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Foreword



I am delighted to present this Economic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire. This plan sets out our bold ambitions for the local economy and our intention to champion the changes needed to achieve a thriving and sustainable economy for the future.

This is an exciting time for Leicester and Leicestershire and we have significant opportunities to drive economic growth by working effectively together in a true partnership. I am pleased that so many people have helped us to develop this plan, by identifying the opportunities and challenges facing local businesses and people. We have taken your views on board to develop a vision for our economy which is ambitious but at the same time realistic and plays to the strengths identified in our extensive research.

The plan articulates the pivotal role the LLEP will play in the future of our area - by attracting new investment and supporting local businesses to grow and create new sustainable jobs. We also aspire to increase the number of high-technology and knowledge-based businesses in our area, building on the expertise in our three world-class universities. This will improve our competitive advantage in an increasingly competitive global economy.

We will need the full commitment and support of local and national partners to realise our ambitions and successfully deliver the plan's priorities.

I hope that you share our ambitions for Leicester and Leicestershire and will help us to make this vision a reality.

Andrew Bacon Chairman

Introduction

Local Enterprise Partnerships were established by Government to drive economic growth and rebalance local economies.

The Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) was formed in May 2011 to lead economic growth across Leicester and Leicestershire. The partnership consists of public, private and third sector bodies and is formally recognised by Government. This Economic Growth Plan sets out the LLEP's strategic objectives, priorities and actions and is in part an economic development plan, infrastructure investment plan and a labour market plan. It recognises the interconnected contribution of commerce, people and infrastructure to a successful and sustainable economy.

It is a plan which recognises the unique characteristics of different areas of the City and County and is built upon a new relationship and a new spirit of partnership. The LLEP will play a lead role in co-ordinating this plan and will rely on the full commitment and support of its constituent local and national partners for its successful delivery.

The strategic objectives and priorities set out in the plan cover the time period 2012 to 2020. However, we recognise that the activities to realise our ambitions will change over this eight year period as new opportunities arise. This document has identified priority actions for the first three years of the plan period to reflect the need for flexibility in the later years.

Our Ambition

By 2020 we will:

- Create 25,000 additional private sector jobs
- Attract £2b private sector investment
- Increase Gross Value Added (GVA) by £4b to £23b

Role of LLEP

The ambition is bold and visionary whilst at the same time realistic and sustainable. This plan identifies opportunities to lever significant local and national public and private investment and resources. It has been informed by engagement with key stakeholders from the LLEP's nine priority sectors and through area-based discussions led by the local authorities. Through this approach, the partnership has gained both political and business community support for its ambition, strategic objectives, priorities and actions.



It is important that the partnership, as a collective, adds value to the efforts of individual member organisations to support local economic growth. The LLEP's role is to add value by:

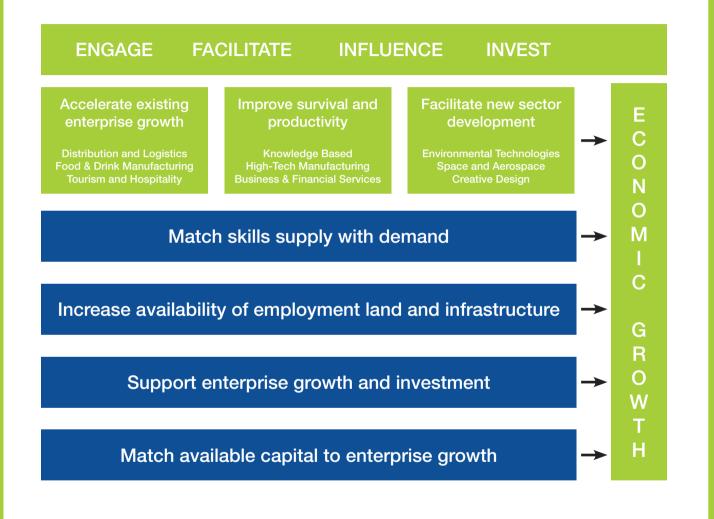
- Engaging with the business community, local authorities, universities, further education/training providers and the voluntary sector
- Facilitating local partnership working and relations with national Government
- Influencing national Government economic policy and spending
- Investing LLEP funding and aligning partner resources

