

LLEP UPDATE APRIL TO JUNE 2021

LLEP Quarterly Report

2021 Q2
April - June



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LLEP Limited

Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership held its second annual general meeting since forming as a limited company.

Over 100 attendees watched a video presentation of the 2020-21 Annual Report from our Chair Kevin Harris, our Vice Chair Andy Reed presented the company accounts to the members before submission to Companies House. In comparison, Andy also presented a slide showing the LLEP operating accounts which are held and managed by our Accountable Body.

Declan Allen and Andy MacDonald from MIRA Technology Park gave an informative presentation on Low carbon and the Future of Mobility. The 20-minute presentation started with an overview of HORIBA MIRA and MIRA Technology Park. They showcased some of the world leading engineering, research and product testing that the park offered, and how they were developing and hosting highly innovative technologies to solve complex problems, increasingly in the Electrification & Autonomous areas of the automotive industry.

A short presentation on the LLEP Priorities and Economic Growth Strategy for 2021 from Andy Reed was given before the Board of Directors took part in a question-and-answer session.

A copy of the annual report and AGM slides can be found on our website [Annual Reports and AGM | LLEP](#)

Following the resignation of Nick Rushton as the public sector director representative for Leicestershire County Council, the members approved the nomination of Councillor Peter Bedford.

Councillor Bedford is a county councillor for Markfield, Desford & Thornton, his portfolio at the county council includes being a member of the Cabinet, Constitution Committee, Employment Committee as well as attending full council meetings.

Strategy

Economic Growth Strategy

Fourteen workshops were held by Cambridge Econometrics with 117 key LLEP stakeholders to gather their thoughts on key points for inclusion within the Economic Growth Strategy. The workshops covered several themes:

- Economic challenges and opportunities
- Enterprise and innovation
- Infrastructure and place
- Climate change and sustainability
- Skills, the labour market, inequality and inclusion

Separate workshops were also held with the Strategic Planning Group and the Skills Advisory Panel. The Evidence Review comprising a summary of the latest evidence on the LLEP economy as well as a synthesis of previous strategies was also completed by the consultants. A series of sessions were held with the LLEP Board to discuss the format and layout of the Strategy. This helped to shape the initial draft of the Strategy for Board consideration. Feedback from Board members led to a refinement of the Strategy, and the Strategy was then endorsed by the Board.

LLEP Business Tracker Study

The second fieldwork period came to an end, a total of 200 businesses within the LLEP area were interviewed. The results from the second wave of fieldwork [can be found on the LLEP website](#).

Covid-19 Sector Research

We worked with Cambridge Econometrics to identify 15 key 'sectors of interest' which would be subject to in-depth analysis. The consultants worked to gather data on these sectors and develop a profile for each. These profiles were shared with industry experts to ensure that the information included was accurate. The sector profiles will be published next quarter.

Natural Capital Strategic Assessment

A policy review was conducted to understand the current policy landscape for The Natural Capital Strategic Assessment. This was included alongside the natural capital

baseline review and workshop findings to form the final assessment, which [can be found on the LLEP website](#).

Skills Advisory Panel (SAP)

The LLEP Skills Advisory Panel meeting was held on 13th April.

This involved a consultation session with Cambridge Econometrics, who had been commissioned to develop the area Economic Recovery Strategy. Cambridge led on a skills focus session as part of the LLEP Economic Recovery Strategy, for SAP members to be fully involved. There was also consultation on the digital skills work, and apprenticeships work, including the development of an area matrix that lists which providers offer apprenticeships across sectors locally, to help engagement with businesses, schools and support advisers.

A Digital Poverty Call for Evidence went live in February 2021 (closing on April 15). The findings were collated and analysed, ready to be used as part of the digital skills work. We were unsuccessful in seconding a Digital Skills Coordinator, to coordinate area digital skills research, evidence, and lead on creating and driving forward an area Digital Skills Partnership, but Stewart Smith, who is already part-seconded to the LLEP, stepped forward to lead on this area. The skills team held a Digital Skills Insight event for partners on May 26 to update them on digital research and start to create the Digital Skills Partnership.

