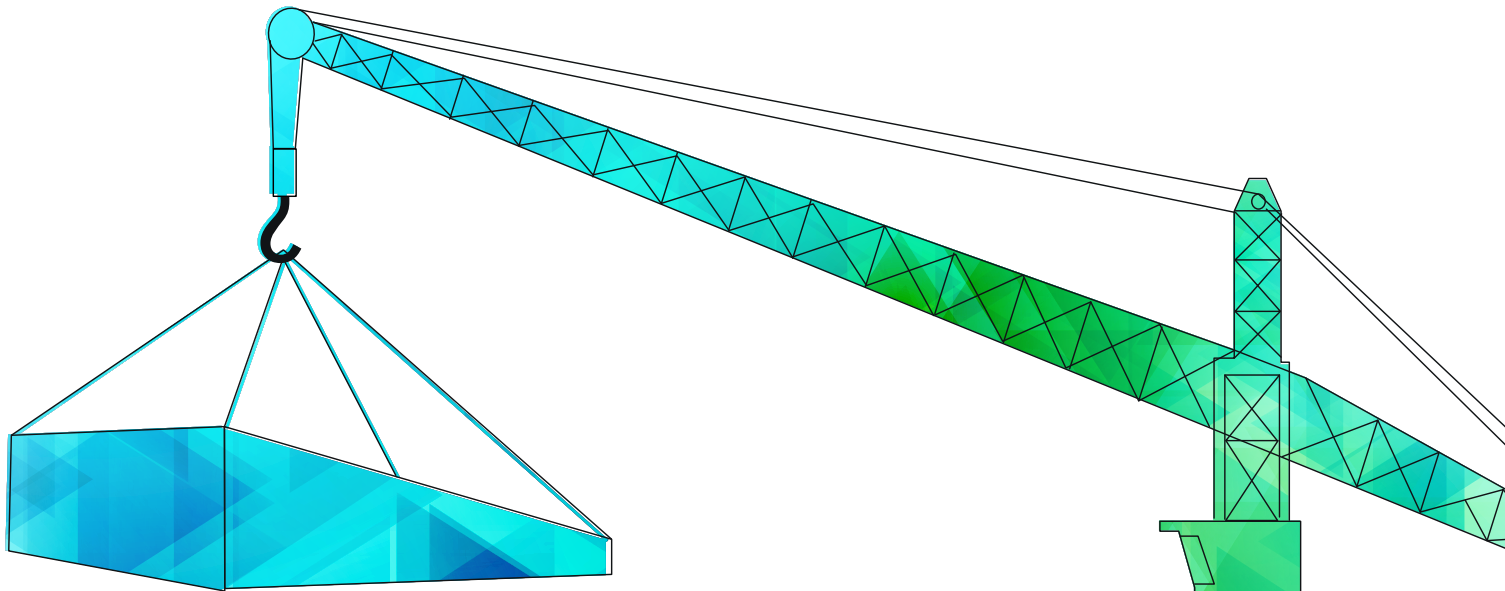


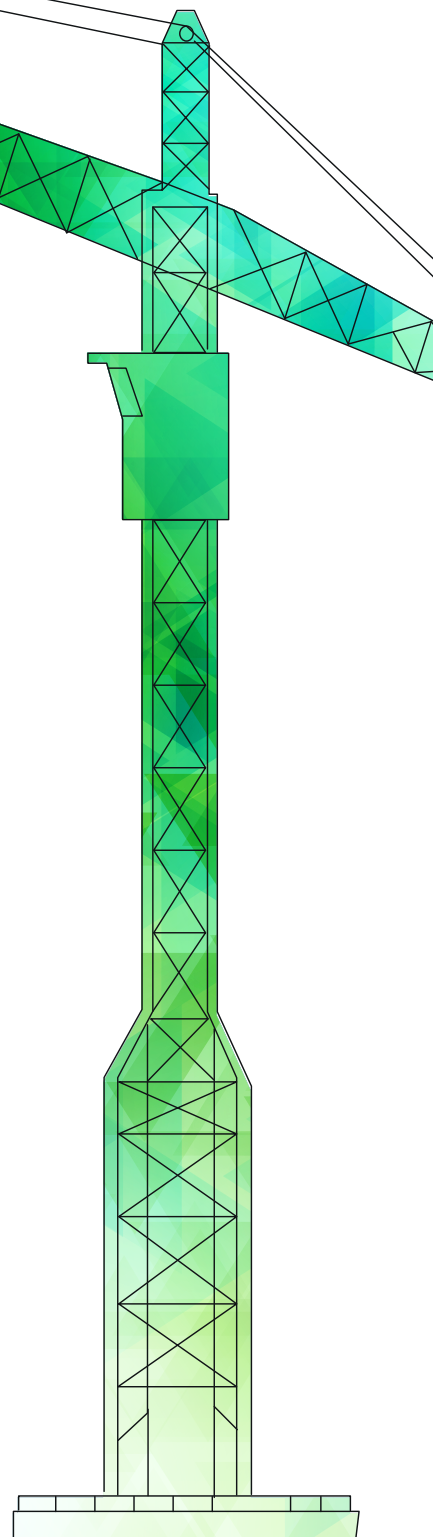
Leicester Leicestershire

Delivering Growth Together



Combined Authority Consultation Report

for the Leicester and Leicestershire
Combined Authority



Introduction and Methodology

The City, County and District Councils have consulted with the public and stakeholders on proposals to create a combined authority. The consultation involved a survey of residents, staff and stakeholders, but also included the invitation to submit views by letter or email.

The survey was made available on Councils' websites from 21 September 2015. This was accompanied by supporting information which set out the proposals in more detail.

The survey asked for views on the proposed model, the proposed functions to be included, and the how the existing governance arrangements had been documented (see Appendix 1 for the full questionnaire).

The consultation closed on the 20 October 2015 (a four week fieldwork window).

Communications and media activity

The Combined Authority consultation was communicated in a number of ways, including:

- press releases sent to local, regional and local government media at the beginning of the consultation and again before the end
- in the County Council's newspaper to all county households, Leicestershire Matters
- social media messages on Twitter and Facebook from partners at key points throughout the consultation
- on all partner website front pages and consultation webpages
- to staff at partner councils, via intranet sites and staff emails
- email briefings and letters sent to MPs, business stakeholders, voluntary groups, councils in neighbouring areas and other interested parties

Survey response rate

During the four week consultation window, 260 people responded to the survey. The majority (98.8%) took part by completing the online survey, with a small number (3) returning a paper copy of the survey.

