

# LLEP Quarterly Report

2021 Q1  
January - March



## Contents

<b>LLEP Limited</b> .....	3
<b>Strategy</b> .....	4
<b>Economic Recovery Strategy</b> .....	4
<b>LLEP Business Tracker Survey</b> .....	4
<b>Covid-19 Sector Research</b> .....	4
<b>Natural Capital Strategic Assessment</b> .....	5
<b>Skills Advisory Panel (SAP)</b> .....	5
<b>LLEP Business and Economic Intelligence Update</b> .....	6
<b>Labour Market Dashboards</b> .....	6
<b>Labour Market Information/Skills/Apprenticeships</b> .....	6
<b>Apprenticeships</b> .....	7
<b>Funding</b> .....	8
<b>European Structural and Investment Funds</b> .....	8
<b>European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)</b> .....	8
<b>European Social Fund (ESF)</b> .....	8
<b>Programme Delivery</b> .....	9
<b>Getting Building Fund</b> .....	9
<b>Local Growth Fund</b> .....	10
<b>Growing Places Fund</b> .....	10
<b>MIT REAP</b> .....	11
<b>Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Regional Entrepreneurial Acceleration Programme (REAP)</b> .....	11
<b>Business Gateway Growth Hub</b> .....	13
<b>Enterprise Zones</b> .....	19
<b>Careers Hub and Enterprise Adviser Network</b> .....	20
<b>Energy Infrastructure Strategy and Midlands Energy Hub</b> .....	21
<b>Communications</b> .....	22
<b>Press Releases</b> .....	22
<b>Personnel</b> .....	26
<b>Staffing Changes</b> .....	26

## **LLEP Limited**

Many of the LLEP's boards and committees have undergone a review, with refreshed Terms of Reference for all working groups.

The Investment Panel has been established to replace the Programme Board, and its membership and revised Terms of Reference have been agreed by the board. In addition, the board have agreed the terms of reference for the Innovation Board and Finance and Audit Committee and sought nominations from each of the directors to site as board representation on these groups.

The revised governance structure also includes the formation of an independent Scrutiny Committee to provide strategic overview and scrutiny of the LLEP. This committee will be formed by members of the company.

As a company limited by guarantee, the board has recently approved applications for membership from the University for Leicester and Leicestershire Business Voice. The University of Leicester falls within the education classification and can nominate the Education Sector Directors.

Leicestershire Business Voice has applied through the organisation route. This allows for organisations within Leicester and Leicestershire to join as a member.

Members play a key role in helping the LLEP to shape the local economy by influencing local and national government, as well as providing effective governance to the partnership.

Following the resignation of Sir Peter Soulsby as the public sector director representative for Leicester City Council, the members approved the nomination of Councillor Danny Myers.

Councillor Myers is an Assistant City Mayor whose portfolio includes responsibility for securing more social investment, to enable local job opportunities and training and apprenticeship opportunities through LCC procurement activities; in addition to exploring policy approaches to stimulating growth.

## **Strategy**

### **Economic Recovery Strategy**

Following a competitive tender process, Cambridge Econometrics were appointed to draft the long-term Economic Recovery Strategy for the Leicester and Leicestershire area. A strategy and literature review has commenced, with the consultants expected to deliver a summary briefing paper outlining findings from the review before the end of the quarter.

A series of individual discussions were held with Economic Recovery Cell members to review the progress of interventions listed against key priorities in the Partner Matrix. Discussions revolved around the status of interventions, any key delivery risks that had been identified and any new interventions that had been introduced to combat the negative impact of the ongoing pandemic. The Partner Matrix was then updated and re-circulated. There was also agreement among the ERC to hold individual meetings on a quarterly basis in line with the financial year to monitor the progress of interventions.

### **LLEP Business Tracker Survey**

Following a competitive tender process, Opinion Research Services were appointed to carry out a survey to measure changes in business sentiment in response to the Covid-19 pandemic over a period of 12 months. The first fieldwork period came to an end with 200 businesses taking part in the survey, results [can be found on the LLEP website](#).

### **Covid-19 Sector Research**

Following a competitive tender process, Cambridge Econometrics were appointed to undertake sector-based economic research across the diverse range of sectors which make up the Leicester and Leicestershire economy. The purpose of this research is to inform understanding of the impact of both COVID-19 and EU Transition across industrial sectors, providing evidence to support the development of the LLEP's longer term economic strategy and informing future investment opportunities. The consultants are currently undertaking a literature and data review process with a briefing paper due to be delivered before the end of the quarter.