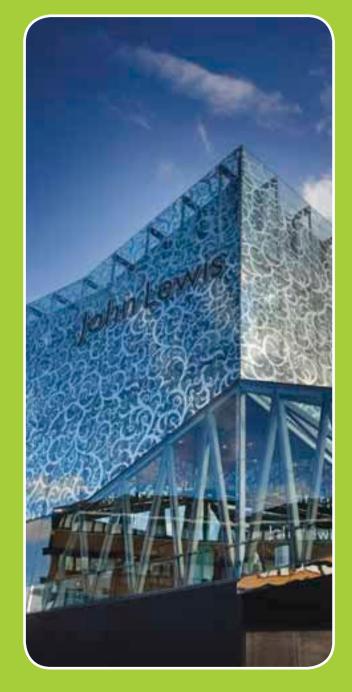




Strategic Objectives & Priorities

The operating model below sets out the LLEP's role, strategic objectives and priority sectors.





This Economic Growth Plan has been informed by a comprehensive review of evidence. This is presented in the Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Assessment (EA) which can be accessed at **www.llep.org.uk**. The EA highlights the LLEP area's many strengths and opportunities along with factors that could constrain future growth. The evidence suggests a need to improve productivity, to improve skills (especially in Leicester City) and the opportunity to build on the strong performance exhibited by our businesses. From our review of evidence and consultation with partners and businesses, the following strategic objectives and priorities have emerged as critically important to enable our economy to grow:

Match skills supply with demand

Improve engagement between employers and training providers

Increase number and flexibility of work placements, apprenticeships and internships

Improve careers advice in schools, FE and HE

Address worklessness by raising ambition and employability skills

Increase availability of employment land and infrastructure

Increase the availability of 'fit for purpose' high quality employment land and premises

Ensure transport infrastructure supports future economic growth

Promote the need for high quality digital infrastructure

Increase the provision of a range of quality housing to support economic growth

Support enterprise growth and investment

Provide effective business support to assist enterprises to start and grow

Support innovation and technologies for new processes and product development

Attract foreign and domestic inward investment

Simplify business regulation through the 'Better Business for All' project

Support local SMEs* to procure public and private sector contracts

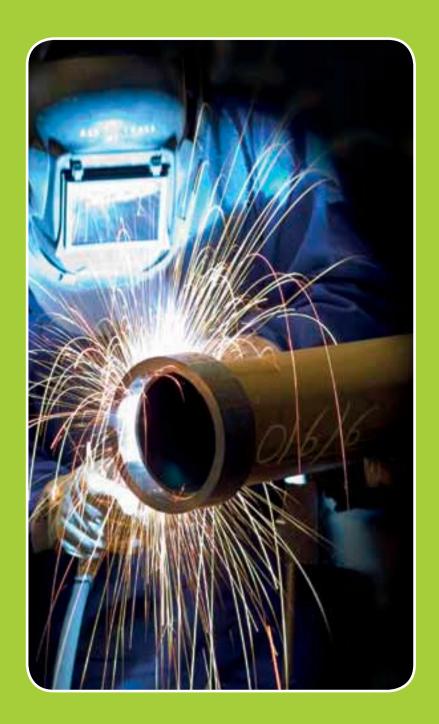
Match available capital to enterprise growth

Secure European and national Government funding

Improve access to capital finance for SMEs

Invest LLEP resources to support economic growth

Utilise public sector assets for economic growth



Match skills supply with demand

The Government has identified that the UK as a whole is falling behind competitor nations in terms of educational attainment and that the country needs to improve its performance to remain globally competitive. In this context, it is a concern to see that our area performs below the national level on many qualifications indicators. There is a need to improve our resident skills base, especially in Leicester City, capitalising on the opportunities provided by our three world-class universities and strong FE and education sectors. In particular, the LLEP would like to stimulate local demand for high-level skills by supporting the growth of knowledge-based businesses.

Evidence from our recent survey of 1,000 local businesses indicates some mismatch between the supply of skills and the needs of businesses. One in four recruiting businesses had experienced difficulties in filling recent vacancies, with problems experienced across a wide range of occupations and skill levels. In many instances, the difficulties were due to a lack of applicants with the appropriate skills. Some employers reported that applicants were not 'job ready', especially young people, suggesting a need to improve 'employability skills'. Businesses also commented that skills shortages in the labour market and skills gaps in their workforce could constrain future growth. Based on this evidence, the LLEP has decided to focus its efforts on facilitating better engagement between employers and training providers, with emphasis on promoting work placements, apprenticeships and internships.

