



## **SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 2<sup>nd</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020**

### **PLACE MARKETING – LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE**

#### **REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

##### **Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Commission on the work of the Place Marketing team for Leicester & Leicestershire.

##### **Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. The County Council's Strategic Plan and Enabling Growth Plan both highlight the importance of enhancing the profile of Leicestershire as a place to visit, live, work and do business; thus encouraging investment and creating the right environment to attract businesses which can grow and flourish now and in the future.
3. Following a review, on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2016 the Cabinet supported the establishment of a Company, to be jointly owned by the County Council and Leicester City Council to lead on Place Marketing, Inward Investment and Strategic Tourism across Leicester and Leicestershire.
4. Due to unforeseen delays in establishing the Company, the Cabinet agreed in February 2019 to revise their decision to create a Company and instead to extend the interim joint working arrangements which had been established which included a staff team hosted by the City Council and based at City Hall in Leicester (the Place Marketing Team). It was felt at that time that good progress against the agreed business plan with strong private sector engagement through the current arrangement and that a company model was no longer required.

##### **Background**

5. The Place Marketing Team (PMT) is jointly funded by the City and County Council to deliver place marketing, inward investment and strategic tourism services across Leicester and Leicestershire. The work of the Team is overseen by the Place Marketing Co-ordination Group alternately chaired by Tom Purnell, Assistant Chief Executive, Leicestershire County Council, and Mike Dalzell, Director of Tourism, Culture and Inward Investment at the City Council.
6. Among the key priorities agreed for the Team for 2019-20 was the need to develop a Tourism Growth Plan, to better manage Leicester and Leicestershire as a tourism destination to help attract more visitors, and to raise the profile of Leicester and Leicestershire as a great place for business and to attract and support further business investment. The Tourism Growth Plan was considered by the Scrutiny Commission on 4 September 2019. A number of changes were made in response

to comments made by Elected Members and these are detailed in the Appendix to this report. A link to the final printed version of the Plan can be found in the Background Papers section of this report.

## Key Achievements

7. Key achievements in 2019-20 include:

### Tourism

- The Tourism Advisory Board led development of the new Tourism Growth Plan to provide a framework for sector growth across Leicester and Leicestershire and was successfully launched in October 2019 by England Director of Visit England/Visit Britain at one of the best attended Leicester Business Festival events.
- Tourism performance exceeded previous years with over 35.3 million people (up 1.3%) visiting Leicester and Leicestershire last year and tourism was worth more than £1.9bn to the local economy, up 4.4%.
- “Uncover The Story” was developed as a unique partnership campaign brand for raising our tourism profile. Fifteen key attractions were engaged as part of the Phase I roll out planned for mid-2020.
- A new Business Tourism service delivery model was developed to capitalise on this important sector for the start of Autumn 2020.
- Developed Place Marketing websites to attract over ½ million new users in 2019/20.
- Introduced new tourism e-newsletter sent to over 1,700 people who have requested receipt.

### Investment

- Worked with over 200 new business enquiries during 2019/20, as well as existing clients, to attract their investment, delivering over 500 new jobs and over 250 jobs safeguarded.
- Developed new Inward Investment messages working alongside Hatch Regeneris and Adam Breeze and produced new collateral to attract investment in key sectors.
- Established an InvestinLeicester LinkedIn page, developing over 1,000 targeted connections and achieving more than 35,000 views of positive business investment posts about Leicester and Leicestershire.
- Worked with Department for International Trade to develop a High Potential Opportunity (HPO) to promote Space-related industries globally, with initial investments secured and also submitted a bid for a new Healthcare Rehabilitation HPO aligned to the emerging Local Industrial Strategy.
- Produced a new high-quality Strategic Sites map to support investment and as a tool for our Business Ambassadors.
- Secured 2019/20 funding to start a Key Account Management Programme to grow our existing foreign-owned business base.

