Leicester & Leicestershire
Enterprise Partnership

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

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Purpose of this plan

This document is the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP). It supersedes any previous documents. This revised plan has been produced following the closure of the Local Growth Fund.

The purpose of the plan is to ensure the monitoring and evaluation arrangements are sufficient to allow the LLEP to monitor and evaluate the performance of funded projects.

Monitoring is the systematic collection, analysis and subsequent use of information collected from projects and programmes. It is vital to enable:

- Effective decision making
- Learning from past actions
- Accountability for resources being used
- Improve future initiatives including appraisal and process.

Evaluation assesses the information collected through monitoring in an objective manner in order to demonstrate whether activities and outcomes are relevant, effective, efficient, sustainable and whether desired impacts are being achieved.

Monitoring and evaluation are complementary, both are necessary to engage and satisfy the range of stakeholders in any monitoring and evaluation intervention. This process enables:

- Effective governance of projects and programmes
- Demonstration of value for money and outcomes from funded programmes
- Continued learning resulting in continuous improvement
- Transparency from inception through to the realisation of outcomes and benefits.

Organisation Background

Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are private sector-led partnerships between businesses and local public sector bodies, LEPs are entrusted with significant public funds to deliver key government policies to support local economic growth.

LEPs are accountable to government through their relationship with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and their cross-department Cities and Local Growth Unit. In addition, each LEP undertakes a regular performance review to ensure compliance with the National Assurance Framework.

The LLEP vision is to "Create a vibrant, attractive and distinctive place with highly skilled people making Leicester and Leicestershire the destination of choice for successful businesses."

Funding awarded by the LLEP will be used to drive growth across the area by providing additional capital funding and leveraging investment to provide new homes and space for businesses, provide high quality skills and training facilities and deliver key transport improvements across the city and county.

The LLEP's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) provides the framework for achieving the vision of creating 45,000 jobs, leverage £2.5bn private investment and increase GVA from £19bn to £23bn by 2020. In addition, the recently published Economic Growth Strategy sets the vision until 2030 through the four pillars:

- Productive
  Increase GVA and productivity, continue to develop a leading science and technology-led economy.
- Innovative
  Global innovation leadership, increase innovation activities across the whole business base
- Inclusive
  Create a resilient, adaptive workforce where all residents have access to skills and career progression and are paid the living wage
- Sustainable
  Become a leader in zero carbon solutions, with sustainability principles built into everything we do.

This will be achieved by investing in our people, place and business utilising previous funding streams such as Local Growth Fund Programme implemented from 2015/16 to 2020/21 and the Getting Building Fund implemented from 2020/21 to 2021/22, the ongoing Growing Places Fund loan programme, and the Local authorities Business Rates Pool fund grant programme.

The monitoring and evaluation plan will be used to ensure a timely flow of management information to key members of the LLEP team, government, and the wider partnership.

The evaluation of previous investment in programmes such as the Growth Deal, and services such as the Growth Hub are vital in helping us to understand what works and to help provide the evidence base to influence future funding policy decisions

Programme Background

Local Growth Fund

Through an allocation of £126.17m over three rounds of growth deals for the operating period 2015-2021. The Leicester and Leicestershire Growth Deal aimed to drive growth by enabling the provision of new homes and space for businesses, high quality skills and training facilities, new jobs, broadband, innovation, flood defences and key transport improvements across the city and county.

The Local Growth Fund supported 20 projects which together have the capacity to deliver over 7,000 new jobs, over 9,000 new homes and over 25,000 square metres of new commercial floorspace by 2025/26.

Getting Building Fund

In August 2020 the Government announced that Leicester and Leicestershire had been allocated £20m for investment in local, shovel-ready infrastructure projects to stimulate jobs and support economic recovery across the area due to the pandemic.

The funded projects are expected to deliver support to the local economy focused on transport, housing, and employment. In the Leicester city centre funding will enhance public realm, improve pedestrian, and cycle connectivity, and will accelerate the delivery of new homes and commercial space. In Loughborough, additional employment space will be added to the already existing sports cluster at Loughborough University, increasing jobs, and cementing Leicestershire's leading place in the sports economy. Road improvements will also unlock and accelerate strategic housing and employment growth and provide greater access to the Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Park.

Growing Places Fund

Growing Places Fund loan scheme supports key infrastructure projects designed to unlock wider economic growth, create jobs, and build houses. To date the investment fund has supported over 11 projects, yielding over 1,650 jobs, 371 homes and 11,238 sqm of employment land. Additionally, projects ranging from stalled transport and infrastructure projects, that will boost the local economy have been supported.

Enterprise Zones

Leicester and Leicestershire support's two Enterprise Zones, MIRA Technology Park and the Loughborough and Leicester Science and Innovation Enterprise Zone, covering nearly 290 hectares of development land across four individual locations. Both EZs focus on our local strengths in research, development, and innovation and offer financial incentives and simplified planning – but each site also has a distinct offer to businesses.