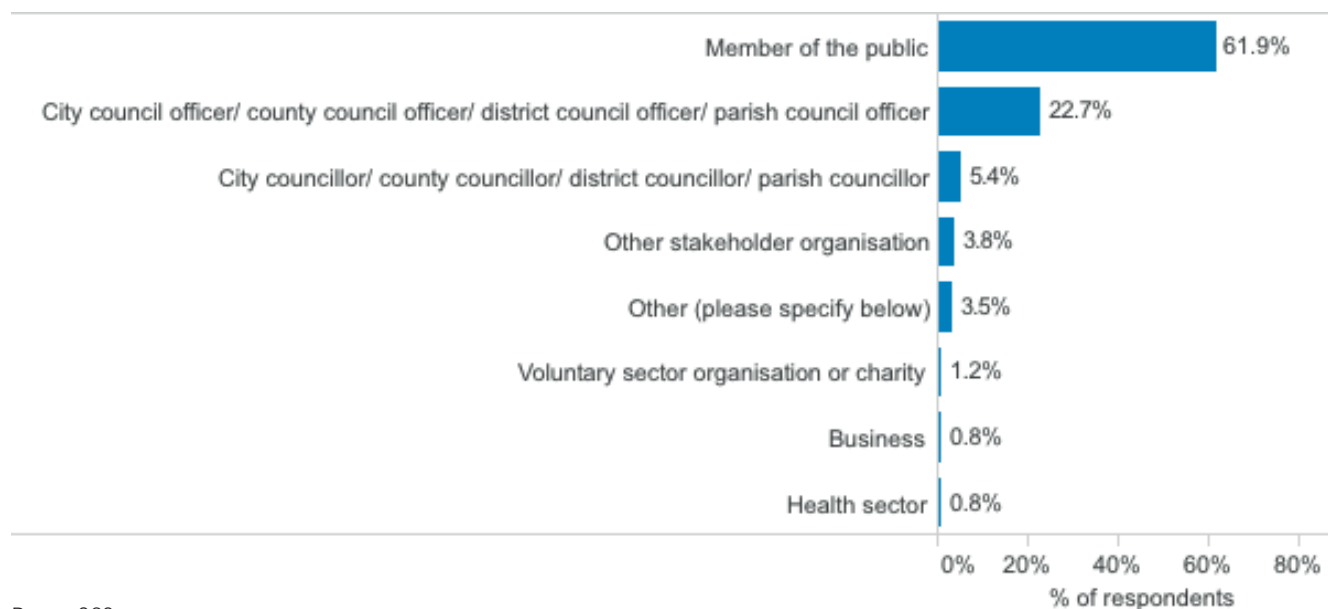
Contents

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Appendix 3 - Are there any other functions that you think should be included in the scheme?	14

Survey respondent profile

Chart 1 shows that most respondents who completed the survey were members of the public (61.9%). Other responses have been listed in Table 1.

Chart 1 – In what capacity are you responding to this consultation?



Base = 260

Table 1 – Other, please specify (as written by the respondent)

City Council employee	2
CC employee	1
District Council	1
Homes and Communities Agency	1
Kibworth Harcourt Parish Council	1
Service manager for a community transport service	1
Youth services	1

Base = 8

Table 2 shows the stakeholder organisations which respondents represented – not all respondents chose to state their organisation.

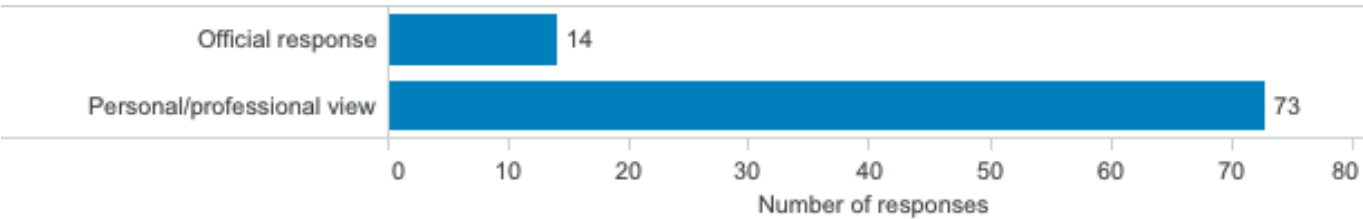
Table 2 – Stakeholder organisations represented

Leicester City Council	8
Leicestershire County Council	5
Claybrooke Magna Parish Council	3
Harborough District Council	3
Blaby District Council	2
Barwell Parish Council	1
Broughton Astley Parish Council	1
Campaign for Better Transport (Leicestershire)	1
Community Action Partnership	1
DMU	1
East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group	1
Enderby Parish Council	1
Federation of Small Businesses	1
Harborough District Councillor, Village Meeting Chairman	1
Homes and Communities Agency	1
Leicester Cathedral	1
Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group	1
Leicester College	1
Market Bosworth Parish Council	1
Orbit	1
Road Haulage Association	1
Signing Network CIC	1
The National Forest Company	1
The University of Leicester	1
Woodhouse Parish Council	1

Base =41

Fourteen respondents from stakeholder organisations provided their organisation's official response (Chart 2). These organisations are listed in Table 3 (two respondents did not provide their organisation's name).

Chart 2 – Are you providing your organisation’s official response to the consultation or a personal/professional view?



Base =87

Table 3 – Official responses received from

Broughton Astley Parish Council
DMU
East Leicestershire and Rutland Clinical Commissioning Group
Enderby Parish Council
Federation of Small Businesses
Homes and Communities Agency
Leicester College
Market Bosworth Parish Council
Road Haulage Association
Signing Network CIC
The National Forest Company
Woodhouse Parish Council

Base =12

A demographic profile of those responding to the survey is reported in Appendix 2.