There have been substantial changes to the infrastructure supporting the funding of skills development and careers advice. The LLEP considers it important to fill some of the gaps created through these changes, especially supporting the provision of good quality careers advice. This should not only seek to raise aspirations, but also communicate the full spectrum of opportunities including the promotion of enterprise as an option.



Key Actions for 2012 to 2015

Improve engagement between employers and training providers

- Develop a Skills Demand Plan to influence future skills and training delivery
- Establish relationships with key employers
- Lead co-ordination into the World Skills events
- Prepare and implement the Enterprise Zone Skills Plan with MIRA
- Encourage employment opportunities for young people

Increase number and flexibility of work placements, apprenticeships and internships

- Support sector-based higher level apprenticeships through the Higher Apprenticeship Fund (HAF)
- Embed training and apprenticeship opportunities into key physical developments
- Increase work experience placements for young people by working with relevant agencies and promoting volunteering
- Support the delivery of a local authority internship scheme

Improve careers advice in schools through to FE and HE

- Deliver sector based careers events in partnership with relevant agencies
- Influence schools to provide access to independent and impartial careers advice and guidance
- Promote enterprise in schools, colleges and universities

Address worklessness by raising ambition and employability skills

- Encourage local employers to support the Work Programme and other national programmes
- Work in partnership with the National Careers Service to promote take up of the free careers advice to adults
- Support the 'Leicester to Work' initiative
- Support the City and County Troubled Families programmes
- Explore the feasibility of an 'Exhibition of Work'
- Support the Big Lottery Talent Match programme

For a full list of actions see www.llep.org.uk

Increase availability of employment land & infrastructure

A balanced supply of employment land and premises is a prerequisite for an area to maximise its economic performance. A lack of 'fit for purpose' employment land and premises has restricted growth in the past, especially a limited supply of Grade A office accommodation in Leicester City. The LLEP will encourage investment in a number of locations throughout the area to grow knowledge-based and high value-added sectors. Working with partners, the LLEP will invest in key infrastructure to unlock and accelerate the development of new employment sites.

The LLEP area enjoys a strategic location in relation to the national road network with 95% of the English population accessible in four hours by road. East Midlands Airport is the second largest freight handling airport in the UK. These two factors have contributed to the presence of a strong transport and logistics sector in the area. In order to maintain and develop our competitive advantage, the area must further invest in transport infrastructure. Transport plans will need to enable people to access employment and training opportunities and cater for the additional transport demand likely to emanate from housing growth, without having a significant impact on traffic congestion. It is therefore important to make the best use of our transport system by focusing investments in the places where they will have the greatest economic benefits.

Results from the recent business survey indicate that ten per cent of businesses experience problems around broadband speeds. This is especially marked in the more rural areas. It will be important to address problem locations, as the rural economy is an important contributor to the area's GVA and a lack of superfast broadband could act as a constraint to growth. Also, if we wish to encourage new enterprises in rural areas and promote home-working to alleviate transport pressures, it will be essential that people are supported by suitable digital infrastructure.



Key Actions for 2012 to 2015

Increase the availability of 'fit for purpose' high quality employment land and premises

- Commission a refresh of the employment land and premises study
- Lead the delivery of the MIRA Technology Park Enterprise Zone (MTP EZ)
- Support the delivery of key allocated employment sites, particularly those with a priority sector focus
- Invest in key infrastructure to unlock and accelerate the development of employment sites
- Invest in direct developments including business incubation centres, growing on space and land assembly schemes
- Engage with the commercial property developers to encourage investment and accelerate development
- Redevelop and upgrade redundant buildings to meet local business demand
- Develop a memorandum of understanding for 'business friendly planning'

Ensure transport infrastructure supports future economic growth

- Ensure alignment of the City and County Council Local Transport Plans to support economic growth
- Secure major transport scheme funding into the LLEP area
- Lobby for the improvement and electrification of the Midland Mainline and improved East/West rail connections
- Support the Network Rail investment in rail freight infrastructure

Promote need for high quality digital infrastructure

- Increase the business demand for superfast broadband across Leicester & Leicestershire
- Support the delivery of the Leicestershire Broadband Plan
- Support the delivery of the superfast broadband and ethernet connection to existing and new employment areas