The Leicester and Leicestershire Local Skills Report (LSR) was launched at the end of March 2021, feedback has been positive, and many partners are utilising this document, which will be updated each year. This is a high-level document that defines skills for regions covered by a Local Enterprise Partnership, setting out core data, successes, and challenges. This feeds into the Skills and Productivity Board, enabling them to compare regions. The LSR has now been completed and is available on the LLEP website at: <https://llep.org.uk/skills-strategy/>

Leicester and Leicestershire Business and Economic Intelligence Update

Headlines from the latest monthly (June 21) update include:

Claimant Rate

- The June 21 claimant rate in the Leicester and Leicestershire area is 4.6% (England 5.7%). This translates to 31,000 claimants. The picture is very different in the city and county. Leicester has a claimant rate of 7.1% and Leicestershire 3.3%. Leicester's claimant rate is 1.4 percentage points higher than average.
- In March 2020 the claimant rate was 2.3% (or 15,145). Between March 2020 and the end of June 2021 the claimant rate increased by 2.6 percentage points to 4.6% (31,000). This translates to an additional 15,855 claimants.
- Since March of this year the number of claimants has fallen by 4,370 (from 35,370 to 31,000).
- Figures for June 2021 demonstrate that there were on average a larger share of 18-24 years olds (5.4%) who were claimants than 25-49 years olds (5.2%) and claimants that were 50 and over (3.7%). Nationally the claimant rates were higher for 18-24 years olds (7.7%), 25-49 years olds (6.2%) and those who are 50 and over (4.4%).
- It must be noted that there were 6,005 claimants that were 18-24, 17,560 aged 25-49 and 7,375 aged 50 plus. All age groups have been significantly impacted and must be considered when undertaking works to reduce the claimant count locally.

Source: Office for National Statistics Claimant Count

Furloughed Staff

- In May 2021 there were over 37,000 eligible staff that had been furloughed. In January 2021 the figure was over 71,000. This is a significant reduction.
- 30/09/2021 - Proposed closure of the furlough scheme.

Source: HMRC

Job Postings

- In June 2021 there were 40,197 unique job postings. In June 2020 there were just 23,594. This is a rise of 16,603 postings (or 70.4%).

- Despite unique job postings being higher in June 2021 than pre pandemic figures in the Leicester and Leicestershire area, job posting data in the Leicester and Leicestershire areas present two different pictures. In Leicestershire from August of 2020 there have been more unique job postings than the last figure supplied prior to the pandemic (March 2020). In Leicester figures have continually failed to exceed the figure delivered for March 2020. This demonstrates that Leicester has not recovered to pre-pandemic levels.

Source: EMSI Job Postings

Business Closures

- Since the start of March 2020, nearly 11,000 businesses have ceased trading in the Leicester and Leicestershire area.
- Closures in 2021 are higher than in 2019 and 2020. In 2021 (to the end of June 2021) there have been nearly 6,000 solved businesses. For the same period in 2020 the figure was between 2,000 and 3,000 and 2019 nearly 5,000.
- Since the beginning of March 2020 over 15,000 businesses have been incorporated in the Leicester and Leicestershire area. Over this period there have been more incorporations than closures, this can be attributed to those schemes implemented by the government that help support businesses through the pandemic.
- When comparing closures with incorporations in 2021 there have been more than 1,000 closures than incorporations.

Source: BVD Fame

The latest Business and Economic Intelligence Update can be found at <https://leep.org.uk/our-economy/>.

Annual Economic Profiles 2020

In June Annual Economic Profiles were made available.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has presented many questions for employers and employees and made 2020 a difficult year. In 2021 the force of the pandemic continues to bite, and it is still uncertain how some industries will be affected, what is certain is that there will be a prolonged resetting of the local and national economies.

Annual Economic Profiles bring together data from a variety of sources that:

- Help provide a snapshot of the local economy.
- Show how the local economy is performing.
- Demonstrate what businesses support the economy and local employment and where this is changing.

Annual Economic Profiles are available for the Local Enterprise Partnership, local and district authority areas.

Annual Economic Profiles can be found at <https://llep.org.uk/our-economy/>.

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. Work started in May 2021 to collate information for the summer update.

