

Growth Unit Update

Scrutiny Commission

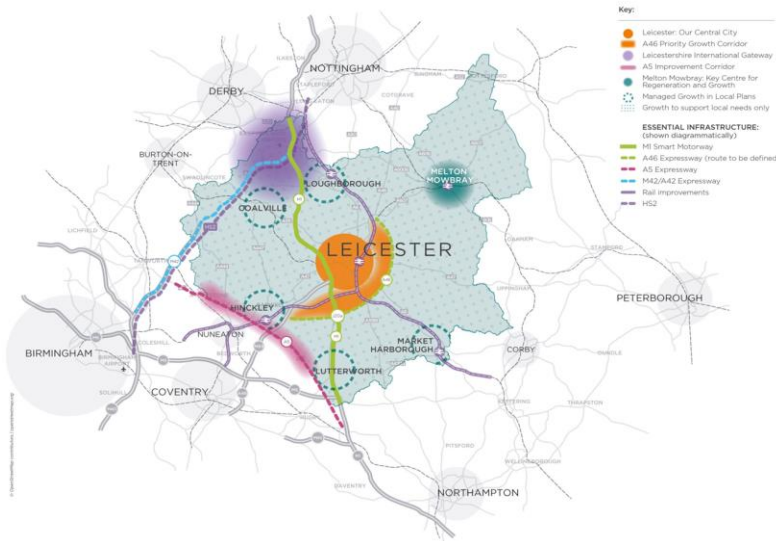
2 September 2020

The purpose of this report is to update the Scrutiny Commission on the establishment of the County Council's Growth Unit, to set out current activity and focus and to provide some examples of specific work being led or supported by the Growth Unit.

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Head of the Growth Unit and Major Programmes
Leicestershire County Council**

Growth Unit Vision

To oversee the effective delivery of growth – managing financial risk to the County Council, achieving the Council’s strategic and departmental outcomes in a way that protects and enhances communities in Leicestershire



