

# Leicester – Great City

Economic Action Plan (2016-2020)

Consultation Draft



Friars Mill, Waterside

# Foreword



It has been four years since I launched my first Economic Action Plan during which we have seen the transformation of our city into a confident and thriving place for business and a more attractive place to live, work and invest.

Back in 2012 we set out our ambitious plans during very difficult economic circumstances. We could not have envisaged back then just how much success the city would achieve. The discovery and re-interment of Richard III's remains and Leicester City securing the Premier League title, against all the odds, have propelled the city onto the global stage.

The growing confidence and strength in the city economy is well evidenced through major inward investments and thousands of new jobs, including from IBM and Hastings Insurance. Dock, Friars Mill, Food Park and Makers Yard have provided much needed new workspaces for small businesses.

Unemployment has fallen dramatically by 60% and youth unemployment by 70%, assisted by our Leicester to Work programme creating over 1200 apprenticeships and work placements.

Over a short space of time we have transformed the look of the city centre through the Connecting Leicester initiative. Our award winning street improvements, new public spaces at Jubilee Square and Cathedral Gardens, Richard III Visitor Centre and Market Food Hall have created many more reasons for people to shop, live, work and invest in the city.

Investment in transportation has made it easier for people to get around the city and supported the growing economy. The impressive new Haymarket Bus Station is complete alongside extensive bus lanes on the A426 and new smart real time bus information.

Extensive new access routes have been built as part of the Connecting Leicester programme, providing some 2 Km of new cycleways and paths within and linking to the city centre. The demolition of the Belgrave Flyover has dramatically transformed the public realm.

The development of a joint rail strategy with the County Council will be central to promoting the city as a national economic hub linked to London and other key cities.

Sporting success typifies the ambition this city has and alongside the astonishing successes of our football club we have invested in the Riders Basketball Arena. Our Rugby and Cricket clubs have also invested significantly in their grounds.

These are exciting times for Leicester and whilst we have created a strong platform for economic growth we will face challenges, not least through uncertainty in the national economy.

Strong partnership working will continue to be central to economic success across the city and county. Working closely with the LLEP, county and district councils as part of the proposed Combined Authority will support strategic planning, transport and skills initiatives. We will develop a strong devolution proposal to bring powers and funding from Government.

As in the past four years, to thrive and compete, we must continue to invest in improving our city. This action plan sets out how we will support the creation of attractive well connected places, more business investment and jobs and further sporting and cultural success.

The plan concentrates on actions and initiatives that will be led by the city council or where the council plays a key role. It doesn't try to capture all the work that will be done or that needs to be led by other partners, for example in the area of business support. That is deliberate so that we can be properly accountable for the things we have promised to do.

**Sir Peter Soulsby**  
City Mayor

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# 2012-2016 Economic Action Plan progress

- 5160 Jobs Created  
(900 ahead of target)
- 889 Apprenticeships created  
(780 ahead of target)
- 369 Work placements created  
(144 ahead of target)
- 137 Graduate placements  
(62 ahead of target)
- 1,920 businesses supported  
(1,020 ahead of target)
- 214,000 sq ft new business space at Makers Yard, Dock, Food Park, Friars Mill, Ashton Green  
(64,000sq ft ahead of target)
- 237,561 sq. ft new/refurbished Grade A office space  
(27,500sq ft down on target)
- £70m investment delivered  
(£40m ahead of target)
- £30m inward investment attracted
- 5327 homes built
- Delivered major regeneration projects:
  - Connecting Leicester
  - Market Food Hall
  - Belgrave Flyover
  - Haymarket Bus Station
  - Jubilee Square
  - Cathedral Gardens
- 10 million leisure and visitor days to the city in 2015
- Tourism sector value £570m in 2015



# Leicester's Ambitions by 2020

- Promote and keep Leicester on the international map
- Unlock growth by delivering infrastructure for development at Waterside, Ashton Green and Pioneer Park/Space Park
- Transform the landscape of the city centre through regeneration projects at the Market, former New Walk Centre, Cultural Quarter, Old Town
- Secure Investment of £100m for jobs and growth
- Modernise our key visitor attractions
- Attract and retain the best talent and develop the skills of our workforce
- Lever £50m of new inward investment
- Build 6800 homes
- Support 1500 Businesses
- Create 3000 Jobs
- Create 1000 Apprenticeships
- Deliver Superfast Broadband to more than 99% of Leicester households
- Enable 6,500 more people to use public transport / cycle / walk



# Themes

To realise our ambitions for the city, the Council will focus on five themes centred on reinforcing and promoting Leicester as a Great City.



# Summary of Actions by 2020

## Theme 1: Great Places

GP1: Complete the **Market Regeneration** project by 2018

GP2: Complete improvements to five streets and properties in the '**Greyfriars' Old Town** area, through the Townscape Heritage Initiative programme by 2020

GP3: Develop the former **New Walk Centre** site for 50,000 sq ft of offices, 74 homes, retail food and drink units and a new public square by 2018

GP4: Support new **high quality housing** in the city centre area – 3,000 homes

GP5: Confirm plans for regeneration of the **railway station** area

GP6: Improve **St Georges Churchyard**, making it a safe and attractive space by 2017 and support conversion of heritage buildings in the **Cultural Quarter**

GP7: Deliver phase 2 of the **Connecting Leicester** scheme by 2020

GP8: Secure a phase 1 development partner and complete advance infrastructure at **Waterside** by 2020. Complete 11,000 sq ft floorspace at **Friars Mill 2** in 2017

GP9: Deliver 20,000 sq ft business workspace in Dock 2 by 2018 and support development of the **Space Park** with Leicester University/National Space Centre.