An updated **World of Work guide for adults** was launched in April 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 here: <https://llep.org.uk/skills/information-and-resources-for-adults/>

The skills team continued to work with the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) team **on videos about key local sectors** from April to June. A further set of films linked to sectors, with complimentary lesson plans, presentations and quizzes were launched in June 2021. These 14 resources are aimed at schools and colleges, but 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](#).

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

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

Scripts for the films were created in June 2021, and filming commenced with SEGRO and East Midlands Airport.

District snapshots were piloted in early 2020, with local employer and sector information. Updated versions have been started in June 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. We are 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. We have commenced the collation of 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. An area apprenticeships strategy has also been commenced.

Funding

European Structural and Investment Funds

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

Our ERDF Programme officially “closed” in December 2020, so there will be no new or additional funding made available in our local area. For most ERDF projects, contracts will continue to be delivered up to December 2023.

Where projects have had a surge in demand, particularly for business support because of the pandemic, they may have insufficient funding available to take them up to the end of their contract period. We have a representative on the National Growth Programme Boards (the governing body for the UK’s ESIF Programme 2014-20) and we are working with the ERDF Managing Authority to try and resolve this issue via the ERDF National Reserve.

Our ERDF Technical Assistance project was completed in December 2020. Due to staff shortages because of the pandemic, the ERDF Managing Authority has not yet carried out any of the final checks required and paid the final claim.

European Social Fund (ESF)

As with our ERDF Programme, the national ESF Programme is closed to any new local funding calls unless there is 1) a clear link to address the pandemic, 2) a need to aid economic recovery post pandemic, 3) there is sufficient funding nationally in both the category and our region, and 4) match funding is identified.

Leicester and Leicestershire are in the more developed region where there is currently little or no funding under ESF Investment Priority 1 (unemployment) which is where we have the most need. We have also struggled significantly to identify and secure local match funding. Under the ESF Reserve Fund, a limited second round of the ESF Digital Skills Inclusion Call opened to existing ESF projects only, to provide the necessary digital equipment / infrastructure needed for their clients to be able to continue to be supported whilst under lockdown. No applications were received. There is currently an investigation under-way at the ESF Managing Authority to understand why this was the case. Under the first-round last year at the beginning of the pandemic when there was also a very low take-up. In Leicester and Leicestershire, one project applied (Twin International) and secured approximately £600,000. When

talking with projects they cited the issues of financial risk placed on them by the ESF Managing Authority together with the incredibly short timelines given to apply and spend the money, as reasons as to why they didn't apply.

We have an ESF Technical Assistance project in place until December 2021. The ESF Managing Authority also has significant staff shortages and we have not received a Variation to our Funding Agreement (VFA), requested by the ESF Managing Authority following changes to the national guidance.

Therefore, we have not been able to submit a financial claim on the e-claims system since Q2 2019. We are working closely with the ESF Managing Authority to resolve these issues before the end of the next reporting period (September 2021).

European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

Due to the pandemic, the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has delayed the closing date by which rural businesses could complete their activities and submit their final claim. The closing date for applications did not change because the programme closed before the lockdown began in March 2020.

Due to GDPR data sharing restrictions the RPA do not the names and details of the businesses who have applied for EAFRD with LEP's. Therefore, we only have headline figures. As of April 2021, £2.55m EAFRD has been secured supporting 12 rural businesses with an average grant of £212,000.

Programme Delivery

Getting Building Fund

Progress has been made on individual projects as follows:

St Margaret's Bus Station

The tender process to appoint a building contractor has completed and a preferred bidder has been appointed. The main contractor was appointed on 9th June and took possession of the site on 14th June. A press release regarding the highways works in the location of the bus station has also been sent out. Construction works are continuing on site, a site visit with the City Mayor, Councillor's and Chair of LLEP Board is expected to take place at the end of August.

Loughborough University Sport Park Pavilion 4

The programme has experienced several delays and is behind schedule. A new schedule has been agreed with Loughborough University and 50% of the funding allocation will be held over into 2022/23. This delay was agreed with the managing authority under its freedoms and flexibilities. Construction is due to start on 1st September 2021.