Growth Unit Focus

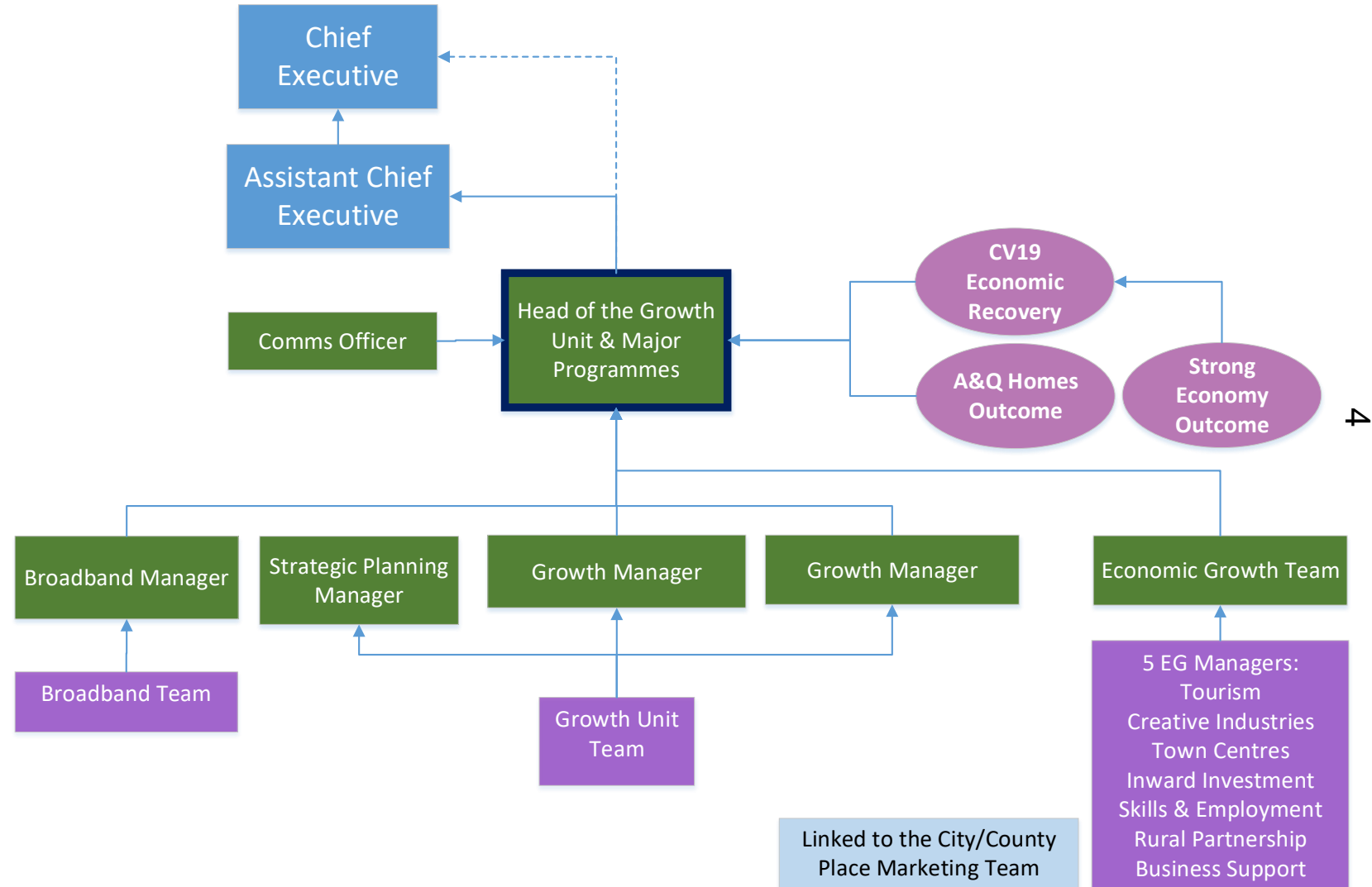
1. Identify and manage **risks** to the County Council arising from the growth agenda and advise Members accordingly. To include financial and reputational risks
2. Coordinate the Council's input to the **Strategic Growth Plan, Local Plans** and the delivery of infrastructure in **priority schemes**, defined on the basis of risk to the County Council
3. **Coordinate departmental input** to the delivery of major growth schemes in the County, ensuring a broader, corporate perspective is properly reflected
4. Work with **external stakeholders** in delivering infrastructure to support priority schemes in the County.
5. Ensure appropriate representation is made by the Council at **Local Plan Examinations** and/or Planning Committees
6. Support and influence the work led by **MAG and SPG**
7. Coordinate County Council **s106 requirements** for major developments in the County, in line with the new s106 process and resources
8. Deliver the Superfast Leicestershire programme and coordinate a **broadband/5G** strategy for the County
9. Represent the County on the Midland Engine **Development Corporation** programme team

