

Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership

Local Skills Report

Updated January 2022





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Foreword

This Local Skills Report has been written against the backdrop of an unprecedented economic shock due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which closed large parts of the UK economy for prolonged periods. The City of Leicester has been subject to the longest period of continuous lockdown measures in the country with a consequent impact on our local economy. Measures have led to consumers and businesses adapting to the changed circumstances with new and changed behaviours. Some of the trends predicted to unfold over future years happened almost overnight, for example a mass move to remote working, home learning and online shopping. At the time of writing the report, it is still unclear as to what extent the economy will return to pre-pandemic 'normal' and which changes are now so embedded they will become permanent transformations to how we live, work and learn. Alongside the disruption of Covid-19, the United Kingdom has also fully left the European Union after a year of transition. The challenges and opportunities of EU exit will also take time to become clear.

With this in mind, the Local Skills Report is very much a forward-looking document with a close eye on future trends: how the Leicester and Leicestershire economy could look in the future and the skills required to get us there.

The report begins by considering the current strengths and needs of the of the Leicester and Leicestershire area. Leicestershire's two Enterprise Zones are undoubtedly a local strength in

supporting industries and jobs of the future, including the UK's first Life Sciences Opportunity Zone as well as supporting space science and automotive research. Logistics is another significant strength of the area and a sector which has experienced accelerated growth in recent years, capitalising on Leicestershire's location at the heart of the UK. There are several logistics hubs in Leicester and Leicestershire but the area surrounding East Midlands airport will see a particular boost in future years after being awarded Freeport status in the 2021 Government budget. To capitalise on these strengths, businesses will need skilled workers and we have outlined how this demand can be fulfilled, for example through supporting disadvantaged groups, reskilling existing workers, and creating skilled young workers with the support of local colleges, training providers and universities. At the time of writing we await confirmation of the outcome of the Institutes of Technology bids submitted to the Department of Education, which would be a key component of skills provision to meet the needs of our advanced technology businesses and also a catalyst for the adoption of higher technical qualifications by SMEs in Leicester and Leicestershire.



The strategy to achieve the ambitions of the Skills Advisory Panel starts with recovery. This is not what we expected to write one year ago but the economy is now in a very different place. However, the recovery also brings the opportunity to 'Build Back Better', a phrase frequently heard in recovery planning across the political spectrum and the title of the Government's recently published plan for economic growth. Underpinning this report, and central to the development of our local skills strategy, the Skills Advisory Panel has identified four golden threads. These are not separate issues to be viewed in isolation but themes to be embedded in all future thinking.

- Place (place-based deals for our city, towns and rural areas)
- Green recovery (accelerating carbon reduction and clean growth)
- Digital (infrastructure, skills and transformation)
- Inclusive growth and well-being (ensuring a fair recovery)

The skills priorities identified in the report aim to boost the area's strengths of STEM and logistics whilst also strengthening the foundations of the economy and supporting national initiatives of infrastructure and housing growth. There will be a need for high level technical skills, for example in STEM and digital and also skills which are relatively new in sectors such as low carbon, for example retro fitting homes. There will also be a need to reskill existing workers to meet areas of demand, for example health and care roles or logistics. The impact of Covid-19 has disproportionately hit

some sectors, for example hospitality, the arts, and some retail and within this, particular demographic groups such as young people, women and the over 50s. However, we do expect a significant 'bounce back' as people return to hospitality, creative and performing arts venues and tourist attractions.

The Local Skills Report aims to demonstrate how evidence can be transformed into actions to support the ambitions of the Skills Advisory Panel. The Skills Advisory Panel has agreed that the focus for skills to rebuild our economy over the coming years must be on:

- Improving digital literacy
- Apprenticeships and training
- Inclusive skills and employment
- Skills transfer through innovation and collaboration
- Young people
- Pathways to future jobs

We know that the skills and education community in Leicester and Leicestershire has worked tirelessly since the onset of Covid-19 to address these issues and details of some of the initiatives already in place can be seen in the case studies detailed in Chapter 7, showcasing some fantastic ingenuity from local providers and businesses.

Verity Hancock,
Principal and
CEO of Leicester
College and Chair
of the LLEP Skills
Advisory Panel.

March 2021



Skills Advisory Panels Introduction



Skills Advisory Panels: the national context

Since 2018, Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs) have been bringing together employers, skills providers and key local stakeholders to better understand and resolve skills mismatches at a local level. SAPs are part of Mayoral Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships and there are 36 in total across England. The Department for Education (DfE) has supported SAPs with grant funding primarily to produce high-quality analysis of local labour markets and publish Local Skills Reports, which

set out the local skills strengths and needs and how the SAP proposes its area addresses its key priorities.

This second iteration of SAPs' Local Skills Reports comes at a time when DfE is Trailblazing new Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs), in eight areas of the country, including in Leicestershire. Developed by Employer Representative Bodies, LSIPs are part of a suite of reforms launched in DfE's "Skills for Jobs" White Paper that aim to put employers more firmly at the heart of the skills system. An evaluation of the eight Trailblazers will inform the national roll out of the programme. In the meantime, and before LSIPs are rolled out across the country, it is DfE's intention

that Skills Advisory Panels and this Local Skills Report should continue to influence the behaviour of local partners and feed intelligence to central government, including to sectoral focussed skills teams and the national-level Skills and Productivity Board (SPB).

The Leicester and Leicestershire SAP meets quarterly and is chaired by Verity Hancock, LLEP Board member, Principal of Leicester College and board member of the Office for Students.



Current membership includes the following organisations:

- LLEP Board representation
- Hinckley and Bosworth Director of Community Services (representing district councils)
- East Midlands Chamber of Commerce (representing business)
- Reaching People (VCS representative)
- Leicester City Council (upper tier local authority)
- Leicestershire County Council (upper tier local authority)
- Education and Skills Funding Agency
- Futures (Careers advice and guidance and training provider)
- Institute of Directors (representing business)
- Job Centre Plus
- Gateway College (representing FE)
- Beaumont Leys School (representing secondary schools)
- Vanilla Recruitment (SME)
- Leicester City Football Club (employer)
- De Montfort University (representing HE)



Further details of the Leicester and Leicestershire Skills Advisory Panel, including the Terms of Reference, can be found on the LLEP website⁴.

1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-advisory-panels>

2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/skills-and-productivity-board>

3 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-for-jobs-lifelong-learning-for-opportunity-and-growth>

4 <https://llep.org.uk/governance/our-boards/overview-of-sub-boards/skills-advisory-panel>

Skills Strengths and Needs



Local Landscape

Leicester and Leicestershire is home to over one million people with a working age population of 679,000 and a 65+ population of 184,000.

The area comprises the city of Leicester, seven smaller market towns and rural areas with small towns and villages.

There are three universities in the area, each with their own unique and broad specialisms, producing approximately 19,000 graduates each year, along with four FE colleges with around 19,000 post-16 enrolments per year between them.