Granby St/St George St Regeneration Gateway

The design stage is underway. Public engagement regarding the proposed works were carried out May and June 2021. A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) regarding the changes was also advertised May 2021.

Consultants have been appointed for cost management and detailed design of St George Street works. Overall start dates have been delayed slightly, but the project team is looking to accelerate the programme to meet its original timeframes by completing construction works during the Christmas moratorium.

J23 M1/A512 Access Improvements

All works onsite are now complete. The full project funding amount has been defrayed.

The claims for the first quarter of 2021/22 are being processed, the total amount of Getting Building Fund to be defrayed up until 30th June 2021 is £4.22m of the total £20m allocation.

Local Growth Fund

Since all projects have claimed their full grant allocation in March 2021, they have continued to be monitored until fully complete and provide quarterly updates of outputs & match funding contributions. Focus Consultants have also been appointed to undertake an end of programme evaluation.

Within Quarter one, 3 projects including Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Hinckley, Skills Training Centre (MTI) & Superfast Leicestershire have now fully closed having completed all outputs as per their funding agreements and their evaluation reports.

A number of milestones & outputs have been achieved during quarter 1 and some key ones to note include:

- completion of 16000 Sq ft office space on the A50 as part of the Waterside Regeneration project
- completion of works on the A512 as part of the M1 J23 & A512 Improvements project
- completion of works at Marsden Lane and CRT works at Memory Lane as part of the River Soar Flood Risk Strategy project

Growing Places Fund

There are currently three GPF projects including Haywoods Estates, The Gresham and Broadnook.

Haywoods Estates

Haywoods Estates has made progress and completed three further sales, with two further projected sales by the end of July expected. Two premium sites currently valued at a combined £327k remain available for sale.

The Gresham

The City Mayor and LLEP team members conducted a site visit to The Gresham development in June. The project is progressing well with no supply chain issues and the projected completion date is the end of August or early September, a three months delay from the original business proposal.

A marketing campaign has commenced for the commercial and retail space, which is attracting positive responses and a number of which are currently in serious negotiation.

Broadnook Garden Village

Detailed heads of terms have been prepared and are awaiting signatures or confirmations from solicitors. The terms which were guided by and have been verified by panels, comments and advice from the accountable body lawyers have undergone scrutiny.

The next stages upon confirmed signatures is to issue a formal loan agreement conditional upon the land being offered as loan security with the applicants. As the planned July start is no longer achievable, a revised timescale is required to reach a loan agreement.

Coalville

An expression of interest has been received for a depot in Coalville. Initial early discussions and negotiations have been held, where the organisation is wanting £1.5m investment for a £3m build. A business case has been requested from the applicant.

Business Rates Pooling

In 2015 the nine local authorities within Leicester and Leicestershire agreed to form a business rates pool which would allow the local area to retain the growth in business rates across the area and reinvest it. This funding, administered by the LLEP, supports the delivery of projects and functions that meet the prevailing economic strategy priorities, driving productivity and growth of the Leicester and Leicestershire economy.

Only those members who contribute towards the pool can bid for funds. Funding is allocated through a competitive process.

In April, Blaby District Council launched the Blaby District Tourism and Heritage Trail. The Fosse Foxes project is a partnership between Blaby District Council and Fosse Park. Local artists Pickle Illustration painted the 20 foxes with each fox having its own unique symbols to represent its location. Placed at tourist attractions across the district, Fosse Foxes locations include Palmers Garden Centre in Narborough, Fosse Meadows in Sharnford and the historic Ice House on Bouskell Park, Blaby.

You can view the locations at [Fosse Foxes Map \(visitblaby.org.uk\)](https://www.visitblaby.org.uk)

Leicestershire County Council secured funds to aid Covid-19 recovery for the rural economy, following the overwhelming number of applications, they have successfully allocated the full £750,000 to rural businesses.

Innovation Board

The Innovation board held their board meeting on 23 June during Leicestershire Innovation Week. The meeting was preceded by the LLEP Innovation Showcase event chaired by Dr Nik Kotecha, OBE, with keynote speeches from government by Dr Luke Evans MP for Hinckley and Bosworth and Professor Fiona Murray CBE, from the MIT Sloan School of Business. The event also featured testimonials from Leicestershire businesses about their innovation journey.