### **Natural Capital Strategic Assessment**

The LLEP also appointed Natural Capital Solutions to conduct a high-level strategic assessment of the natural capital assets in Leicester and Leicestershire, the purpose of which was to inform the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership's (LLEP) longer term economic strategy. A review of the natural capital baseline is currently underway, with a workshop due to take place with key stakeholders before the end of the quarter. A report outlining findings from the review as well as recommendations on how best to utilise natural capital asset within the LLEP area is due in the second quarter of 2021.

### **Skills Advisory Panel (SAP)**

The LLEP Skills Advisory Panel meeting was held on 7<sup>th</sup> January. Discussions included amending the Terms of Reference to reflect changes in LLEP governance structure, and to strengthen information about the role of members in representing their sector. In addition, actions were supported regarding LLEP GPF underspend funding to support skills recovery.

All panel members are keen to support digital skills. It was decided that for effective pilot projects linked to address digital poverty, that there should be a digital poverty call for evidence out for stakeholders/peer evidence around the area. The panel also reviewed the LLEP Economic Recovery Plan Action Matrix and were asked to consider further additions. The matrix sets out identified interventions by the LLEP and partner organisations who can contribute to the economic recovery of the area.

Following the SAP (Skills Advisory Panel) meeting, a Digital Poverty Call for Evidence was made live by the LLEP in February 2021 (closing on April 15), and an advertisement for the secondment of a Digital Skills Coordinator became live in March 2021, which closes on April 6, 2021. They will coordinate area digital skills research, evidence, and lead on creating and driving forward an area Digital Skills Partnership.

The Leicester and Leicestershire **Local Skills Report** (LSR) continued to be developed throughout January to March; a draft version was sent for comment to the DfE SAP Team in February, and feedback was positive, with only slight amends suggested.

This is a high-level document that defines skills for region covered by a Local Enterprise Partnership, setting out core data, successes, and challenges, which feeds into the Skills and Productivity Board, who can then compare regions. Local skills case studies have been added to the report.

The LSR has now been completed and is available [on the LLEP website](#); thereafter this document will be updated each Autumn.

### **LLEP Business and Economic Intelligence Update**

The LLEP Business and Economic Intelligence Update is a tool that is produced on a monthly basis. The update is a direct response to events that have impacted the local and national economies and place a bearing on the wellbeing of business, the local workforce, and residents.

Content includes information relating to research and reports, Government announcements, claimant data, furloughed employees, the Self Employment Income Support Scheme, job postings and business closures and incorporations.

Copies of Business and Economic Intelligence Updates can be found [on the LLEP website](#).

### **Labour Market Dashboards**

Produced monthly, dashboards provide a snapshot of the local labour market.

Dashboards are available for the Local Enterprise Partnership, local authority, and district areas. Data used relates to employment, unemployment, claimant rates, qualifications, and those not in employment, education, and training.

The latest version of the labour market dashboards can be found [on the LLEP website](#).

### **Labour Market Information/Skills/Apprenticeships**

Accessible labour market information is important, to support young people, adults and those who support people with skills across Leicester and Leicestershire.

**The World of Work Leicestershire (labour market guide for young people)** is updated each autumn and focuses on sectors that are less likely to be affected by the impact of Covid-19, plus employability tips. We have printed 22,000 copies and shared them with schools and colleges. Schools continue to request copies.

An updated **World of Work guide for adults** was completed in March 2021, focussing on sectors that are less affected by the impact of the local lockdowns., It includes information to help people looking for work in a challenging market, and tips on how to learn new skills, retrain, and improve employability.

The 2021 World of Work for Adults [is available on the LLEP website](#).

The skills team continues to work with the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) team on **videos about key local sectors**. A set of six films linked to sectors, with complimentary lesson plans, presentations and quizzes were launched in March as part of National Careers Week 2021. Although the resources are aimed at schools and colleges, partners who work with young people or adults may also find them useful.

Videos can be viewed [on the LLEP World of Work web page](#). Further sector films will follow in April-May 2021.

North West Leicestershire has a set of nine working groups to support skills in the East Midlands Enterprise Gateway area. The LLEP is leading on the task and finish group for resources for schools, parents, and potential employees.

**New resources to promote logistics across Leicester and Leicestershire , one on the EMEG site, plus 'myth busting'** information and encourage young people and adults into the sector will be created.

**District snapshots** were piloted in early 2020, with local employer and sector information. Updated versions will be created in 2021 with a focus on vacancy information and employers.