## Performance during 2019/20

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT	CITY	COUNTY	TOTAL	19/20 Target
	CUMULATIVE	CUMULATIVE		
<b>INWARD INVESTMENT</b>				
No: of enquiries (City & County)	City & County		202	250
No: of new jobs created	293	255	548	500
No: of jobs safeguarded	5	273	278	200
<b>STRATEGIC TOURISM</b>				
No: of businesses that are engaged in Uncover The Story	6	9	15	10
Value of Tourism and Hospitality (2019)	682m	1.28bn	1.96bn	Contextual
Visitors to City and County (2019)	11.71m	23.66m	35.3m	Contextual
<b>PLACE MARKETING</b>				
InvestinLeicester.info (City & County) New Users	City & County		1,901	2,000
VisitLeicester.info (City & County) New Users	City & County		541,537	450,000
InvestinLeicester Linked In Connections (City & County)	City & County		1,043	400

## Tourism

8. Tourism and hospitality is an important economic sector for Leicester and Leicestershire. In 2019, over 35.3m visitors helped boost the economy by £1.9bn and supported around 23,000 jobs.
9. Covid-19 has severely impacted the tourism sector globally. As at 29th July, Visit Britain forecasted domestic tourism spending in 2020 to be 49% down compared to 2019, with inbound tourism to the UK declining by 59% and changing. Tourism numbers are forecast to gradually rise throughout the remainder of 2020 although are still very likely to be well below normal levels by the end of the year.
10. The Leicester & Leicestershire Tourism Growth Plan, launched in October 2019, outlined a strategic approach to growing the visitor economy in partnership with tourism businesses and the public sector. The impact of Covid-19 on the tourism sector since March 2020 has, however, been devastating and it has been necessary to re-focus efforts on the recovery of the sector before looking at further

ambitious growth. As part of the work to support the tourism and hospitality sector recover from the impact of Covid-19, a Tourism Recovery Framework was developed to feed into the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) Economic Recovery Cell. The Recovery Framework now forms part of the Tourism Growth Plan to help the sector get back on track to its pre Covid-19 baseline, building on the planned interventions that were identified as right for supporting and growing the sector.

11. The Tourism Recovery Framework is being championed by the Tourism Advisory Board, a strategic public/private sector partnership that represents the interests of the tourism sector in Leicester and Leicestershire. A number of operational tourism recovery plans have been developed for the districts and City. The Framework was designed as an overarching document to provide more cohesion, focusing on a standards-led approach aligned to the work of Visit Britain. Key actions include:
- Sector engagement, knowledge sharing and webinars promoting support available, with over 150 business people benefitting from the webinar advice.
  - Supporting the development and administration of local and national grant programmes aimed at sector recovery.
  - Encouraging local businesses to sign up to “We’re Good to Go” industry safety standard to give consumer confidence, with 212 business across Leicester and Leicestershire achieving the Quality Mark.
  - Embracing the Visit England “Know Before You Go” campaign within marketing activity.
  - Raising awareness of tourism and hospitality sector re-openings to encourage tourism.
  - Delivering key projects to stimulate consumer demand in both the leisure and business tourism segments.

#### Uncover The Story

12. The need to create a strong, distinctive and visible destination is a key strategic priority within the Recovery Framework and Tourism Growth Plan. Good progress is being made to develop and deliver the “Uncover The Story” brand campaign to raise awareness of our destination and attract visitors.
- An “Uncover the Story” partner toolkit has been developed and was tested at a workshop, attended by 15 tourism organisations from across Leicester and Leicestershire. The workshop helped support businesses to develop their stories as well as to shape the final toolkit.
  - The “Uncover the Story” section on the Visit Leicester website has been built and tested ready to receive story content.
  - It is planned to launch the first tranche of stories in Autumn 2020.

#### Discover England Fund – England’s Waterways Project

13. Leicester and Leicestershire were partners in a Visit Britain-funded Discover England Fund programme to promote the Midlands to the travel trade in partnership with Shakespeare’s England, West Midlands Growth Company, Visit Shropshire, Visit Coventry and others. Through the project suggested itineraries and interactive maps were developed, the area was promoted at 12 national and international trade shows, a familiarisation visit with London-based tour operators was hosted in the

National Forest and a day workshop for tourism businesses on how to work with the travel trade was held with 1:2:1 follow up support. A travel trade guide which features 23 local attractions and accommodation providers is currently being finalised. The consortium has applied for an additional grant of £175,000 to extend the project into 2021.