This was just one of 19 events organised as part of Innovation Week across a range of themes and sectors. Innovation Week included key topic areas such as harnessing the power of space technology, developing the next generation of diagnostics in the health sector and green hydrogen. Events also focussed on building communities in food and drinks and the fashion and textiles industry. The events delivered powerful insights and engaged audiences who participated in Q&A sessions.

The Innovation Board is progressing with a draft Innovation Dashboard. This is a means of mapping innovation in Leicester and Leicestershire and monitoring the uptake by businesses to innovate. Metrics will be mapped to at least one Innovation enabler. A traffic light system for each indicator will lead to an overall assessment of change/progress against each Innovation enabler.

Another priority for the Innovation Board is the delivery of business support. A series of workshops and webinars are to be commissioned to run a pilot for SMEs.

Three companies have been chosen from the tender process and the first to commence delivery is Qinesis. This company helps businesses to grow through offering services in management, consultancy, coaching, mentoring, and training. Support includes commercialising innovation.

Their innovation webinars will be built around being agile, flexible, practical, and cater specifically for SMEs who often feel disenfranchised from Innovation. Regular

breakout groups will include discussion pieces, engagement, and reflection to improve the innovation mindset under a peer group trainer.

Business Gateway Growth Hub

During this period the Business Gateway received a total of 341 direct requests for support.

This is lower than the previous quarter however, this was expected due to easing of restrictions and moving forwards from where businesses felt they were 6-12 months ago.

Business Advisers have confirmed that the enquiries they received have been heavily focused around businesses now wanting to grow / expand and other clients wanting to start new businesses.

The majority of the enquiries received are based within Leicester City with Charnwood and Melton following behind. The most common sectors for these enquiries are from manufacturing, wholesale and retail businesses.

Programme Procurement Update

The Business Gateway commissioned two delivery partners for business support programmes.

The Food and Drink Forum have been procured to deliver a 3-month package of support to Food and Drink Manufactures, and Food and Drink retail and hospitality sector businesses.

The How to win Food & Drink Tenders Support Programme will work with a maximum of 20 Leicester/shire Food & Drink Manufactures and related businesses to prepare them for a new public sector common framework and help them secure tenders for supply. The package of support will include 12 workshops plus up to 4 hours 1:1 technical and business support from sector experts and specialists.

The programme is due to commence in September 2021 and will run until March 2022.

Ian Lockwood Digital Consultancy Ltd has been procured to deliver the Digital solutions for your business challenges support programme.

Our experts will support businesses to explore, develop and maintain effective digital solutions. This can cover anything from building a website to CRM and digital logistics. Each business can access up to 8 hours of fully funded 1:1 support.

Peer Networks

The peer networks programme continues to recruit businesses to form part of the new cohort delivery for 2021-22. Three cohorts each comprising of 11 directors across a range of sectors have already commenced with a further 14 cohorts still to be recruited. The programme must be delivered between now and March 2022.

The pilot programmes 2020-21 has been effective at helping businesses to develop the innovation mindset with glowing reports from participants benefiting from working with directors from other businesses across a range of sizes and sectors.

Business Gateway Comms and Marketing Update

Editorials and blogs were used to help push key messages for the Business Gateway. This includes some paid-for articles through LeicestershireLive and the Business Desk.

Themes of innovation and going green have been used in communications, particularly linked to our events programme and Innovation Week. We included case study examples.

Innovation Week was heavily promoted and featured prominently on the Business Gateway website.

We continue to promote the core webinar programme through social media and elsewhere to encourage attendance and also increase engagement with Leicestershire SMEs.

Social Media	April	May	June
Twitter followers	2956	2967	2988
LinkedIn page followers	858	879	915
LinkedIn Group	1304	1321	1336
Facebook fans	443	446	446

We sent out eight newsletters, with an average open rate of 27%.