Business Rates Pool

In 2015, the ten local authorities within Leicester and Leicestershire formed a business rates pool. The agreements allow for the surplus business rates, less the safety net, to form a pool of funds to support economic development projects. Only Authorities within the pool are entitled to produce bids to access these funds in accordance with the LLEP's administrative arrangements.

Methodology

The designing of an evaluation starts at the planning stage of a project and / or programme. This enables the necessary resources to be planned and allocated for. In its simplest forms an evaluation will tell us if we have achieved the desired goals and objectives.

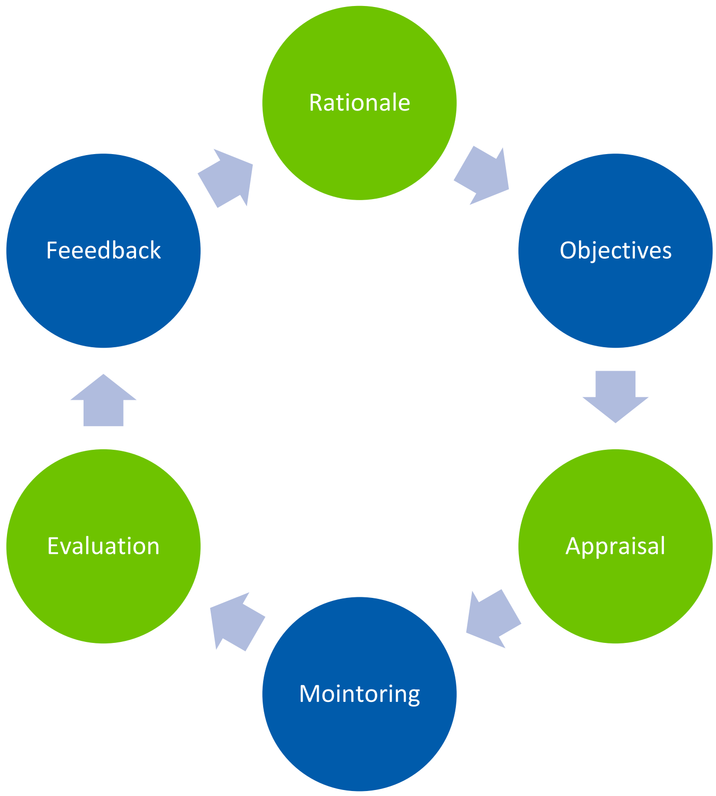
The LLEP defines a programme as multiple projects streaming from a single package of funding, and defines projects to mean those who form part of the programme or are standalone projects with the LLEP team, such as Business Gateway Growth Hub or the Careers Hub.

The principles and approach generally follow the same process for any evaluation. The following document sets out the LLEP methodology for monitoring and evaluation.

Programme Lifecyle

The LLEP utilises the ROAMEF model, in determining which projects, it will fund. The key driver throughout this cycle is the monitoring and performance of the projects and / or programmes, that will in turn feed back into the policy cycle.

RO



Rationale: what is the purpose of the intervention?

Objectives: what specific objectives is it intended to deliver?

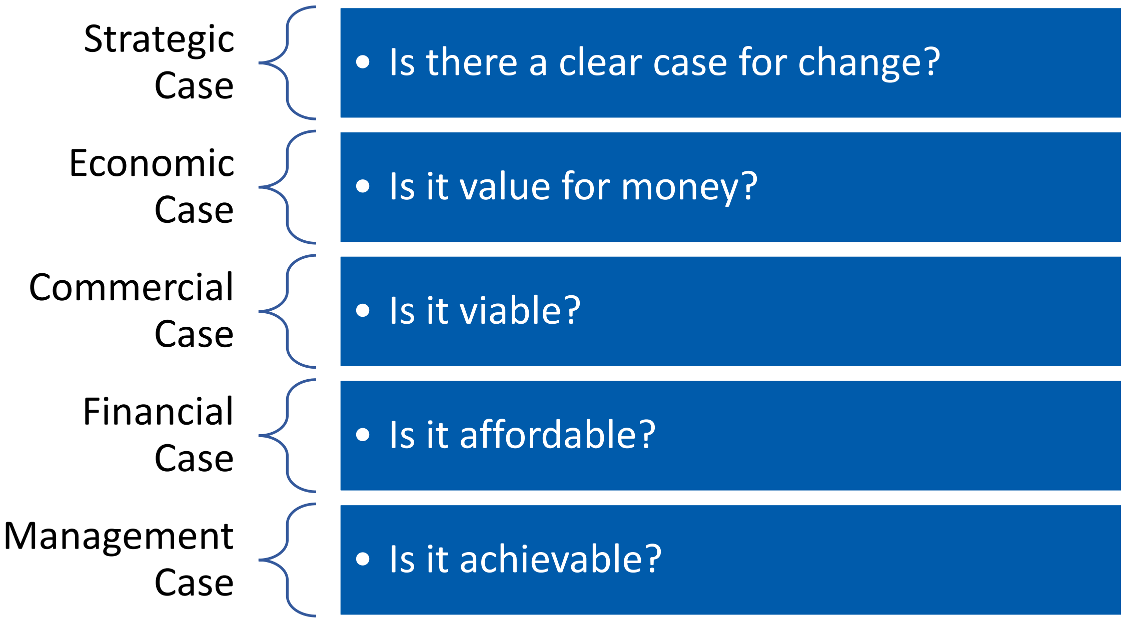
Appraisal: does the project meet the objectives, is it deliverable within the timeframe, is it value for money?