The Leicester and Leicestershire Economy

Leicester and Leicestershire has traditionally had a strong manufacturing base, including a significant textiles industry. According to the most recent data, 14% of the Leicester and Leicestershire workforce was employed in the manufacturing sector compared to only 9% nationally. In contrast, 13% of employees worked in banking, finance and insurance compared to 18% nationally. These two areas showed the largest difference between local and national (all data can be found in annex A of this report).

This difference is also reflected in occupation data by the higher proportion of people working in Process, Plant and Machine operatives and in Elementary Occupations compared to national, and less in Professional Occupations.

These patterns contribute to the

Leicester and Leicestershire having a significant number of labour-intensive occupations, which are often low paid. The average income in local workplaces is approximately £70 a week less than national levels. The figures are closer to regional neighbours, but workplace wages are still £19 a week lower than the neighbouring D2N2 LEP area (comprising Derby and Nottingham cities and counties – see annex A for details).

Area strengths and Opportunities

Science and Technology

Leicester and Leicestershire has two Enterprise Zones specialising in science and technology.

Loughborough and Leicester Science and Innovation Enterprise Zone (covering three sites including):

Charnwood Campus: bio-medical and pharmaceutical sectors (UK's first Life Sciences Opportunity Zone); Space Park in Leicester; Loughborough University Science and Enterprise Park (including low carbon and advanced manufacturing businesses).

MIRA Technology Park: a world leading automotive research and development park, the largest in Europe, and hosts the MIRA Technology Institute, an on-site training centre for the automotive industry.

Logistics

Leicestershire is home to East Midlands Airport, the largest pure freight



airport in the UK. Significant recent developments have seen the emergence of the Segro Logistics East Midlands Gateway Logistics Park and Magna Park South, capitalising on the region's central location as a strategic point for a transport and distribution hub. Predicted jobs growth includes 3,400 jobs at Mercia Park, (Junction 11 M42) where future tenants include JLR and DSV Group⁵ and 2,400 jobs at DPD's new site at Hinckley Park – the largest automated distribution hub in Europe⁶.

Engineering and Construction

There are a number of significant infrastructure projects which have started or are likely to come on stream over the next ten years including the building of a new prison at Glen Parva in Blaby. The proposed northern extension of HS2 also has the potential to create

a huge skills and labour demand across the East Midlands. This would require workers in a variety of occupations but most notably engineering and construction. Housing growth planned for the area will also require modern construction skills. Perhaps the most transformational infrastructure project will be the East Midlands Freeport, a consortium bid led by the two East Midlands LEPs (LLEP and D2N2) to deliver a unique inland Freeport at the heart of the UK. The Freeport proposal is now approved and will provide unrivalled rail connectivity to all UK ports, bringing significant investment to develop and drive innovation, alternative energy sources and green technologies, creating close to 60,000 new skilled jobs to areas of deprivation in the East Midlands.



Food Manufacturing

Food and drink manufacturing is also a strong sector within Leicester and Leicestershire. Funding was secured through Midlands Engine to support Melton's Manufacturing Zone designation⁷; one of only four in the East Midlands, which will enhance Melton's reputation as the 'Rural Capital of Food'; as well as provide support to key manufacturing and tourism sectors. The area is also home to large manufacturers including Pepsico (Walkers Crisps), Samworth Brothers and Tulip Foods.

Challenges

Many skills challenges – such as digital skills, retraining and future skills – are facing all LEPs across the country. However, several challenges more particular to the LLEP area have been identified from available evidence and local knowledge:

- Leicester and Leicestershire's traditionally strong manufacturing base is predicted to contract as an employer in the future, partly due to the impact of automation and new technologies and potentially

accelerated by the economic shock of the COVID-19 pandemic. This could create the need to retrain workers and transition to new areas of demand.

- Local high demand for labour intensive jobs, almost twice national levels, many of which can be low paid. This works against the ambition to be a high skill, high paid economy. Demand for staff in most sectors has become more acute in 2021 due to people leaving the workforce and less workers joining. Some areas of work, for example logistics, have seen a rise in labour demand compared to pre-pandemic levels and are competing strongly for workers.
- Skilled occupations such as science and engineering are a key strength of the area and the availability of skilled workers in the LLEP area will be required to drive productivity and growth. This includes the role of colleges, apprenticeship provision and training providers in developing a talent pool as well as retaining workers and attracting skilled graduates. This is compounded by a shortage of well qualified teaching staff in FE to deliver in subjects such as digital skills and engineering.
- Logistics is a rapidly growing sector in Leicestershire. The sector includes a wide variety of professions and a broad skills mix. The availability of the right staff will be instrumental to the success of the new logistics developments in the LLEP area, including the Freeport area.
- The LLEP area has a greater reliance on the European Union than most other LEPs. This is for both markets and labour. Brexit could have a

stronger impact in Leicester and Leicestershire than other areas. Early signs of this have been seen with many EU workers leaving the UK during the pandemic and far fewer returning. This has been linked with a shortage of HGV drivers serving the local logistics sector.

- Continued labour demand for core occupations essential to the function of society, including health and social care. The importance of such roles has been strongly highlighted during the pandemic. Many roles in this sector have been traditionally low paid and wage inflation in other sectors, coupled with lower immigration, may put pressure on recruitment for core occupations.
- A significant number of residents with barriers to work. This includes those living in areas of high deprivation, especially in the city where a high number of residents have no qualifications. The most disadvantaged communities have often been those hit hardest by the pandemic leaving some individuals further away from the job market due to factors such as health, transport or additional caring responsibilities.
- A specific barrier to work for many is travel. Several of the new developments (e.g. the logistics parks) are out-of-town and not always accessible by public transport.

COVID impact

- Unemployment has not risen as anticipated due to the pandemic and the UK has actually seen a shortage of workers. However, across the East Midlands, cities have higher claimant rates than county areas with Leicester

city having similar levels of claimants to Derby and Nottingham of between 6-6.4% (all three cities are above national averages), whilst the counties are below national averages. The LLEP area as a whole had a claimant rate of 3.9% in October 2021 compared to a national rate of 4.8%.

- The national job retention 'furlough' scheme concluded in October 2021. The closure of the furlough scheme had no noticeable impact on claimant rates at either a local or national level.
- Job postings data shows advertised vacancies of almost 63,937 at the end of November 2021. This is 33,000 higher than November 2019, as a pre-pandemic comparison, and demonstrates the current demand for workers. The city was slower to recover than the districts, as hospitality and retail suffered and logistics facilities boomed. All areas within the LLEP footprint, including the city had higher vacancies than pre-pandemic by November 2021.
- The mental health impact of the pandemic is also proving to be a barrier to some workers returning to the workforce. This is affecting recruitment, including job preferences and motivation. Local job support schemes have also identified this and see addressing mental health as a priority.

Potential impacts of UK departure from the European Union

- Shortage of available labour in sectors including Adult Social Care and logistics, which local providers have highlighted as sectors employing a significant number of EU nationals.