Survey analysis - methodology

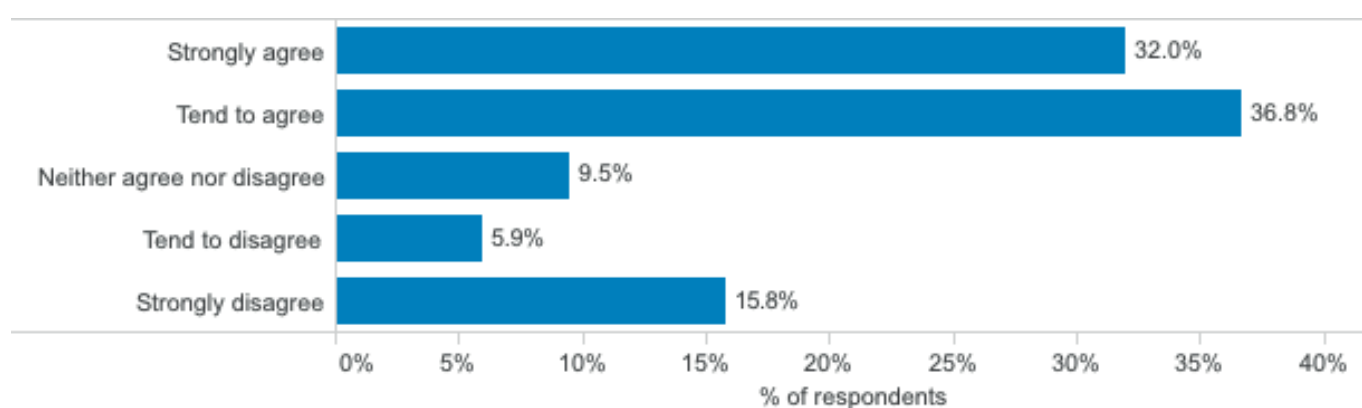
Graphs and tables have been used to assist explanation and analysis. Although occasional anomalies appear due to rounding differences, these are never more than +/-1%. Question results have been reported based on those who provided a valid response, i.e. taking out the ‘don’t know’ responses and no replies from the calculation of the percentages.

Survey Results Analysis

Combined Authority governance model

Chart 3 shows that the majority of respondents (68.8%) agreed that, to enable economic and transport improvements, of the four options presented a Combined Authority is the best governance model for Leicester and Leicestershire. Just over a fifth of respondents disagreed (21.7%).

Chart 3 – To what extent do you agree or disagree that, to enable economic and transport improvements, a combined authority is the best governance model for Leicester and Leicestershire?



Base = 253

Analysis of the open comments showed that respondents who 'strongly agreed' or 'tended to agree' with the statement commented that it would avoid duplication and provide value for money. They also commented that it would improve co-ordination between authorities, particularly as the functions of the Combined Authority related to issues which were wider than the current political boundaries.