### **Apprenticeships**

Covid-19 has had a significant impact on apprenticeships, and has affected the launch of T Levels, a new level three technical qualification. The LLEP is coordinating activity with the Education and Skills Funding Agency, Leicester Employment Hub

and Leicestershire County Council on a set of key initiatives to revive apprenticeships and traineeships post Covid-19. The LLEP led apprenticeship, traineeship and T Level provider forum enables providers to share good practice, deliver actions, and resources to raise awareness of apprenticeships, traineeships, and T Levels across Leicester and Leicestershire . The LLEP is starting to collate an area apprenticeship/T Levels Matrix, setting out what is delivered locally and who will deliver this, which can be used by schools and employers.

## **Funding**

### **European Structural and Investment Funds**

All funds pertaining to the allocation awarded to the LLEP in 2015 have now been allocated and all contracts are either in place or waiting to start once current contracts come to end later this year. However, there are funds available under both the ERDF and ESF Reserve Funds. Due to the pandemic these will be released at a national level and aim to aid the economic recovery coming out of the pandemic.

During this period, the LLEP launched an ESIF Programme e-booklet setting out its current achievements under ESIF together with examples of projects in our local area. This can be found on the [ESIF pages](#) of our website.

### **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**

Our ERDF Technical Assistance project has now come to an end. This funding, secured in 2016, enabled the LLEP to work with MHCLG to determine ERDF funding calls in our local area, launch them, host training events and then support interested applicants to secure the funds.

The LLEP will, however, continue to work with MHCLG as regards the ERDF Reserve Funds together with support projects at a local level. ERDF activities to support our local economy and businesses will continue to be delivered up to December 2023.

### **European Social Fund (ESF)**

Under ESF, our Technical Assistance project will continue up to December 2021. As part of the project we will continue to produce monthly newsletters informing both

those interested in ESIF together with local projects of activities being delivered in our local area, new opportunities, as well as any changes to the funding guidance and rules. These can be found on the [ESIF pages](#) of the LLEP website.

In September 2020, the ESF Managing Authority launched a £10m Digital Inclusion Call under the ESF Reserve Fund. This funding was aimed at existing projects only, to help them provide much needed laptops to their clients to help them continue to be supported through remote contact. This call closed in December 2020.

### **European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)**

The last call under this fund closed in February 2020. However, due to the pandemic the appraisal time for applications was extended by the EAFRD Managing Authority. To date, Leicestershire businesses have secured £1.9m under the EAFRD Programme.

## **Programme Delivery**

### **Getting Building Fund**

All funding agreements are now in place for the four projects being supported by the Getting Building Fund, with the first of their monitoring reports and claims being submitted in March. Progress has been made on individual projects as follows:

**St Margaret's Bus Station** – work on the demolition of the old bus station started ahead of schedule and has been progressing rapidly with completion due by April, four weeks ahead of programme. The procurement process is underway to appoint the main contractor, anticipated mid-late May.

**SportPark Pavilion 4** - a heads of terms agreement is in place with the anchor tenant with further discussions underway to confirm details of the full agreement. The planning application was submitted in March with a decision expected by June. The proposed extension has been modelled to assess impact of PV. The aim is for the extension to be carbon neutral, and Loughborough University are hoping to secure Passivhaus accreditation.

**Granby St/St George St Regeneration Gateway** – design work is progressing and should be finalised in June. Traffic Regulation Orders have either been published or the process started.

**J23 M1/A512 Access Improvements** - the Charnwood Road junction is now complete and works have started again at the Leicester Road junction. The planned completion date of the scheme has slipped slightly to June, largely down to the required re-design.

The first claims have been processed totalling £3.8m of the £20m allocation.

### **Local Growth Fund**

Quarter 4 claims were received in March totalling £2.06m hitting the target for the year of £17,896,716, which finalises the spend for the whole Local Growth Fund (LGF) programme of £126m since the programme started in 2015.

While all projects have now received their full LGF grants they have not necessarily reached full completion. Therefore, projects will continue to be monitored until they are fully complete, have claimed all match funding contributions and achieved all outputs as per their funding agreements (for some projects outputs will not be achieved until 2025/26).

Once projects are fully completed, they will be asked to submit an evaluation report and the project closed.

### **Growing Places Fund**

#### **Broadnook Garden Village**

The vision for the site is a garden village in Charnwood, to deliver high quality accommodation and employment space. The employment land will be developed at an early stage. The site will strive to have zero carbon buildings and infrastructure for cycling. There will be living space for 4000-5000 people with high speed broadband, alongside schools and a retirement village.

Work continues on bringing this project forward with due diligence to be completed on the project in terms of the title as well as an independent valuation, clarifying the land areas offered as security. The GPF loan agreement will not be signed until adequate security is in place.

#### **Haywood Estate**

Loan repayments are continuing and land interest from SMEs is encouraging with 4 plot sales in the pipeline, all of which are anticipated to complete before April.