GP10: Deliver infrastructure at **Ashton Green** along with a first phase of 100 houses commencing 2016 and assist build out of the second phase of employment land.

## Theme 2: Connecting Leicester

CL1: Secure commitment to improve the Midland Mainline, connect to HS2 and enable better links to Coventry and Birmingham through implementation of a new **Rail Strategy**

CL2: Develop a **Strategic Transport Plan** by 2017 to confirm major infrastructure priorities

CL3: Deliver the **Leicester North West Major Transport Programme** on the A50 corridor by 2020.

CL4: Deliver highway improvements for buses, real time and smart ticketing programmes to 2020

CL5: Deliver a programme of **cycling and walking** infrastructure improvements to at least 10 streets, improving the links to the city centre and neighbourhoods.

CL6: Help people navigate the city through delivery of the **Legible Leicester** signage initiative in the City Centre in 2017.

CL7: Deliver actions with the **Air Quality Action Plan and Sustainability Action Plan** to meet air quality and carbon reduction targets

## Theme 3: Leicester to Work

LW1: Create **1000 apprenticeships by 2020**

LW2: Reduce the number of **NEET** by half by 2020

LW3: Implement a **Social Value Charter** for the Council in 2017

LW4: Provide advice and support on the New **Apprenticeship Levy**

LW5: Ensure appropriate advice and support for local residents impacted by the roll out of **Universal Credit**

LW6: Implement the **Living Wage** within council procurement contracts

LW7: Maximise take-up for individuals to access **funded schemes**

LW8: Support employers to recruit apprentices via a new **Employment Hub**

LW9: Implement a **Skills devolution agreement** in 2017

LW10: Provide training & support in **basic skills** for residents and families



LW11: Actively contribute to the post-16 educational and training institutions **area review** in order to ensure a better fit between the skills supply system and the demands of the local economy

LW12: Support families through the **Think Family** and **GREAT** projects

LW13: the council will coordinate bespoke recruitment campaigns that broker support for those currently out of work where new jobs will be created at **major development sites** e.g. former new walk centre site

## Theme 4: Enterprising Leicester

EL1: Provide targeted support for **priority business sectors** to accelerate investment

EL2: Support supply chains and business led **sector networks**

EL3: Work with LLEP to secure funding for a **grants programme** and stimulate **equity/loan finance** to support business growth and investment

EL4: Deliver the **Leicester Investment Fund** – investing at least £10m by 2020

EL5: Increase availability of new **workspace for growing businesses** – at least 90,000 sq ft

EL6: Expand the innovation and technology cluster at **Pioneer Park** including via **Dock 2**, providing more than 50,000 sq ft of new workspace

EL7: Facilitate new **Grade A office space** in the city centre – 300,000 sq ft by 2020

EL8: Provide for up to **45 hectares of new employment land** in the new Local Plan

EL9: Increase coverage of **superfast broadband** to more than 99% of city households

EL10: Expand **Inward Investment service** for city and county area

EL11: Work closely with the Universities to agree a proactive strategy to encourage **graduate retention**

## Theme 5: Sports & Culture

SC1: Deliver world class **cultural events and activities**

SC2: Continue to grow our **festivals and events** programme by 10,000 visitors per year

SC3: Create investment plans to deliver high quality visitor facilities at **Walk Museum, Jewry Wall Museum and Abbey Pumping Station,**

SC4: Support a new national visitor attraction at **Leicester North Station** working with Great Central Railway and the National Railway Museum

SC5: Redevelop and re-open the old **Haymarket Theatre by 2017**

SC6: Use technology and engagement to better tell the **Story of Leicester** and bring our shared history to life for residents and visitors

SC7: Support our high profile **national sports clubs to invest and improve**

SC8: Develop the Leicester & Leicestershire **Sport & Physical Activity Sector Growth Plan**

# Action Plan



Leicester City

The first Economic Action Plan was published in 2012 and, despite difficult economic circumstances much has been achieved. The following sections outline how we are doing in delivering our initial plans and also new actions that could not have been envisaged at the time of preparing the first Plan. Having achieved substantial success in improving the city economy we have reflected on how we use this as a platform for further growth and improvement.

Leicester is a great city but we can do more to promote the place and what it has to offer to live, work, visit and invest. We see the marketing of Leicester as a Great City as a key cross cutting theme and the first section overleaf outlines what we intend to do to

support this. The subsequent sections reflect back on what has been achieved since 2012 and set out specific new actions to be achieved by 2020 for each of the key themes listed below.

