



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

11th FEBRUARY 2010

Report of the Regeneration and Transportation Scrutiny Task Group Review on the impact of Highcross Leicester

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of the Regeneration and Transportation Scrutiny Task Group Review of the impact on the City Centre of a year of trading of Highcross Leicester.
- 1.2 The report looks not just at the retail and economic impact of the development, but also the social and community development aspects of the jobs creation programme.
- 1.3 It also sets out strategic issues which the creation of Highcross Leicester has served to highlight.
- 1.4 In considering the recommendations, which set out what the Task Group considers to be work which needs to be done, the enormous positive effects and benefits of the introduction of Highcross Leicester, which feature throughout the report, should also be kept in mind.

2 Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to accept the recommendations set out in Section 2.1 and 2.2 below.

2.1. Strategic considerations

- 2.1.1 Major routes into the city need to be improved to attract more customers to the city centre as a whole, to reduce the semi-derelict aspect of parts of these approaches and to enhance the sense of a city under regeneration.
- 2.1.2 Car parking standards should be raised and signage to them should be improved
- 2.1.3 The areas between high-quality developments such as Highcross, Curve and the Phoenix Square should be improved to encourage users of Highcross Leicester to go to other parts of the City Centre.

2.1.4 The policies developed by and with Job Centre Plus within Leicester should be used as a model for partnership and community cohesion work in other parts of the East Midlands, and indeed the UK.

2.2 Management issues

2.2.1 Agencies, landlords and agents should work closely together to reduce voids within the City Centre. This should include using short-term promotions for the Centre or of creative use of space to provide art and other attractive options and outlets for talent within the city.

2.2.2 Greater control should be exercised in planning and licensing terms to improve the quality of shop frontages and reduce the impact of short-term lets and the visual and oral impact of day-traders.

2.2.3 Bus operators should run services reflecting the more flexible operating hours of city centre stores – for the benefit of shoppers and staff.

2.2.4 A public-private partnership should develop a strong marketing campaign for the city centre based on strong iconic images which can be used at regional, national and international level to attract business and leisure customers to the city.

2.2.5 Strong management of the street scene should be deployed to reduce litter and help create a stronger sense of public “ownership” of public space and pride in the facilities on offer.

3 Introduction

3.1 This review was a snapshot view of the impact of Highcross Leicester within the City Centre. One objective was to determine how well Highcross Leicester had performed against its own business objectives.

3.2 Also important was the impact of the development on other parts of the City Centre. The review aimed to assess earlier concerns about the impact of Highcross Leicester against what actually happened over the past 12 months. It also looked at future trends and what was likely to be needed to sustain and improve Highcross Leicester and the rest of the City Centre

3.3 The Review also examined how effective the Work Highcross project had been. This was the major exercise to encourage people from disadvantaged areas and communities into work at the new project.

3.4 The Review centred on one hearing, held on 30th November 2009. Witnesses provided oral and in several cases written evidence. Written evidence to the meeting is contained in Appendices 3-5 and 8-10.

3.5 The meeting was preceded by a number of interviews with witnesses and potential witnesses to gain information and assess the main issues.

3.6 A number of stakeholders unable to attend the meeting were invited to provide written submissions. Cllr Patrick Kitterick, Cabinet Lead for Regeneration and Transportation, was invited and attend, presenting evidence and in responding to

points made by other witness. The meeting was very much an open forum for those who attended.

- 3.7 As Chair of the Task Group I would like to put on record the appreciation of the members for the hard work, courtesy and assistance provided by all involved in providing the information for this Review.
- 3.8 The written evidence allowed the meeting to proceed speedily and effectively and to focus on the main matters of concern. Written submissions were made by or on behalf of:
- Martin Herbert: Associate Director, Lambert Smith Hampton (Appendix 3)
 - Michael Holland: Brand Experience Manager – Highcross Leicester (Appendix 4) - also gave verbal evidence
 - Nelda Kappia: Senior Worklessness manager (Appendix 5) - also gave verbal evidence
 - Helen Smith: Leicester and Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce (Appendices 8 and 9)
 - Sarah Harrison: City Centre Director: (Appendix 10) - also gave verbal evidence
- 3.9 Verbal evidence was also given by Cllr Patrick Kitterick, Lead Member for Regeneration and Transportation, Barry Pritchard, Team Leader Central Area & Project Management, Tony Webster, LCC Economic Development Team Leader and David Illingworth, Fenwick store director and chair of the Market Street traders.
- 3.10 Other evidence and /or information:
- Appendix 7: Extract from Ofsted report into Adult Learning Services in Leicester
 - Appendix 6: Media release on the expansion of the Multi Access Centre programme.

4 Main issues identified in evidence

4.1 Martin Herbert (Lambert Smith Hampton)

- 4.1.1** Mr Herbert said in written evidence (Appendix 3) that broader market issues such as the downturn in the economy had affected Leicester.
- 4.1.2** Landlords were now reacting by reducing rents and this was leading to further lettings within the city centre.
- 4.1.3** The size of Highcross Leicester was proportionate to the rest of the city centre.

- 4.1.4 The small number of transfers of business into Highcross Leicester reflected a trend which was already apparent before the development opened – particularly from Gallowtree Gate to the Shires.
- 4.1.5 Overall footfall throughout the city centre retail circuit was higher, reflecting a benefit of Highcross Leicester to other parts of the city centre retail operation.

4.2 Michael Holland (Highcross Leicester)

- 4.2.1 Mr Holland provided written evidence ([Appendix 4](#)) stressed that the great majority of stores within the centre were new to Leicester.
- 4.2.2 The restaurant area was working well. Highcross Leicester was building links with other key centres within the City Centre and with communities within the city. Recent research indicated that Leicester had an image problem and failed to promote itself as a regional destination as well as other cities such as Nottingham.
- 4.2.3 “County” shoppers preferred to go to regional centres such as Birmingham, Nottingham, Fosse Park or Derby. New developments sat among areas which lacked investment.
- 4.2.4 Strategic approaches to the City Centre were considered to be run-down and off-putting. The Golden Mile, for example, now appeared to be scruffy, grubby and run-down. Road access and signposting were considered to be poor by customers. The compass point reference to city centre car parks was not considered to be helpful.
- 4.2.5 Future developments should include aligning bus timetables to new trading patterns – evening, Sunday and Bank Holiday working. This would help staff and customers and would need to be promoted.
- 4.2.6 Highcross Leicester was keen on developing Sunday as a family-friendly day for visitors and customers.
- 4.2.7 The cosmopolitan nature of the city should be promoted and underwritten by support and promotion for festivals and events. Hammerson had established and was developing.
- 4.2.8 More than 2,000 retail and leisure jobs had been created. Another 1,000 were involved in building the project.
- 4.2.9 Nearly a third of visitors to Highcross also visited other parts of the City Centre. The general prosperity of visitors to the city centre had risen since Highcross Leicester opened. Most visitors felt the Centre had improved the city centre. The John Lewis car park had added 2,000 city centre spaces.

4.3 Sarah Harrison (City Centre Director)

- 4.3.1 Ms Harrison tabled a paper which summarised the views of major players within the City Centre. Two lists ([Appendix 10](#)) summarised a range of positive and negative views relating both to Highcross Leicester and wider issues affecting the city centre. These are key to this Review and have been extracted from Ms Harrison’s submission in their entirety.

4.3.2 POSITIVE IMPACT OF HIGHCROSS DEVELOPMENT

- Highcross represents the catalyst for transformational change to Leicester City Centre
- Attractive architecture
- Excellent concentration of bars & restaurants
- New retailers attracted to Leicester for the first time
- Environment seen as clean, safe and secure, also at night
- State of the art car parking facilities are welcomed
- Showcase Cinema De Lux is seen as a significant attractor
- New visitors attracted to Leicester
- Public realm works are seen as being equally as important to the impact Highcross has on the perception of the city centre
- Highcross has raised Leicester's profile
- Stores such as John Lewis, Carluccios and the Apple Store have lured the more affluent customer
- Highcross has provided the impetus for other improvements across the city and is a catalyst for helping develop a long-term strategy for the city centre.
- Leicester is seen as a more desirable leisure destination
- People working in the city centre see Highcross as a 'plus'
- 2% uplift in footfall to Haymarket Shopping Centre ascribed to opening of Highcross
- High Street is seen to be establishing itself as a quirky, upmarket, independent retailing area
- Marks & Spencer has seen a more affluent customer mid week into the weekend with average basket spend higher
- Development of 'islands of excellence' (Highcross, The Curve, Phoenix Square) has started to create a sense of civic pride, particularly amongst the younger generation
- Local employment opportunities
- Marketing budget committed by Hammerson to promote Highcross, and through this action, Leicester.
- Willingness of Hammerson to contribute to the future success of Leicester City Centre by supporting initiatives such as the formation of City Centre Management
- Setting an example for future private development.