Increase the provision of a range of quality housing to support economic growth

- Co-ordinate the implementation of the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Investment Plan (LIP), including delivery of the Growth Transition Fund (GTF) programme
- Invest in key infrastructure to unlock and accelerate housing development sites

For a full list of actions see www.llep.org.uk

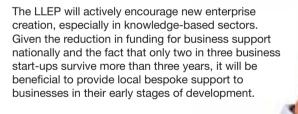
Support enterprise growth and investment

The area has a diverse economy which is not overly dependent on any one sector or a single large employer. The diverse economy is considered a strength as it makes the area less vulnerable to economic shocks. Nevertheless, the EA identified the need to create more private sector jobs in the economy to reduce dependency on public sector related employment. It is also considered desirable to further develop knowledge-based sectors, especially professional services, creative industries and high-tech manufacturing.

There have been substantial changes to the national funding and provision of business support services over the last year. This has led to gaps in terms of face-to-face support for start-up businesses, locally focussed investor development activity and sector-based initiatives to support existing businesses to help them grow.

The ability to retain our large employers in the locality is vital to the future of our economy, as this will maintain diversity and stability. However, to grow the knowledge economy, we must also encourage new foreign and domestic inward investment to the area, capitalising on the many advantages our area can offer.

About 30% of our businesses are investing in Research & Development (R&D) activities, suggesting that more could be done to promote innovation and investment in R&D. In addition, there are opportunities to retain investment in our local economy by helping local SMEs to secure contracts with the large public and private sector organisations located in our area.



For many years, businesses have complained about bureaucracy and 'red-tape', with a third of local businesses rating this as a significant concern in our recent business survey. The LLEP now has an opportunity to address this through the 'Better Business for All' pilot.

Key Actions for 2012 to 2015

Provide effective business support to assist enterprises to start and grow

- Support local companies to access national business support programmes
- Deliver an investor development programme to support indigenous companies to grow
- Coordinate the delivery of sector based strategies and actions
- Commission a bespoke business support service for start-up and pre-start businesses
- Support the delivery of UKTI's international trade and export services
- Support the implementation of the Rural Economy Planning Toolkit

Support innovation and technologies for new processes and product development

- Develop strong collaboration with the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) and promote opportunities to local businesses
- Support the delivery of the ASDEC Vibration Technology Project
- Support the Space Applications Catapult Centre
- Support the Transport Technologies Catapult Centre at MIRA Technology Park

Attract foreign and domestic inward investment

- Deliver the UKTI Foreign Direct Investment Service
- Develop and deliver both general place marketing and bespoke campaigns for priority sectors
- Develop and maintain a LLEP area land and property database
- Identify and work with intermediaries to generate new enquiries
- Develop the 'Team Leicester & Leicestershire' offer for key events such as MIPIM

Simplify business regulation through the Better Business for All project

- Deliver the national pilot programme 'Better Business for All' (BBfA)
- Support the local Regulatory Services Partnership and Business Focus Panel
- Develop an accessible and coordinated local regulatory system
- Develop and foster a positive and productive relationship between local regulatory services and business
- Deliver BBfA the Business Support Scheme

Support local SMEs to procure public and private sector contracts

- Establish a Local Procurement Task Force to develop a new approach for local procurement
- Seek the support of the Leicester and Leicestershire Procurement Forum to deliver the Local Procurement Programme
- Simplify approach to public sector procurement practices for the benefit of local small businesses via a pilot project
- Engage with corporates to develop supply chains and procurement opportunities

Match available capital to enterprise growth

The ability to attract new funding to the area will be essential to stimulate growth and accelerate development. The LLEP will play a pivotal role in identifying funding opportunities for the local economy and communicating these opportunities to partners and businesses. In particular, the LLEP has in-depth knowledge of funding rules/requirements and can provide support to other partners and businesses to facilitate the submission of high quality bids. The LLEP will align funding with local economic priorities and identify match funding.

The LLEP will invest funding where it can have the most impact, for example through re-investment of the Enterprise Zone receipts and by influencing the Growing Places Fund investment programme. This will help to deliver key infrastructure projects to promote economic growth.

Our area has a high proportion of relatively small businesses with plans to grow. Some have struggled to access the finance they need to expand and diversify. The LLEP will support local businesses to access finance by promoting existing national schemes and establishing local partnerships between corporate banks and SMEs.

Finally, our area could make more efficient use of its public land and building assets and upgrade assets for private economic growth.