Monitoring: ongoing monitoring of project performance against agreed targets.

Evaluation: assess the impact of the intervention.

Feedback: what lessons have been learned through monitoring and evaluation?

All projects applying for funding must complete a business case based on the five-case model.



The business case is the first step in the project approval process. It provides justification for undertaking the project and provides a baseline on the current state of play, including the do-nothing option.

Business cases should include a clear rationale for intervention, with a clear presentation of strategic and viable objectives, while delivering good value for money compared to potential alternatives.

Each business case should demonstrate a benefits realisation plan and a monitoring and evaluation strategy.

However, we are realistic in our expectation that the business case is proportionate to the value of the funding asked for.

Over the cycle of the project, the business case is updated through regularly monitoring reports.

Once a business case has been received it undergoes an internal appraisal which is aligned with the HM Treasury Green Book Guidance on appraisals. This includes consideration of the following issues:

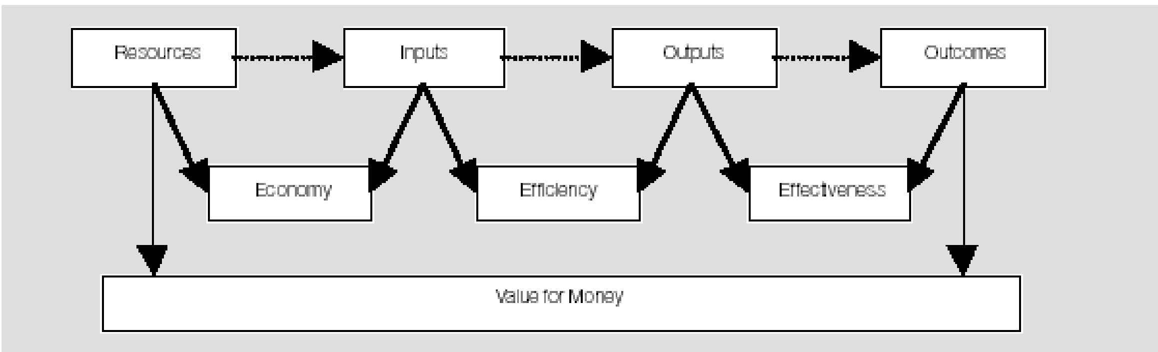
Value for money: An assessment of the value for money of the project will be made using three standard criteria: economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

Economy: Reducing the cost of resources used, without sacrificing quality. Economy can be assessed qualitatively by examining procurement procedures to ensure that inputs (personnel, materials, equipment, and services) are being obtained at the best possible prices. It is also advisable to establish local or national benchmarks against which the resource inputs of the current intervention can be compared. In this case, for example, the cost per job can be measured against the national average.

Efficiency: Increasing output for a given input, or minimising input for a given output, whilst maintaining quality. In this case the ratio of inputs to outputs can be assessed by comparing quantifiable outputs against the quantifiable inputs: the total costs compared to the total value of investment secured, jobs created, and visitor economy spend.

Effectiveness: An evaluative judgment based on how well outputs are converted to outcomes and impacts. Assessing cost-effectiveness presents challenges: effects must be measurable in the same units, but the variety of benefits the projects will generate and the timescale over which it will do so, make this problematic. Also, it is difficult to attribute some of the growth in the LLEP area to the projects and or the funding given. Reasonable efforts will be made to assess cost-effectiveness for the funding, giving a meaningful indication of which activities worked best and why.

Below demonstrates the wider value for money framework.



Source: Assessing the Impacts of Spatial Interventions - Regeneration, Renewal and Regional Development - Main Guidance (ODPM) and Choosing the right FABRIC (NAO etc).

Ideally, outputs and outcomes should be valued in monetary terms where possible. Valuation is especially desirable as an aid to comparison within programmes. Where valuation is not possible assessments should identify how best to quantify the impact and to identify priorities among the outcomes.

The preferred approach by government to assess value for money is through a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) at the project appraisal stage.

Calculating BCR varies for different types of projects, depending on the type of activity and the expected benefits. The general approach is to divide total discounted benefits (the value of) by the total discounted costs. For example, a discounted benefit may relate to the expected (or achieved) uplift in land values as a result of an intervention. The preferred approach to appraising a development is to use changes in land values to infer the net private impact and to separately account for external impacts.

Projects with a BCR greater than 1 have greater benefits than costs; hence they have positive net benefits. The higher the ratio, the greater the benefits relative to the costs.

In addition to the business case we require all projects to submit a logic chain. We utilise logic chains as a framework for enhancing the focus and robustness of evaluation activities.