- Shortages in several occupations have been linked to a lack of EU workers. This includes meat processing, agricultural workers and HGV drivers. The latter could have an impact on the local logistics sector.
- Additional skills for international trade may be required for continuation of overseas commerce, for example customs knowledge or expertise on rules of origin and conformity of products. Training support may need to be put in place.
- New opportunities may arise, for example: gaps in the market where EU companies have stepped back or new UK trade deals opening new markets.
- There is expected to be an amount of short-term disruption to supply chains and this will especially have an impact on manufacturing, which is key sector in Leicester and Leicestershire. This may be short lived but could lead to longer term issues for some businesses and their employees if trade frictions become embedded.
- New visa restrictions will affect the recruitment pool for employers. Skills gaps could be addressed in some cases by recruiting and training local candidates if support is in place, especially for SMEs who are less likely to have specialist in-house training compared to a large company.



5 <https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/local-news/huge-new-jaguar-land-rover-4882978>
 6 <https://www.dpd.com/group/en/2019/06/19/first-view-work-underway-on-dpds-new-150m-superhub>
 7 http://www.melton.gov.uk/news/article/325/melton_borough_council_receives_75000_manufacturing_zone_pilot_grant
 8 <https://www.midlandsengine.org/wp-content/uploads/Midlands-Engine-Monitor-Edition-10-October-2020.pdf>
 9, 10, 11 <https://www.lsr-online.org/economy.html>

Summary of strengths and needs

Strengths

- Location of Science and Technology Enterprise Zones housing high technology businesses.
- A supply of diverse graduates from the three universities sited within Leicester and Leicestershire.
- A strong Further Education sector, with excellent employer partnerships and delivery which includes young people, employees and those needing support to enter the labour market.
- Embedding careers education, information advice and guidance (CEIAG) and integrated local labour market information resources in secondary schools to create an economically valuable skilled future workforce.
- A strong established food and drink manufacturing sector bolstered by Midlands Engine funding to support Melton's Manufacturing Zone designation for food.
- Growing logistics sector due to our unrivalled central location, with major new developments across the county.
- UK's busiest pure cargo operation at East Midlands Airport.
- A diverse economy, with no over reliance on one sector or a single large employer.
- A diverse workforce which is linked to entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity.
- A seedbed for start-ups - recent data showed that the number of start-ups in 2020 (including during Covid), was

27% higher than in the previous year.

- Strong education-business partnerships due to long standing working group.

Needs

- Transition from a labour-intensive economy to a high skilled, high paid workforce to support area strengths including science and engineering.
- Ensuring the area is prepared for the fourth industrial revolution, including adoption of digital and low carbon technologies and support for SMEs to enable digital transformation.
- Utilisation of available workforce to fill skills gaps and meet new demand as migrant labour is forecast to reduce.
- Measures to help young workers have become a greater priority as the group has been disproportionately hit by the economic disruption. This includes delivery of effective careers advice to ensure that individual aspirations are consistent with employer demand.
- Encouraging life-long learning for all and inclusive growth, ensuring those most impacted by the pandemic are not left behind in the recovery.
- Enabling parity of vocational learning and raising T-Level and apprenticeship take-up.
- Increasing levels of Level 4+ qualified workers, particularly in higher technical qualifications.

Actions and initiatives to realise ambitions

Current



- The establishment of the MIRA Technology Institute as a flagship partnership between business, FE and HE to deliver qualifications from Level 3 to Level 8, including higher technical qualifications and low carbon technologies.
- Establishment of locally funded projects to address inclusive growth, e.g. Employment Hub, Construction Skills Hub, Youth Employment Hub and Ex-Offender Hub.
- Engagement with large employers and the FE sector to delivery site-focused construction skills projects, e.g. the new prison build at Glen Parva and other projects involving businesses such as Barratt Homes and Everards.
- Creation of a Leicester and Leicestershire Training Provider Forum to focus on the ongoing development of Apprenticeships and T-Levels in the area.
- 'Graduate City', an ESF funded project designed to promote graduate retention in the area and employment of graduates by SMEs.
- Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN) covers 99% of all schools and colleges in Leicester and Leicestershire, strategically connecting education and business with a focus on whole school careers education and meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks for Good Careers Guidance.¹²

Actions and initiatives to realise ambitions

Anticipated



- Establishment of Loughborough College's Careers and Enterprise Hub (see case study)
- The opening of Space Park Leicester in 2021 will enable the University of Leicester and its partners, to offer training for the space sector. Areas covered will include space-related engineering, data analytics software engineering and entrepreneurship.
- Scaling up of the Enterprise Adviser Network and Careers Hub to include all local mainstream secondary schools and colleges¹³
- Digital Poverty grant funding agreed by the SAP will enable seven local projects to address digital exclusion in the LLEP area with a wide range of exciting projects.
- Skills Bootcamps are a government initiative that began as a pilot in 2021. Provision is expected to be quadrupled in the future, including more provision in the LLEP area.
- Publication and implementation of area Apprenticeship Action Plan to address the decline in apprenticeship take-up in recent years.
- Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP): Leicestershire has been chosen as a trailblazer for an LSIP. A government funded employer led skills plan to identify the skills needs across the LLEP area. Findings are expected to be published in March 2022.

Actions and initiatives to realise ambitions

Aspirational



- The LLEP area does not currently have an Institute of Technology within its footprint. At the time of writing, details of a new IoT in the LLEP area have just been announced. This will have a significant impact on raising qualification levels and delivering the Higher Technical qualifications in demand from employers.
- The MIT REAP¹⁴ project will facilitate the development of training programmes for staff employed in SMEs to enable them to adopt and utilise advanced manufacturing technology to improve productivity.
- Develop capacity among local providers for the delivery of training in low carbon technologies.
- Establishment of a local Life Sciences skills group to support the skills pipeline into the sector.
- Improve the production of current and accurate labour market intelligence to inform the development of curricula in FE, HE and other provision. Ensure this is supported by the delivery of good quality careers advice and guidance to all ages which reflects current job opportunities and career paths.

Achieved since March 2021 publication:

- Launch of the Leicester Fashion Technology Academy (LFTA) a project to offer apprenticeships and accredited training for people working in the local textiles industry.
- Launch of The Centre for Logistics, Education and Research (CLEAR), based at Magna Park in Lutterworth, to boost success in supply chain operations through training provision.
- Low carbon training for all LLEP staff
- A Digital Skills Partnership has been established in the area to bring together local partners to consider current skills gaps at all levels, inform future provision and close the digital divide.
- Projects to mitigate against the impact of Covid-19 using LLEP repurposed GPF funding covering:
 - NEET Prevention
 - Digital Skills
 - Kickstart extension for SMEs



12 Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth, January 2021 p45

13 Massachusetts Institute of Technology Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Project, a pilot scheme in Leicester and Leicestershire which all three local universities, corporates, SMEs and government are represented with the aim of enabling adoption of innovative technologies by SMEs

14 <https://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance>



Recover, Rebuild, Prosper

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is unprecedented, unlike other economic shocks, it is ongoing and volatile, giving rise to high levels of uncertainty.