4.3.3 FUTURE CHALLENGES

- Visitors to Highcross are not seen to be using the other retailing areas in the city centre
- Initial attraction of new shoppers to Leicester appears to have levelled out
- Neighbouring retail areas perceived as being 'grotty'. Planning regulations to be imposed to control the quality of shop fronts
- Highcross has pulled trade away from other areas, particularly Gallowtree Gate, The Lanes and Cultural Quarter
- The incomplete public realm works in The Lanes area has been disappointing for The Lanes retailers as they feel the completion of improvement plans would have helped them to reduce the negative impact Highcross has had on their trading levels
- Working with agents and landlords to let the void units in the city centre
- Strengthen the city's retail offer by re-looking at the opportunity to create a 'retail circuit' ie the 3rd anchor store
- Understanding the reasons why the residential element at Highcross does not appear to be fully occupied

- Creating improved connectivity between areas within the city centre through better lighting, signage, planting, traffic planning, etc.
- Ensuring that Highcross does not fragment the city centre
- Monopoly of one landlord and influence on the direction and strategy for Leicester City Centre
- Local retailers need to respond to the competition Highcross brings to continue to win customers
- City Council needs to respond to the 'lop-sided' nature of the retail space by offering attractive car parks and streets
- Gateways into the city are unattractive and look derelict creating a poor first impression of the city.
- The railway station is a prime gateway for commuters and visitors to the city centre and the poor customer experience needs addressing
- Public realm development has impacted on shoppers to the market as they now have to walk further to catch a bus and this has affected the elderly.
- Threat of Marks & Spencer and/or Boots relocating from Gallowtree Gate in the future
- Achieving consistency in car park standards and reliable public transport
 - The need for a co-ordinated strategic marketing plan for the city centre.

4.4. Cllr Kitterick, Lead Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Transport

- 4.4.1. Cllr Kitterick commented that trading had gone very well over the last year. The restaurant quarter was a welcome addition and was an important factor, along with the new De Lux cinema, in keeping the city centre alive between the hours of 6 and 10 pm.
- 4.4.2. There would be a need to have further investment in the City Centre, including likely significant investment in the regeneration of the Market area.
- 4.4.3. But other significant developments included proposals for a new bus station, major work around the rail station access (out to consultation as the hearing took place), and improvements to the Sanvey Gate A50 junction (now out to consultation).
- 4.4.4. That work would start in March. A new bus station would also help encourage out of hours retail and entertainment activity. The separation of bus stations did not encourage people to feel safe coming into and leaving the city centre, even if this was more a perception than a reality.
- 4.4.5. He commented that the approach to the city along the A50 had been criticised and pointed out that improvements were being made through private investment in new commercial outlets.
- 4.4.6. A significant private sector role would be needed to fully revive this gateway to the city, and partnership working was the most likely option for this.

4.5 David Illingworth, store director of Fenwick and chair of the Market Street Traders' Association

- 4.6.1 Mr Illingworth praised the associated street works which had been funded by the City Council. The scene in Market Street was "absolutely stunning" and was a quite dramatic improvement which had helped maintain and slightly improve footfall within the area.

- 4.6.2 The development of pavement cafes had created more of a continental feel. Vacancies within the street had started to reduce.
- 4.6.3 One cause for potential concern - the loss of staff to Highcross Leicester – had not materialised, he said. Fenwick in Leicester had lost just one member of staff to the new development, he said.
- 4.6.4 He encouraged local groups of traders to organise, at least informally, to campaign for issues of specific interest to them (e.g. the Gallowtree Gate traders, who the hearing was told had formed a group).
- 4.6.5 He also said he recognised that the completion of the public realm works hadn't taken place as envisaged because of the threat of formal objections which would have required the Streets and Spaces project to go to Public Inquiry, which would have delayed it beyond the deadline for the opening of Highcross Leicester.

4.7 Nelda Kappia: Senior Manager, Worklessness, Adult skills and learning service

- 4.7.1 The Work Highcross programme had been set up to make sure employment chances were given to as many people as possible from communities with high levels of unemployment and low expectations of finding work.
- 4.7.2 The programme had received national and even international recognition (and was praised in the December 2009 One Space report from the Audit Commission).
- 4.7.3 It worked hard at supporting people into and within work, and developed constructive relationships with other agencies, including Job Centre Plus which shared information and expertise in a highly positive way.
- 4.7.4 Employers who might have been considered to be in competition co-operated to ensure the best interests of clients – those seeking work – were taken into account. (This is also reflected in information provided in Appendix 8).
- 4.7.5 The model developed for Work Highcross is being rolled out across parts of the city through the creation of new MACs. (See also Appendix 8 5.3)

4.8 Helen Smith: Leicester and Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce

- 4.8.1 Ms Smith submitted two pieces of evidence – appendices 8 and 9. These looked at how the Work Highcross project developed, supporting and reinforcing much of the material provided by Ms Kappia (4.7 above).
- 4.8.2 Appendix 9 is a snapshot of the employment outcomes for the initial recruitment programme. While the current profile is not known the programme was used to recruit for the Christmas 2009 period. (Appendix 8 2.3). Ms Smith describes this as a “positive endorsement” of the programme.

4.8.3 Ms Smith highlights the commitment of employers and the partners in the programme to encourage diversity within the workforce (Appendix 8 section 3).

4.8.4 This section also refers to the high level of co-operation between Job Centre Plus and other agencies working within the city.

5 Conclusions

5.1 The creation of Highcross Leicester raised a number of concerns about the impact it would have on the city centre. These included whether it would succeed on its own terms, and whether its success would be at an inordinate cost to other parts of the City Centre.

5.2 The major concerns about its impact have not been well founded. There has not been a mass diversion of outlets from the wider city centre into Highcross Leicester. Any trends were in place before Highcross opened and in some cases reflected the national failure of retail chains.

5.3 Voids have not been notably increased and less than six stores moved into Highcross from the rest of the city centre. This is despite a severe economic downturn which had a direct impact on the vitality of almost all city retail centres and which may claim further victims.

5.4 A major reason for the unlet store sites within the city centre has been a stand-off between landlords and retailers which has ended with a reduction in rental rates and a recent increase in lettings.

5.5 However, there is a need to take a strategic review of how to build on the clear successes of the past year. In particular, there has not been the attraction to the city of county-based customers initially expected.

5.6 Many customers attracted to Highcross Leicester do not visit other parts of the city. However, more prosperous consumers have been attracted to the city and other retailers have seen an increase in spend by customers.

5.7 In general, footfall within the city centre has improved following the opening of Highcross Leicester. Customers have also tended to be more affluent, resulting in higher-value check-out takes across the city centre.

5.8 The strategic importance of the Market Place to the whole of the city centre is recognised, as is the need to improve it further, perhaps as part of the encouragement of a family-friendly and an evening economy.

5.9 However, concern was expressed about the patchy quality of parts of the city centre and the need to improve the connections between different parts of the centre. This could be achieved in part at least by better signposting.

5.10 The need to have tighter control of sensitive development areas such as Market Square and the frontages surrounding it was recognised. This included both development control and licensing of the activities of short-lease and day traders. The disruptive effect of amplified speech and music was considered to have a significant detrimental effect on the environment.

- 5.11 Within the city centre itself there is a sense of a lack of connectivity between Highcross and other key iconic areas such as Curve and the Cultural Quarter. Within the cultural quarter itself there were complaints of poor lighting and a lack of cctv.
- 5.12 Within the centre there was a need for people to take stronger ownership of the public spaces – including pressure to reduce litter. A physical improvement to the environment should be set alongside a campaign to raise civic pride.
- 5.13 There is a need to improve gateway sites to the city – and it is recognised that work has started on some of these. It is felt that this would help improve the attraction of the whole of the city centre.
- 5.14 Partnership working, with cross-cutting use of resources within City Council and other public agencies and co-operation between a range of private sector agencies, appears to have been important both to the development of Highcross Leicester and in the period since it opened.
- 5.15 Witnesses referred to a need to build on the One Leicester strategy to create a stronger image of the city, marketing it regionally, nationally and internationally using the strongly iconic images of the city centre.
- 5.16 We agree with this, and think there is a strong case for much closer co-operation between a range of agencies and interests, including the universities, to pursue this strategy. In the immediate short term bus and other media advertising for the city centre could be deployed to help.
- 5.17 The creation and development of a City Centre Strategy Board can only assist in creating a more sharply defined set of objectives addressing the issues set out above.

6 Legal implications

- 6.1 There are no direct Legal Implications in this report.