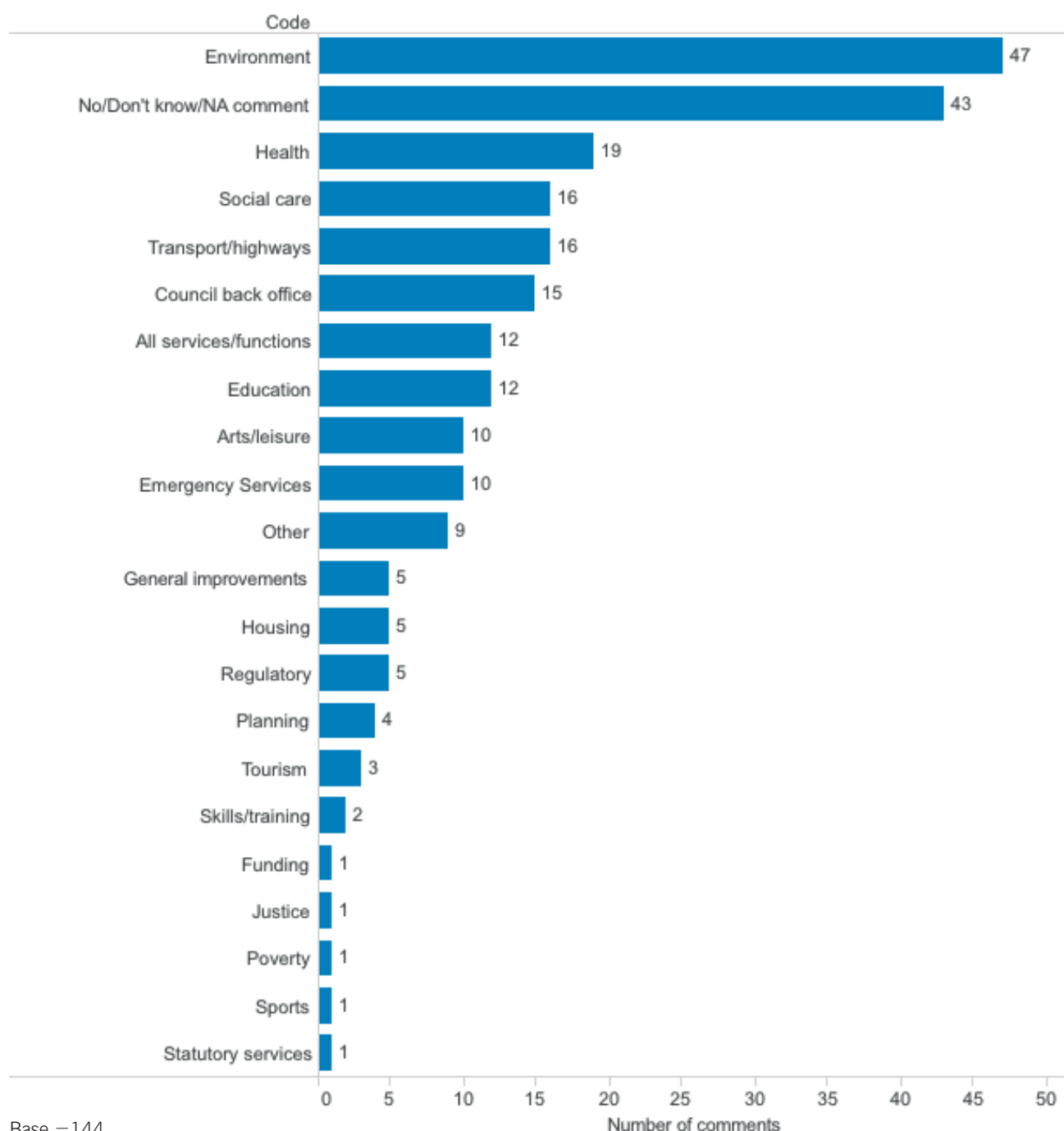
"Leicester and Leicestershire are strongly interlinked with people moving between city and county for work, shopping and leisure. A combined authority would allow for planning and transport decisions which took account of the needs of the city and the county residents."

Respondents who either 'strongly disagreed' or 'tended to disagree' with the statement expressed concerns that local accountability would be lost and highlighted the difference between Leicester City and Leicestershire County, both in terms of political approach and the differing needs of the populations. Respondents also commented that the proposals would result in a decrease in democratic accountability.