The **Economic Growth Strategy**¹⁵ for Leicester and Leicestershire was commissioned by the LLEP as part of the Covid-19 Economic Recovery framework. This will form the basis of any future skills strategy and is currently the guiding strategy document for the Skills Advisory Panel.

Strategy principles:

- Constant use of available economic data to support the plan (this has proven to be very changeable in recent months).

- Embrace the future but leave no one behind.
- Recognise where there are opportunities to 'Build Back Better'.
- Respond to emerging local and national priorities. These may emerge from Covid recovery, Brexit, or Climate Change.

Cross cutting Skills Priorities - the Golden Threads

Cutting across all of the priorities are four identified 'golden threads': cross cutting strands embedded within the strategy and critical to both a successful economic recovery and fit for the modern world.



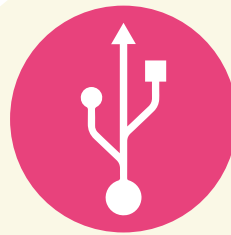
Place:

development of place based deals and implementation of recovery plans for our city, towns and rural areas.



Green recovery:

accelerating our sustainable and clean growth and exploiting our natural capital assets.



Digital:

ensuring effective infrastructure, skills and transformation.



Inclusive growth and wellbeing:

ensuring economic recovery is distributed fairly across society.

Taking Apprenticeships as an example, when considering an apprenticeship strategy, the golden threads would trigger questions such as:

- Are the right apprenticeships available in the right place?
- Do apprenticeships support the green recovery – for example do they include new skills such as retro-fitting?
- Do all apprenticeships sufficiently cover basic digital skills? Do specialist apprenticeships exist for new digital skills and technologies?
- Are apprenticeships courses able to overcome barriers that some learners may face in reaching a successful outcome?

Local Sector Skills Priorities

Engineering and Construction

Government support for building and infrastructure projects appears to be strong, including the HS2 high-speed rail scheme which could create a huge skills and labour demand across the East Midlands. This will require workers in a variety of occupations but most notably Engineering and Construction.

Several large construction projects are expected in the short and medium term in Leicester and Leicestershire including the rebuilding of Glen Parva prison, an acceleration of new house building and a government backed scheme to retrofit houses to improve energy efficiency. (See case studies for construction firm Barratt's development of skills in the area).

Engineering and Construction has been identified as an area strength in Chapter 3 but also a challenge to meet the demands of the sector growth.

Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership: Local Skills Report

Logistics

Leicester and Leicestershire sits at the heart of the 'Logistics Golden Triangle' of the M1, M6 and M42 motorways, with 80% of places in England within four hours journey by road. Local infrastructure developments, for example, around the East Midlands airport transport hub, Magna Park South and the DPD Super Hub, suggest that there will be a logistics boom in the Leicester and Leicestershire. This will be further accelerated as the bid to locate a Freeport at East Midlands Airport has been successful. Logistics cuts across many sectors for example: warehousing and I.T. professional skills (e.g. tracking and inventory); technical engineers (e.g. robotics and automation); customer service; management and project management jobs. Digital skills are embedded in many modern logistics roles.

A strong driver of the logistics sector is e-commerce, which is predicted to grow 30% by 2024 according to retail analysts¹⁶, in part driven by a rise in on-line shopping via smartphones. This forecast was pre-Covid and the move to online shopping has accelerated since lockdowns began.

Logistics is undoubtedly a strength of the Leicester and Leicestershire area but the skills challenge to meet demand will be significant. Work to address this has already begun with the launch of a new Centre for Logistics, Education and Research at Magna Park in Leicestershire.

STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths)

Demand for science skills could be driven by the area's Enterprise Zones which specialise in life sciences, space, low-carbon and automotive research.

Leicestershire hosts the UK's first Life Sciences Opportunity Zone, with the profile of Life Sciences higher than ever before due to the UK's scientific role in the development of vaccines and study of virus strains during the Covid-19 crisis.

Leicester and Leicestershire is also home to the UK's first Space apprenticeship with the area at the forefront of research and development, including satellite technology.

Science and Technology has been identified in chapter 3 as an area strength, mainly due to the innovative work happening in the areas Enterprise Zones. However, a strong skills supply will be required to support excellence and growth.

Core Health and Social Care roles

The pandemic has shown the importance and value of roles previously at risk of being overlooked and undervalued. This includes occupations now recognised as key to a functioning society such as: health and care workers, including non-hospital settings.

Skills for these roles can be taught formally via apprenticeships and other qualifications. However, many transferable skills already exist in the economy and may be found amongst those looking for a career change. This could include workers from hard hit sectors such as hospitality, tourism and accommodation services. Matching these valuable skills to jobs will be of benefit to employers and those seeking employment during what is expected to be a short to medium term economic downturn.

We will stimulate further meaningful encounters between young people and

the world of work to highlight careers pathways (including STEM) at a local level to make well informed decisions on their next steps in education or entry to the local labour market.

Covid-19 recovery and renewal skills priorities

- Supporting government initiatives such as Kickstart, Restart and the Adult Lifetime Skills Guarantee.
- Ensuring that plans address the needs of all parts of our economy, including recovery sectors such as retail and hospitality in both high streets and city centre; areas of growth such as logistics; support for entrepreneurs (including the self-employed) to create new businesses.
- Mitigate against increase in NEET numbers, with a strong careers offer with the support of schools and colleges.
- Monitor additional impact arising from EU Transition – Leicester and Leicestershire has a significant number of EU migrant workers employed in the logistics and food processing industries, and as an area, recruits more EU workers more than many other areas. This will include identifying emerging skills gaps.
- Building upon strengths of the area to aid recovery. Supporting the role of the Enterprise Zones and the new Logistics Parks to provide high quality jobs in growth areas.
- Support applications for a Freeport and an Institute of Technology in Leicester and Leicestershire.
- Helping workers impacted by the economic downturn to transition to areas of demand. This could include

current vacancies such as health and social care or retraining for jobs of the future (e.g. retro fitting homes).

- Keep the plan flexible to accommodate 'unknown unknowns' which could emerge from Covid recovery and 'the new normal', Brexit changes or climate change initiatives.



Skills priority category

Cross-cutting skills priorities (far-reaching, cross sector)

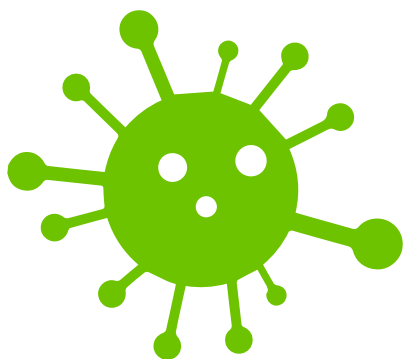
Priorities and supporting rationale

- Digital skills
- Skills to support carbon reduction
- Higher technical skills
- Raising skills levels across the area and reducing the number of residents with no qualifications

Rationale

These are the key areas identified within our skills strategy. Digital skills have become critical to enable individuals to participate in society and employment, and for business to adapt to new ways of working. Higher technical skills are critical to closing the productivity gap in Leicester and Leicestershire and since the advent of Covid-19, green recovery has come to the fore (**Government ten step plan for green recovery**). The need for higher technical skills is supported by the submission of two Institute of Technology bids for the area. In tandem with the need to address high level skills, the area also suffers from a low level of qualifications and more is needed to address this deficiency in order to improve productivity. We need to ensure careers conversations reach into the classroom at Year 7 though to adults reskilling or retraining.