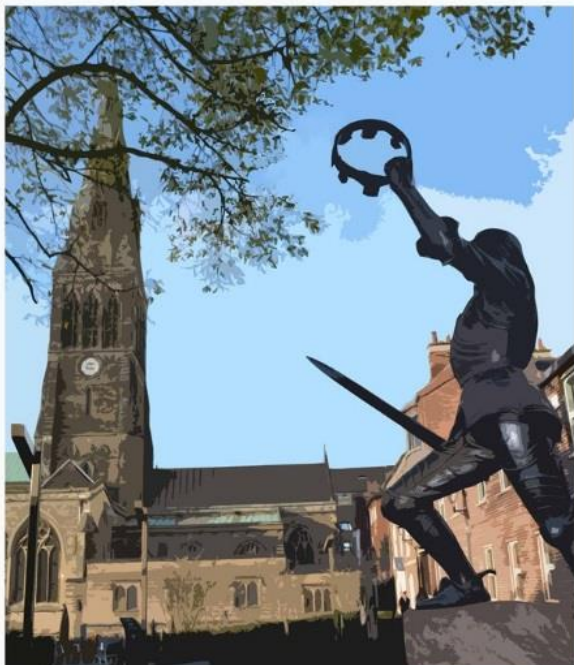
- Great Places
- Connecting Leicester
- Leicester to Work
- Enterprising Leicester
- Sports and Culture

## GREAT CITY

To be a great city Leicester must look the part. It has to offer great places that impress visitors, attract future workers and that residents are proud of. The city has a rich built, social and cultural heritage and understanding and promoting this puts Leicester's place in history as a great city in context.

But to be known as a great city, people that live and work in and visit the city need to be confident about its place in history and its future prospects. Raising the profile of the city and promoting the many great things it has to offer requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders alongside specific actions to improve the city and its economy.

Leicester has rediscovered its sense of self confidence with spectacular success in the past few years both locally and on the global stage. This section reflects on how we are doing and outlines future priorities to keep Leicester on the map.



Welcome to  
**LEICESTER**  
Historic City

## How are we doing?

The city has achieved international prominence through the discovery of **the remains of King Richard III** and the world class reinternment event which had an economic value of £59 million to the city.

**Leicester City Football Club's Premier League title** success has firmly put the city on the global map. Spend from football spectators added nearly £17m in 2105/16 to our local economy. With Champions League participation in 2016, that figure can only grow.

Three **Rugby World Cup** games were held in the city with 86,000 tickets sold and tourism spend of £21.2m. This has significantly boosted tourism and again displayed our capacity for supporting major events.

The city's profile with inward investors has been raised significantly with **IBM and Hastings Direct** both setting up operations in Leicester in 2015 and creating around 1500 jobs between them by 2018.

**"We love Leicester, we love the city, we love the work you are doing there and the great transport links and also the really good pool of graduates we are hoping will work with us in Leicester."**

**Bernard Szczech, Chief Executive of IBM Services UK**

**Hotel occupancy rates are at historic high levels** and we have seen considerable investment in existing facilities, driven by the growing market for leisure and business tourism to the city.

**Visit Leicester** our new tourist information centre opened in 2012 in a prominent high street location offering information, advice and access to the best of Leicester for visitors.

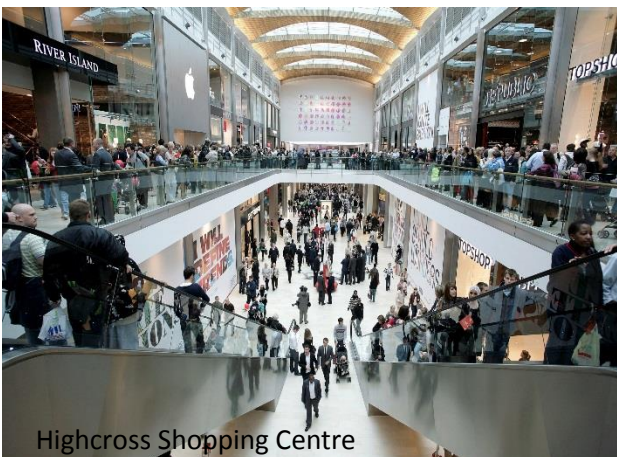
A strong **Team Leicester** spirit has developed through our **Ambassadors programme** and the partnership with commercial agents, colleges and universities, recruitment agencies, law firms, accountants and local sports clubs all helps to promote the city.

With some 40,000 students at the **University of Leicester and De Montfort University** the economic value to the city is estimated at **£500m** each year. Both institutions are also huge investors, helping to transform the fabric of the city and driving demand e.g. for bespoke student accommodation.



Graduation Ceremony

In 2015 Leicester was ranked **third in Property Week's Hot 100 UK retail locations** and was recognised by the UK Growth Dashboard as having the **fastest business growth rate outside of London.**



Highcross Shopping Centre

The role of the **heritage** to the future success of the city is fully recognised. Understanding of architectural, social and cultural heritage has been improved through almost 100 interpretation panels in the city centre with more planned.

Many landmark vacant and derelict heritage buildings have been brought back to life.

- **Friars Mill** has been transformed by the council for new business workspace and to kickstart regeneration at Waterside
- **Wheatsheaf works** in Knighton Fields has been converted to new homes
- The 15<sup>th</sup> century **Wygston's House**, Leicester's oldest surviving house, has been leased to a restaurant company
- Former Midland/HSBC bank in Granby Street has been refurbished by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness
- **Former NatWest bank in St Martins** will house a Middletons 200-seat restaurant and create up to 60 jobs
- The adjacent **former Bank of Ireland, St Martins**, has been opened as a Delilah's Delicatessen
- The former Snooker Club on Charles Street has been refurbished for Council use as its new **HQ City Hall**



*Without the support of Leicester City Council and the Townscape Heritage initiative grant, our restoration of this building would simply not have been possible. It's great to see targeted investment in the whole Greyfriars area. We've witnessed its transformation first-hand over the last year and a half. We are so excited to be in Leicester."*