## **The Gresham**

The Gresham redevelopment project is progressing well. The exterior scaffolding has started to be removed, following extensive cleaning and restoration work to the 140-year old exterior ashlar stone façade. The project is due to complete in the summer of 2021.

## **MIT REAP**

### **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Regional Entrepreneurial Acceleration Programme (REAP)**

#### **Innovation Secondment**

January saw the commencement of the secondment from Loughborough University of Gary Dimmock to the new Innovation role, to provide much needed resource to help to facilitate the support and delivery against the following objectives:

- Brokering (Demand) – The REAP group had identified that whilst Leicestershire’s existing business support infrastructure and its universities have forged excellent links with businesses, these typically channel support to niche areas of research, or offered generic support to start-ups and scale-ups. However, a more specialist provision is needed to transition mature manufacturing sectors to beacon activity.
- Deliver the Must Win Battle project, by centralising relevant information and contacts, engaging and horizon scanning for relevant organisations and schemes to ensure state of the art thinking, lead the development and delivery of the project as above.

Gary, in his capacity as Innovation lead will also:

- Take responsibility for ensuring actions are delivered and outputs are submitted for the remainder of the MIT REAP project
- Be responsible for ensuring the Innovation website pages on the Biz Gateway website, comms and profile of the project remain high profile.
- Help develop a strategy for the sustainability of the project
- Help develop other streams of activity for delivery in parallel or after the Must Win Battle stage (e.g. Beacon activity)

- Support, coordinate and develop the Innovation Board membership and agenda
- Inspire and enable innovation

### **Ongoing activities**

The MIT REAP programme mapping and assessment of our region had highlighted the essential ingredients necessary to support innovation and innovation driven enterprises, but they are fragmented and mainly operating in their own sectors.

Activity and events such as the annual Leicester Innovation Week (21-25 June 2021), delivery from our innovation hubs/centres are not able to achieve their full potential due to the fragmentation and lack of dedicated capacity and resources. A number of recommended interventions had been highlighted, as follows.

- There needs to be a year-long programme of engagement and support (e.g. Innovation Club which supports innovation driven enterprises/beacon businesses through action learning groups) if we want to deliver greater innovation and R&D in our area.
- Innovating businesses – we need to understand a number of elements of the future needs and culture of businesses that are innovating across Leicester and Leicestershire.
- There is a need for a proof of concept piece around changing the cultures relating to risk and innovation within established SMEs. This will use the current COVID situation and examples of transitioning companies and those that wish to pivot, to test our offers and key identified support packages to ensure they are effective in terms of changing mindsets.

The findings of the MIT REAP team and the development of the Beacons and Bootstrap strategy have provided up to date intelligence and findings and the recommendations have already been factored into the Economic Recovery plan.

### **LLEP Innovation Board**

The Inaugural Innovation Board meeting took place on 17<sup>th</sup> February. The meeting went well and there was a high level of participation from a talented and engaged Board. Details about this new board can be found [on the LLEP website](#)

The formation of the Innovation Board will provide dedicated interventions and package of activities to enable and support the delivery of the 'Beacons and Bootstraps' vision across Leicester and Leicestershire.

The MIT REAP Programme focusses on the engagement with key stakeholders including corporates, innovation-driven enterprises and manufacturing companies, to deliver the 'must win battles' as part of the MIT REAP Programme to focus on the transition and innovation supported recovery from Covid-19.

The next Innovation Board meeting will take place during Innovation Week and part of the Board meeting will take the form of an innovation event.

### **Innovation Steering Group**

The LLEP MIT REAP team finalised the proposals to MIT with a two day 'grande finale' on 3<sup>rd</sup> February.

Going forward the LLEP MIT REAP team will be known as the 'LLEP Innovation Steering Group' and will meet monthly.

### **Business Gateway Growth Hub**

During the first quarter of 2021, the Business Gateway received a total of 588 business requests for support.

Key activities this quarter included:

- supporting businesses with EU transition advice
- continuation of the highly successful Peer Networks Programme
- delivery of diverse range of business support programmes for those sectors severely affected by Covid-19
- delivery of a Start-Up Accelerator programme for business start-ups.

Each week the Growth Hub has continued producing a business intelligence report on the impact of the pandemic and any issues affecting local businesses on EU transition. This intelligence has been reported directly to government with information on business shocks, business sentiment and any challenges that should be escalated in relation to the pandemic and EU transition.