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7 Financial implications

To come.

8 Departmental comments

Departmental response to OSMB to come at a later date.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Terms of reference for the Review were:

- 1 To evaluate how Highcross Leicester has met the Council's objectives in terms of sustaining the city centre and creating new jobs and marketing the city
- 2 To review how Highcross Leicester will integrate into future developments and provision within the City of Leicester
- 3 To evaluate the impact of Highcross Leicester on other parts of the city centre.
- 4 To place the Highcross Leicester development and objectives within the context of the regeneration vision set out in the One Leicester strategy.

Appendix 2

Minutes of the meeting held on 30th November 2009

P R E S E N T: Councillor Hall – Task Group Leader, Councillor Shah
Councillor Kitterick Cabinet Lead– Regeneration & Transport

Jo Tallack	Highcross Leicester	
Michael Holland	Highcross Leicester	
David Illingworth	Fenwick / Market Street Traders	Association
Elaine Baker	Democratic Services Officer	
Jerry Connolly	Members' Support Officer	
Sarah Harrison	City Centre Director	
Nelda Kappia	Adult Skills and Learning Service (Multi Access Centres)	
Barry Pritchard	Team Leader Central Area & Project Management, Highways Design	
Tony Webster	Team Leader, Economic Regeneration	

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bhavsar, Councillor J Blackmore, Tom Nathan, General Manager, Highcross Leicester and Helen Smith, Chamber of Commerce.

ORAL EVIDENCE

- a) Tony Webster, Team Leader Central Area & Project Management, Leicester City Council

Tony Webster advised the meeting that the City Council had facilitated the establishment of employment partnerships during the development of Highcross and had worked on establishing training for potential employees and an employment charter. Following that, Council officers had programme-managed Single Regeneration Budget projects, helping to align resources in deprived areas.

Michael Holland, Highcross Leicester, confirmed that partnerships had been slow to get started, but had developed well, leading to a good integration of partners. Barry Pritchard stressed that private sector involvement had been key to the success of the partnerships, along with agencies such as the Learning Skills Council.

Nelda Kappia, Adult Skills and Learning Service, reminded the Task Group that the Highfields Multi Access Centre and Highcross hub had developed to enable access to the employment database and a routeway to training courses and guaranteed interviews for jobs at Highcross. The hub had subsequently moved to Leicester College and became a Multi Access Centre (MAC). Michael Holland, Brand Experience Manager, Highcross Leicester, advised the Task Group that very positive feedback had been received from retailers about the success of this process and the high calibre of applicants who had been interviewed.

Nelda Kappia advised that it was planned to provide six further MACs, based on the Highcross model. These would be in local communities, so that they were easily accessible. Barry Pritchard confirmed that routeway training, pre-recruitment support and work to increase awareness in deprived areas of the vacancies at Highcross had all been provided. European Social Fund money had been filtered in to routeway training for construction.

b) Barry Pritchard, Team Leader, Central Area & Project Management, Leicester City Council

Barry Pritchard advised the meeting that the Council had worked very closely with the developer from the time that the development of Highcross had first been proposed. The need to provide a higher quality facility than was available in other locations and the potential problem of drawing trade away from other streets had been recognised. Streets in the City Centre therefore had been reconstructed to a very high and attractive standard and traffic management measures had been introduced, including relocating buses to Belgrave Gate and introducing greater restrictions on when goods could be loaded and delivered in City centre streets. These measures had helped to improve people's perceptions of the area.

It was very difficult to deliver this type of scheme in working streets. This had resulted in measures such as "drawbridges" being needed to get in to shops at various times. A lot of complaints had been received about how long the work had taken and how dirty the area had been, but it was not feasible to shut shops while the work was being done. The Council had worked very closely with the traders on this and lessons learnt would be used in future developments.

This work was not complete, as various areas remained to be developed. For example, it had been hoped that the Hotel Street / St Martins area could be included in the pedestrian zone, but it had not been possible to resolve objections received in time for this to happen. It was hoped that the area could be pedestrianised at some point. In addition, the re-routing of buses had not been completed, but it was hoped that the planned new bus station would assist in this.

c) Councillor Kitterick, Lead Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Transport, Leicester City Council

Councillor Kitterick stated that Highcross had been a very good development for the City in a number of ways. For example, two thousand jobs had been created at the start of the current recession, which had helped the City's economic situation. Two important things had been the long lead in time available for preparation and training and the City Council's work showing communities the variety of jobs that were being created.

Work had been completed in accordance with very tough deadlines and Councillor Kitterick felt that this had led to public good will being created. This would be important in forthcoming major projects, such as filling in the Granby Street underpass and the development of a bus hub in St Nicholas Place. Highcross had shown how the City could be transformed and the public would want this to continue.

One way in which the process could have been improved was to work more slowly, giving the scheme time to evolve. Communication also had been a problem on some occasions. The Highways service was used to working on one street at a time, but during this project several streets had been worked on at once and this had led to some communication problems.

Some areas remained in need of redevelopment in the City Centre, such as the market, Market Hall and Gallowtree Gate. It was hoped that Highcross could assist in resolving these issues.

David Illingworth, Store Director of Fenwick and Chairman of the Market Street Traders Association, advised the Task Group that most traders had been very worried that staff would leave existing traders to work in Highcross. This had not happened due to the recruitment and training programme that had been put together. All concerned were thanked for this.

David Illingworth also stressed that the problems created by the redevelopment of Derby City Centre had not been experienced in Leicester, as the City had considered potential problems and put plans in place to make sure that any decline arising as a result of the redevelopment was successfully managed.

d) Michael Holland, Brand Experience Manager, Highcross Leicester

Michael Holland presented the evidence attached at Appendix 4 in this report

Attention was drawn to the research undertaken during June 2009, which had shown that the further away a person was from Leicester, the more negative their perception of the City, due to the amount of high quality competition near them. Michael Holland expressed the hope that everyone would work together to overcome these perceptions.

The Task Group noted that improvements had been made to some of the gateways to the City, such as the roundabout at St George's Retail Park. However, further work was needed on these, particularly the appearance of key gateways and arterial routes and improved signage.

Some improvements had been made on the A50 corridor, but there was a long stretch from Woodgate / Frog Island to Highcross that still gave a bad impression as a gateway to the City. There was insufficient funding available to do all of the improvements required, but improvements would be made where possible. For example, the forthcoming improvements to the road junction on Sanvey Gate near All Saints Church would provide opportunities for landscaping.

Customers also had indicated that they would welcome more Park and Ride provision and would like a public transport link between Fosse Park and Highcross. The Task Group was reminded that a Park and Ride service recently had started running from Enderby to the City Centre and that further services would be introduced in 2010.

Improving the City's existing assets was important, such as promoting the food market and the Lanes retail area, to encourage people to shop across the City. Highcross also wanted to continue to stage and facilitate family-friendly events, as part of work to attract more families in to the City. This could be usefully done on Sundays, as they tended to be quieter than other days.

The Task Group recognised the benefits brought to the City by the development of the cinema and restaurant facilities in the St Peters Square area. The businesses there helped to fill the gap in provision in the City between 6.00 pm and 10.00 pm.

It was noted that most shops opened at 9.00 am, even though very few people shopped at this time, and closed at 6.00 pm, when many people were ready to shop. This also applied to the market, which closed at about 5.00 pm, although many people wanted to shop on their way home from work. The availability of transport would be important in achieving the cultural changes need to change this situation. Communication therefore would be needed with the bus companies, to ensure that services matched retail activity.

e) David Illingworth, Store Director, Fenwick and Chairman of the Market Street Traders Association

David Illingworth reported that the pedestrianisation of Market Street had made a dramatic improvement to the street. There was now a vibrant atmosphere, partly due to the pavement cafes. In addition, the standard of cleansing was very good.

The establishment of the Market Street Traders Association had enabled the businesses there to work together and resolve problems before they became major issues. For example, the Association worked with the Council to change the latest time for deliveries from 11.00 am to 10.00 am, which had helped improve the environment in Market Street.

Members of the Association also had worked together to advertise Market Street as a shopping destination. When the previous Shires shopping centre had opened, shops had lost approximately 10% of their trade, but when Highcross opened, the traders in Market Street had worked together and managed the situation well. Although three stores had been lost, two new units had opened in Market Street since Highcross opened, which was encouraging.

Negative points included the lack of linkage on pedestrian routes for the retail circuit, particularly the lack of pedestrianisation in Hotel Street and St Martins. There previously had been problems relating to two pubs in Hotel Street, which had given people a perception of threat there, even though people did not drink in the street. This was in contrast to Market Street, where there was on-street drinking, but no perception of threat.