**Sangita Tryner, co- owner of Delilah**

## GREAT CITY PRIORITIES

To build on the momentum and awareness of the city that has been generated by sporting success and King Richard III and to position the city as a prime tourist attraction and location for inward investment, we have developed the following cross cutting “Great City” priorities:

- A better co-ordinated strategy for Tourism, Place Marketing and Inward Investment. Council services have been brought together in one Division to support ambition.
- Create and champion a new brand identity for the city during 2016 with our partners, which identifies core messages that support our ambitions.
- Better explain the unique history and heritage of the city, through enhanced technology, additional heritage interpretation panels and the reuse of important historic buildings, particularly in the Old Town Greyfriars Townscape Heritage Initiative area.
- Work with business, inward investors and the universities to encourage our graduates to stay and develop their careers in the city and county. This could include a joint approach to materials intended to promote life in the city and what it has to offer.
- Make the most of the vibrancy of our different communities to promote the city, further strengthening its diversity and welcoming and integrating new communities.
- Strengthen our Inward Investment services to attract new companies and jobs, particularly in the financial services sector.



**“In the last 8 years Curve has established itself as a leading production theatre in the UK. Last year over 320,000 people came through our doors to see a production, take part in a workshop or attend a conference. The plans for the Cultural Quarter are incredibly exciting and will cement this area of the city as a vibrant, beating heart of Leicester’s rich cultural offer”**

- Support the development of additional quality hotel provision throughout the city centre by 200 bedspaces to 2020 including at least one 4/5 star hotel. Also support the development of other visitor accommodation including the aparthotel market in the city centre.
- Improve the number and quality of visitor attractions in the city as outlined in the Culture section.
- Encourage and support the early evening economy and the growth of city living to deliver a more vibrant centre, increasing the population of the city centre
- Be recognised as a ‘SMART’, connected city that uses technology to deliver better services and reduce our carbon footprint,
- Inspire confidence and ambition for the city through the development of the Team Leicester approach to deliver a shared vision and effective partnership working.

## THEME 1:

### GREAT PLACES

#### How are we doing?

We have focussed our attention over the past four years on supporting investment in parts of the city that will have most impact on the economy, benefiting both residents and businesses. We want to create high quality places for all that provide substantial new employment and business opportunities. Investment through the city council and the private and voluntary sectors is making a real difference in creating great places where people want to live, work, visit and relax.

In our **city centre** retailing continues to perform well with Highcross going from strength to strength and our investment in the **Market Food Hall** proving a very popular new addition.

City centre retail vacancies have fallen and new brands have invested in the city to radically improve the leisure and shopping offer. National names such as Marco Pierre White and Urban Outfitters have all arrived to join expanding local operators such as 45 West Distillers.

The public realm has been transformed with new squares and spaces at **Cathedral Gardens and Jubilee Square**.

The discovery of the remains of Richard III in a council car park and the development of the **Richard III Visitor Centre** has attracted many thousands of people to our city centre and truly put the city on the map.

Investment in transport infrastructure through new pedestrian routes and cycleways, a major new bus station at Haymarket and demolition of the flyover and remodelling work at **Belgrave Circle** is also transforming the look of the city centre. **Demolition of eyesores** at New Walk Centre and the old Market Hall has also created opportunities for new development and high quality public spaces.

The development of **Leicester Print Workshop** and new workspace for designer makers at **Makers Yard**, together with the continued success of LCB Depot, Phoenix and Curve, provide a strong platform for further growth in the St Georges Cultural Quarter.

Regeneration of the **Waterside** area is gathering pace with plans now in place for a 60 hectare regeneration project and funds secured from the LLEP to assemble land and deliver highway and other essential infrastructure. The dramatic conversion of **Friars Mill** from a burnt out shell to new office workspace is complete and work is already underway on a second phase reflecting the strength of demand. A major student residential scheme is nearing completion and there are plans to develop Jewry Wall Museum.



Leicester Cathedral and Gardens

**Pioneer Park** has been established as a focus for innovation and technology businesses in the city. The award winning **Dock** workspace is fully let with growing technology businesses. The development of further business growth on workspace and a new supermarket has also contributed to regeneration in this area.

We are working on plans for a **National Space Park** with the University of Leicester to create a new academic and business hub focused on the potential of the space and space applications sector.



Dock

This will be adjacent to our outstanding **Abbey Pumping Station**. Plans are prepared for a radical overhaul of the Museum and grounds. Nearby, extensive **flood relief works** by the Environment Agency will also help to transform the environment.

Housing development at **Abbey Meadows** has progressed well with regeneration of derelict sites to develop some 400 new homes at Abbey Park Road and Ross Walk, with a further 350 in the pipeline.

The long standing ambition to create a major new sustainable development on the outskirts of the city at **Ashton Green** is starting to be realised. Initial investment from Samworth Brothers saw the opening of a new food processing factory creating up to 700 jobs. More employment development is being planned and the first phase of what will ultimately be 3000 new homes will start in 2016.



Abbey Meadows Housing Development



## GREAT PLACES PRIORITIES

To develop great places in the City for people to live, work, visit and invest we will focus on continuing to deliver major infrastructure and public realm improvements in the city centre, Waterside, Abbey Meadows/Pioneer Park and Ashton Green.

**Action GP1:** Completion of the **market regeneration** project including a high quality public square to the rear of the Corn Exchange and improvements to the outdoor market.