BizGateway Website April to June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11,732 unique new visitors to the website
BizGateway e-newsletters April to June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32,108 e-newsletters were delivered achieving 9.95% click to open rate

Enterprise Zones

The first project funded through the Enterprise Zone Business Rates Reinvestment Fund at Charnwood Campus got underway. We awarded £3.14m, and facilitated through an agreement with Charnwood Borough Council, it will part-fund the refurbishment of a substantial three-storey, state-of-the-art laboratory facility for a new tenant for the site, Charnwood Molecular. The company are expanding onto the site and are due to occupy the building in the Autumn creating around 300 jobs.

Loughborough University, in partnership with Charnwood Borough Council, has launched a business start-up accelerator programme that aims to help local people, working on unique, early-stage products or services, bring their vision to life. Established in response to the Covid-19 pandemic the two-year programme is being delivered by LU Inc. (Loughborough University's incubator) and is part-funded by £314,000 from a Covid-19 Recovery Fund created using Enterprise Zone Business Rates.

MIRA Technology Park welcomed another noteworthy innovator, Viritech, to the campus. The company are developing one of the world's first hydrogen hyper-cars onsite, The Apricale™, in tandem with HORIBA MIRA's world-class engineering consultancy. It will be sold in limited volumes and is Viritech's start point for a cleantech revolution based on zero emissions hydrogen powertrain development that will extend into HGV solutions and onward to marine, aerospace and power generation.

Private equity investor and developer, Evans Randall Investors, has signed a joint venture agreement with HORIBA MIRA Ltd to become the exclusive developer for MIRA Technology Park. Evans Randall Investors will now oversee the next phase of development at MTP, which will see it expand across two neighbouring sites located

either side of the A5. The project will deliver up to 4m sq ft of new space with a total GDV of up to £500m, encompassing R&D, office and industrial facilities.

Careers Hub and Enterprise Adviser Network

The Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN) continues to grow with 94% of schools and colleges now engaged in the Network and supported by a LLEP Enterprise Coordinator. Over the next academic year all schools will be invited to join the EAN and access more support through the Careers Hub. A high proportion of institutions in the EAN are also matched to an Enterprise Adviser (EA) working with them on their career's education programmes.

We now have 84 EAs with our most recent volunteers joining us from the Department for Education, ZMS Solicitors, Michelmersh Brick Holdings PLC, Growth Partners, Office Angels, Peter le Marchant Trust, Caterpillar and CS Elliot Group.

The second phase of our World of Work (WoW) Programme was launched providing schools with even more local labour market resources for young people and introducing them to key sectors including Space, low carbon, tourism and hospitality and digital innovation.

Working with local employers including Cadent, Lendlease, Cavendish Nuclear and LCFC the team have created over 200 virtual insight experiences just for students in Leicester and Leicestershire. These are interactive live sessions involving employees ranging from senior managers to apprentices working in these companies. Young people had the chance to hear first-hand on career pathways and ask questions.

Two Autism Awareness training sessions have been Delivered by Autism Plus which have been funded through the Careers Hub. The sessions raised awareness of Autism and how employers might engage with young people with autism and how this might be able to take place in the workplace with the right support.

The Careers Hub Manager and Head of Strategy and Engagement delivered an online workshop at the national Teachers and Careers Advisers Conference for the University of Leicester. The session highlighted how Local Skills Reports and Economic Growth Strategies produced by all Local Enterprise Partnerships can help develop a whole school or college career programme.

In June we launched a Community of Practice to look at careers provision for young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND). This was attended by a

wide range of partners and a highlight was hearing directly for a student at Dorothy Goodman Special School who completed a work placement with Geosynthetics and an engaging Q and A session.

Energy Infrastructure Strategy and Midlands Energy Hub

Midlands Energy Hub have partnered in a regional bid being headed up by Midlands Engine and EDF Energy looking at hydrogen HGV's. The proposal would look at provision of hydrogen powered 44 tonne vehicles, generation of hydrogen and locations for a network of hydrogen refuelling stations. With logistics a key Midlands sector, but particularly a Leicestershire strength, this desktop study will stand us in good stead for further funding to carry out a physical trial of vehicles and fuelling across the Leicester/shire area and the Midlands.

Following provision of funding for greening low-income homes in Leicester and Leicestershire (through Local Authority Delivery 2 – LAD2) Midlands Energy Hub are submitting a regional bid to continue this work through 2022/23 as the Government launch the Sustainable Warmth Fund (incorporating LAD3 and Home Upgrade Grant). All Leicester/shire Local Authorities have been invited to participate.