### **EU transition Support**

In January 2021, the Business Gateway received a grant to provide additional activities to support businesses with issues relating to the UK leaving the EU on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

Activity undertaken included:

- 1:1 support from a **specialist EU Business Adviser.**

- **Dedicated EU phone support helpline** – callers completed an EU readiness diagnostic/risk assessment with an adviser, were provided with an action plan, offered a 1:1 session with a specialist EU transition Business Adviser and referred to additional support provisions, including our **“Trading with Europe”** Support Programme and wider Growth Hub Support Services.
- Contracted a telemarketing company to conduct outreach activity by contacting businesses to complete an **“EU transitional issues Survey”** and to highlight and promote the EU transitional specific support and wider Growth Hub support services.
- Contracted with an external marketing company to promote the support available to local businesses and create a **“What’s in it for SME”** guide that covers some key challenges that small businesses are facing as a result of the UK leaving the EU.

This activity resulted in a total of 220 completing an **“EU transitional issues Survey”**.

A total of 60 businesses were referred on to a 1:1 advice session with a specialist EU Transition business advisor and a further 160 businesses were referred to a Growth Hub Front Line Business Advisor for wider Growth Hub support, with over 100 new businesses engaged with the Growth Hub.

### **Peer Networks Support Programme**

The BEIS funded Peer Networks is a national initiative delivered through Growth Hubs to help improve productivity and innovation and help leaders find solutions to operational and strategic challenges.

A procurement exercise to appoint dedicated suppliers was undertaken to deliver the scheme across a range of sectors.

Intense activity and additional telemarketing delivered results with 13 cohorts accommodating 128 businesses. Initial feedback from the businesses is extremely positive.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Cohort / organization</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>
<b>1</b>	<i>Vispera - Digital &amp; Creative Cohort - Maria Peggs</i>	<b>10</b>
<b>2</b>	<i>Bulb Studios Cohort - Jim Wills</i>	<b>10</b>
<b>3</b>	<i>Andersons Midlands Cohort - Sebastian Graff-Baker</i>	<b>11</b>
<b>4</b>	<i>Vispera - Retail Cohort - Maria Peggs</i>	<b>10</b>
<b>5</b>	<i>Resilient World Solutions Limited Cohort</i>	<b>11</b>
<b>6</b>	<i>Owen and Partners Ltd Cohort</i>	<b>9</b>
<b>7</b>	<i>SFEDI - High Growth Cohort</i>	<b>10</b>

<b>8</b>	<i>SFEDI - Retail Cohort</i>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>	<i>Oxford Innovation - Food and Drink Cohort 1</i>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b>	<i>Oxford Innovation - High Growth Cohort 1</i>	<b>9</b>
<b>11</b>	<i>Oxford Innovation - General Manufacturing Cohort 1</i>	<b>9</b>
<b>12</b>	<i>Marketing Voice - Tourism &amp; Hospitality Cohort</i>	<b>11</b>
<b>13</b>	<i>Marketing Voice - Fashion &amp; Textile Manufacturing Cohort</i>	<b>11</b>
<b>Total number of participants</b>		<b>128</b>

The participating businesses are classified as follows:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Cohort / organization</b>	<b>No. of participants</b>
<b>1</b>	<i>Micro Businesses</i>	<b>100</b>
<b>2</b>	<i>Small Businesses</i>	<b>23</b>
<b>3</b>	<i>Medium Businesses</i>	<b>6</b>

### **Business Support Programmes**

During the first quarter of 2021, the Business Gateway continued to focus on supporting businesses severely affected by Covid-19, to exploit digital technologies and utilise digital marketing to expand, grow and diversify their businesses. The Business Gateway has ensured that support is available to a wide range of sectors including High-Street retail & services, Creatives, Tourism and Hospitality, Food and Drink Manufacturing, Fashion and Textiles businesses, throughout the region.

**Digital Diagnostics & Consultancy Support Programme** – Delivered through a Digital Consultancy partner, Boom Online Marketing, each business can access up to two days of consultancy, free of charge to help them remain sustainable, competitive and adopt digital technologies to grow their business.

To date:

- 31 businesses are engaged with the programme
- 39 hours of 1:1 consultancy delivered
- 234 consultancy hours currently allocated to enrolled businesses.

Programme delivery is due to be completed in April 2021.

**NWLDC Digital Marketing High-Street Sector Support Programme** – 2 exclusive Cohorts delivered in partnership with North-West Leicestershire District Council, for high-street businesses impacted by Covid-19 restrictions who need to utilise digital marketing to help grow and diversify their business.

The programme offers a £1,000 grant (funded by NWLDC) for equipment and software that will help the business Implement recommendations from the programme and 1:1 consultancy with our Digital Consultancy provider to produce detailed action plans.