Covid-19 recovery and renewal skills priorities



- Retraining to fill skills gaps (post Covid this could include health, social care and logistics)
- Signposting to alternative career pathways where Covid has impacted on jobs available including young people and adults
- Help for those disproportionately affected by the economic downturn (for example young people, women, over 50's)
- Development of entrepreneurship skills to facilitate establishment of start-ups
- Supporting development of the training offer in growth sectors, e.g. digital, logistics

Rationale

To avoid long term economic scarring to affected workers and capitalise on areas of jobs growth within the region, there will be a need for providers to pivot their offers to match current levels of demand. A new demographic profile in terms of employment within the different sectors within the Leicester and Leicestershire economy is needed. This will be driven by the need for labour in growth sectors and the identification of those individuals who have been disproportionately disadvantaged.

Sector priorities (or occupational priorities)

- Support the growth of the science and technology sector in Leicester and Leicestershire. Specifically Life Sciences and automotive technology based in the Enterprise Zones
- Support growing sectors such as logistics and health that may benefit from post-pandemic career changers
- Develop pathways to enable the development of professional digital skills, through Digital Skills Bootcamps or similar

Rationale

- Support the skilled jobs of the future in emerging sectors
- Support immediate needs of employers and workers by matching labour to demand
- Close the productivity gap and raise qualification levels in the area

15 <https://llep.org.uk/app/uploads/2020/12/Covid-19-Economic-Recovery-Action-Plan-FINAL.pdf>

16 <https://www.retail-insight-network.com/features/uk-online-shopping-growth/>

Skills Action Plan



People, Employment and skills - Priority Actions

The four Golden Threads outlined in the Skills Strategy section of this report will be considered as part of every action.



Place



Green Recovery



Digital



Inclusive growth
and well-being

A detailed plan will be developed locally with clear road map to how the actions outlined will be achieved. The plan will detail the following:



Actions identified to support SAP ambitions

Previous chapters have considered the skills strengths and needs of the Leicester and Leicestershire area, as well as the strategy to address the needs and build on the strengths. Evidence has been sourced using available data,

the knowledge of the Skills Advisory Panel and the LLEP's analysis of ongoing emerging trends locally, nationally and globally. Listed below are some of the specific actions that aim to bring the strategy to life.

The actions have been categorised under the following headings:



Improving digital literacy



Inclusive skills and employment



Young people



Apprenticeships and training



Pathways to future jobs



Skills transfer through innovation and collaboration

Improving digital literacy

- Create a Leicester and Leicestershire Digital Skills partnership made up of key partners, businesses and stakeholders to address digital skills deficiencies in the workplace and wider society.
- Identify and deliver interventions targeted at reducing digital poverty across Leicester and Leicestershire.

- Secure a Wave 2 Institute of Technology (IoT) within Leicester and Leicestershire to provide delivery of higher technical qualifications and digital skills linked to the needs of the economy of Leicester and Leicestershire.

Apprenticeships and training

- Develop an Apprenticeship Strategy with input from businesses and delivery partners to enable both employers and individuals to benefit from the opportunities offered by apprenticeships and increase volumes post-Covid-19.

Skills transfer through innovation and collaboration

- Develop sector-focused accelerator programmes, to transfer skills from the area's 'beacon' science and technology assets and 'bootstrap' manufacturing base enabling cross sector transfer of technologies
- Identify and action 'quick win' opportunities for the creation of new

spaces (both physical and virtual), for improved knowledge exchange and cross-fertilisation of skills from high R&D to low R&D sectors. These connections would stretch beyond campuses and civic institutions to off-campus mixed spaces, new networks and hubs, and use existing infrastructure (e.g. the well-connected creative and digital industries).

- Sustainability and success would be enhanced through collaboration with FE and HE to develop focused training programmes for the manufacturing workforce to enable adoption of new technologies (e.g. AI, big data, automation, low carbon, e-commerce) which support innovation and enhance manufacturing capabilities.

Inclusive skills and employment

- Deliver effective careers, employment and retraining advice through DWP, NCS and other partners. Reduce the flow of poorly qualified individuals into adulthood and ensure that good quality, relevant careers support is available to all age groups, including those over fifty.
- Enable delivery of support interventions for those furthest from the labour market in both urban and rural settings.
- Create a local framework for start-up support to support self-employment and entrepreneurship. Including provision for the development of entrepreneurial skills among key groups, e.g. newly redundant, graduates, young people and women.

Young people

- Support the national Kickstart programme through local delivery to maximise young people's prospects of securing employment.
- Deliver additional targeted support to those young people most at risk of becoming NEET.
- Through EAN school engagement plans all young people have access to relevant, good quality sector-based labour market information (LMI).

Pathways to future jobs

- Create opportunities for graduate employment within SMEs as both a route to business recovery for the employer and a way of creating employment opportunities for graduates.
- Develop clear pathways into employment for emerging, highly productive and buoyant sectors (e.g. low carbon) through detailed consultation with sector representatives to understand the skills and qualifications required, the scale of opportunity and the range of occupations.
- Identify jobs, skills requirements and pathways to training to support the roadmap to a zero-carbon economy.
- Set out the investment requirements for our local zero carbon development needs and work with partners to match the associated training and skills routes and business opportunities.
- Develop an understanding and strong links with the growing logistics sector to appreciate the varied skills demand.

Assessment of Progress



Taking a local leadership role

The SAP, like many other aspects of life, was disrupted and refocussed during the Covid-19 pandemic. Pre-March 2020, a strong evidence base¹⁷ had been approved by the SAP and the LLEP was focussed on taking the agenda forward. However, circumstances changed dramatically.

Post March 2020, local economic work pivoted to concentrate on immediate issues and then to consider recovery. The city of Leicester, at the heart of Leicester and Leicestershire, was the first city in the country to experience an extended lockdown period, lasting for the duration of the summer whilst the rest of the country was beginning a tentative recovery, with non-essential retail still closed in the area at a time when it had opened up nationally.

The LLEP has worked relentlessly with local partners, leading the Economic Recovery Cell. Recovery plans and priorities have been shared with the SAP and feedback has helped shape future iterations of not only recovery plans but also the skills plans and strategies in development.