### Business Tourism

14. A new business tourism service is in development to support hotels and conference venues win more meetings, incentives, conferences and events (e.g. Imago Venues, Bruntingthorpe Events, Hothorpe Venues, Kilworth House) and to better utilise our visitor attractions for the corporate market.
- Samantha Hall joined the team as our Business Tourism Manager in March to develop and deliver the service and we are in the process of recruiting a Business Tourism Assistant post.
  - A new website for business tourism is nearing completion, aligned to existing Place Marketing websites.
  - We are preparing to attend the rescheduled Meeting Show in Olympia in October to launch the service to the UK and international meetings and events industry.

### Inward Investment

15. A core function of the Team is to promote and raise awareness of the investment opportunities within Leicester and Leicestershire to secure business interest, working in partnership with key stakeholders including local businesses, business intermediaries, land and property owners, commercial agents and developers, the Leicester & Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, Midlands Engine and Department for International Trade.
16. Business confidence and investment decisions have been heavily influenced by a number of major external factors over the past 12 months, including Brexit, government elections, global economic challenges and now Covid-19. This has impacted on the relocation decision making processes of businesses and makes it even more important that we support our existing businesses to survive and where possible grow locally, and also to ensure we compete effectively for new investment.
17. The Inward Investment team was strengthened last year with the appointment of Oliver Whittaker, a new employee of the county council who has been seconded to the Place Marketing team to help support and attract business investment.

### Promotional collateral and website

18. Retaining and securing investment is highly competitive with investment agencies needing to stand out from their competitors by offering coherent investment propositions, based around key opportunities and assets, and targeted marketing materials, supported by robust evidence.

19. We are in the process of enhancing our promotional collateral and web presence, ensuring that our area's strengths and opportunities are appropriately promoted and showcased. This includes:
- Re-designing our Inward Investment website to be more client focused, offering businesses and their advisers' access to high quality location, sector and property information;
  - Creating a new Inward Investment brochure, showcasing Leicester and Leicestershire's location and sectoral strengths and opportunities relating to business, people, skills and place assets – including quality of life;
  - A series of niche sector propositions, representing parts of our economy with strong growth prospects. These propositions combine locational and people factors, such as connectivity, skills and labour availability, with cross-sectoral strengths within the area that are important to businesses. The propositions will support the early stage investment decision making process and can be tailored to support investment enquiries;
  - A new strategic sites map highlighting key development and investment opportunities across Leicester and Leicestershire. The map demonstrates locational advantages of investing in our area, together with the support that is on offer; and
  - New photographic images and video and written business / investment case studies. Strong imagery and highlighting positive experiences of recent investors and existing businesses is a powerful advocate in attracting new investment.

#### Social media

20. Business networks are critical to amplify the positive business impression we are seeking to build upon. Many business professionals use LinkedIn to keep up-to date in their industry, communicate, as well as seek new opportunities.
21. We have established a LinkedIn page to help promote positive local business stories and improve our business connections and communications. To date, we have developed over 1,300 connections, focusing on businesses operating within the property, development and investment industry, Department for International Trade including overseas posts, local businesses, universities and business intermediaries. The effective use of hashtags and sharing is used to further amplify the voice and reach.

#### Business networks and advisory groups

22. Drawing on the knowledge and experience of the public and private sector, we have established a network of advisory groups, including the Leicester & Leicestershire Inward Investment Group - consisting of local authority representatives and Department for International Trade. This informal group adds value to inward investment activities across Leicester and Leicestershire by sharing information, working in collaboration and delivering consistent messages.

23. The team works as a key part of the “Team Leicester” private-public partnership to showcase Leicester and Leicestershire within the property and investment world. A series of well attended, high quality events have been held throughout the year all focused on business confidence and promoting our area, developing connections and stimulating investment. By engaging in this way, we benefit from private sector business and development leaders helping showcase our area, which is more effective than local authorities in isolation.