To date:

- 28 businesses are enrolled to the programme

Programme delivery is due to end June 2021.

**Digital Marketing support programmes** - tailored to support sectors impacted by Covid-19 and provides them with advice and guidance in how to use digital marketing to grow their businesses online. Four programmes for Retail, Leisure and Tourism, Manufacturing and Creatives sectors are due to commence delivery in April 2021, with a good level of interest received from local businesses to date.

**Food & Drink Sector Support Programme** – Delivered in partnership with the Food and Drink forum offering diagnostic and 1:1 support on a range of food and drink manufacturing issues.

To Date:

- 11 Food and Drink Sector businesses supported.

14 businesses are currently in the pipeline for delivery and demand for this support programme is consistently strong.

**Start-Up Accelerator Programme** – Delivered in partnership with Leicester Start-Ups, the accelerator programme forms one of Leicester University's initiatives to help bridge a gap between industry, staff and students to make connections, gain experience and design and launch new technologies whilst benefiting and growing the local economy.

To date:

- 13 early-stage businesses currently are engaged with the six-week programme of mentorship, networking, and motivation.

Programme delivery is due to end on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.

**Fashion and Textile Sector Support Programme** - Delivered in partnership with Resilient World Solutions, this tailored sector support programme is designed to support the strong Fashion and Textiles sector businesses', who have been severely

impacted by both Covid-19 and EU transitional issues within Leicester and Leicestershire. The programme offers 1:1 support from industry experts, an audit and action plan.

To Date:

- 10 textile businesses are engaged with the programme.

Programme delivery is due to end in April 2021.

The Business Gateway undertook a procurement exercise to appoint a telemarketing company to conduct outreach activity for the new Peer Networks Programme 2021-2022 and to conduct a customer satisfaction survey of businesses who had used the service. Blueberry Telemarketing have been appointed.

An additional procurement will see David James Ross contracted as the delivery provider for a Creative Sector Support Programme, focused on supporting up to 30 businesses to adopt ecommerce sites to grow their business online.

### **Business Gateway Marketing and Events**

Social media accounts have all increased in followers/fans during the past quarter.

<b>Social Media</b>	<b>January</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>
Twitter followers	2922	2931	2945
LinkedIn page followers	763	786	818
LinkedIn Group	1270	1282	1301
Facebook fans	408	422	438

<b>BizGateway Website</b>  <b>Jan to Mar 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>13,632 unique new visitors to the website</b></li> </ul>
<b>BizGateway e-newsletters</b>  <b>Jan to Mar 2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>9 e-newsletters were sent achieving 29.6% click to open rate</b></li> </ul>

## Adverts

### Niche Magazine

We had [a full-page advert in the Jan/Feb issue 2021 issue](#) of Niche Magazine and an EU support advertorial:

### MaHa Magazine

Our webinar advert was repeated in the January issue of MaHa magazine

### Innovation Awards – Advertorial

We are supporting this year's LeicestershireLive Innovation Awards. This package includes 2 editorial pieces, the first of which was issued in January. It featured one of our clients, Penny Price Aromatherapy who has had a Business Growth Grant.

### She Inspires Magazine

We were asked to produce a full-page editorial about grant funding and access to finance for this publication in March.

## Blogs

We issued 6 blogs including 2 from FU Media on EU support.

[blog-how-to-rebuild-employee-trust-and-morale/](#) **32 views**

[blog-learn-how-to-identify-talent-from-within-your-business-to-reskill/](#) - **4 views**

[blog-top-tips-on-boosting-motivation-and-performance/](#) - **9 views**

[blog-eight-simple-steps-to-create-your-brands-tone-of-voice/](#) - **21 views**

[blog-uk-border-readiness-what-does-brexit-mean-for-hauliers-and-drivers/](#) - **12 views**

[blog-new-euro-tariffs-and-charges-and-how-to-make-sure-youre-not-paying-too-much/](#) - **16 views**

## Case Studies

We created two case studies this quarter:

- Koi Sports: [koi-sports-is-match-fit-for-future-growth/](#)
- Home Independence Occupational Therapy: [growth-hub-support-helps-sophia-to-achieve-independence/](#)
- 

<b>Growth Hub Webinars</b>	<b>No. of Events</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>No. of Attendees</b>
Business Gateway Events	16	January	95
Business Gateway Events	34	February	93
Business Gateway Events	30	March	273

## Enterprise Zones

A new Business Rate Legal Agreement covering the next 10 years of the MIRA Technology Park Enterprise Zone has been signed. This means that the LLEP and the respective Billing Authorities have progressed the Forward Funding Agreements which will enable future investment in the Enterprise Zone.