Enhancing local knowledge

Current and future skills needs are informed by comprehensive use of data and grassroots engagement with local businesses and skills and education providers at all levels. Both these aspects have informed the ongoing development of recovery plans, skills plans and the overall skills strategy. As well as monitoring the current and

often changing needs, the LLEP keeps an eye on the future, horizon scanning as the global megatrends start to filter into contemporary work. The LLEP has included Digitalisation and Carbon Reduction as golden threads that will influence all aspects of future planning

The LLEP uses a combination of publicly available and subscription service economic data and endeavours to share data as widely as possible via interactive dashboards accessible to all partners on-line. In addition, the LLEP creates user friendly Labour Market Guides¹⁸ for young people (used in schools, colleges and by other partners who support young people) and adults.

The LLEP has partnered with the Leicestershire and Rutland data portal to produce a series of data dashboards²⁰ which are used extensively by local stakeholders.

Building the Workforce of the Future

With increasing demands on employers to get involved with skills and education providers, and the commencement of T levels, the LLEP led on creating a Building the Workforce of the Future working group and guide for employers, aimed at highlighted the business benefits to employers of offering experience of the workplace, including T Levels. This snapshot guide is suitable for partner and employer events and



summarises the multiple ways that businesses can engage to support them with their business objectives. See: llep.org.uk/skills/information-and-resources-for-employers.

Impact on local skills provision

In Leicester and Leicestershire, an example of SAP impact on skills provision could be seen in the collective identification of priorities for the repurposing of LLEP Growing Places Fund.

Following Covid-19, discretionary funding was identified by the LLEP, and the SAP was responsible for determining the priorities against which provision should be commissioned (support for young people, including those at risk of becoming NEET, digital skills).

The SAP is also the lead for reviewing achievement of actions identified within the LLEP Covid-19 Economic Recovery Action Plan, and members both contribute to the actions identified and also monitor performance against targets.

Covid-19 recovery and renewal plans

The LLEP has taken a local lead during the Covid crisis and led the Economic Recovery Cell. This has included extensive use and interrogation of emerging data such as HMRC Job Retention Scheme

data, appropriate use of HR1 data (internal analysis only), Google mobility data and comprehensive processing of available DWP claimant data. The LLEP has also subscribed to paid services including Experian economic forecasting, EMSI economic modelling and Bureau van Dijk FAME databases.

As part of this work, the LLEP established an Economic and Business Intelligence Bulletin to share all relevant information with partners. This was initially fortnightly during the early stages of the pandemic and is now monthly. It contains data on claimant rates, furloughed employees, business closures, job postings and links to relevant reports and publications. The bulletin is sent to SAP members and other local partners in addition to being published on the LLEP website and aims to inform colleagues of recent developments and available data. The information also feeds into the local Multi Agency Intelligence Cell and has supported local recovery funding bids with intelligence around Leicester's extended lockdown.

In June 2020, the LLEP published an Interim Covid-19 Economic Impact Assessment¹⁹ for Leicester and Leicestershire: people, employment and skills. This focused specifically on the impact on skills and the content was

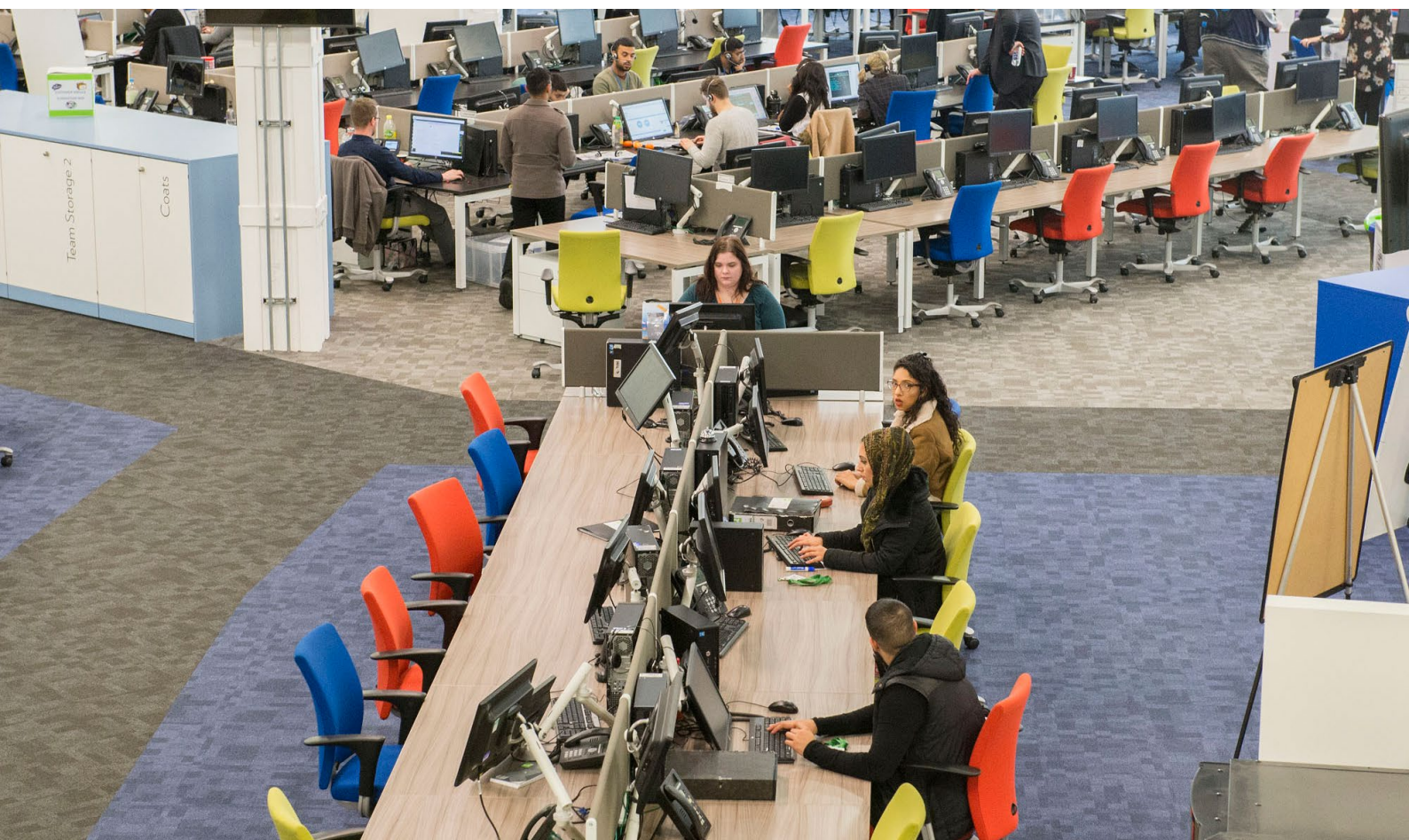
analysed by the SAP and used to inform their prioritisation of funding.