**“The city centre has changed dramatically. There's been an amazing transformation. Leicester is really buzzing.”**

**Ian Mattioli, CEO Mattioli Woods**

Development on the old council HQ site



New Market Square



**Action GP4:** Support for **high quality housing development** to increase the numbers of people living in the city centre and support the evening economy.

**Action GP5:** Establish plans for regeneration of the **railway station area** including for office, residential, hotel, cultural and leisure uses.

**Action GP2:** Complete improvements to streets and properties in the **‘Greyfriars’ Old Town** area as part of the **Townscape Heritage Initiative** programme, part funded by the Heritage Lottery.

**Action GP3:** Development of the former **New Walk Centre site** for commercial office, restaurant and residential uses set around a high quality new public space linking to New Walk.

**Action GP6:** Invest in the St Georges Cultural Quarter through improvements to **St Georges Churchyard** and link with Orton Square. Also support the conversion of heritage buildings for additional **creative and cultural business workspace** and quality **residential schemes** by building owners, developers and creative businesses.

**Action GP7:** Ensure that improvements to our streets as part of the **Connecting Leicester** scheme (outlined in the next section) contribute to the creation of high quality public realm in the city centre.

**Action GP8:** Complete land assembly, developer procurement and infrastructure delivery at **Waterside** as part of the LLEP funded project to 2020. Also, complete **Friars Mill 2** business workspace and support other private sector investment in residential and commercial developments.

**Action GP9:** Accelerate the development of Pioneer Park, deliver **Dock 2** technology workspace. Also to establish a revised Masterplan to help develop the **National Space Park** project, working with Leicester University, the National Space Centre, and Abbey Pumping Station.

**Action GP10:** Provide enabling highway and green infrastructure for the initial phase of residential development at **Ashton Green**, support delivery of initial phases of residential development and the proposed village centre, and enable new employment development.



## THEME 2: CONNECTING LEICESTER

### How are we doing?

Our Connecting Leicester programme has **transformed streets and spaces** in the city centre and connected adjoining neighbourhoods over the past four years. Some **2 km of cycleways and paths have been provided**. As well as providing high quality safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists the programme has linked major new public spaces at Jubilee Square and Cathedral Gardens with the Richard III Visitor Centre, Castle and Jewry Wall sites and the new Market Food Hall. The programme has helped to make the city a more attractive and liveable place.

Major highway and transport improvements have been delivered through the **removal of the Belgrave Flyover** and the transformation of Belgrave Circle allowing better access for cyclists and pedestrians and improved traffic flows. The **£19m Leicester North West Transport Programme** has included a first phase of major improvements to the A50 county council and New Parks Way roundabouts, together with extensive improvements for cycling on this key arterial route.

Substantial investment has been made to public transport infrastructure with the opening of the new **£13m Haymarket Bus Station** and **2.4km of new bus lanes on the A426**. We have also provided

**100 Real Time information signs** at bus stops, introduced the **One Card** for flexible bus trips and constructed level access kerbs at our bus stops.

We have prepared a **Cycling Action Plan** and delivered major initiatives to encourage more people to walk and cycle as part of our **Local Sustainable Transport Fund programme**. Our **Ride Leicester Festival** goes from strength to strength with 15,000 attending the mass participation 'Sky Ride' and 'Castle Classic' elite cycle race in 2015. In November 2015 we adopted a comprehensive **Air Quality Action Plan** with actions to meet our air quality targets to 2020 set by the EU and Defra. Working with bus operators we have part funded the conversion of 36 buses using clean engines technology on the Belgrave Road corridor to improve air quality. Bus operators have also provided some 95 (28% of total) new cleaner buses greatly improving the quality of bus travel in the city.

We have also developed a **Sustainable Action Plan**, aimed at reducing our carbon emissions with a number of actions related to public transport and active travel.

The first phase of our Legible Leicester initiative to **replace all city boundary signs** has been completed.





### CONNECTING LEICESTER PRIORITIES

To expand our Connecting Leicester initiative to provide high quality transport links so that people can walk, cycle, drive and use public transport to more easily move around the city and get to other important destinations outside the city, our priorities will be:

**Action CL1:** Implementation of the joint city and county council and LLEP sponsored **Rail**

**Strategy** through influencing, and potentially directly supporting, the infrastructure development and franchising plans of the DfT, Network Rail, Midlands Connect and rail operators. Improvement of the Midland Mainline, high quality connections to HS2 and better links to Coventry, Birmingham and Manchester are key priorities to be delivered over the longer term.



**Action CL2:** Work with the County Council, as part of the proposed Combined Authority, and Highways England to develop a **Strategic Transport Plan** by 2017 to identify the priorities for highways and other transport infrastructure to support economic growth

**Action CL3:** Deliver the next phases of major transport infrastructure as part of the **Leicester North West Major Transport Programme**. This will provide the necessary infrastructure for more effective transport connections on the A50 corridor in the vicinity of the Waterside regeneration area by car, public transport, walking and cycling.

**Action CL4:** Work closely with bus operators and users to establish a **prioritised joint bus plan** to deliver higher quality public transport and sustained growth in patronage. This will include a phased **Bus 'Pinch Points' programme** to improve punctuality together with a review of opportunities to further improve **real time information and smart ticketing**. Bus operators will be encouraged to further improve and replace their fleets to meet Air Quality Targets by 2017 as part of the proposed **Low Emission Zone**.

