing campaigns and other initiatives to support businesses to re-open and to promote the visitor economy; the latest work being done make available data about the impact of the pandemic on the economy and on communities and the bids that will be made by the council in mid June to government funding programmes i.e. the Levelling Up Fund and the Community Renewal Fund. Further reports on progress will be provided later in 2021.

2. Recommendations

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

3. Supporting information

Background

- 3.1 The published recovery plan has helped to guide short term responses to the economic impacts of the pandemic. Work is also now under way to generate a longer term plan for the wider city economy which will be reported to this scrutiny commission later in 2021. This report builds on the update provided to the EDTT scrutiny commission in March 2021.
- 3.2 This report will be supported by other presentational information illustrating the marketing strategies for business recovery and summary details of the bids intended for the Community Renewal Fund and the Levelling Up Fund.

Entry to Employment

- 3.3 A key element of the recovery plan was for the council itself to prioritise and support 70 extra entry to employment opportunities within the council workforce over the next two years. That work has been led by the Organisational Development Team and championed by senior managers including the Chief Operating Officer. A dedicated officer has been recruited to drive that work and a report of progress to date is attached as Appendix One.

Supporting Businesses to Re-open

- 3.4 Previous updates have concentrated on the significant work done to support local businesses with grant payments. This update focuses on the efforts to support businesses to re-open by way of marketing campaigns that encourage confidence and consumers to return. This has been exceptionally difficult, particularly in recent weeks as there has been uncertainty and mixed messaging from national media. Much of this work has been led by the City Centre Director deploying resource provided via the government and working with external stakeholders such as the Business Improvement District (BID). That resource is re-directed European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) which is very restrictive. Consequently we have not been able to proceed with all the things we might have wished to do, however much has been achieved.
- 3.5 The take up by businesses of the £500k allocation for outdoor furniture, shop improvement grants and café seating licensing has been extremely good. To date 95 businesses across the city have been paid £211,182 in outdoor furniture grants and a further £98,774 in shop improvement grants.
- 3.6 The ERDF Reopening High Streets Safely Funded £120k marketing campaign 'We've Missed You' launched with a bespoke video poem 'By The Clock Tower' reminding people of the wide range of things to do and see in the city centre and neighbourhoods. To date the video has been viewed over 700k times. Photography of business owners/manager and quirky animations are being used in a social media campaign running through to the end of June. On street and bus advertising is also part of the overall media plan. Poetry workshops for different communities will produce a collaborative poem filmed in the different areas of the city and released on 23rd June, National Writer's Day.

Promoting the Visitor Economy

- 3.7 The visitor economy has been particularly hard hit by the pandemic. Some attractions have been able to re-open since May 17 and it is hoped council facilities such as the King Richard Visitor Centre and our museums will re-open on June 21st, though that remains dependent on the overall picture of pandemic infection and the staffing requirements of our testing and vaccination initiatives.
- 3.8 As reported in March 2021 £185k has been secured via the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) to support Place Marketing initiatives across the city and county. This work is being co-ordinated through the Place Marketing team based at the city council. The first priority for that funding has been the launch of a destination marketing campaign for the whole city and county area under the title of Uncover the Story.
- 3.9 The title is of course a nod to the King Richard iii discovery but many other stories have now been developed to showcase the best that the city and county has to offer. The digital campaign has already started and details about all of the stories can be accessed via the Visit Leicester web site [Uncover the Story \(visitleicester.info\)](https://www.visitleicester.info). All the campaign material points to the Visit Leicester site. A physical launch of the campaign is intended for June 21st to feature the City

Mayor and the county council leader. This campaign will run continuously to develop awareness of the Uncover the Story brand and it is hoped this will raise the profile of our area and capture some of the UK visitor 'staycation' market. This work has been developed over several years working closely with visitor attractions and other areas and is being enthusiastically taken up and used by these other partners. For example see [Uncover the Story - Visit Harborough](#).

Economic Recovery Data

- 3.10 We are developing a basket of data indicators to track Leicester's economic recovery and performance. This work is being developed by the Smart Cities team using the Open Data Platform, and involves sourcing, collating, analysing and uploading data from a range of Council services and external organisations onto the platform, where it can be presented and visualised. The benefit of using the Open Data platform is that economic data for Leicester can be combined with other data sets, for example public health data, to inform decision making.
- 3.11 A range of economic indicators have already been uploaded onto the platform, including unemployment, Universal credit data and NEET data, and work to build the range of datasets on the platform continues. A brief demonstration/overview of the economic data dashboard will be provided to the committee at the meeting.

Funding Bids

- 3.12 As reported in March 2021 the government has released several new regeneration funding programmes. The Levelling Up Fund programme will run over several years until March 2025 and is intended for significant capital projects. The Community Renewal Fund is a short term, smaller scale revenue programme with criteria and objectives very similar to the European Social Fund. In both instances the city council has been designated as the lead authority responsible for submitting proposals and these are due on June 18 2021.
- 3.13 Levelling Up Fund : Under the rules of the programme Leicester can make up to three project bids and one additional transport related bid. It is anticipated the programme will be highly competitive. For this first round (details on round two are not yet available) the city will submit two projects and a transport bid. The project bids are to develop and support significant new workspace within the city centre and at Pioneer Park. The transport bid is for a substantial, first phase redevelopment of the railway station. Further information about the bids will be presented to the meeting.
- 3.14 Community Renewal Fund : The council has been tasked by government with the promotion of this opportunity. Leicester has been designated one of 100 Level 1 priority areas by government though this does not guarantee any funding. On behalf of the city bids up to a value of £3m can be submitted. Bids are encouraged by government to be at least £500k in value and since all monies need to be spent by March 2022 and as 90% of the funds are revenue, this is extremely challenging.