Skills Action plan

The Skills Action plan is scheduled to be developed by March 2022. Current work is being undertaken to inform the plan, aiming to be as specific as possible to meet the needs of the Leicester and Leicestershire area. To support this work, detailed sector analysis was commissioned and undertaken by Cambridge Econometrics. Due to the unprecedented economic shock of COVID-19, the SAP felt that existing historical data alone would not be sufficient to inform future actions and a more forensic view of sectoral impact was required to give the Skills Plan the best possible foundation. The sector profiles were published in summer 2021.

The SAP has also undertaken a local audit of digital poverty to better understand the problem and direct funding towards the issues identified. Other initiatives around digital poverty do exist at national and local level and the SAP is keen to avoid duplication by focussing on impactful actions. Local partners including local authorities, businesses and voluntary groups helped inform the consultation which identified the key themes to be addressed: connectivity, devices and skills.

- 17 <https://llep.org.uk/app/uploads/2020/12/Skills-Evidence-Base-Summary-January-2020.pdf>
- 18 <https://llep.org.uk/app/uploads/2020/11/Young-People-World-of-Work-Guide-2020.pdf>
- 19 <https://llep.org.uk/app/uploads/2020/12/Skills-and-Employment-Economic-Impact-Assessment.pdf>
- 20 [Economy | LSR Online \(llep.org.uk\)](https://llep.org.uk)



Case Studies / Positive Impact Stories



Pathways to future jobs | Apprenticeships and Training

Mira Technology Institute gearing up for UK Electric Vehicle Switch

The MIRA Technology Institute (MTI), part of the MIRA Technology Park Enterprise Zone, opened in 2018 to fulfil the skills needs of the automotive sector. The MTI is the result of a unique collaboration led by North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College, and its partners, HORIBA MIRA, Coventry University, the University of Leicester, and Loughborough University. Built with £9.5m investment from the UK Government's Local Growth Fund via the LLEP, the MTI is a specialist facility designed specifically to train the next generation of engineers in the latest

automotive technology.

Since it first opened its doors, MTI has welcomed around 12,000 students and delegates. This includes over 800 studying for accredited qualifications from a Level 1 Institute of the Motor Industry certificate up to Masters' degrees, and 380 following apprenticeships at all levels. The MTI has launched a degree level engineering apprenticeship and a master's degree Connected Autonomous Vehicle Systems and has seen more than 8,700 automotive professionals take part in professional development activities.



Inclusive skills and employment | Apprenticeships and Training

Leicester College, DWP and Everards Meadows support local people into work

Everards Meadows is a new development commissioned by Everards Brewery Ltd at the South Side of Fosse Park, a huge Leicestershire retail park.

Everards Meadows is a new attraction, with its own beer hall, tours, shop and food outlet, set in a beautiful countryside setting.

Leicester College City Skills Centre has worked closely with colleagues from Everards and DWP to design a three-week Sector Based Work Academy Programme (SWAP) to help unemployed

adults back into work and Everards hope to recruit around 40 people for the site. It will also help the revitalisation of the hospitality sector post lockdown.

Following interviews, successful recruitment will move several unemployed young people and adults into new areas of work.



Loughborough College – Careers and Enterprise Hub

Loughborough College, in partnership with Loughborough University and Charnwood Borough Council, is leading a project to open a new Careers and Enterprise Hub in Loughborough town centre in early 2021. It is the first project to be completed as part of the Loughborough Town Deal which aims to leverage funding from the government to rejuvenate the town centre.

The project aims to provide local people with access to learning, training and support services in the post-Covid economy and help fill the skills gap identified in the LLEP Economic Recovery Strategy including communication skills, problem solving and resilience which are cited as the main issues for local people. At the local level the hub will provide a physical portal for those most economically at risk into skills and enterprise. The Hub will also be a delivery location for the governments Kickstart Scheme which will enable employers to offer six-month job placements for 16-24-year-olds at risk of long-term unemployment.

The impact of Covid-19 will put pressure on the local economy and affect people just entering the local workforce (16-24-year-olds); those coming to the end of their working lives (55-65-year-olds) and those in traditionally low skill roles. To support them, the Hub project will have two over-arching elements: Skills (led by the College), and Enterprise (led by the College with support from the University).

The skills element will be attractive to people who do not traditionally access learning and development. It will provide flexible (including weekend and evening) access to skills advice and learning related employment opportunities, including apprenticeships and the Government's new Kickstart initiative. There will also be direct delivery of bite-size and introductory units of learning to all audiences on a structured and drop-in basis.

The Enterprise element will facilitate and encourage business start-ups and business growth in the town. It will bring together problem solvers, innovators and aspiring entrepreneurs into one space.

People with business ideas will be able to access specialist expertise and facilities at Loughborough University by initially accessing services at the Hub.

We will also focus on upskilling people to boost the proportion of the Leicester and Leicestershire working age population qualified to Level 2 and Level 3 which are currently below the national averages.



Inclusive skills and employment | Pathways to future jobs | Apprenticeships and Training

Barratt Developments and SMB Group build successful construction partnership

The SMB Group, a successful merge of two Leicestershire colleges, Stephenson Colleges and Brooksby Melton Colleges, covers a wider range of vocational provision and has some very strong employer links.

One of their thriving partnerships is with Barratt Developments, a huge Bardon based construction company. SMB engaged with Barratts to support them with challenges related to building a pipeline of joinery and bricklaying skills, starting with a pilot programme two years ago.

In addition, Barrett's has created a new action plan to address social mobility as a barrier to career opportunities in the housebuilding sector. Barrett's approached SMB for a venue to launch this new Social Mobility Pledge. The Social Mobility Pledge was launched by former Secretary

of State for Education Rt Hon Justine Greening – co-founder of the initiative.

Justine said: "Achieving true social mobility in Britain and levelling up our country is a huge challenge but one that businesses and universities are rising to. They have a crucial role to play and can be an incredible force for good in spreading opportunities more evenly across communities and to people that have missed out for far too long."

The SMB Group offers a range of different apprenticeships and full-time study programmes, offering different routes into the Construction industry and, therefore, working towards meeting the needs of local skills gaps.

Mick Hinds, Director of Curriculum for Construction at Stephenson College, said: "The SMB Group (Stephenson Campus) are proud to be working with

Barratt Developments in offering

comprehensive industry
focused apprenticeships

supporting the

requirements of the

construction industry

and the wider

economy", adding

"This supports each

student to achieve

their full potential

and contribute to

sustainable economic

growth and a thriving

community."



Apprenticeships | Skills for the Future | Young people

Toyota Material Handling UK and North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College

Toyota Material Handling in Leicester offers materials handling equipment, logistics solutions and after-sales support services to a wide range of companies from retailers to manufacturers across the UK.

Working closely with North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (NWSLC), Toyota Material Handling recruits a new group of apprentices every year with the aim of offering each one a place within its team.

Laura Gilhooley, Apprentice Support Coordinator for Toyota Material Handling, Leicester said, "Our relationship with the college is vital for the lifeblood of our teams. We have



22 apprentices currently enrolled with NWSLC and ten have recently completed their Level 3 apprenticeships in forklift truck maintenance and repair. We are looking to recruit more individuals for our apprenticeship programme to due to start in Spring 2021.