The Growth Hub has launched its trial of a digital platform aimed at supporting businesses to decarbonise. Zellar is the first Sustainability as a Service platform which enables a business to identify its carbon impact and then provides a bespoke plan to reduce it. The Growth Hub is providing 100 free licenses for Leicester and Leicestershire Businesses to try out the package, with the Growth Hub looking to demonstrate the collective impact over the year the trial will run.

The Growth Hub has also recently concluded a series of webinars introducing the zero-carbon agenda to businesses. The webinars introduced subjects ranging from transport to behaviour change and included practical examples of good practice and success stories along with support available for businesses. The six webinars were delivered by De Montfort University, University of Leicester and Sustainability West Midlands.

We are beginning work internally to respond to the Climate Emergency. The Zero Carbon Action Plan sets out a series of actions from Carbon Literacy Training for staff (reported in the Jan to Mar update) to embedding low carbon into funding decisions and strategies. We will continue to report on progress.

Communications

Press Releases

April 2021

LLEP is first Local Enterprise Partnership to become Carbon Literate

LLEP is the first Local Enterprise Partnership in the country to achieve a bronze level Carbon Literacy Award from The Carbon Literacy Project. The LLEP employees undertook a comprehensive training course on carbon reduction and the climate emergency.

June 2021

Innovation Week 2021 aims to inspire

This year's Leicestershire Innovation Week has one goal in mind: to inspire businesses of every size and sector to embrace innovation.

Innovation Week Launch is out of this world

The official launch event, 'First Steps to Business Blast Off', was organised by the Business Gateway Growth Hub in partnership with Space Park Leicester and attended by over 50 people.

Showcase celebrates best of Leicestershire Innovation Culture

Leicestershire Innovation Week 2021 saw over 1000 people register for 19 events. One of the highlights was Shaping the Future Innovation Showcase which involved three pioneering innovative companies right here in Leicestershire.

Engagement

LLEP Social Media Overview – April to June 2021

	Tweets	Engagement	Engagement by type	Link Clicks	New Followers
Twitter Overview	136	389K	228 likes 158 retweets	136	39

	Posts	Engagement	Engagement by type	Page Clicks	New Followers
LinkedIn Overview	88	288	3 replies 145 reactions 57 shares 8 comments	140	44

LLEP Website April to June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20,871 unique new visitors to the website
LLEP Round-Up e-newsletters April to June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38,236 e-newsletters were delivered achieving 27.3% click to open rate

Events Round-Up

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the LLEP team has been working remotely and not organised face to face events. This quarter saw the LLEP Digital Skills Insight Event on 26 May and the LLEP Annual General Meeting on 29 June.

Innovation Week also took place from 21-26 June, supported by the LLEP and Business Gateway.

The Business Gateway continued their series of webinars.

The table below includes a summary of event activity.

Webinars	No. of Events	Date	No. of Attendees
Business Gateway	22	April	157
LLEP Digital Skills Insight Event This event was organised for LLEP partners and skills organisations that want to learn more about how we are coordinating research and actions to drive digital skills forward in our region.	1	26 May	46
Business Gateway	21	May	211
LLEP Annual General Meeting for 2020 -21 This event was held online and provided an overview of all the LLEP programmes over the last year. Guest speakers from MIRA Technology Park gave an insight to the exciting new developments at the site.	1	29 June	94
Innovation Week Events	19 total	21-26 June	TBC

First Steps to Business Blast Off at Space Park Leicester LLEP			55
Leicestershire Innovation Showcase - Shaping our Future LLEP			67
Business Gateway	20	June	141

Forthcoming LLEP Events

6th July - Digital Skills - Unlock your Business Potential Breakfast Briefing

11th August - LLEP Enterprise Adviser Recruitment Event

Personnel

Staffing Changes

Staff changes from April to June 2021 welcomed the arrival of Sharif Chowdhury, LLEP Governance Officer. Leavers included Helen Miller, Head of Programmes, Jon Egley, Growth Hub Manager and Sabine Pavule, Admin Support Officer.