"I think a combined authority of the type being proposed would dilute and compromise an individual authority's ability to act in the best interests of its residents and respond to their needs and views."

Respondents were also asked whether there were any other functions that they thought should be included in the scheme. Chart 4 shows a summary of the results.

Chart 4 – Are there any other functions that you think should be included in the scheme?



Base = 144

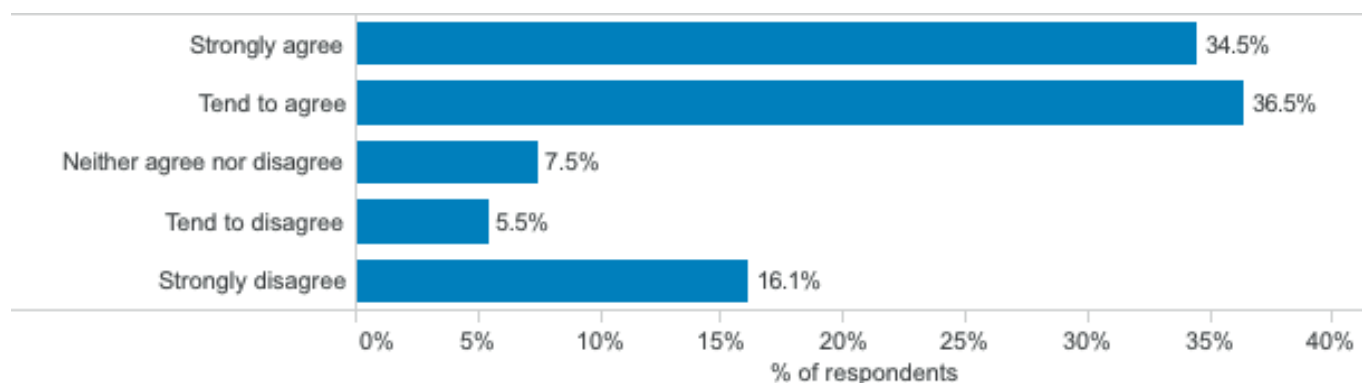
Note each response could contain more than one comment/point of view

Chart 4 shows that the most common functions mentioned by respondents were around the theme of the environment, followed by health, transport/highways, social care, and council back office functions. Appendix 3 provides a more detailed breakdown of these codes.