Something you can only influence

Within your control

Problem to address	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
Articulation of the problem the project is seeking to address	Any resources you anticipate requiring to deliver your activities (e.g. financial, human, technology resources)	Specific processes required to produce outputs e.g. e.g. plan and develop attractive shared industrial spaces for start-ups and SMEs, which is expected to improve local business collaboration, as more networks are built in the cluster	The quantifiable results signalling the completion of an activity e.g. 10 new employers engaged in a network; 1km cycle lane increase proportion of firms undertaking product or service innovation by xx	The intended short-to medium term (2-10 years) effects generated by the outputs e.g. improved collaboration in a sector/locality; enhanced skills. Reduction in car usage	The intended longer-term (10 years plus) impact of the initiative/intervention which addresses the original problem (column 1)

Projects are monitored against these activities

Evaluation

The impact should link back to and address the problem

Project Approval

Programme governance within the LLEP is overseen by the Investment Panel, as a critical friend to the Board. However, the Board have the ultimate say on funding decisions.

All requests for funding, have as a minimum, an internal appraisal. Where possible, and if time permits, an external independent appraisal will be sought.

Prior to submission for approval under the LLEP governance structure, an opinion will be sought from the Accountable Body to ensure that any decisions or activities conform to legal requirements such as subsidy control, equalities, and social value. In addition, the Accountable Body through the S151 Officer will ensure that funds are used and accounted for appropriately and in a transparent way.

Projects agreements are issued by the Accountable Body and follow a standard template agreement. Within the agreement there are clauses enabling either clawback, suspension, or repayment of the grant to ensure the funds are used appropriately. Some examples of when these could be enforced are noted below:

- the Recipient uses the Grant for purposes other than those for which they have been awarded.
- the Recipient is, in the reasonable opinion of the Funder, delivering the Project in a negligent manner.
- the Recipient provides the Funder with any materially misleading or inaccurate information.
- the Recipient becomes insolvent, or it is declared bankrupt, or it is placed into receivership, administration or liquidation, or a petition has been presented for its winding up, or it enters into any arrangement or composition for the benefit of its creditors, or it is unable to pay its debts as they fall due.
- the Recipient fails to comply with any of the terms and conditions set out in the Agreement and fails to rectify any such failure within 30 days of receiving written notice detailing the failure.
- the Recipient deliberately withholds information relating to the Project regarding financial liquidity, cashflow management, partnership management or any other such significant affecting factors

No decision to withhold, suspend or clawback the grant is undertaken lightly. Once a project has been identified as breeching the agreement it will go back through the LLEP governance process for a decision on remedies. The Board, in consultation with the Accountable Body have the ultimate decision.

Payments to projects are made in arrears and are based on actual defrayal. All claims must be accompanied by invoices and banks statements, however, before a claim is submitted, projects are required to submit a satisfactory monitoring report.

Paying on defrayal enables the LLEP to mitigate against any risks associated with non-compliance.

Monitoring Framework

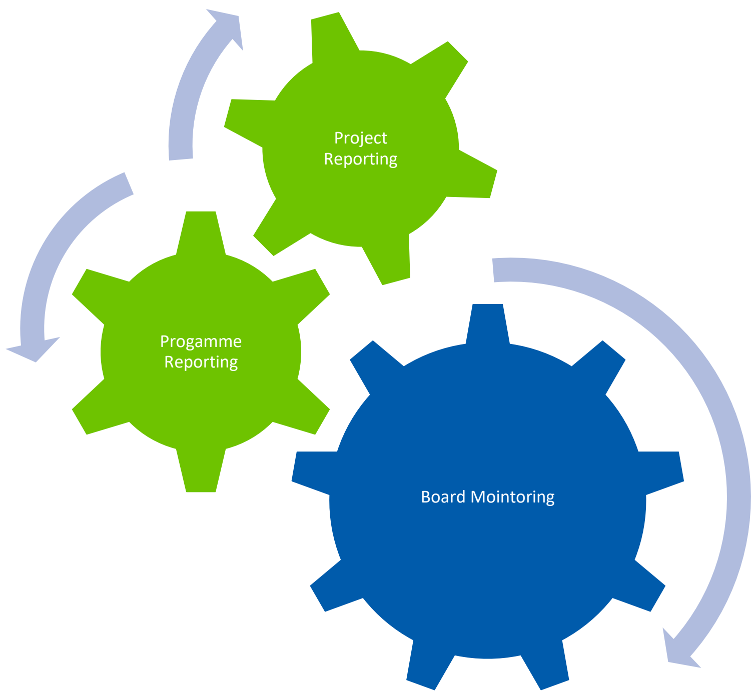
Effective monitoring is essential for managing performance, of projects and programmes.

Project data is captured throughout the project lifecycle from the business case through to project closure.

The data collected is both quantitative and qualitative and must be objectively verifiable.

The LLEP undertakes regular monitoring with projects which enables us to track their progress against agreed milestones.

The monitoring should focus on readily accessible, quantified performance data set against the business case and logic chain.