David Illingworth noted that the new Park and Ride bus service from Enderby passed the Council offices and asked that consideration be given to introducing a bus stop there. This would help visitors to both the Council offices and Market Street. In addition, David Illingworth asked that parking meters could be introduced in the Bowling Green Street / Bishop Street area, by Christmas if possible. Customers were in favour of them and now that the Post Office was closed there was room in Bishop Street to accommodate them.

In response to a question, David Illingworth advised that he foresaw an uplift for business in the City Centre as a whole. The number of out-of-City shoppers was increasing, but the City was very poor at going in to other cities and selling the business of Leicester. A strategy therefore was needed to do this.

e) Sarah Harrison, City Centre Director, Leicester City Council

Sarah Harrison reported that she had spoken to members and stakeholders following the first City Centre Board and there was increasing confidence. A lot of this was due to the Highcross development. The challenge now was for other retailers, especially smaller ones, to stay competitive in the future. Highcross was seen as a catalyst for changes in the future, contributing to positive momentum in the City. It was particularly noticeable that young people were now “talking up” Leicester and feeling that they wanted to stay in the City.

The pedestrianisation of various streets had contributed to a large improvement in people's perceptions of Leicester. However, first impressions of the City were not always good, for example in the area round Frog Island. People needed to be aware that the City was under regeneration and to be persuaded that the City was safe and secure. This information could be put on billboards at the City gateways.

Feedback from the Haymarket shopping centre indicated that footfall had risen by 12% since Highcross had opened. This could have been people seeking value ranges of goods. Marks and Spencer felt that the footfall of more affluent customers had risen since Highcross opened.

Sarah Harrison also made the following points:-

- Following the setting up of the Market Street Traders Association, other Associations had been formed in the Lanes and Gallowtree Gate;
- The diverse facilities that Leicester offered needed to be promoted. However, there was a need to be sensitive to smaller, independent traders, who were a very important part of the City's retail mix. Highcross had committed considerable expenditure to promote Highcross, which in turn would promote Leicester;
- Improved connectivity between areas was needed, for example through improved signage to help people find other areas. This would be considered through the Markets Forum and work with partners and key stakeholders;

- An important threat to Gallowtree Gate was a major store relocating from there. It was hoped that work could be done through Prospect Leicestershire with traders on creating a sustainable tenant mix for the City Centre. Some landlords were giving short-term rentals to shops trading at the value end of the market, which could be frustrating;
- Art vinyls would be put up on buildings after Christmas to provide a City walk around gallery; and
- Although Highcross provided a high quality, well lit shopping environment, there were no facilities for very small children. This was one reason why a fair had been brought in to Humberstone Gate in the run up to Christmas.

Appendix 3

Note of meeting with Martin Herbert, Associate director, Lambert Smith Hampton with Jerry Connolly, Member Support Officer
16th November 2009

1 The Highcross effect

- 1.1 “The first thing to understand about Highcross Leicester is that it is a proportionate scheme in relation to the rest of the city centre. There is approximately 450,000 sq ft of new retail space, of which around 200,000 sq ft have been taken by John Lewis.
- 1.2 That leaves 250,000 sq ft of new development, which in the context of the rest of the city centre isn’t so disruptive. So we haven’t seen the kind of mass dislocation seen by other developments. The Westfield scheme in Derby, for example, is around 1m sq feet and has had a much greater impact at the margins of the retail centre.
- 1.3 In Leicester I suppose Gallowtree Gate has seen the greatest impact. But that was already being seen in the way retail businesses were moving to The Shires even before Highcross opened. But there was always going to be a shift to Highcross. Gallowtree Gate is still busy but has to re-invent itself.
- 1.4 However, in general terms many retailers have seen an increase in pedestrian footfall throughout the city since the opening of Highcross, including for example the Haymarket Centre, which offers a different retail proposition to that of Highcross.

1.5 The St Martin Centre was seeing a change of profile. (Lambert Smith Hampton is managing agent for this development). We are accepting that fashion retail is going to be in the Highcross Centre and we expect a different profile of tenant to start occupying space here.”

2 Rental issues

2.1 Mr Herbert identified two issues for city centre retailers. One is the business rate. There is a revaluation in April 2010 with the antecedent valuation date being April 2008 which was at the top of the retail value cycle.

2.2 Specifically on Gallowtree Gate then this needs to be re addressed by the existing landlords and tenants since there has been a significant shift in the retail pattern on the City subsequent to the April 2008 valuation date. This currently makes the total occupancy costs of retail units on Gallowtree gate still very high.

2.3 Economic evidence for this already exists. There had been a six-month stand-off between landlords and potential clients. Landlords had seen Zone A rental levels in, say, Gallowtree Gate, at around £190 sq ft for the last seven-eight years.

2.4 A number of new leasing deals were in the £120-£125 range – around 35% lower than previous rates. Outside Gallowtree Gate Market Street was still busy, but rental reductions were also being seen here – Zone A rents were reducing around 15% from £72 sq ft to £63 sq ft. “It could be full by the end of the year.” In St Martin Zone A rents were reducing from £56 to £42-£44, a reduction of 22-25%.

2.5 In general three factors had acted to change the market –

- Lower rents
- Shorter leases
- More incentives (for example rent-free periods).

2.6 In Derby the Westfield development had seen Marks and Spencer move from stores in St Peter Street and Cornmarket. These were being replaced by Tesco and Primark respectively.

- 2.7 Sadler Gate shops, which were mainly fashion retail outlets, were suffering because, quite simply, they were so far from Westfield. The Derby city centre retail pattern is linear, and stores in streets off the main retail footfall areas have suffered. As already stated, Leicester's pedestrian flow through the retail area is more circular.
- 2.8 I am pleased to have been asked to comment on this Review: the private sector tends to have a great awareness of economic and retail issues and what impacts they have and perhaps we don't get consulted enough about them. "

Martin Herbert 16th November 2009

Explanatory Note

The Zone A rate is the way in which shops are valued and all retail units compared with each other. In essence it is saying that the 1st 20 ft of a shop is rentalised at £190 psf (e.g. Gallowtree Gate), the next 20 ft at £85 psf, the 3rd 20 ft at £42.40 etc.

Appendix 4

Michael Holland, Brand Experience Manager, Highcross Leicester

Retail

- Highcross Leicester burst onto the scene on 4 September 2008 in a blaze of colourful community events and a day of celebration
- Over 125,000 visited Highcross on its first day of trading, and over a million in the first two weeks
- In its first Christmas, at peak times, and despite the economic climate, Highcross was taking £111 per second, and welcomed over 1.5 million shoppers in the first three weeks of December
- Highcross Leicester brought 50 new retail brands to the city. These included:
 - Reiss
 - Lacoste
 - John Lewis
 - G Star Raw
 - Cult & Superdry
 - Zara
 - All Saints
 - Guess
 - Henleys
 - Hugo Boss
 - Apple
- Of the retailers that joined Highcross at launch 85% were new to Leicester as a whole.
- In the year that followed, an additional 15 retailers have opened stores or are in the process of opening. These include:
 - Vera Moda/Jack Jones
 - Tom Wolfe
 - Past Times
 - Explore Learning
 - Jeff Bains

- Aveda
- One Dental Spa
- Pop Store
- Faith Shoes
- Mango
- Bose
- Aldo
- Retailers such as New Look, Francis & Gaye, Boots and Next have strengthened their presence within the city with an extra outlet or larger store
- Out of 120 retail units only four have relocated from the city centre (Top Shop, Beaverbrooks, Faith and Tom Wolfe (formerly trading as Envy)
- In the first year of trade Highcross welcomed 18.5 million visitors
- The average basket spend at Highcross has increased by 40% since launch

Leisure

- 13 restaurants were introduced when Highcross opened, including many that are new to Leicester. These include:
- Wagamama
- Yo Sushi
- Carluccio's
- Handmade Burger Company
- Canas y Tapas
- The 12-screen Cinema De Lux has held four regional premieres in Leicester; for Keira Knightley's The Duchess, Hugh Jackman's Australia, and children's favourite Aliens in the Attic and Night at The Museum 2
- With the mall open until 8pm and the cinema and restaurants open later, the city centre now has family-friendly leisure facilities. 41% of evening visitors to the centre do so to eat in the restaurants, 34% to see a movie
- Since launch a further 4 restaurants have signed and are either open or are preparing to open, these include:
- Urban Pie
- 1573 Bar and Restaurant (located in the Grade 2 Listed Grammar School)
- Almanac
- Cafe Rouge

Employment

- Over 2,000 retail and leisure jobs have been created by Highcross Leicester.
- The Work Highcross initiative helped the long term unemployed retrain to provide job ready candidates for retailers
- 1,000 construction jobs were created during development, over 30% from within Leicestershire