**Action CL5:** Deliver a phased programme of **cycling and walking infrastructure** improvements and **mass participation events** with the aim of sustaining growth in **active travel** to promote efficient transport options and healthy living. The focus will continue to be extending pedestrian and cycle friendly zones in the city centre and extending segregated cycle routes on arterial routes to local neighbourhoods.

**Action CL6:** Roll out a programme of phased signage and information enhancements for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists as part of our **Legible Leicester** Initiative. Initial priorities will include a network of information boards and signs to aid navigation in the city centre.

**Action CL7:** In addition to the above, other actions to meet targets by 2020 are set out in our **Air Quality Action Plan** and **Sustainability Action Plan** to meet our carbon reduction targets.



Proposed Mill Lane Improvements

## THEME 3: LEICESTER TO WORK

### How are we doing?

Our Leicester to Work programme has focussed particularly on getting those most in need into training and work. 5,160 jobs have been created for the city since 2011. When the first Economic Action Plan was launched unemployment, specifically amongst the young, was a major problem. Through the work outlined below and linked to other inward investment and business support activity, the Council has helped to substantially reduce the number of people who were unemployed four years by over 60% across all ages. Youth unemployment has seen a reduction of over 70%.

The Council has been active in bringing training providers and colleges together to form the **Leicester Apprenticeship Hub** which provides independent advice and support to businesses and individuals looking for apprenticeship opportunities. This has supported over 450 new apprenticeships.

In 2015/2016 the first **Leicester Apprenticeship Graduation** events were held at De Montfort Hall where hundreds of apprentices were recognised for the qualifications they achieved.



“A very proud day, we are the only two to have a cap and gown in our family, his through Uni - I thought I would never get the opportunity. Such a fantastic day, and an absolute honour! So proud!”

**Hannah Cowley**, Apprentice

Leicester City Council has been active with its own recruitment to encourage more young people into the city council. These have been through **6 month work placements, graduate and apprenticeship** opportunities. Recently we held our second celebration event for more than 100 people who have joined the council through one or other of our employment initiatives.



Leicester to Work Celebration

The Council's **Step-Up** programme has been a huge success with over 240 young people supported into 6 month work placements and gaining real paid work experience. Some 80% were still off benefits 6 months after their work placement. Due to this success Big Lottery has awarded funding to support a further 45 individuals in the next two years.

The **Constructing Leicester** project has worked with developers, training providers, colleges and Job Centre Plus to enable individuals to gain work experience, jobs and apprenticeships in the construction industry. The scheme has worked with developers of Friar's Mill, Lidl supermarket and Haymarket Bus Station and so far has created 31 jobs, 23 apprentices and 12 work placements.

**Connexions Leicester** has supported 898 young people into employment and 660 young people progressing into apprenticeships who were Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET). Since 2011, a 10% reduction in NEET has been achieved.

Through the **Adult & Learning Service** 341 people have been supported in 12 work clubs across the city; 2,977 have achieved qualifications in English, Maths, IT, ESOL and vocational skills; 1582 parents and children participated in family learning provision; 845 people completed work related learning support via voluntary / community sector organisations.

The **Think Family** team working with Job CentrePlus has enabled 299 families to be supported into employment.

Working with LLEP we are looking at the **skill needs** of our priority business sectors and considering the potential opportunities for **skills devolution** as part of the planned Combined Authority for Leicester & Leicestershire.

## LEICESTER TO WORK PRIORITIES

Leicester to Work will support those most in need to move people into the labour market, gaining the relevant skills they require and addressing business needs.

The city council will work closely with other partners and in particular the Job Centre Plus service and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership to improve the skills of the workforce, especially for the identified business growth sectors. Detailed forecasts for skills required to support local economic growth have been developed by the LLEP and will be used to support effective careers advice, to inform skills supply initiatives and the design of targeted recruitment campaigns. The council will support the delivery and co-ordination of projects funded by the new European Structural Funds programme that are designed to develop skills and address worklessness.

Many of the other initiatives in this plan will help to generate new job opportunities. In particular the physical improvements described in the Great Places section will directly lever private sector investment that will in turn create new jobs. A good example of how this is already working can be seen in and around the Hotel St area. Over the longer term the redevelopment of the Waterside area will create hundreds of new jobs.

**Action LW1:** Increase the number of **Apprenticeship** opportunities by 1,000 across the city and county, working with schools, businesses, parents and young people through the Apprenticeship Hub.

**Action LW2:** Reduce the numbers of **NEET** by **half**, working with schools to prevent NEET occurring and with additional support provided to client groups through EU funding.



**Action LW3:** Introduction of a Council **Social Value Charter** in **2016/17** to deliver training and employment benefits, particularly using the council's planning powers and procurement processes.

**Action LW4:** Support businesses and other organisations with the introduction of the new **Apprenticeship Levy** and implementation of the Levy within the City Council to maximise apprenticeships.

**Action LW5:** Ensure appropriate advice and support for local residents impacted by the roll out of **Universal Credit**.

**Action LW6:** Promote the **Living Wage** including through procurement contracts.

**Action LW7:** Maximise take-up and support for individuals seeking training and work through **employment and skills contracts**, including support for NEET and Ex-offenders.

**Action LW8:** Provide a **central resource through the Employment Hub for employers** looking to recruit apprenticeships, internships, work placements, work experience. Particular emphasis will be to support the most disadvantaged people in our communities.