Reporting on programme performance, including risks, is escalated through the LLEP governance process. The Board receives regular updates on all LLEP funded projects, and is sighted on their performance, issues, risks and are aware of all relevant mitigations that have been put in place.

Once a project has been approved for funding, the LLEP undertakes a project inception meeting. This initial meeting with the project covers

- Confirmation of project outputs and outcome targets specifically contracted as part of the funding
- Confirmation of the definitions of these metrics, and their evidence requirements
- Explanation of the approach to reporting and verifying these metrics
- Identification of any wider outputs and outcomes that the project sponsor expects to collect, for example to provide to other funders. Agreement on whether it would be possible to report these to the LLEP (recognising they do not form part of the LLEP contract/agreement)
- Discussion of the project-level evaluation plan, including key indicators this will test
- Discussion of whether there are alternative methods which would support communication and engagement between the project and the LLEP, if relevant; for example, provision of internal project progress reports to the LLEP, occasional attendance by a LLEP representative at a project board meeting etc.

Following the project commencement, projects submit regular monitoring reports to the LLEP, covering

- General progress
- Achievement against targets to date
- Identification of any risks to achieving targets, including evidencing these
- Any wider achievements by the project (e.g. qualitative)

Although project funding agreements are standardised, the output and outcome specifications within them will be actively tailored to be project-specific to ensure that key project objectives are met.

Core performance indicators

Core performance indicators aligned across all programmes allow the LLEP to measure the long-term performance set against key objectives. All metrics used are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely (SMART)

In addition, to the core indicators, projects can set their own supplementary outputs, which are monitored for the lifetime of the programme.

Theme	Indicator	Definition
Employment	Jobs Created	The total number of newly created permanent paid full-time equivalent jobs as a direct result of the intervention. Created jobs exclude those created solely to deliver the intervention (e.g. construction). A job is deemed as permanent if it lasts at least a year. **A job is deemed as permanent if it lasts at least a year.** For Enterprise Zone (EZ) A permanent job is expected to last 26 weeks or more.
	Additional construction jobs	The total number of new construction jobs to deliver the intervention Permanent paid full-time equivalent construction jobs that are newly created in connection with the Enterprise Zone. A permanent job is expected to last 26 weeks or more. Do not count supply chain jobs except those on the EZ.
	Jobs Safeguarded	The total number of safeguarded permanent full-time equivalent jobs as a direct result of the intervention. Created jobs exclude those created solely to deliver the intervention (e.g. construction). A job is deemed as permanent if it lasts at least a year
Housing	Housing units unlocked	The number of housing units that would be unlocked by the intervention.
	Housing units delivered	The number of completed housing units. Complete refers to physical completion of the individual unit, or, in the case of flats, on physical

		completion of the block. Housing unit refers to one discrete housing unit (e.g. house, flat, live/work), regardless of size.
Transport	Length of Road Resurfaced This Period (km)	Length of road for which maintenance works have been completed this quarter (km).
	Length of Newly Built Road this period (km)	Length of road for which works have been completed and now open for public use (this quarter) (km).
	New Cycle Ways (km)	Length of cycle way for which works have been completed and now open for public use (km).
Skills and Education	Area of new or improved learning/training floor space (m2)	The amount of "new build" training/learning floor space constructed. Figures to be provided following completion. The amount of training/learning floor space refurbished to improve building condition and/or fitness for purpose. For FE Colleges, this should be by estate grading. Figures to be provided following completion.
	Prior Estate Grade	Condition graded by surveyor – A, B, C, D

	Post Completion Estate Grade	Condition graded by surveyor – A, B, C, D
	Floor space rationalisation (m2)	The amount of overall floor space reduced following completion of the project through, for example, demolition or disposal. Figures to be provided following completion.
	Number of New Learners Assisted (in courses leading to a full qualification)	The number of new learners assisted as a direct result of the intervention, in courses leading to a full qualification.
	Specialist Capital Equipment	Type of new specialist equipment - Specialist equipment: Resources specific to a particular sector or industry, and which are required in connection with that sector or industry's production of goods and services. These resources will usually comprise specific mechanical devices, but may include bespoke software, or a combination. Includes resources used to produce goods and services, as well as training resources unique to the industry (e.g. simulators). Does NOT include general equipment, IT infrastructure or resources used for several curriculum areas.
	Other Capital Equipment	Non-specialist capital equipment (see above).
Commercial	Commercial Floor Space Constructed	At the impact site, the area and class of commercial floor space completed (sqm). Use International Property Measurement Standard-3 (IPMS-3) for