"Apprentices learn a full range of technical skills on all types of forklift truck including gas, diesel and electric. Increasingly we are focused on future technologies and are currently talking to NWSLC about developing training elements that cover auto-guided vehicles, coding, and robotics, to ensure that we future-proof our skills pipeline. The college helps with recruitment, delivers BKS testing, and gets involved with presentations to new recruits and with the induction period when apprentices first start.

"We value our apprentices very highly and invest a great deal in them so that they can start making a positive contribution to our business as soon as they are qualified. Our strong relationship with the college supplies fresh talent and an excellent service. It is a true partnership because the college understands our business and is always there to support our apprentices, with personal development and welfare as well as skills development."

Skills transfer through innovation and collaboration | Improving digital literacy

De Montfort University (DMU)

De Montfort University has developed a wide range of skills-based partnerships working with stakeholders in Leicester and Leicestershire, placing high importance on the value of research, knowledge exchange and graduate careers to support regional growth.

In 2020, students helped drive forward recruitment in the logistics industry by devising marketing campaigns in partnership with Leicestershire-based Pall-Ex. The freight network challenged students to help tackle the industry's nationwide skills shortage, with a live brief to develop a fully integrated marketing communications recruitment campaign to appeal to Generation Z. The partnership will continue into 2021 as Pall-Ex challenges students to develop ongoing marketing campaigns.

As the Covid-19 pandemic gathered pace in March 2020 and Leicester went into lockdown, DMU launched a completely new digital support scheme for SMEs, connecting students' tech skills with local businesses needing immediate help to go online. In total, 23 small businesses were matched virtually with students, who helped them create digital marketing plans, develop their websites and set up digital booking systems. Sarah Ludden-Roughley, Director of Inicio Private Tuition, commented: "Our volunteer student was professional, talented and understanding of how tough things must be for a business affected by the Covid-19 restrictions.

We used her skill to promote our online offering, as this was a brand-new version of our business model and, as a result, we had no advertising ready for it. Thanks to DMU and their knowledgeable student, we do now."

Flexible forms of business support build on DMU's fully funded graduate internship programme, running since 2013. To date, DMU has committed a total of £1.6M to fully fund 200 graduate internships a year in the LLEP region. This has supplied local businesses with a flow of graduate skills to carry out work ranging from database development to new brand design. Many successful outcomes have resulted from this standing internship offer - for example, local companies including Eazi-Business and Insight Consultancy both went on to recruit their interns due to the value they brought to the company, and both now occupy senior roles.



Looking Forward



The Local Skills Report is driven by four golden threads, as described in chapter 4, which are fundamental to the overall skills strategy and the detail of future skills plans. The first two themes, Digital and Low Carbon, are not only national priorities but worldwide megatrends that are embedded in the future. The second two themes, of Place and Inclusive growth and wellbeing, are closely tied to the governments Levelling Up agenda with the City of Leicester and several of the county towns fitting the description of places where wages, productivity and skills could be raised to benefit the local economy.

Two of the main strengths of the LLEP area are a strong traditional manufacturing base and ultra-modern science and technology, as highlighted in chapter 3. The two elements look different on the surface but with the driving forces of digital and carbon reduction, the connectivity becomes closer. Manufacturing will inevitably look different in the future, influenced by new technology, carbon reduction and fundamentally, what is being produced by the factories. On the other side, science, technology and innovation is being nurtured with the potential to expand from the developmental work mainly based in the Enterprise Zones. With the strong support of universities, skills transfer to local SMEs is already happening (as detailed in the De Montfort University case study). With the areas strong manufacturing infrastructure and capacity, there is great potential for manufacturing, science and technology to fuse together to support industries of the future. This theme is reflected within the Local Skills Plan in several places such as the 'beacons' and 'bootstraps' principle of 'new' manufacturing empowering 'old' manufacturing.

Two of the main external drivers to skills demand in the LLEP area will be government ambitions and consumer behaviour. It has been well documented



that the government is planning to allocate substantial funding to infrastructure projects, which includes rail developments in this area and the development of a Freeport based around East Midlands Airport. Another area of demand is expected to be house building and retro fitting of existing properties. Neither of these initiatives are exclusive to the LLEP area but are likely to create job opportunities and demand for specific skills.

The second driver, consumer behaviour, has a more direct impact on the LLEP area due to the areas geographically central location. Several new logistics parks and hubs have been developed across the county to cater for the rising volumes, with several huge multinational companies establishing a presence in the area. Not only does the LLEP benefit from being in the centre of the UK but also the excellent air, road and rail links to the rest of the UK and beyond, 80% of England is within a four-hour road journey. As discussed in chapter 4 the logistics sector is wide and varied, with an increasing emphasis on digital systems. The move towards online shopping and delivery services was rapidly accelerated during the pandemic of 2020/21.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be ignored, and the economic consequences were quickly felt. The hardest hit sectors were accommodation and food services, together with arts, entertainment and recreation. Leicestershire and Leicester suffered particularly badly due to the extended lockdown of the city of Leicester and some districts throughout the summer

of 2020 when the rest of the country was beginning to open up. This creates the dual challenge for the LLEP of supporting those sectors to rebuild but also helping workers to transition to new sectors where there are employment opportunities.

A second impact of the pandemic was to shine a light onto jobs that were often overlooked or undervalued as a career pre-pandemic. The concept of 'key worker' not only included health and care workers but also delivery drivers, retail staff, postal workers and refuse collectors (amongst many other occupations on which modern life is built). Although we must look at skills of the future, we must also recognise the importance of key roles.

In December 2021, the LLEP published its Economic Growth Strategy which identifies future priorities for the area's economic growth over the ten years up to 2030. This will include a focus on skills and employment and incorporate the recommendations in the recently released white paper, Skills for Jobs. Following the publication of the strategy in December 2021, further work will be undertaken by the SAP to use the refreshed evidence and direction of travel identified in the strategy to frame a more detailed Skills Strategy for the area.

The role which employers will play in shaping future skills provision will be critical and the LLEP has commissioned a Business Tracker Survey which will follow a cohort of 200 employers who will complete a survey every two months, including questions on their skills requirements. The first report was

published in March 2021 and it was clear from this that Covid-19 had accelerated employer demand for both digital and marketing skills among employees. Through tracking the same group of employers in the future, we will be able to gauge overall demand for skills.

Employers will also be front and centre in contributing to sector specific skills provision in the area through both existing and planned institutions including the MIRA Technology Institute (engineering, low carbon technologies), CLEAR (logistics, supply chain management), Textile Skills

Academy (textile manufacturing), MIT REAP Project (advanced manufacturing, low carbon technologies), the newly established Digital Skills Partnership in addition to membership of the Skills Advisory Panel itself. The prospect of an Institute of Technology within the LLEP area will also provide a key point of interaction with anchor employers.



Contact Details

To receive news and information about LLEP programmes and activities go to:
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