**Action LW9:** **Skills devolution** proposals to be developed as part of the Combined Authority/Devolution work.

**Action LW10:** Provide training and support to residents and families in **ESOL, English, Maths, employability skills** and **Digital Literacy** through a programme of community based courses.

"Connexions supported me in expanding my CV supporting me to approach potential work opportunities in an experienced way."



**Action LW11:** Actively contribute to the post-16 educational and training institutions **area review** in order to ensure a better fit between the skills supply system and the demands of the local economy.

**Action LW12:** Continue partnership working with Job Centre Plus on the **Think Family** project working with 1,995 families to 2020 to ensure eligible individuals receive support to progress into work. Support the delivery of the **GREAT project** in conjunction with Voluntary Action Leicestershire and Leicestershire County Council, supporting 600 Leicestershire families furthest from the labour market into work.

**Action LW13:** The council will coordinate bespoke recruitment campaigns that broker support for those currently out of work where new jobs will be created at major development sites e.g. former new walk centre site.



# City Hall – Willmott Dixon

**Jobs created**  
**9**

**Total project cost**  
**£12m**

**Supply chain**  
**25.02%**  
Total spend on companies within 10 miles

### About the project

Substantial refurbishment of two city centre buildings to provide new offices for Leicester City Council staff. The project involved converting a 75-year-old building into a new civic centre for the city plus the internal refurbishment of a nearby 1960s office block to create local authority offices.

### What Constructing Leicester delivered

As the contract exceeded £3.5m, Constructing Leicester used procurement to promote investment in skills.

One of the conditions when awarding the contract was an agreement to an employment and skills plan for the development. Detailed benchmarked outputs against fourteen employment and skills areas meant there was a focus on using sub-contractors located close to the project to bring a benefit to the local economy.

Local firms were engaged to provide windows, scaffolding and building services. There were also several opportunities for work placements and skills development. It delivered:

- 20.2% of total spend on local employment within 10 miles
- 3 Work placements
- 2 Construction curriculum support activities
- 4 Apprentice starts
- 4 S/NVQ starts for subcontractors
- 4 Existing apprentices

“Willmott Dixon has not only delivered on our project across Leicester on time and on budget, but they have delivered other benefits to the local community – such as apprenticeships and skills development, and have used our local supply chains.”

**Frank Jordan,**  
strategic director,  
City Development and  
Neighbourhoods,  
Leicester City Council





## THEME 4: ENTERPRISING LEICESTER

### How are we doing?

Leicester is an excellent place to start and grow a business. In 2015 the city and county were home to the **fastest growing SME community** in the country outside London.

The city is developing distinctive strengths in priority sectors. These include textiles, food and drink manufacturing, and the creative industries/ technology sectors.

Leicester is also attracting large successful businesses, with IBM and Hastings Direct establishing significant new bases in the city and generating hundreds of new jobs, with established brands such as Samworths expanding.

This success is leading to a growing national profile. For example, Tech Nation 2016 has identified Leicester as one of the **UK's notable digital technology clusters**, one of three across the Midlands and the only cluster in the East Midlands.

The council has used a range of **businesses support measures** to stimulate the economy including grants, broadband vouchers, the £10m Investment Fund loans and discretionary business rate reductions. 1,920 businesses have been supported since 2012.

The Council's **managed workspace portfolio has doubled in size** since 2012, providing over 120,000 square feet of workspace for 210 businesses at LCB Depot, Phoenix Square, Makers Yard, Dock and Leicester Business Centre, along with a range of industrial estates and business centres in local communities.

The **Retail Area Improvement Scheme** has supported over 70 shop front improvement and environmental improvements at the West End, Golden Mile and city centre such as Granby Street. New workspaces at Leicester Food Park and Friars Mill, both managed on behalf of the Council by the Chamber of Commerce, have also added to the availability of quality business workspace in the city.



The development plans of Leicester University and De Montfort University are helping to re-shape the city. **University investment in enterprise** is generating a new cohort of graduates with entrepreneurial skills, and helping to create a climate of knowledge sharing and innovation.

The Council has worked closely with the **Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership** to provide grant support and advice for example through the Regional Growth Fund. More recently the **Midlands Engine** has emerged as a potential additional vehicle to support business investment in the City.



## ENTERPRISING LEICESTER PRIORITIES

**Action EL1:** Deliver **targeted business support at growing businesses in priority sectors**, including food and drink manufacturing, textiles, creative and technology sectors.

**Action EL2:** Support **sector specific networks** for priority sectors, encouraging collaboration, innovation, supply chain development, joint initiatives around training and workforce development, and the development of new markets.

**Action EL3:** Maximise **access to finance** for growing businesses, working with the LLEP to establish a new business grants programme and stimulate equity/loan finance investment.

**Action EL4:** Promote the **Leicester Investment Fund** to support private sector projects that deliver new infrastructure and / or business expansion.

**Action EL5:** Increase the availability of **workspace for growing businesses**, including the exploring the creation of new industrial units in the city, potentially with other joint venture partners.

**Action EL6:** Grow the innovation district at Pioneer Park, with **Dock 2** providing more than 50,000 sq ft of new workspaces for lease and sale to house growing businesses and to attract new investment.

**Action EL7:** Encourage the development of new **Grade A office space** in the city centre and the expansion of the professional and business service sector in the city. The council will use its land and powers to support this.