		office space and provide gross internal area for all other floorspace types. A building is classed as completed once it is on the non-domestic rating list.
	Commercial Floor Space Refurbished	At the impact site, the area and class of refurbished commercial floor space. Floor areas should be measured in accordance with the RICS Code of measuring practice (6th edition) 2007 (sqm). A building is classed as completed once it is on the non-domestic rating list.
	Commercial Floor Space Occupied (sqm)	At the impact site, the area and class of commercial floor space constructed/refurbished that is currently occupied by commercial tenants this quarter (sqm).
	Land reclaimed and made ready for development	Area of land directly improved by the project that is now suitable for commercial development where previously it was unattractive to commercial developers. Reclaimed: making the land fit for use by removing physical constraints to development or improving the land for hard end use; providing services to open it up for development e.g., provision of services or utility roads.
	Sqm R&D facilities floorspace	The area of R&D facilities floor space completed. Floor areas should be measured in accordance with the RICS Code of measuring practice (6th edition) 2007. A building should be classified as completed once it is on the non-domestic rating list(sqm).
Digital	Number of new super/ultrafast broadband connections	Number of additional commercial premises and domestic dwellings that, as a result of intervention, now have the option to access broadband of at least 30mbps (average), where this was not previously the case

Flood Risk Prevention	Area of Land with reduced likelihood of flooding as a result of the project (m2)	Area of land with a reduced likelihood of flooding as a result of the project (m2) this quarter
	Reduced Flood Risk Homes This Period	Number of homes with a reduced likelihood of flooding as a result of the project this period
	Reduced Flood Risk Commercial This Period	Number of commercial units with a reduced likelihood of flooding as a result of the project this period
Business and Enterprise	Number of businesses that started trading in the Enterprise Zone	A business is counted as being 'on the zone' when a new or relocated business starts trading on the EZ. This includes: Entirely new businesses i.e., Start-ups Businesses that are new to the LEP area Business that are locating from outside of the LEP but from within the UK Outside the UK (businesses locating from the EU outside the EU Starts trading is when the business registers for VAT or registers for National Insurance (Class 2) contributions or the start date of a company's first accounting period or is a business receiving risk finance investment prior to its first commercial sale.
	Number of businesses that stopped trading in the Enterprise Zone	A business is counted as being 'on the zone' when a new or relocated business starts trading on the EZ. This includes: Entirely new businesses i.e., Start-ups Businesses that are new to the LEP area Business that are locating from outside of the LEP but from within the UK Outside the UK (businesses locating from the EU outside the EU A business is defined as having stopped trading from the date when a business already trading on the Enterprise Zone leaves the Zone or closes

	Number of enterprises receiving grant support	Number of SMEs receiving grant funding support with the intention of improving performance (i.e. reduce costs, increase turnover/profit, innovation, exporting). To be counted where the support is at least £1,000.
	Number of enterprises receiving financial support other than grants	Number of SMEs receiving funding support in the form of equity or repayable loan instruments with the intention of improving performance (i.e. reduce costs, increase turnover/profit, innovation, exporting). Counted where amount of support is at least £1,000.
	Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	Number of SMEs receiving support (inc. advice and training) with the intention of improving performance (i.e. reduce costs, increase turnover/profit, innovation, exporting). Value of the support should be a minimum of £1,000, calculated at Gross Grant Equivalent or a minimum of 2 days of consulting advice
	Number of new enterprises supported	A new business is one which: • has been registered at Companies House or HMRC for less than 12 months before assistance is provided; or • is a business locating in the England programme area for the first time, to start trading (i.e. registers for VAT, or registers for National Insurance (Class 2) contributions, or the start date of a company's first accounting period, or the date a business receives risk finance investment prior to its first commercial sale)
	New products to market/new to the firm products	Number of SMEs supported to develop a "new to the firm" product. A product is new to the firm if the enterprise did not produce a product with the same functionality or the production technology is fundamentally

		different from the technology of already produced products. Products can be tangible or intangible (including services).
Low carbon	Low carbon projects receiving non- financial support	Number of low carbon projects that are receiving support that does not involve direct financial transfer, e.g. advice, consultancy, enterprise incubators
	No of ULEV registrations	Number of ultra-low emission vehicles registered in with the area
	Number of new retrofits delivered	Number of domestic and non-domestic retrofits completed as a direct result of the intervention.
	KG of CO2 emissions avoided	Kg of CO2 emissions avoided as a direct result of the intervention.
	Sqm public realm or green space improved or created	The area (sqm) of public realm or green space improved or created by this intervention
Investment	New Public Sector Capital Investment (£)	Gross amount of public sector capital investment fully made, not just announced.
	New Public Sector Revenue Investment (£)	Gross amount of public sector revenue investment fully made, not just announced.
	Any new Private Sector Investment (£) (excluding non-monetary)	Gross amount of direct tangible investment from the private sector. Private Sector includes businesses, registered charities, not-for-profit organisations, private individuals, and Further Education or Higher Education

		institutions, and social enterprises (where the funding cannot be traced to a public source)
	New Private Sector non-monetary investment	Direct tangible or intangible investment from the private sector which is non-monetary which directly benefits delivery. Eligible non-monetary contributions made by individuals or organisations that add value to an operation and can be given a monetary value include but are not limited to land, staff, use of facilities, sites or buildings etc. This must be investment that is fully made not just announced.

Data Management

Monitoring and evaluation are contingent on the availability of high-quality data. To this end the LLEP utilises Verto, a cloud-based programme management software tool used to track and manage all LLEP funded projects.