The first tenants moved into a new business hub in Leicester’s Pioneer Park – part of the Loughborough and Leicester Science and Innovation Enterprise Zone. IT consultancy Employee Zero have occupied offices in the recently completed managed workspace next to the existing Dock facility. The hub provides 16 units, including light industrial workspace and office accommodation, for businesses wanting to be based in this thriving entrepreneurial community in the city. The continued strong demand for this type of accommodation saw the building nearly 50% pre-let when work started on the £5m scheme in May last year.

Consolidation of MIRA Technology Park as an R&D destination of choice for new and emerging vehicle technology continued with the confirmation of their partnership with REE Automotive. The agreement will see the development of a new state-of-the-art engineering centre on the site creating approximately 200 highly skilled jobs. The bespoke facilities will accelerate engineering design, validation, verification and testing of REE’s ground-breaking products which enable the development of electric

and autonomous cars, vans and trucks of any size or shape, for any application, and any target market.

### **Careers Hub and Enterprise Adviser Network**

During this quarter we have ran a campaign to recruit additional Enterprise Advisers (EAs) as part of a national 'Rewrite the Story' campaign. We have recruited a further 16 EAs bringing the total to 79.

We have welcomed new Advisers from a range of organisations including Cadent, Cocoa Amour, Croner HR, DPD Group, Mattioli Woods, Macildowie and XOP Logistics to name a few. In addition to this we have also increased membership in our Cornerstone Employer Group to include The Mighty Creatives, Cadent and Cavendish Nuclear.

The team launched the first phase of an ambitious World of Work (WoW) programme during National Careers Week (1-6 March 2021). WoW is a flexible and interactive programme, packed full of local information for all local schools and colleges. WoW supports Careers Leaders and Advisers in schools and colleges to understand more about industry sectors, the range of roles and careers, key facts and myth busting in a local context to aide their students in their careers choices.

Alongside classroom resources a set of industry specific videos have been produced with local employers and young people presenting them. They also offer employability tips, routes in and progression information for young people. Phase two will be launched in late April 2021.

The EAN and Careers Hub team are working with a range of local employers, Universities and Councils to create a programme of live and interactive 'Insight Days'. These will be open to all schools and colleges and give young people the opportunity to hear first-hand from local employers, take part in industry challenges and access real-time question and answer sessions with employees and apprentices.

The team continues to support schools and colleges on their recovery curriculum and strategic careers planning. COVID has created challenges with them being able to provide encounters for young people with employers and experiences of the workplace.

Working in partnership with Beaumont Leys School and the Education Improvement Partnership the LLEP have funded the expansion of the Leicester City Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Hub so that Careers Advisers and Practitioners from all schools and colleges in the Enterprise Adviser Network can take up the offer of membership. This strengthens the community of practice and allows even greater sharing of best practice around careers education.

### **Energy Infrastructure Strategy and Midlands Energy Hub**

Having recently completed a study identifying locations for a network of infrastructure scale Transport and energy hubs across the Midlands, we have begun to identify the next steps for progressing hubs in localities.

Midlands Energy Hub brought partners together to better understand which sites would be able to begin developing their plans, and to identify partners that could help. Local expertise and partners were engaged including Cenex, East Midlands Airport and Central England Cooperative.

Funding has been allocated to District and Borough Councils and City Council to support delivery of household energy efficiency works for lower income households across Leicester and Leicestershire as part of the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme (not affected by recent press about the voucher scheme) – this is coupled with training made available for increasing installers across the region.

The LLEP recently completed Carbon Literacy Training across the whole of the staff team and the two Board members who champion the Low Carbon agenda. This is part of wider work to develop an action plan for the zero-carbon agenda, demonstrated by the LLEP committing to support local Climate Emergency Declarations and [a recent Board Blog on the subject](#)

Another key area of work in this area is being developed with Zellar – a digital platform supporting businesses to decarbonise, more on this and greater support for the subject being developed in the Growth Hub will be reported next quarter.

The Rural Community Energy Fund is still available for communities wishing to explore the feasibility of renewables schemes in their area – anyone interested in applying for up to £40,000 for technical assistance and feasibility assessment can contact the LLEP for details.

## **Communications**

### **Press Releases**

#### **January 2021**

##### **Free support for Visitor Economy businesses to combat Covid-19 impact**

This dedicated support programme is aimed at tourism, hospitality, sport and leisure businesses, and the purpose is to support economic growth and help these businesses reach new consumer markets to help generate sales.

##### **Business volunteers needed to help rewrite the story of careers education in Leicestershire**

Local businesses are being asked to help “rewrite the story” for young people by putting their skills to use with a local school or college as an Enterprise Adviser.