Key Actions for 2012 to 2015

Secure European and national Government funding

- Lead funding bids for EU and national resources to support the LLEP's economic priorities including Regional Growth Fund (RGF) programme bids
- Represent the LLEP on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Local Management Committee (LMC) and LMC's Investment Sub-group
- Support private sector led bids for the Regional Growth Fund (RGF)
- Support Growth Innovation Fund (GIF) and Higher Apprenticeship Fund (HAF) bids

Improve access to capital finance for SMEs

- Promote the national access to finance programme to local companies
- Work with local businesses to access the asset backed RGF loan fund
- Establish local partnerships between the corporate banking sector and SMEs

Invest LLEP resources to support economic growth

- Deliver the Growing Places Fund (GPF) investment programme
- Re-invest the Enterprise Zone (EZ) receipts to deliver the LLEP Economic Growth Plan
- Explore alternative funding and investment models
- Identify opportunities for matching and aligning funding streams

Utilise public sector assets for economic growth

- Encourage efficient utilisation of local authority land and building assets
- Provide assistance to upgrade public land and building assets for private economic use

For a full list of actions see www.llep.org.uk

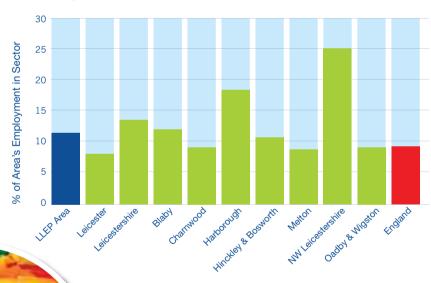
Priority Sectors

The LLEP has identified nine priority sectors to help achieve balanced economic growth over the plan period.

Distribution & Logistics

The distribution and logistics sector provides over 51,300 jobs in the LLEP area, accounting for 11.6% of local employment, which is significantly above the national proportion (8.9%). The LLEP area's strategic location on the national road network, with 95% of the English population accessible in four hours and the presence of East Midlands' airport, the 2nd largest freight handling airport in the UK, provide a competitive advantage over many other areas of the country. There are high concentrations of employment in North West Leicestershire (especially near the airport) and in Harborough District at Magna Park. This is a strong sector with opportunities for further growth.

Distribution & Logistics Employment Share

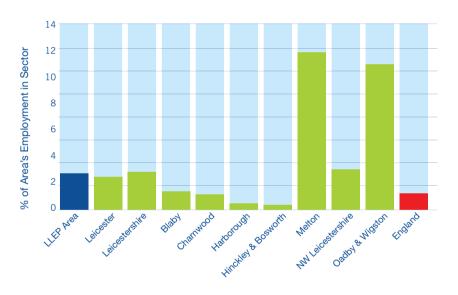


Source: ONS Crown Copyright, BRES 2010, from nomis, March 2012

Food & Drink Manufacturing

The food and drink manufacturing sector provides nearly 12,000 jobs in the LLEP area representing 2.7% of local employment, which is twice the national share of employment (1.3%). This is a well-established sector with some large employers, a significant presence in the snack food markets and signature speciality foods such as Red Leicester Cheese, Stilton Cheese and Melton Mowbray Pork pies. There is potential to accelerate growth in this sector through developments in food technology, speciality ethnic foods and through links with the tourism and hospitality sectors. This is an important sector for the rural economy and there are high concentrations of employment in Melton and Oadby & Wigston districts.

Food and Drink Manufacturing Employment Share

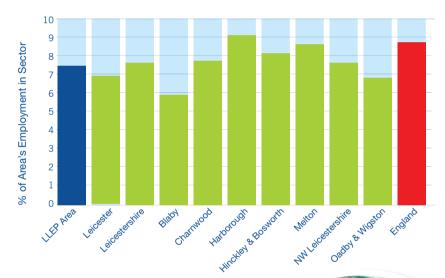


Source: ONS Crown Copyright, BRES 2010, from nomis, March 2012

Tourism & Hospitality

The tourism and hospitality sector is diverse and includes accommodation, tourist attractions, tour operators, sports and recreation activities, bars and restaurants. It is estimated to account for 32,500 jobs locally (7.4% of LLEP employment, compared to 8.8% nationally). The value of tourism to the LLEP economy was estimated at £1.3 billion in 2010. The area has a culturally diverse city, vibrant market towns and an attractive rural environment. Key attractions include Twycross Zoo, Snibston Discovery Park, National Forest, Foxton Locks and the National Space Centre. There are opportunities to further develop this sector by encouraging more overnight stays, co-ordinating the promotion of attractions and making more of the potential offered by our high profile sporting teams and motorsport attractions.