Infrastructure and City Centre

- The number of visitors to Highcross who live 30 minutes drive away increased by 25% following launch, bringing more people into the city centre as a whole – nearly a third of Highcross visitors also shop in other areas of the city centre
- In addition the demographic profile of customers (specifically our target Mosaic groups) improved by 12% following launch, helping to establish Highcross as a leading retail and leisure destination
- Visitor numbers have also increased from towns such as Market Harborough and Loughborough

- According to our research 81% of those surveyed feel that Highcross has made a real change to Leicester city centre. 87% feel that the city centre has improved in the past year
- New bus interchange created and in operation
- The John Lewis car park added a further 2,000 extra car parking spaces to Leicester city centre

Community

- Highcross has two nominated local charities; Rainbows Hospice and Groundworks Leicester
 - Highcross raised over £30,000 for its nominated charities by donating the extra 2.5% VAT from car parking charges (a customer would have contributed under 5p for two hours peak time parking)
 - In addition a £50,000 Community Bursary project will utilise a further car park VAT contribution. Organisations are currently being invited to apply for small grants of between £1,000 and £5,000
 - Highcross played an important part in the Special Olympics opening ceremony logistics by using the John Lewis car park as part of the games' families Park & Ride Service. It also hosted a special late night shopping and entertainment evening on Wednesday 29 July where a variety of stores will be open till 9pm
 - In May, Highcross teamed up with Spark the Children's Arts Festival to create some dazzling community art within its public realm, in and around St Peters Square
 - Curve Theatre has taken up full time residency on the Highcross Upper Mall in a purpose built ticket kiosk, making it even easier for shoppers to experience the new facility
 - The stars of Curve's first production Simply Cinderella launched the Christmas proceedings performing songs from the show
-
- Through a partnership with the Leicester Education Business Company (LEBC) Highcross has hosted a series of school visits – introducing more than 500 children to careers in retail. Our goal is to welcome 1,000 children within the first 18 months of trade
 - In addition Highcross has supported numerous community initiatives with LOROS, Leicester Cares, Toys on the Table

Research Findings (qualitative study completed in July 2009)

- Qualitative research has highlighted that Leicester as a city suffers from some negative legacy perceptions, and that this prevents some customers from visiting. This is especially true of "county" customers who often have well established alternative shopping destinations within reach (Fosse Park, Nottingham, Westfield Derby, Birmingham)
- These negative perceptions include, but are not restricted to the following:
- New developments sit amongst areas of the city that lack investment. This then makes it difficult to navigate between them on foot
- Past promotion of Leicester as a multicultural hub is seen as both a positive and negative amongst visitors, often correlated to poverty, decline and grubbiness. Cosmopolitan as a descriptive however conjures up a more positive image and is seen as more desirable
- On entering the city many of the main arterial roads appear run-down with numerous closed shops and restaurants – this is not reflective of the newly completed regeneration projects
- The Golden Mile is highlighted as an example of this, now scruffy, grubby and run-down it is far from the attraction that its name would suggest
- Road access and signposting are poorly regarded by customers, especially the use of compass points as locators (North, South etc) as this is not widely understood
- A greater amount of park and ride facilities, and direct bus access from Fosse Park would aid access to the city centre

- Customers consider that bus, train and park & ride services restrict their use of city centre facilities only running during core trading hours – noting poor services in the evening, on Sundays and Public Holidays, all key leisure periods
- **Areas for further consideration**
- Increase public transport services to match new trading patterns in the city centre – later nights, Sundays, Public Holidays
- Once improved, the city must promote these services ensuring their continued success
- Improve appearance of key gateways and arterial routes
- Positively promote the cosmopolitan nature of the city – highlighting the following attributes:
 - Exotic food market
 - Excellent range of ethnic cuisine
 - Outstanding Diwali Festival / Celebrations
- Ongoing regeneration, including the development of the Cultural Quarter
- The Lanes and other independent retail
- A small compact city that is easy to navigate around
- Upgrade dated seasonal themeing (e.g. Christmas decorations) and invest in city dressing at other important times of the year
- Promote positive messages regarding culture, leisure activities, regeneration and commercial strength across the entire East Midlands positioning Leicester against Nottingham and Derby
- Continue to stage events and provide facilities that support the “family” market, and specifically focus on Sunday activity as this is the day with the most potential in terms of future growth

Ongoing Highcross Improvements

- Continue to strengthen the retail mix with flagship brands that will differentiate against our regional competitors. Particular attention being made to the East Mall (original Shires)
- Create an express catering facility on the lower mall in the East Gates part of the scheme
- Support the establishment of Leicester’s evening economy both from a leisure (dining & cinema) and retail perspective with late night shopping until 8pm year round
- Continue to energise St Peters Square through a programme of live events and external landscape improvements
- Review and improve mall seating and signage
- Continue to build on improvements in customer demographics and drive time, attracting customers from beyond 30 minutes away

Appendix 5

Notes of meeting with Nelda Kappia: Senior Manager, Worklessness Adult skills and learning service

- 1.1 The Work Highcross programme has had some long-lasting and continuing implications which have been recognised as nationally and even internationally important. It’s won two national awards for the work it’s done.
- 1.2 Work Highcross has seen the development and strengthening of co-operation between agencies within the public sector and perhaps surprisingly, between private sector employers who might be formally considered to be competitors.

- 1.3 All of this has been with the objective of securing employment and training opportunities for groups of people who have either never been in work or who have been out of work for a long time.
- 1.4 Two agencies have been continually involved in the employment programmes we have been involved in. They are the Leicester City Multi Access Centre (MAC) and the Highfields MAC (HMAC).
- 1.5 An important aspect of these has been the high level of co-operation with Jobcentre Plus. The team in Leicester has provided great access to advisers, information and signposting of employment opportunities, and flagged up training opportunities for those who have come into employment through the MACs.
- 1.6 There are supported into employment by dedicated Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) workers, client progress is monitored and tracked using a bespoke database (Ethitec) which was been customised by City Strategy. Once a client moves into work they receive support from the employment support programme which tracks clients through the first 13 weeks of employment.
- 1.7 The MACs are within The Adults Skills & Learning Service and contributed to the Community Development sector of the recent Ofsted inspection. Whilst the Service as a whole was proud to receive an overall grade 2 (Good), it was delighted to receive the top grade of one 1 (Outstanding) for Community Development, with the multi agency approach used within the MACs referred to as an 'exemplary model'. The programme has been "kitemarked" by the Matrix, the quality standard for information advice and guidance services.
- 1.8 The MACs are also part of NIACE – a trans-European programme aiming to provide support for third-country nationals (those from outside the European Community). Other countries have said they have been impressed at how embedded we are within the community. That is partly the way Leicester is, and partly the deliberate work that's been aimed at achieving that objective.
- 1.9 There is now a project to roll out MACs across the city – at Braunstone, New Parks, Netherhall/Hamilton, Saffron/Eyres Monsell, St Matthews/St Marks and Beaumont Leys. Working Neighbourhoods funding for the revenue part of the programme has been achieved. We are awaiting a decision from the East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA) for the capital part of the programme.
- 1.10 We are keenly aware that people in these areas are wary of being treated as "targets" for Government initiatives, and through Work Highcross, and the partnership which we developed we have learnt a lot of lessons about how to work with communities which are or have been facing difficulties.

- 1.11 One issue we faced up to, probably about a year ago, was the sudden turndown in the retail sector. It meant that a number of people who we had worked very carefully with to get into work found themselves out of employment for reasons which were nothing to do with them. We worked with agencies to support them and try to get them back into employment.
- 1.12 Another element of the Work Highcross programme is the level of co-operation between organisations which might be considered to be commercial rivals. There's open communication and open referrals, organisations are encouraged to work to their strengths. It's something that has been to the benefit of clients seeking work, and the whole programme, and every partner, has been looking to help them.
- 1.13 That has included the very strong relationship with Jobcentre Plus, which is developing a strong culture of sharing and co-operation. It's an aspect of the work we've been doing which has caught the attention of authorities we've talked to in other parts of the region.
- 1.14 In summary, the lessons learnt and techniques adopted in the Work Highcross programme have been successful – as recognised by the figures for people brought into work and the national recognition an interest it has adopted. The culture of co-operation has been strengthened and developed at a time which has been difficult for city, its businesses and the communities which make it up.