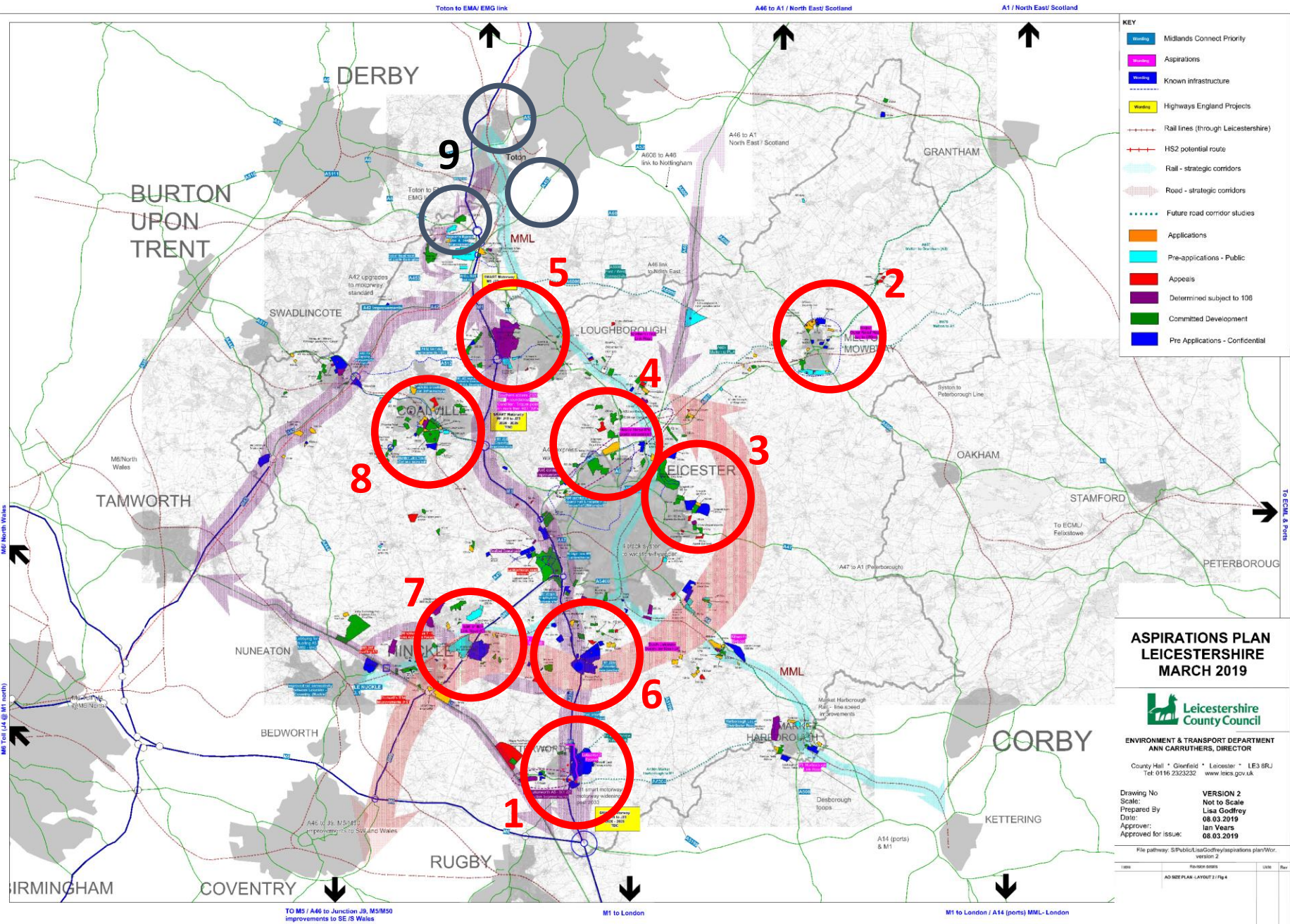
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Growth Unit Structure and Responsibilities

Responsibilities

- Original Growth Unit priorities (see next slide)
- Superfast Broadband Programme
- Management of the Economic Growth Team
- Management of the Strategic Planning Manager
- Leading the Council's economic recovery activity, as part of the LLEPs Economic Recovery Cell
- Developing and leading the Council's Affordable and Quality Homes and Strong Economy Strategies





Examples of Growth Unit Activity. 1 of 2

- Implementation of a **Business Partner approach** to engagement with each council department to identify infrastructure requirements to support growth
- Establishment of **positive relations with key stakeholders** including districts, Loughborough University, developers, CCGs, Homes England, Midlands Engine, the LLEP etc
- **Managing a register of key sites/SUEs** in the County, aligned to district Local Plan activity
- Development of a **forward plan of key growth related decisions** at the County Council but also District Councils
- **Addressing S106 issues** through engagement with the Council's new S106 structure, direct involvement in the major SUEs and development of positive relations with district council officers
- Early engagement with the **Health Sector** to develop an integrated view of delivering infrastructure to support growth
- Leading discussions with Environment colleagues on the impact the **climate emergency** will have on growth in the county and the associated infrastructure needs. To be reflected in a long term Infrastructure Strategy for the County in due course.
- Exploring options to develop a **County Council Design Code** to incorporate emerging best practice in relation to place making and to ensure a consistent approach in design and delivery
- **Direct engagement with Charnwood BC officers** on the three SUEs in the district