Combined authority functions

Chart 5 shows that the majority of respondents (71.0%) agreed that the proposed functions are appropriate. Just over a fifth of respondents disagreed (21.6%).

Chart 5 – To what extent do you agree or disagree that these proposed functions are appropriate?



Base =255

Respondents who 'strongly agreed' or 'tended to agree' with the statement commented that the functions set out in the Scheme were key issues affecting the whole of the combined authority area. Respondents commented that a joined up approach with these functions was in the best interests of the public and made economic sense.

"These appear to be key areas affecting the whole of the city and county and so appropriate for a combined authority"

There was a lack of consensus amongst respondents who 'tended to agree' with the statement with regard to skills. Some felt that co-ordination in this area would not be possible whereas others welcomed the focus on it.

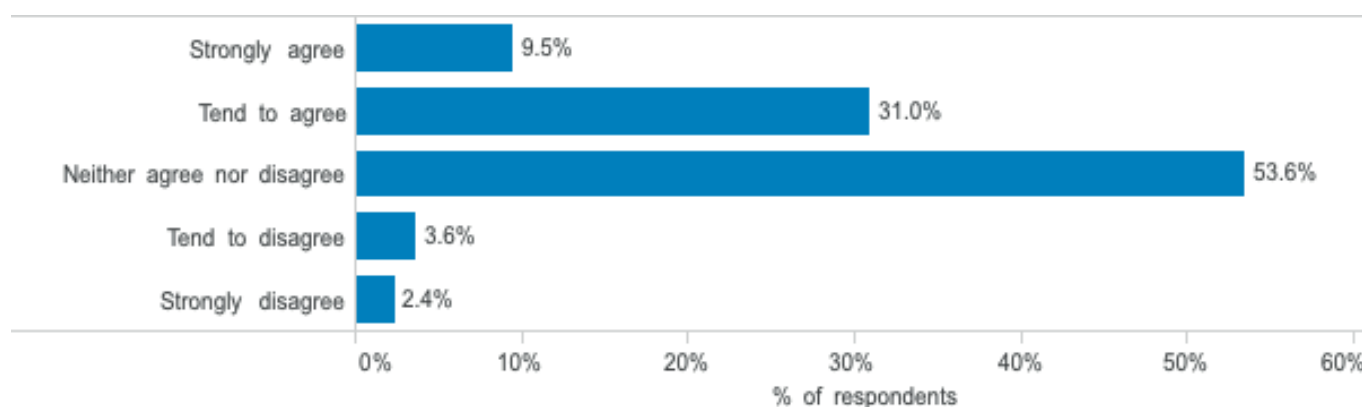
Respondents who 'strongly disagreed' or 'tended to disagree' with the statement expressed concerns that local accountability for functions would be lost, particularly with regard to planning and that some areas would benefit more than others.

"With any group coming together there are compromises. This could lead to trade-offs between different areas which do not best meet residents requirements"

Existing governance arrangements

Chart 5 shows that the majority of respondents (53.6%) neither agreed nor disagreed that the governance review correctly outlines the existing governance arrangements. Just over 40% of respondents agreed and 6.0% disagreed.

Chart 5 – To what extent do you agree that the governance review correctly outlines the existing governance arrangements?



Base =84

The majority of comments were from respondents who ‘neither agreed nor disagreed’ with the statement. Respondents felt that they did not have sufficient experience to comment in this area.

“I’m not an expert on this subject so don’t feel my opinion is particularly useful”.