25th November 2009

Appendix 6

Media release re multi-access centre programme: October 2009

- 1.1 A NEW multi-million pound city scheme to boost local employment, improve skills and to support business is set to be launched.
- 1.2 Leicester City Council's new Multi-Access Centre (MAC) programme will help get people back into employment, and to help them advice on a wide range of job, benefit and welfare-related issues.
- 1.3 The programme is being launched with the official opening of the new Leicester City Multi-Access Centre, at Leicester Adult Education College in Wellington Street, on October 14.
- 1.4 It comes after Leicester City Council's cabinet approved the investment of £25 million from the Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF) earlier this month. As part of the fund, Multi Access Centres across the city are being established in order to make training and employment opportunities available.
- 1.5 The decision to expand the MAC programme follows the success of the existing scheme in Highfields, which last year worked with the Work Highcross Partnership to get hundreds of formerly unemployed people into work at the flagship £350 Highcross complex.
- 1.6 A large part of the £25 million funding will now pay for a further six centres across the city, focusing on areas with high levels of unemployment. The proposed centres will be based in Braunstone; New Parks, Braunstone Frith and Kirby Frith; Saffron, Eyres Monsell and Gilmorton; North West Leicester, North East Leicester; St Matthew's and St Mark's.
- 1.7 Leicester City Council's cabinet member for regeneration and transport, Councillor Patrick Kitterick, said: "Through its links with the Work Highcross Partnership, the Leicester City MAC in Highfields has supported local people into jobs that have provided them with work, money and above all dignity.
- 1.8 "Many people who have previously struggled to find work have been helped by staff at Leicester City MAC. We need more of this effective support in the future."
- 1.9 Speaking at the launch of the new centre, Leicester City Council's head of adult skills and learning, Chris Minter, added: "Putting the Leicester City MAC in the welcoming atmosphere of the Adult Education College has made it easier for people to get the help and support they need.
- 1.10 "It has proved that our public buildings can be used in many different ways to serve the needs and aspirations of the people of Leicester. The staff have done a wonderful job in making it such a friendly and helpful place."

- 1.11 The Leicester City MAC programme is funded by the One Leicester Working Neighbourhoods Fund, which was set up to help people overcome difficulties or barriers in terms of coming off benefits, gaining new skills or getting support to return to work.
- 1.12 Under the MAC programme, employment and skills agencies in Leicester work together to help potential clients, such as the long-term unemployed or on benefits, to access to a range of advice and support services to do with work, training, benefits, debt advice, housing and legal concerns.
- 1.13 Jobcentre Plus Leicestershire and Northamptonshire's senior external relations manager, Rob Cooper, added: "Jobcentre Plus welcomes the introduction of Multi Access Centres.
- 1.14 "This is the opportunity to make best use of a multi agency partnership approach to helping people take steps back to work. Working with people in the community can also increase the contact time with people, and can enhance services generally available."
- 1.15 The Leicester City MAC programme is working with a range of Jobcentre Plus programmes, including the Refugees into Employment scheme, which helps refugees to access mainstream support programmes; the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) Support programme, which works with Business Link to support people running or planning to run businesses in deprived areas, along with plans to link to the NHS-led Fit for Work pilot programme which supports people on long-term sick leave.

Appendix 7

Extract from Ofsted report into Leicester City Council Adult Learning Services:
January 2009

Community development - Outstanding: Grade 1

Context

65. Approximately 2000 learners are on courses in: family learning; family literacy, language and numeracy; health and social care; education and training; sports leadership, and a range of other programmes for learners with mental health issues. In addition, 37 voluntary sector organisations provide engagement activities, vocational training and employment support in the six most deprived areas of the city.

Two multi-agency access centres provide employment focused information, advice and guidance, interview skills, vocational and work skills training and access to intensive vocational Routeways with guaranteed job interviews.

66. Courses are from entry level to level 3 and are held in 62 venues including schools, community centres, arts centres, children's centres and Leicester prison. Courses include short one-day taster courses, intensive weekend sports courses, four-week introductory courses, and long courses where learners attend twice a week. Currently 24% of learners are male, 26% of have a declared disability, 43% are from minority ethnic groups and five per cent aged over 60.

Strengths

- Excellent development of self-confidence and employability skills
- Very good achievement of a range of objectives, qualifications and job outcomes
- Very good use of initial assessment to plan learning
- Highly innovative curriculum
- Excellent advice, guidance and support
- Highly successful community development strategy
- Outstanding partnerships to widen participation

Areas for improvement

- No significant areas for improvement identified

Achievement and standards

67. Achievement and standards are outstanding. Development of learners' selfconfidence and employability skills is excellent. They improve their communication, personal, social, vocational and practical skills and become highly confident in themselves and their abilities. Many learners have low levels of prior educational achievement and multiple barriers to employment. Attendance and punctuality is good.

68. The standard of learners' work is particularly good. On childcare courses the standards of learners' work is very good. One family learning group produced a good quality CD of stories and jokes to promote the language development of foundation stage children. Learners with mental health needs who are on arts courses are very proud of their work which is regularly exhibited in local arts centres and museums.
69. Achievement on accredited courses is good, particularly on national vocational qualifications (NVQ) at levels 2 and 3 in childcare, a certificate in advice and guidance, and sports courses. Job outcomes are good with 141 identified job outcomes in the past year from neighbourhood learning in the deprived communities projects, multi-agency access centre, sports and youth work courses. In addition, LCC in conjunction with the Work Highcross partnership achieved jobs for 600 local unemployed people including 143 young learners not in employment, education or training.
70. Learners make highly effective use of their skills and knowledge to benefit their communities. Some work in local advice centres. Others support parents in the community whose children are exhibiting anti-social behaviour.

Quality of provision

71. The quality of provision, including teaching and learning, is good. Learners are highly motivated to learn and promote learning well to other potential learners. Tutors accurately identify learners' starting points, barriers to learning and employment and other aims to set individual targets and ensure enrolment on the correct course. Learning is good and learners learn well from each other. Tutors are highly knowledgeable and skilled and provide a good range of learning activities. Parents and children on family learning programmes have fun and work very well together.

Learners with mental health issues are highly motivated on the song writing course, supporting each other well in the development of technical and composition skills. Learning resources are good.

72. LCC has a highly innovative curriculum that meets the needs of learners, employers and communities. Learners can identify immediate benefits of learning in themselves as well as their children such as better health, improved motivation and the development of employability skills. These skills include work tasters, work-placements, and access to guaranteed job interviews. Learners can identify clear links between all these initiatives and see the results through their own success and that of their peers. Partners are highly influential in shaping the contents of the programmes. Courses are diverse in range and structure and are located suitably in the areas of highest deprivation in the city.
73. Advice and guidance for learners is excellent and is provided by knowledgeable and skilled advice workers, LCC staff and partners. The range of advice in multi access centres covers issues such as learning and training, employment opportunities, housing, benefits, legal matters and personal issues. Childcare support through the on-site crèche facilities for the parents of pre-school children is excellent.

Leadership and management

74. Leadership and management are outstanding. LCC's strategy for community development is highly successful. It successfully delivers its services and support within the deprived neighbourhoods of the city. LCC works very effectively to help build self-sufficient communities that can sustain learning and tackle unemployment and financial and social deprivation.
75. LCC celebrates and promotes community diversity and cohesion. The involvement of 37 voluntary and community groups in the delivery of locally based projects is an exemplary model of multi-agency working providing a cohesive service for learners.
76. Partnerships are excellent. Strong partnerships with local employers, funding agencies and other providers help identify, target and develop the provision. Partners provide data, funding, venues, work-placements and taster courses to improve the curriculum.

Well-established links with a wide range of statutory organisations, and local community and religious groups enhance the experience of learners and help them progress. Homeless adults, refugees and asylum seekers, vulnerable adults with mental health needs, and other issues benefit from increased accessibility and participation in learning.

77. Team-working is excellent. Staff work well to share ideas and develop the provision with highly productive support from curriculum managers. Staff development is excellent. Managers' and tutors' commitment to equality and diversity is excellent with a strong emphasis on social inclusion and community cohesion.
78. The self-assessment report is inclusive and accurately identifies the strengths found on inspection. Quality improvement processes are good. However, quality improvement on the newly established neighbourhood learning in the deprived communities provision is not fully developed.

Link to the full report is as follows

[http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxedu_providers/full/\(urn\)/52994/\(type\)/2128609280,1073741824,536870912,268435456,134217728,67108864,33554432,8388608,4194304,2097152/\(typename\)/Adult%20Learning](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxedu_providers/full/(urn)/52994/(type)/2128609280,1073741824,536870912,268435456,134217728,67108864,33554432,8388608,4194304,2097152/(typename)/Adult%20Learning)

Paragraph numbers in Appendix 7 relate to their position in the full Ofsted report.