Tourism & Hospitality Employment Share

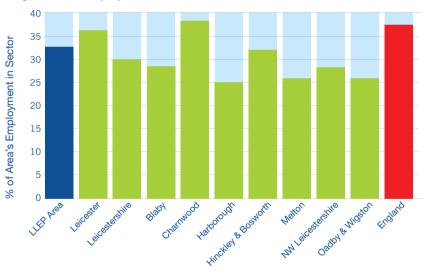


Source: ONS Crown Copyright, BRES 2010, from nomis, March 2012



The knowledge-based sector includes businesses from a wide range of sub-sectors where economic activity relies upon the creation, evaluation and trading of knowledge. The sector includes high and medium technology manufacturing, communications technology, financial and professional services, creative and cultural industries. The sector definition also includes employment in education and healthcare. Based on this broad definition, it is estimated that 33% of local employment falls into the knowledge-based category, slightly below the national figure (37.5% in England). The area is relatively strong in terms of manufacturing but under-represented in the professional services sectors. Given the presence of three world-class universities, there is significant potential to grow this sector through knowledge-based start-ups and attracting investment to science parks and innovation centres. Growth in this sector will improve economic performance on a number of indicators, such as GVA, skills and earnings. Charnwood has a relatively high share of employment in the broad knowledge-based sector. Whilst Leicester City's share of employment is close to the England figure, it is lower than many other cities, especially around employment in professional services.

Knowledge Sectors Employment Share



Source: ONS Crown Copyright, BRES 2010, from nomis, March 2012 Note: figures include employment in health and education sectors

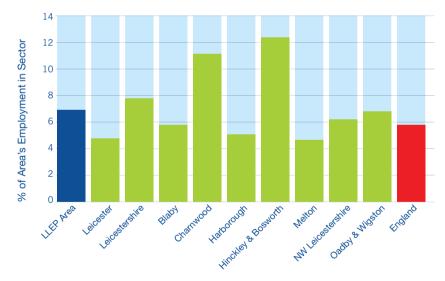
Priority Sectors

High-tech Manufacturing

This sector includes manufacturing engineering, technical consultancy and associated scientific research and development. This sector is quite well developed locally, benefitting from significant expertise in local universities, some large employers and supply chain activity. The sector is estimated to provide 29,800

jobs in the LLEP area, representing 6.9% of local employment (compared to 5.8% nationally). This sector has the potential to boost the area's GVA and productivity, especially through export growth. In the recent business survey, the local manufacturing sector demonstrated strong performance, especially engineering businesses. There are concentrations of employment in Hinckley & Bosworth and Charnwood districts.

High-tech Manufacturing Employment Share

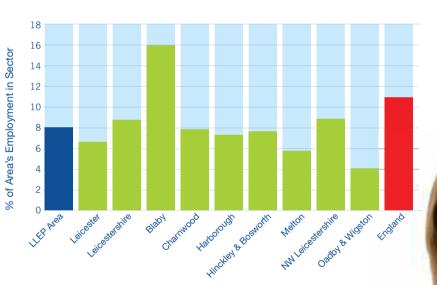


Source: ONS Crown Copyright, BRES 2010, from nomis, March 2012

Business & Financial Services

The business and financial services sector includes legal and accounting activities, head office activity, management consultancy, professional services and scientific/ technical consultancy. The sector provides 35,300 jobs in the LLEP area, representing 8% of local employment, which is below the national share of employment in this sector (10.9%). In particular, Leicester City's share of employment in this sector is low for a major city. This sector is a key employer in Blaby District, linked to the location of Santander. The sector is generally associated with high skills, graduate employment, high earnings and making a strong contribution to an area's GVA. For these reasons, it would be desirable to develop this sector and increase employment opportunities.