**Action EL8:** Identify up to **45 hectares of new employment land** for business and industry through the new Local Plan.



**Action EL9:** Work with private sector infrastructure providers to increase the coverage of **superfast broadband**, providing first class connectivity to support business innovation and growth.

**Action EL10:** Expand the **Inward Investment service** to cover the whole city and county area.

**Action EL11:** Work closely with the Universities to agree a proactive strategy to encourage graduate retention.



## THEME 5: SPORT AND CULTURE

### How are we doing?

Audiences have been growing at all our flagship venues. At Curve attendance across all productions exceeded 80% in 2015/16 and 100 new seats are helping to deal with growing demand.

At Phoenix Arts, cinema attendances have grown by over 140% in the last 5 years, ticket income is 177% higher and the café and bar are buzzing.

Over recent years De Montfort Hall has increased its annual turnover by 50% from £3.2m to £4.8m and reduced net cost by a third. Stage sound, lighting and backstage facilities have been upgraded and the redecorated auditorium will have new seating in Summer 2016.

More than 40,000 people have now visited the 'Fearless Foxes' exhibition at New Walk Museum. Put together in only 45 days it tells the story of Leicester City's magical 2015/16 Championship season.



Leicester City Football Celebration at Victoria Park

Festival and events in Leicester now provide a year long cultural programme. Over the past 3 years annual visitors to Leicester festivals have increased from 460,000 to over 680,000 contributing more than £23m to the city economy



Richard III Visitor Centre

Leicester Comedy Festival has more than doubled in size in the past 5 years regularly attracting 100,000 people to 800 events with 1/3 of the audience coming from outside Leicestershire,

KR III reinternment saw thousands of visitors flock to the city as we became focus of international media interest. The visitor centre had more than 150,000 visitors in its first two years.

More than 90 Heritage Panels have now been installed across the city celebrating the contribution of key industrial, faith, sporting, civic and educational figures from the city's history.

The new extension at Attenborough Arts has provided 3,500 sq ft of high quality, flexible gallery space. Together with a revamped reception and coffee bar this has helped drive visitor numbers.

Leicester Print Workshop celebrated a 30 year birthday in its award winning new building at the heart of the Cultural Quarter, widening the range of training programmes, resources and display spaces available.

Soft Touch Arts also celebrated a 30 yr

birthday in a new building following the £1m refurbishment of 50 New Walk which has delivered a superb arts and heritage centre for young people.

A £4.2m refurbishment will see the 11<sup>th</sup> century Leicester castle re-invented as a Business School by De Montfort University. Public access will continue and a digital I beacon project will tell the story of the Castle over the centuries.

### Sporting success

Leicester Tigers completed a new 3,000 seat stand and agreed in principle a deal with the city council to buy land for a new Hotel, conference facilities and a high quality public space in front of the stadium.

The Rugby World Cup in October 2015 boosted revenue per available room by 15% across the whole county.

The Leicester Riders celebrated moving into their £4.5m new 3,000 capacity arena by winning the national Basketball Championship.



Leicester Riders

Leicestershire County Cricket Club is investing in new facilities, including new floodlights, to boost attendances as part of a wider improvement plan.

wisdom and odds of 5000 - 1 to win the Premier League sending the whole city delirious with 250,000 enjoying the celebrations

The Castle Classic elite cycle race has put Leicester on the map and our streets have featured prominently through the TV coverage that this has brought.



A new sporting partnership has been established to allow more regular dialogue with our leading sporting clubs.



Leicester Tigers

Leicester City Football Club defied accepted

## Sport and Culture Priorities

Much of the investment in the physical fabric of the city has transformed the scope of new cultural activities to be celebrated in the public realm and to further build on our existing festivals and events programme. The network of spaces now includes Jubilee Square, Town Hall, the new square to the rear of the Corn Exchange, an enhanced Orton Square linked to a refurbished St George's churchyard and the new public realm that will be created as part of the re-developed New Walk site.

Priorities for the city council will be to effectively animate these new spaces by creating cultural events and activities that engage all sections of the community and by maximising the scope of arts, culture and sport to tackle social exclusion as well as to celebrate excellence.

**SC1:** Deliver **world class cultural events and activities** to showcase artistic excellence, international links and community solidarity including street art and public participation events with international artists.

**SC2:** Continue to grow our **festivals and events programme** for visitors and residents alike.

**SC3:** Develop investment plans to

- better connect the **Jewry Wall museum** and grounds with the city centre and develop it as a Roman museum to rival the best in the country.
- improve access and install a stunning new entrance staircase at **New Walk Museum**
- create a state of the art visitor attraction at **Abbey Pumping Station**,

**SC4:** Work with the **Great Central Railway** and the National Railway Museum at York to create a national visitor attraction at the **Leicester North Station**.



**SC5:** Bring life to the old **Haymarket Theatre**, empty for 10 years, by working with a local arts consortium to refurbish it as a theatre training, music performance and commercial conference venue.

**SC6:** Use technology to better tell the **Story of Leicester** and its people through the ages and to bring the heritage of the city to life.

**SC7:** Support the continued growth and



Jewry Wall Museum

success of our **high profile national sports clubs** to contribute to strengthening the local economy, particularly through additional visitors to the city.

**SC8:** Contribute to the **Leicester & Leicestershire Sport & Physical Activity Sector Growth Plan** developed by the LLEP.