Appendix 8

Written evidence from Helen Smith: Leicester and Leicestershire Chamber of Commerce

1 Employment

- 1.1 The Work Highcross partnership, initiated by Hammerson, the co-developers of Highcross, and involving various key partner organisations including Jobcentre Plus, the City Council, the Learning & Skills Council, City Strategy, Leicester College, Connexions, was very successful in developing a co-ordinated approach to the development of skills and employment opportunities for local people.
- 1.2 You have a copy of the breakdown of the employment outcomes (Jun – Dec '08) where details of the individuals are known. This information shows the diversity of the employment outcomes achieved in terms of ethnicity, prior employment status, ward of residence, age etc.

NB: please be aware that it is impossible to obtain full data on everyone who gained a job at Highcross last year – employees & employers cannot be compelled to give their details, and often are unwilling to do so (largely due to their HR constraints & data protection concerns). We obtained the most comprehensive

job outcome data of any shopping centre that Hammerson have opened in recent years, but it was still by no means complete.

2 Sustained Employment

- 2.1 The difficulties in obtaining comprehensive job outcome data when Highcross opened last year have also prevented us getting continued access to information on how sustainable those job outcomes have been.
- 2.2 John Lewis have been very interested in the progress of this project and continue to provide information on the progress of candidates recruited from the Retail Works Routeway programme last year.
- 2.3 They have also exclusively recruited from the programme for their Christmas recruitment this year – a very positive endorsement. We await the latest update from John Lewis which will give us performance and skills development data '12 months on' for those recruited from the programme last year, and I think they will share some overall data with us – but this report is not yet available.
- 2.4 Other employers are willing to share information, at least anecdotally, and the Work Highcross team are aware of many candidates recruited from the Retail Routeway programme who have progressed very well in the last year. Unfortunately most are unwilling to have their stories publicised but details of Paddy Ayres are attached as an example of just one young person whose life has been transformed by the support, training & encouragement received along his Routeway into work.

3 Encouraging Diversity

- 3.1 Part of the role of the Work Highcross team was to encourage employers to ensure their recruitment practices didn't deter candidates from certain key groups.
- 3.2 For example many retail companies now recruit using online application processes with competency-based questions to 'de-select' unsuitable candidates. This might be said to discriminate against those without easy access to the internet, or who find writing English quite difficult. We persuaded some companies to make adjustments to these processes & allow Retail Works Routeway candidates to use paper-based application forms which could be completed with the support of their personal advisors, either at Jobcentre Plus or other guidance organisations.
- 3.3 The Highcross recruitment project team worked closely with Jobcentre Plus & engaged at least 55 employers with a Local Employment Partnership. These LEPs encourage employers to engage with candidates from key disadvantaged groups, for example by making adjustments to their recruitment processes. As a result over 250 LEP-eligible people who faced various barriers to work were successful in securing employment in the high profile new stores at Highcross.
- 3.4 The partnership working with Jobcentre Plus and many other organisations in the city continues, improving access to employment in the retail & hospitality sectors (amongst others) for local people who might face barriers to work.

4 Skills

- 4.1 The focus of Work Highcross was not just about getting local people into jobs but also about upskilling them, both prior to taking up employment (with pre-employment training such as the 30 hour Retail Works course), and post-employment, by encouraging employers & their staff to invest in continuing training & up skilling.
- 4.2 The Work Highcross team provides employers with information about other service providers & sources of funding for training such as Apprenticeships & Train to Gain, and encourages their investment in training for management & staff, as a way to combat the economic downturn & prepare for success in the upturn.

5 The Work Highcross Legacy

- 5.1 Led by Hammerson's Partnership Manager, Michelle Dawson, and the Retail Project Team here in Leicester, the Work Highcross project & model have been judged as very successful, winning several high profile awards including the 2009 National LEP award for Partnership Working, and a 2009 National Training Award for Partnership & Collaboration.
- 5.2 Improving access to job opportunities is an ongoing challenge for the retail project team working with Highcross Leicester and with other employers across the city. By continuing to work in partnership with key agencies and partner organisations

we plan to further extend opportunities, and engage more and more employers with the fundamentals of open & fair recruitment and employment practices. This will contribute to raising employment rates & skill levels, and lead to more successful businesses within the city.

- 5.3 The partnership 'Routeway' model developed during the delivery of the Work Highcross project, has been adopted as a blueprint for employment & skills activity in other sectors. This echoes the national focus on 'Routes into Work' training, but with the benefit of additional complementary support for jobseekers in Leicester, accessed via the network of Multi-Access Centres and supported by the continuing partnership of organisations across the city.

Appendix 9

Work Highcross Job Outcome Data: December 2008

All these figures relate to staff who had been recruited since June, and only where the relevant information on ethnicity, postcode, prior employment status or age has been obtained from employers & individuals. In the case of individual clients the data has been voluntarily given not mandated – therefore all figures can only be indicative, not absolute.

Total Number of New Jobs	
Confirmed number of job outcomes – info gained	1566
Estimated additional outcomes – no info gained as yet	509
Total	2075

Prior Status - of those where status has been declared		
Full or Part-time Education	90	11%
NEET (16-19 year olds)	141	17%
Unemployed	454	55%
Employed	139	17%
Total Number (where Status is known)	824	
Total of Unemployed & NEET	595	72%

NB: The total of Unemployed / NEET outcomes has since December increased beyond 600

NB: given that over 500 people have been employed in companies where we haven't been able to access recruitment data & if we assume that 50% of them were previously unemployed or NEET, then the overall % of those who were previously unemployed or NEET will reduce to c.64%

LEP Outcome Data	
Jobcentre Plus LEP outcomes - total	236
Priority Group 1 - Lone parents, Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disability Allowance	36
Priority Group 2 - JSA New Deal – claiming benefit for over 6 months	41

Priority Group 3 - Claiming JSA for less than 6 months / living in disadvantaged wards	32
Priority Group 4 - Unemployed and not claiming any benefits	97
Priority Group undefined	30

NB: The LEP outcomes have increased since December 08 to over 250

Lone Parents / Disabled & IB Claimants - from WHX outcome list / where details are known	
Known Lone Parents gaining jobs at HX	40
Known Disabled / IB Claimants	20

Ethnicity	All		Unempl / NEET	
of those where ethnicity has been declared				
Asian / Asian British – Other	13		10	
Asian / Asian British - Bangladeshi	2		1	
Asian / Asian British – Indian	257		171	
Asian / Asian British – Pakistani	10		6	
Black / Black British – African	11		7	
Black / Black British – Caribbean	13		9	
Black / Black British – Any other	4		3	
Chinese	3		3	
Mixed – White & Asian	9		4	
Mixed – White & Black Caribbean	12		8	
Mixed – Any Other Mixed Background	5		4	
White - British	284		184	
White – Irish	2		0	
White – Any Other White Background	9		5	
Total BME	302	48%	210	67%
Total Other	321	52%	105	33%
This suggests that the partnership has been particularly effective in attracting candidates from the BME population who were previously unemployed or not in education or training, & supporting them into employment				

Resident in Disadvantaged Wards	All		Unempl / NEET	
Abbey	32		26	
Beaumont Leys	45		31	
Belgrave	35		26	
Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields	28		15	
Castle	61		17	
Charnwood	21		14	
Coleman	33		22	
Evington	33		12	
Eyres Monsell	19		14	
Freemen	22		11	
Hastings	1		0	
Latimer	44		31	
New Parks	32		17	
Spinney Hills	16		30	
Stoneygate	55		26	
Thurncourt	41		15	
Total in Priority Wards	518	43%	307	52%

Not in Priority Wards	673	57%	284	48%
This suggests that the partnership has been effective in engaging & supporting candidates from the city's priority wards				

'Retail Works' trainees	
Total number of clients who had completed sector-specific Pre-employment training eg. Retail / Hospitality Works (by December 2008)	570
who subsequently gained jobs at Highcross	123
who gained jobs elsewhere	45
still seeking employment, with the support of IAG advisors & the employer engagement team	402
ie. 168 people / 30% of those who completed this training, obtained employment	

- WHX Work Highcross
NEET Not in Education, Employment or Training
IAG Information, Advice & Guidance
BME Black & Minority Ethnic
LEP Jobcentre Plus Local Employer Partnership
JSA Jobseekers Allowance
IB Incapacity Benefit

Appendix 10

1 Highcross Review

The evidence collated in this report by City Centre Director Sarah Harrison is from key stakeholders in the city centre, with specific comments from:-

- Ian Borley - KPMG
Tom Brucciani - Brucciani's
Miguel D'Almeida - The Lanes Retailer Association
Dean Law - Marks & Spencer
Phil Toyne - Haymarket Shopping Centre
Nick Rhodes - The Market
Michael Lyons - Holiday Inn
Aatin Anadkat - Maiyango Hotel

- 1.1. There is an overwhelming opinion that the development of Highcross is undoubtedly positive for Leicester.