Business & Financial Services Employment Share

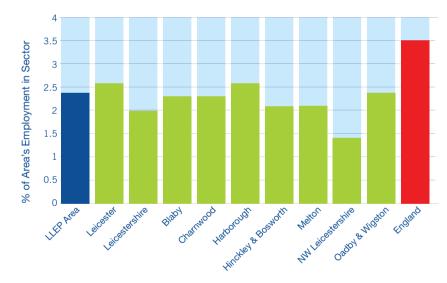


Source: ONS Crown Copyright, BRES 2010, from nomis, March 2012

Creative, Design, Media and Performing Arts

Local employment in this sector is estimated at 10,300 jobs, representing 2.4% of employment which is slightly below the national figure of 3.5%. This is a diverse sector which is characterised by a high proportion of freelance workers and micro businesses. The sector has significant potential to grow drawing on expertise in local universities and FE colleges. The proliferation of micro businesses could be encouraged to expand with the provision of appropriate infrastructure and support. Where dedicated workspace has been provided for the sector, such as the LCB Depot in Leicester and the Atkins Centre in Hinckley, the take up of facilities has been good.

Creative, Design, Media & Performing Arts Employment Share



Source: ONS Crown Copyright, BRES 2010, from nomis, March 2012

Space and Aerospace

The University of Leicester houses one of the foremost academic space science and instrumentation centres in Europe. Locally built sensors and imaging devices are currently in active service on space missions. This is an emerging sector which requires specialist and high level skills. The LLEP area already has businesses involved in satellite technology and suppliers to the aerospace industry. With the expansion of space related technologies and applications at a national level, it is estimated that there could be 100,000 new jobs in this sector over the next five years. With our university expertise, the iconic National Space Centre attraction and an existing business base, our area is uniquely placed to capitalise on the expected national growth in this sector. Moreover, this could differentiate our economy from other areas of the country.

Environmental Technologies

The environmental technology sector has been identified as an emerging sector that is likely to show substantial growth, at a national level, over the next decade. The LLEP area has pockets of expertise in local universities and FE colleges and the area is home to pioneering organisations such as CENEX, Intelligent Energy (Loughborough) and MIRA in Hinckley & Bosworth. In addition, the area is home to the National Forest, a national exemplar of environmental-led regeneration.

Key initiatives include the Government's Green Deal, which aims to radically overhaul the energy efficiency of homes and small businesses and could support 250,000 new jobs over the next 20 years. There is significant local potential to stimulate and develop the 'Green Deal' market as well as to respond to national conditions. It will be important to ensure that our local businesses and workforce have the right skills to proactively benefit from opportunities.

Additional opportunities include green transport technology around the MIRA Technology Park and Loughborough Science Park, sustainable construction to support new housing developments in our area and agricultural diversification in the rural economy.



Measuring Progress

We will monitor our progress towards our broad ambitions:

- Create 25,000 additional private sector jobs
- Attract £2b private sector investment
- Increase GVA by £4b to £23b

We will also assess wider economic performance using the following indicators.

Desired outcome	Base Year/date	Baseline for LLEP	Baseline England	Target 2020
High level economic measures				
Increased productivity and competitiveness (GVA per head)	2009	£19,000	£20,498	£23,500
Employment Growth is positive	2008 to 2010	-3.3%	-3.0%	3% per year
Share of employment in professional and managerial occupations increases	Mar 2012	40%	44%	48%
Share of employment in knowledge-based sectors increases	2010	32.7%	37.5%	43%
Reduced share of employment in public sector	2010	19.3%	20.8%	17%
Gap closed between median workplace earnings and UK (figures shown are weekly)	2011	£466 City £472 County	£507	Same as England

Desired outcome	Base Year/date	Baseline for LLEP	Baseline England	Target 2020
Employment and skills				
Increased employment rate	Mar 2012	70.5%	70.3%	75%
Increased proportion of working age population with at least NVQ2 level qualifications	Dec 2011	67.8%	69.5%	75%
Increased proportion of working age population with at least NVQ4 level qualifications	Dec 2011	29.0%	32.7%	35%
Reduction in proportion of businesses reporting skills shortages	Feb 2012	23%	**	18%
Reduction in unemployment rate (JSA claimant count)	Jun 2012	3.6%	3.8%	2.5%
Enterprise and business				
Increase in number of new enterprises per 10,000 population	2010	53.4	61.3	61.3
Increased 3 year business survival rates	2010	64.2%	62.9%	70%
A high proportion of local businesses report increased turnover and profits	Feb 2012	Sales 41% Profits 34%	**	Sales 50% Profits 40%

^{**} Local survey, no national comparator available





For more information: www.llep.org.uk

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