Examples of Growth Unit Activity. 2 of 2

- Supporting the Council's **engagement with Melton BC** regarding HIF funding, and the need for a Masterplan
- Detailed **engagement with the City Council** on SUE issues which impact on district local plans and county infrastructure, particularly related to school placement challenges
- Ongoing **engagement with Harborough District Council regarding Lutterworth East** covering S106 issues, Planning application and Delivery options/funding/Joint Venture
- Detailed engagement with Midlands Engine on the **Development Corporation and Freeport proposals**
- **Discussions with Blaby District Council** regarding their two SUEs (Whetstone Pastures and Sapcote) and the proposal of a more collaborative approach to place shaping/infrastructure provision. An approach to be adopted with other districts
- **Direct engagement with NWLDC senior officers** on a more collaborative approach to place shaping/infrastructure provision
- The **Superfast Broadband** programme and the reappraisal of the County Council's role in the future following BDUK proposals
- Development of **CV19 recovery strategies** for Economic Growth Team functions, particularly tourism, market towns, skills and employment

Case Studies

- 1. Midlands Engine Development Corporation**
- 2. Lutterworth East SDA**
- 3. Working with Charnwood Borough Council**
- 4. Driving and Delivering Strategic Growth with Blaby District Council**

East Midlands Development Corporation (Midlands Engine)

- The Development Corporation is a close collaboration with local LA, private sector and other partners intended to create an effective mechanism for delivering strategic development at scale for the region
- Centred around three initial sites, 'The Alchemy Project' embodies the ambition of the Development Corporation (see image on right)
- The Growth Unit is responsible for the relationship with Midlands Engine and other key partners in relation to this project, providing expertise and resource to manage complexities, risk and opportunities and to ensure the strategic interests and objectives of the Council are met



- 1. Toton & Chetwynd**
A new destination for knowledge-driven jobs and next generation living, with a new HS2 station offering high-speed transport.
- 2. Ratcliffe-on-Soar**
A power station ready for redevelopment into a next generation site of Industry and Innovation.
- 3. East Midlands Airport Area**
Home to the UK's largest dedicated air-cargo operation, a global centre for trade and logistics and the entry point to our Inland freeport. Plans and Infrastructure are in place for immediate delivery.

Lutterworth East SDA

- Gathered insight from Members and Officers to develop a clear set of scheme objectives and clarity around the remit of the Joint Venture partnership
- Developed governance and programme management structures to identify interrelationships and critical decision points
- Cross departmental working ensured Lutterworth East supports the Council's Strategic Plan Outcomes
- Partnership working with Property Services and stakeholders to establish clear objectives and best practice around design, environmental and economic sustainability and the wellbeing of residents
- Close working with HDC to align planning application with local plan requirements. Planning approval granted July 2020
- Supported assessment of alternative delivery options in part following unsuccessful HIF bid cost savings



Charnwood Borough Council

- Emerging draft Local Plan (2019 - 2036) – key development ‘North of Birstall SUE’ (Broadnook).
- Direct engagement with CBC’s ‘Growth Advisory Group’ and identification of significant issues concerning planned school requirements and S106 education contributions for Broadnook SUE.
- Subsequent liaison between CBC and county council officers and close working to help identify and resolve significant differences of position between the local planning authority and LEA.
- Arising from developing dialogue and emerging draft Local Plan, unit also central to ensuring constructive discussions concerning other developments, e.g. exploration of potential solutions to primary school site issues relating to the Soar Valley area.
- Next steps:
 - continue to develop and further dialogue to help ensure effective and meaningful engagement with our service departments on key infrastructure developments, including 3 Charnwood SUEs; and
 - support exploration of delivery options for the Soar Valley area and other ‘service centres’ where smaller scale development opportunities may arise as part of the emerging draft local plan.



Driving and Delivering Strategic Growth with Blaby District Council

- Effective collaboration and partnership working are key characteristics of the delivery of any key strategic-scale development and infrastructure project
- The Growth Unit initiated and manages an innovative approach to collaborating with BDC on mutually-beneficial growth objectives and is responsible for ensuring that the County Council's risks and opportunities are understood and mitigated where necessary
- It is expected that the close collaboration with BDC will yield early-stage progress on key development sites at Stoney Stanton (M69 junction 2, pictured right) and the Growth Corridor (centred around the proposed new junction at M1 20a, not pictured)