The software enables efficient management of data and collaboration across the project lifecycle. It enables us to centralise all information and documentation.

Training to projects on the use of Verto is conducted inhouse by the LLEP programme Management team.

Verto is compliant with ISO/IEC 27001 certification. In addition, data is retained in accordance with the Accountable Body's (Leicester City Council) and funders retention policies. Access to Verto is password protected and this is managed by the LLEP ensuring users can only the see the data that their role entitles them to see.

Risk Management Policy

Risk is simply defined as 'the effect of uncertainty on objectives' It is a neutral term and describes the potential for deviation from an expected outcome.

Risks can therefore be subdivided into Threats & Opportunities to indicate whether their influence on an objective is positive or negative. By managing the threats and opportunities effectively, the LLEP is in a stronger position to deliver its objectives.

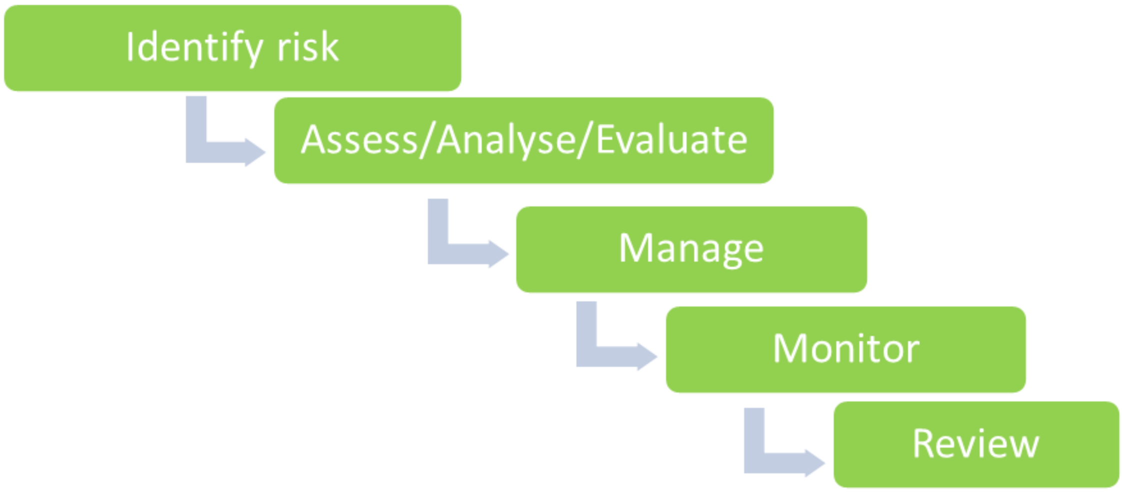
Risk is a feature of programme management activity. The LLEPs risk management approach is to be proactive in identifying risks and managing these in a timely manner.

The objectives of risk management are to

- Preserve and protect the organisation, assets reputation and staff,
- Promote a culture of well-measured risk taking throughout, as an integral part of the organisational decision-making processes
- Manage and act on opportunities and threats to enable the LLEP to achieve its objectives and integrate risk management into the culture and day to day working.
- Ensure that a systemic and consistent approach to risk management is adopted throughout the organisation and as part of planning, performance management and models of operation.
- To provide assurance to the LLEP Board and partners that the LLEP has a comprehensive and professional approach to planning, and the monitoring of performance against targets.

Project risk management is the process of identifying, evaluating, and responding to risks that arise over the life cycle of a project. Early identification and mitigation helps the project remain on track and achieve its objectives.

Risk management process



Through the monitoring of projects, we can identify new risks, and keep track of existing risks. In addition, risks identified within a project, potentially, can impact on the whole programme performance.

Risk exposure will be used to set appropriate project management thresholds which will be monitored by the LLEP team. Projects that demonstrate unacceptable variance to their project plan will be subject to an Investment Panel review which may consider the imposition of a penalty.

The Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for overseeing risk management within the LLEP. Their fundamental role is to set the tone and agree the 'risk appetite' of the company.

In addition, our Accountable Body supports the Board in identifying risks associated with pursuing a particular course of action over any funded projects and or programmes.

Evaluation Framework

An evaluation is fundamentally the gathering and processing of information and analysing it to inform learning and accountability.

Monitoring and evaluation are closely related, but distinct separate functions. Without the monitoring of projects and programmes, through the collection of data, the ability to celebrate success through an evaluation to demonstrate the completed objectives is lost.

In addition, an evaluation allows more accurate judgements to be made on the effectiveness of interventions, including the opportunity to undertake research to identify wider outcomes and impacts which were not part of project monitoring regimes. It also enables the programme and its projects to understand and learn 'what works' in different areas and why.

The evaluation of projects and / or programmes will be used to:

- Provide accountability for the investment.
- Justify future spending allocations.
- Enhance the operational effectiveness of existing projects or future project extensions.
- Improve future initiatives including appraisal and process; and
- Improve process and appraisal reviews

The learning derived from the management of the programme and project level reviews of outputs, outcomes and impacts will be filtered back into the Board, Investment Panel and LLEP Secretariat to aid future policy development and improve future programme delivery.