#### **February 2021**

##### **East Midlands Makes Green Growth Freeport Bid**

An East Midlands bid for Freeport status has been submitted to the government today by a consortium led by the two Local Enterprise Partnerships that represent Leicester, Leicestershire, Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

##### **Unique Inland Freeport decision expected imminently**

A decision is expected imminently in response to the Government’s Freeport prospectus, Leicestershire joined regional partners to put forward a compelling proposition, making use of existing expertise and facilities.

##### **Growth Hub welcomes Government Covid briefing as good news for businesses**

The Prime Minister’s latest COVID briefing (22/2/21) brought signs of some good news for regional businesses.

##### **LLEP Enterprise Zone announces new engineering centre of Excellence**

MIRA Technology Park, one of the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership's (LLEP) two Enterprise Zones, has announced a new partnership that will see an engineering centre of excellence located at the site.

### **Digital health checks help businesses do more with technology**

Businesses struggling to get to grips with how digital technologies can improve their business have been thrown a lifeline from the Leicestershire Business Gateway Growth Hub.

## **March 2021**

### **Growth Hub support for Food and Drink sector is a recipe for growth**

The Growth Hub, with delivery partners The Food and Drink Forum, has created a no-cost programme of support that runs to December 2021.

### **Koi Sports is match-fit for future growth**

Leicester-based community interest company, Koi Sports CIC, has used the Covid-19 lockdown as time to reflect, plan for future growth and take advantage of the free support available from the Business Gateway Growth Hub.

### **LLEP publishes results of Business Tracker Survey**

The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership Ltd. (LLEP), has released the results of a new Business Tracker Survey.

### **Midlands LEPs celebrate two Freeports**

The Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak confirmed in his Budget on 3<sup>rd</sup> March that two out of eight English freeports would be located in the Midlands.

### **LLEP launches digital poverty call for evidence**

Partners and stakeholders that deliver services to local communities and businesses are invited by the LLEP to submit evidence to this digital poverty Call for Evidence.

### **Positive news for fashion and textile manufacturers**

To help the sector get through recent changes successfully, a new programme of support has been created by the Business Gateway Growth Hub for small and medium-sized fashion and textile manufacturers.

**Growth Hub welcomes Chancellor’s budget support for business**

Leicester and Leicestershire’s Growth Hub has welcomed the measures announced in yesterday’s budget by Chancellor Rishi Sunak.

**East Midlands Freeport given green light for take-off!**

The East Midlands received a major economic boost with the government's announcement that it will be one of eight new Freeports in England, creating an estimated 60,000 new skilled jobs for the region.

**Engagement**

**LLEP Social Media Overview – January to March 2021**

We posted fewer tweets this quarter, but our link clicks were higher, and we gained 77 new followers. Our activity on LinkedIn was less with fewer posts but the engagement was better than last quarter.

	<b>Tweets</b>	<b>Engagement</b>	<b>Engagement by type</b>	<b>Link Clicks</b>	<b>New Followers</b>
<b>Twitter Overview</b>	91	453K	253 likes 195 retweets 5 replies	101	77
	<b>Posts</b>	<b>Engagement</b>	<b>Engagement by type</b>	<b>Page Clicks</b>	<b>New Followers</b>
<b>LinkedIn Overview</b>	18	242	162 reactions 64 shares	161	67

			17 comments		
--	--	--	-------------	--	--

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>LLEP Website</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Jan to Mar 2021</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>25,533 new visitors to the website, up 52%</b> <i>Jan to Mar 2020 – 12,121</i></li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>LLEP Weekly News Roundup</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Jan to Mar 2021</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>15 e-newsletters were sent achieving 24.8% click to open rate</b></li> </ul>

### Events Round-Up

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic the LLEP team has been working remotely and not organised face to face events. This quarter saw one LLEP event.

<b>Webinars</b>	<b>No. of Events</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>No. of Attendees</b>
<p>LLEP Economic Data Development Workshop</p> <p>This event was for partners, organisations and stakeholders who wanted to learn more about economic data for Leicester and Leicestershire.</p>	1	February	35

### Forthcoming Events

LLEP Digital Skills Insight Event planned for Wednesday 26 May 2021 at 10am

The LLEP's AGM 2021 is planned for Tuesday 29 June 2021 at 16:00 hrs.

## **Personnel**

### **Staffing Changes**

Staff changes from January to March 2021 welcomed the arrival of Peter Allen, Communications and Marketing Officer and Kerry Mainwaring, Project Officer, both for the Business Gateway Growth Hub team.