#### Supporting our Foreign Owned Businesses

24. The team were successful in securing funding from the Department for International Trade to introduce and deliver a key account management project to support the growth of foreign-owned businesses within the Leicester and Leicestershire. The project started in March 2020 with the appointment of Salma Manzoor to lead the project.

#### Enquiries and Successes

25. There are several different types of enquiries that are handled, ranging from local businesses seeking to expand to international businesses keen to establish a UK presence. The support that is requested ranges from simple property enquiries, such as searching for 1,500 sqft of office space, to detailed major investments that require new employment land, support by way of grants and/or loans and a more innovative approach to securing the investment.
26. During 2019/20 the team received 202 new enquiries (199 enquiries were received in 2018/19). Over the period, 548 new jobs were created and 278 jobs safeguarded through business investment or relocation within Leicester and Leicestershire. 45 new enquiries were received in Q1 2020/21 (part covering the Covid-19 lockdown period).
27. The level of officer involvement depends on the type, size and stage of the enquiry, which can include place marketing, data rich sector propositioning, full site/building search, planning engagement, supplier sourcing and access to grants and loans, through to local business connections, university support, skills and labour availability and accessing the labour market. This work is done in partnership with a range of organisations to maximise the impact of the planned investment.
28. The team’s work to support attracting investment includes working closely with district councils, employment land site owners, developers and agents to attract investment from potential end users. This includes producing the Strategic Sites Map where previously interested parties have made direct contact with the site promoter to explore potential for investment.
29. The Sites Map for 2020 included 36 key employment sites promoted by the Team for delivery. Of the sites within Leicestershire, recent investments include:
- Charnwood Campus - Kindeva
  - Optimus Point – Sarstedt
  - Watermead Business Park – Global Payments
  - Loughborough University Science & Enterprise Park – Access Group
  - Lutterworth East – in development

- Mira Technology Park – ClearMotion and Eicher Motors (Royal Enfield)
- Magna Park – Bleckmann, Culina Great Bear
- Interlink South (Nailstone Colliery) – Aldi
- Mountpark Bardon II – Countryside Properties
- Hinckley Park – DPD and Amazon
- Segro Logistics Park – DHL and Games Workshop

30. The Team are in regular dialogue with previous investors to help them continue their growth trajectory, as well as supporting new investors, including:

- HSBC – banking – relocation from Grove Park to Pegasus Business Park
- EGD Logistics – customised logistics solutions – expansion at Magna Park
- Mexichem – chemical manufacturing – expansion at Melton Mowbray
- Winbro Technology – manufacture of advanced machines – foreign investment
- Kinderpedia Ltd and CustomSoft – digital & mobile solutions – initial foreign investments in Leicestershire from which to grow UK presence.

### **Resource Implications**

31. There are no direct funding implications arising from this report which are not provided for within existing approved budgets.

### **Timetable for Decisions**

32. There are no decisions required arising from this report.

### **Conclusions**

33. The views of the Commission are sought on the report together with the presentation to be provided by Mark Oakley, Director of Inward Investment and Place Marketing.

### **Background papers**

Leicester and Leicestershire Tourism Growth Plan - <https://www.llep.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Leicester-and-Leicestershire-Tourism-Growth-Plan-2019.pdf>

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

34. None

### **Equality and Human Rights Implications**

35. There are no equality or human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

### **Other Relevant Impact Assessments**

36. None

### **Appendix**

Appendix - Responses to Elected Member comments on the Tourism Growth Plan



**Officer to Contact**

Tom Purnell  
Assistant Chief Executive  
Strategy and Business Intelligence  
[Tom.purnell@leics.gov.uk](mailto:Tom.purnell@leics.gov.uk)  
0116 305 7019

Mark Oakley  
Director of Inward Investment & Place Marketing  
Leicester City Council  
[mark.oakley@leicester.gov.uk](mailto:mark.oakley@leicester.gov.uk)  
0116 454 3840

This page is intentionally left blank