3.15 The council promoted the opportunity widely throughout the city and set a deadline for project submissions to be received by the council of 21st May. A total of 29 proposals were received requesting support of circa £18.5m. As at the time of writing this report those submissions are still being appraised by council officers. Information about projects that will be forwarded to government will be provided to the meeting.

Appendix One : E2E Employment Targets at Leicester City Council

1. Summary

- 1.1 This appendix summarises progress on the Entry to Employment targets within the Economic Regeneration plan. This includes kickstart posts, apprentices and graduates.

2. Background

- 2.1 The economic recovery plan outlined the following targets over the next 2 years (2021/2022):

- Up to 30 Kickstarts (within and outside of Leicester City Council through the Employment Hub)
- 30 additional Apprentices (in addition to ongoing commitment of 30)
- 10 additional Graduates (in addition to ongoing commitment of 10)

- 2.2 The impact of COVID-19 has had a negative effect on numbers of new staffing due to the challenges and need to redeploy current employees to different areas to assist with the plans for tackling COVID-19 in Leicester. Other challenges which have had an impact on staffing levels due to COVID-19 include: service area closures; a reduction in recruitment activity as staff continue to work from home; availability of equipment to enable working from home, potential budget cuts, inability to provide adequate coaching, mentoring and development opportunities remotely; alongside training providers postponing practical face to face learning (mainly trades apprenticeships); breaks in learning; and training providers having to furlough delivery employees. Considering this, and as we look to decreasing cases of COVID-19 and vaccines becoming available, we are looking at more efficient ways of working within our New Ways of Working project

- 2.3 Whilst COVID-19 had an impact on all three programmes, Kickstarts, Apprenticeships and Graduates, OD and resourcing are working closely together to streamline processes and promote these initiatives. To support our Kickstarts and give them the correct introduction/reintroduction back in to work, we are looking to fill potential face to face vacancies as opposed to home-working positions

3. Current E2E Data

- 3.1 Data since August 2020* shows the number of graduates recruited at figure 1. A further 11 Graduate roles are being advertised currently for Travel, Tourism and Inward Investment, City Barrister & Head of Standards, Finance and Neighbourhood and Environmental Services.
Data since August 2020 shows the number of new apprentices at figure 2. A further 24 apprenticeship posts are currently being advertised or awaiting approval for advertising.

4 Kickstart vacancies created within EBS and Employment Hub, with more to be confirmed in June/July

*Data taken since August 2020 aligned to when LCC received the government initiative funding

Department	Division	No of Starters
City Development & Neighbourhoods	Estates & Building Services	3
	Planning; Development & Transportation	3
Corporate Resources & Support	Smart Cities	1
Corporate Finance	Finance	2
	Grand Total	9

Figure 1: New starters from August 2020 in graduate positions

Department	Division	No of Starters
City Development & Neighbourhoods	Tourism; Culture & Inward Investment	
	Capital Programmes	
	Estates & Building Services	
	Neighbourhood & Environmental Services	
	Planning; Development & Transportation	2
	Housing	2
	LLEP	
Corporate Resources & Support	Finance	1
	Delivery; Communications & Political Governance	1
	Non Divisional	1
	Housing	
Public Health & Sports Services	Public Health	
Social Care & Education	Adult Social Care & Commissioning	
	Learning & Inclusion	1
	Adult Social Care & Safeguarding	6
	Children's Social Care & Early Help	6
Grand Total		20

Figure 2: New starters from August 2020 with 'Apprentice' in their job title

4. Future Actions and Data Reporting

- 4.1 The Organisational Development (OD), Resourcing and Management Information team have created new data fields to record and monitor recruitment activity and new starters whether kickstarts, apprenticeships or graduates, alongside identifying existing employees who are undertaking an apprenticeship to upskill in their role.
- 4.2 The HR Management Information team have developed monthly dashboard reports for Directors which highlight numbers of new kickstarts, apprentices, and graduates as well as those upskilling in their areas to support the workforce planning conversations. The report gets sent from HR Management Information team to directors monthly. This clearly highlights divisions who have no entry to employment posts.

- 4.3 HR have recruited an additional specialist resource to lead the E2E strategy in terms of HR activity to include educating managers and advocating the three schemes. Part of this role is taking several key entry level job descriptions of Grade 5 and below to map them to apprenticeship standards with the help of our Quality Assurance Provider. This will support recruitment of entry level posts in service areas.
- 4.4 HR have created an increased education programme for leaders and managers regarding the three E2E options via digital resources, Interface, and webinar (now available on Interface). Internal resources have been developed and delivered by OD and resourcing to the following areas: Housing, Parks, Cleansing, Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, Museums, Libraries, Public Health, Sports, De Monfort Hall, Estates and Buildings Services, Adult Skills and Learning.
- 4.5 Discussions with service areas have started and several more are planned in with several services during June/July with the workforce planning consultancy group to encourage managers to consider E2E when planning their future workforce.
- 4.6 Additional governance has been set in place so that when recruiting managers raise the Authority to Recruit (A2R) form, the resourcing advisors challenge to ensure the post cannot be converted to one of the three initiatives. If the decision by the manager is to proceed without conversion, the A2R is then scrutinised by strategic directors before authority to proceed with the recruitment process.
- 4.7 Monthly apprenticeship surgeries hosted by OD and Quality Assurance provider for any employee of LCC to join and find out more information about entry to employment initiatives and development opportunities for existing workforce.
- 4.8 The COO, Alison Greenhill, circulated a direct email communication to all Heads of Service explaining the 3 new incentives and our commitment on the three initiatives outlined in the Economic Regeneration Plan