At the design stage of any project or programme a desktop assessment will be undertaken to define what success looks like. We will seek to clarify what to evaluate, and what will be considered out of scope, ensuring appropriate data is collected and readily available.

If an evaluation is required as a stipulation of any external funding, this will be down streamed to individual projects through their legal agreement.

The LLEP utilises several types of evaluation during the lifetime of its programmes.

- Process: utilises the logic chain, to determine how successful the project was.
- Impact: utilises the outputs and outcome gathered during monitoring
- Economic: measures the cost effectiveness of the intervention

Process	Economic	Impact
• How is the program being implemented? • How appropriate are the processes compared with quality standards? • Is the program being implemented correctly? • Are participants being reached as intended? • How satisfied are the projects clients?	• What has been the ratio of costs to benefits? • What is the most cost-effective option? • Has the intervention been cost-effective (compared to alternatives)? • Is the program the best use of resources?	• How well did the program work? • Did the program produce or contribute to the intended outcomes in the short, medium and long term? • For whom, in what ways and in what circumstances? What unintended outcomes (positive and negative) were produced? • To what extent can changes be attributed to the program? • What were the particular features of the program and context that made a difference? • What was the influence of other factors?

Any evaluation is commensurate with the size of the project and / or programme, the time, and resources available for the evaluation, the types of impacts which are expected, and the timescales over which they might occur.

All projects and programmes will undertake a final programme evaluation, which will primarily focus on the impact of the project programme.

If resources or demand necessitate then consideration will be given to a post programme review, looking at the long outcomes and impact of the programme.

In summary any anticipated evaluation will cover

- Background / scope of the evaluation
- Purpose / objectives/ rational
- Strategic context
- Programme performance
- Review of outcomes and impact
- Reflections and summary
- Case studies

In addition, for programmes of high value the LLEP will undertake evaluations at various stages of the programme.

- Individual project evaluations
    - Identification of:
        - Progress against overall timescales
        - Progress against planned expenditure
        - Overall project progress

        - Project performance, including contracted outputs/outcomes achieved, risks to achieving targets, and wider outcomes and impacts achieved
        - Ongoing project activity, including focus for the following year and risks to delivery
        - Learning for the LLEP

- Midterm programme
    - Focus upon both process and impact
    - How is the programme progressing against its main aims and objectives?
    - How effective are the programme's processes, including governance, management, and communication?
    - To what extent are individual projects progressing?
    - What are the strengths of the programme to date and what lessons can be learnt from it?
    - What risks exist regarding the successful delivery of the programme?

A 'lighter touch' approach to evaluation would include obtaining relatively basic information from projects, with minimal if any consultation. For example, it could include a review of project achievement against targets, project activities and general learning for future programmes. This could take place across broad range of projects.

A more robust evaluation would include a sample of projects explored in much more detail. This could incorporate:

- Consultation with a representative sample of 'end users'.
- The use of a control group to measure the counterfactual (this would ideally need to take place over the lifetime of the project to consider 'before' and 'after' impacts).
- Estimation of deadweight, displacement, and leakage ratios to enable gross to net calculations (for outputs).
- Assessment of land value uplift.
- Calculation of project value for money, and where applicable, BCR.
- Detailed case studies relating to impact on specific groups / individuals / organisations.

Any evaluation undertaken will use both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data will be in the form of the quarterly monitoring information that is provided by the projects along with approved project business cases.

The use of secondary data is necessary to demonstrate the impact of the programme on LLEP area. Appropriate secondary data sources will be identified at the point of evaluation. Where appropriate and possible, we will aim to will identify a counterfactual to measure the impact of a project.

It is generally recommended that the evaluation is undertaken by someone independent of the project and who has the relevant skills to undertake the task. Where this is possible the LLEP will procure independent evaluators.

Appendix A

Example of the type of evaluation questions asked by the LLEP

- Please identify the issues in your business case and did the funding help address them?
- Has the project gone ahead based on the business case?
- Did you/do you expect the project to achieve all your intended outputs/outcomes?
  - Please explain any variance to your intended outcome.
- What were the particular features of the LLEP funding that made a difference and has the intervention been cost effective?
- What do you think have been the key successes of your project to date?
- What have been the key challenges to date?
- What impact have global/national factors such as EU exit and Covid-19 had on your project?
- Have all your project outcomes been achieved? If no, please provide details of when you expect them all to be achieved
- If all the project outcomes have not been achieved, what are the main reasons for this?
- What do you anticipate the main impacts of the project will be? or if your project is complete what have been the main impacts?
- Has the project resulted in any unexpected impacts or outcomes?
- Has your project delivered (or due to deliver) any environmental benefits? If so, please explain.
- Has your project delivered (or due to deliver) any social/community benefits? If so, please explain.
- As a result of the funding has your project attracted additional funding or endorsement / support?
- Please describe the next steps for the project.