"Highcross was a necessary and good development for Leicester City Centre if it has the chance of competing with other regional retail offerings."

Tom Brucciani

"Highcross has raised the profile of Leicester and done much to make it more likely to draw trade in from outlying areas."

The development also provided the impetus for other improvements across the city and is a catalyst for the development of a long term

strategy for the city centre, which was something that was lacking in the past.

Importantly, the improvements to the public realm and pedestrianisation are seen as equally important to the overall city offer and customer perception.” Ian Borley, KPMG

- 1.2 However, it is important that the challenges are addressed in future to ensure that the city centre retail offering is balanced and trade being pulled to the High Street area does not compromise businesses in other parts of the city.
- 1.3 Highcross has raised the bar on the standard of development and operation and other businesses in the city centre should do likewise to remain competitive and attractive to customers.

2 Positive Impact of Highcross Development

- 2.1 Highcross represents the catalyst for transformational change to Leicester City Centre
- 2.2 Attractive architecture
- 2.3 Excellent concentration of bars & restaurants
- 2.4 New retailers attracted to Leicester for the first time
- 2.5 Environment seen as clean, safe and secure, also at night
- 2.6 State of the art car parking facilities are welcomed
- 2.7 Showcase Cinema De Lux is seen as a significant attractor
- 2.8 New visitors attracted to Leicester
- 2.9 Public realm works are seen as being equally as important to the impact Highcross has on the perception of the city centre
- 2.10 Highcross has raised Leicester’s profile
- 2.11 Stores such as John Lewis, Carluccios and the Apple Store have lured the more affluent customer
- 2.12 Highcross has provided the impetus for other improvements across the city and is a catalyst for helping develop a long-term strategy for the city centre.
- 2.13 Leicester is seen as a more desirable leisure destination
- 2.14 People working in the city centre see Highcross as a ‘plus’
- 2.15 2% uplift in footfall to Haymarket Shopping Centre ascribed to opening of Highcross
- 2.16 High Street is seen to be establishing itself as a quirky, upmarket, independent retailing area
- 2.17 Marks & Spencer has seen a more affluent customer mid week into the weekend with average basket spend higher
- 2.18 Development of ‘islands of excellence’ (Highcross, The Curve, Phoenix Square) has started to create a sense of civic pride, particularly amongst the younger generation
- 2.19 Local employment opportunities
- 2.20 Marketing budget committed by Hammerson to promote Highcross, and through this action, Leicester.
- 2.21 Willingness of Hammerson to contribute to the future success of Leicester City Centre by supporting initiatives such as the formation of City Centre Management.
- 2.22 Setting an example for future private development.

3 Future Challenges

- 3.1 Visitors to Highcross are not seen to be using the other retailing areas in the city centre

- 3.2 Initial attraction of new shoppers to Leicester appears to have levelled out
- 3.3 Neighbouring retail areas perceived as being 'grotty'. Planning regulations to be imposed to control the quality of shop fronts
- 3.4 Highcross has pulled trade away from other areas, particularly Gallowtree Gate, The Lanes and Cultural Quarter
- 3.5 The incomplete public realm works in The Lanes area has been disappointing for The Lanes retailers as they feel the completion of improvement plans would have helped them to reduce the negative impact Highcross has had on their trading levels.
- 3.6 Working with agents and landlords to let the void units in the city centre
- 3.7 Strengthen the city's retail offer by re-looking at the opportunity to create a 'retail circuit' ie the 3rd anchor store
- 3.8 Understanding the reasons why the residential element at Highcross does not appear to be fully occupied
- 3.9 Creating improved connectivity between areas within the city centre through better lighting, signage, planting, traffic planning, etc.
- 3.10 Ensuring that Highcross does not fragment the city centre
- 3.11 Monopoly of one landlord and influence on the direction and strategy for Leicester City Centre
- 3.12 Local retailers need to respond to the competition Highcross brings to continue to win customers
- 3.13 City Council needs to respond to the 'lop-sided' nature of the retail space by offering attractive car parks and streets
- 3.14 Gateways into the city are unattractive and look derelict creating a poor first impression of the city.
- 3.15 The railway station is a prime gateway for commuters and visitors to the city centre and the poor customer experience needs addressing
- 3.16 Public realm development has impacted on shoppers to the market as they now have to walk further to catch a bus and this has affected the elderly.
- 3.17 Threat of Marks & Spencer and/or Boots relocating from Gallowtree Gate in the future
- 3.18 Achieving consistency in car park standards and reliable public transport
- 3.19 The need for a co-ordinated strategic marketing plan for the city centre.

4 Empty Shop Initiative 2009/2010– Outline Summary

4.1 DCLG Funding

- 4.1.1 The current economic conditions have contributed to a higher retail vacancy ratio in the city centre. The condition the empty shops are left in varies from landlord to landlord but these vacant units having a bearing on the visitor's perception of Leicester and we want to promote the city as a thriving and safe place to visit.
- 4.1.2 The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, John Denham announced on 13 August 2009 that a £3 million funding package to support town centres would be available to more deprived areas that may be less able to absorb the impact of shop closures and where the recession may be exacerbating existing conditions. Leicester City Council has now received a grant of £52,631.58 from Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).
- 4.1.3 There is potential additional funding from the Arts Council of £500,000 for "Arts in Empty Spaces" – turning vacant high street shops into artistic and vibrant places. This programme will run in partnership with the DCLG scheme.

4.2 The Strategy

4.2.1 City Centre Management conducted an audit of the city centre vacant shops and selected those in the most prominent, visible positions in the city centre. Having discussed this opportunity with the agents and landlords, it is recommended that this initiative be executed in three phases to gain maximum benefit for the city centre and efficient use of the funding received.

4.2.2 Phase One: Use the opportunity to create awareness of venues and events taking place in the city over the Christmas period and beyond.

4.2.3 Permission has been given by the agents/landlords for vinyl graphics to be placed on the shop windows of the following empty shops

6- 8 St Martin's Square

Promoting A Journey Out of Darkness, an exhibition of German Expressionist art running February 28 2010.

7-9 Market Place

Promoting heritage

31-33 Gallowtree Gate (ex HSBC)

Promotion of Christmas shows at The Curve, De Montfort Hall and Little Theatre

1/3 Rutland Street (corner unit)

Promotion of Phoenix Square

4.3 Summary of Phase One process

4.3.1 Identify empty and available retail units and their letting agents. Those under offer or up for temporary lease over the Christmas period are not considered suitable for the initiative at the present time

4.3.2 In consultation with the Council's marketing team, decide which graphics are most suitable for which shopping area and which individual retail unit

4.3.3 Marketing team to supply mock-ups of artwork, Prospect Leicestershire then forward to the letting agents for approval. Deadline set by Prospect, if no contact from landlord then consent is assumed by default

4.3.4 Obtain measurements of window space and quotations from Smart City Dressing, the company recommended by the marketing team for fitting the displays

4.3.5 Obtain approval from the Licensing department

4.3.6 Send briefing note to Cllr Kitterick

4.3.7 Marketing team to supply artwork perhaps with input from outside companies

4.3.8 Smart City Dressing install graphic vinyls onto shop windows

4.4 Phase Two

4.4.1 This phase is being coordinated with the Arts Department to secure additional funding from the Arts Council. Artists have been contacted through Creative Leicestershire to produce original artwork to be used on vinyl graphics installed on empty shop windows across the city.

4.4.2 It is proposed that this is packaged as 'Art in the City' and will form a walking exhibition of art around the city. We are speaking to Leicester

- Sound to produce an audio tour of 'Art in the City' which will explain the inspiration behind each piece and provide details on the artist.
- 4.4.3 Also, we are reviewing the cost of using the inside of one of the empty units for a creative shop that would display different types of arts and sculpture. The viability of this idea will depend on the amount of additional budget required to cover the cost of rates, utilities and insurance.
- 4.4.4 We are working with DMU to explore the possibility of using an empty shop to display the student work.

4.5 Phase Three

- 4.5.1 An art group wishes to set up the 'Smallest Theatre' in an empty unit and we already have agreement from the agent acting for the landlord of a shop in St Martin's Square
- 4.5.2 We are looking at another proposal from Age Concern to set up an advice centre for people aged 60 and over giving advice on pensions, health care, insurance etc. Part of the unit would be used to sell to raise funds for the refurbishment of Catherine House
- 4.5.3 It is also proposed that an empty unit is used as a community information point, providing the opportunity to create awareness of the efforts from the environment team to delivery a clean city; provide advice on safe cycling, bus routes, Park and Ride and other services provided to the community
- 4.5.4 The timing for Phase Two and Three is programmed for February 2010 when we will have a clearer picture of which units are vacant.

Report written by Sarah Harrison City Centre Director
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