

Community Scrutiny

28 October 2020

Draft NWL Economic Recovery Plan

UC risen by 165% since March.
2,770 (4.3% of resident population)

In line with Leicestershire and below the East Midlands (5.7%) and GB (6.5%).

10.3% Furloughed in East Midlands at 31 August –

Similar numbers at local level.

Number of Job Postings in NWL has grown by 98% between May & September – double that of Leicestershire's increase.

Buoyant Logistics Sector.

Volume of freight at EMA up approximately 20%.

PwC and KPMG both predict house price rises in the East Midlands to outpace other regions.

Small Business and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant schemes - 1,642 businesses paid out of an estimated 1,693 businesses

£19.15 million paid out to 97.0% of NWL eligible businesses.

202 Discretionary Grant Relief scheme paid out to the sum of £984,023.

Over 1000 businesses supported

1:2:1 support

Funding

Business Champions

Webinars

Local Restrictions Support Grant drafted.

Reopening High Streets Safely Fund application submitted.

Coordinating role in the delivery of:

Covid 19 redundancy support

Kickstart scheme

EU Exit Readiness

NWL Virtual Jobs Fair- Over 700 people visited the site with nearly 400 registering their details.

41% from LE67 postcode area

11% from the LE65 postcode area

Recovery Plan Introduction

- The NWL Economic Recovery Plan provides a programme of deliverable actions for the Council to respond to the crisis and help contribute to build our economy back strongly and more resilient.
- Originally prepared as a Business Focus Covid Response Plan for the Economic Recovery Cell, the Recovery Plan sets out immediate plans (0-9months) of actions for economic recovery in response to the Coronavirus outbreak.
- Following consultation with the RCG and the Recovery MAG, it was suggested that the work plan broadens to reflect the economic recovery work being delivered across the authority and not just through the Economic Recovery Cell.

Regional and National context

- The Government and the LLEP have announced that they will initiate national and regional recovery plans respectively. – Both expected for release in early 2021.
- First draft of the LLEP Recovery plan was published 1 September 2020 and the Economic Recovery Cell were consulted on its structure and content.
- There is also a parallel requirement to produce a local economic recovery plan for North West Leicestershire which meets the immediate and specific needs of our businesses and communities.

Outcomes

- The NWL Economic Recovery Plans includes a number of key actions that contribute to the delivery of 9 outcomes.
- These outcomes stemmed from the early Leicestershire Economic Recovery Cell planning and have since modified to reflect the recovery work of the draft LLEP Economic Recovery Plan.
- The 9 outcomes, and examples of actions against these outcomes, are summarised in the next five slides.

1) Support individuals during hardship

- Ensuring sufficient redundancy support for residents and businesses resulting from Covid 19.
- Establish referral model for residents and job seekers to access local and regional virtual Job Fairs.
- Provide essential financial intervention and advice on benefits to eligible businesses and residents in need.

2) Administration of government grants to businesses and individuals

- Administer the Small Business and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant, the Discretionary Grant Relief scheme and, potentially, the Local Restrictions Support Grant.
- Promote the take up of other funding programmes to support local businesses in response to Covid 19.
- Introduce measure to ensure that suppliers to the council are paid promptly to help maintain suppliers cash flows, protect jobs and the supply chain.

3) Provide a link between representatives of local businesses and agencies that support economic development

- Support for local businesses and carriers in readiness for the UK's exit from the European Union.
- Set up an online referral mechanism to signpost to support agencies.
- Support hospitality and high street businesses to maximise compliance with COVID-19 requirements and minimise the spread of the virus.

4) Deliver local programmes of support to new and start-up businesses to stimulate economic recovery

- Provide first point of contact and 1:2:1 support for local businesses experiencing hardship as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.
- Provide local support programmes such as webinars, virtual networking, business start up advice, support to women to re-enter the labour market or consider self employment.
- Maintain single point of contact for employer relationship with existing strategic employers. i.e. Mercia Park, SEGRO and EMEG.

5) Collate and monitor trends and data to understand and respond to changes in the economic climate

- Prepare and supply regular economic intelligence at a local, regional and national level to assist in decision making.
- Map the commercial occupancy of towns and local centres across the NWL to monitor the changes on our high streets due to the impact of Covid 19 on local businesses.

6) Identify the impact on tourism and the tourism sector

- Provide support for the tourism and hospitality sector in North West Leicestershire.
- Create and communicate more reasons to visit North West Leicestershire.
- Collate and analyse available data sources to monitor the economic impact of the pandemic on the tourism sector.

7) Supporting retail recovery and the reopening of the high streets post Covid 19

- Develop a shop local campaign to encourage residents back into our town centres and to support local businesses.
- To promote and support retailers, farm shops, corner shops, local networks and businesses providing essential services to local communities during the Coronavirus pandemic.
- Deliver a towns and local centre digital growth programme to support the businesses to get online.

8) Work with education providers to identify opportunities for upskilling and training of individuals

- Support the work of Stephenson College to promote apprenticeship opportunities, distance learning courses and upskilling support available to local residents and businesses.
- Ensure that partners provide support to adults and school aged leaving pupils through careers advice, apprenticeships and training.

9) Support measures that respond to infrastructure challenges

- Generate community value, job opportunities and maximise localised supply chain opportunities through the council led development of the new leisure centre on the A511.
- Facilitate projects to assist with access to employment and training for apprentices, jobseekers and NEET's.
- Provide positive and proactive planning advice, support and guidance to new and existing businesses that will enable business growth and ensure compliance.

Delivery and review

- The recovery plan outlines the immediate and short-term actions of the Council and a number of the actions identified are already being administered within service areas across the council.
- However, it is important that the recovery plan remains fluid to respond to the changing needs of our communities in response to the changing environment resulting from Covid 19 and also to adapt to new national and regional programmes of support as they are released.
- This work plan will be reviewed and refreshed in early 2021 to reflect the emerging national and regional recovery strategies currently being developed.

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