Any other comments on the proposals as a whole

Comments made by respondents included a wide range of issues, the most of common were:

- In support of the proposal to establish a combined authority;
- Concerns regarding the cost of establishing and administering a combined authority, including concerns that this would add an extra tier of government for the area;
- Concerns that the proposals will have an impact on local accountability;
- That the current arrangements are satisfactory;
- That the proposals are not sufficiently ambitious or that the establishment of a unitary authority should be considered instead of creating a combined authority;
- Concerns that political differences may limit progress.

Other consultation responses

Letters providing an official response to the consultation were received from the East Midlands Airport, the Federation of Small Businesses and the East Midlands Chamber. These letters set out clear and positive positions in relation to the consultation proposals and are attached as Appendix 4 to this report. Appendix 4 also includes an email response from Andrew Bridgen MP which expresses concerns regarding the level of ambition in the proposal.

Leicester Leicestershire

Delivering Growth Together



Have your say on the Leicester and Leicestershire combined authority proposal

Introduction

The city, county and district councils are working on proposals to create a combined authority. A combined authority would not replace individual councils and their current services but would enable them to work more closely together on transport, planning, skills and other key issues affecting the whole area. The combined authority can only be formed if all councils agree and if the Government approves any proposals.

The councils concerned are: Leicester City Council; Leicestershire County Council; Blaby District Council; Charnwood Borough Council; Harborough District Council; Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council; Melton Borough Council; North West Leicestershire District Council; and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council.

We'd like your views on our outline proposal.

All comments we receive during the consultation will be analysed and we will amend the proposals in the light of them. The amended proposals will then be considered by all the above councils. If all councils approve the proposals, we will submit them to the Government. We hope to be able to submit proposals early next year and would then expect a decision from ministers within a year.

Please note: Your responses to the main part of the survey (Q1 to Q7, including your comments) may be released to the general public in full under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Any responses to the questions in the 'About you' section of the questionnaire will be held securely and will not be subject to release under Freedom of Information legislation, nor passed on to any third party.

Q1 In what role are you responding to this consultation? Please tick one option only

- ☐ Member of the public
- ☐ City councillor/ county councillor/ district councillor/ parish councillor*
- ☐ City council officer/ county council officer/ district council officer/ parish council officer*
- ☐ Business*
- ☐ Health sector*
- ☐ Emergency services*
- ☐ Voluntary sector organisation or charity*
- ☐ Other stakeholder organisation*
- ☐ Other (please specify below)

Other (please specify)

Q2 *If you represent a stakeholder, please provide your details:

Name:

Organisation:

Are you providing your organisation's official response to the consultation or a personal/professional view?

Please tick one option only

- ☐ Official response
- ☐ Personal/professional view

Combined authority governance model

Recently we looked at possible governance models to enable economic and transport improvements in the local area. The preliminary findings of the governance review suggest the combined authority is the best governance model for Leicester and Leicestershire.

A combined authority is a legal arrangement which enables councils to work together more closely on issues around transport, planning and economic growth. They can help reduce duplication and bureaucracy. They are created to enable clearer co-ordination and decision-making, to drive forward decisions on transport, economic development and skills, giving local councils a stronger voice in discussions with the Government, neighbouring areas and developers.

There are alternatives to having a combined authority. For example, councils could continue to work together as they are, or set up a joint committee, or an economic prosperity board. However, none of these options give the full benefits of a combined authority and that is why a number of areas are applying to set up combined authorities. These are set out in our governance review.

Q3 To what extent do you agree or disagree that, to enable economic and transport improvements, a combined authority is the best governance model for Leicester and Leicestershire? Please tick one option only

Strongly agree

☐

Tend to agree

☐

Neither agree nor disagree

☐

Tend to disagree

☐

Strongly disagree

☐

Don't know

☐

Why do you say this?

Combined authority functions

Part 2 of the draft scheme sets out the proposed functions of the combined authority. In summary, these are:

Planning: councils could work together to agree a clearer, long-term framework to meet future housing and employment needs for the whole area and identify future growth locations.

Transport: focussing on long-term investment in road, rail and other public transport infrastructure.

Skills: driving improvements in skills and training, to give local people the chance to get better qualifications and employment.

Q4 To what extent do you agree or disagree that these proposed functions are appropriate? Please tick one option only

Strongly agree

☐

Tend to agree

☐

Neither agree nor disagree

☐

Tend to disagree

☐

Strongly disagree

☐

Don't know

☐

Why do you say this?

About you

Leicestershire County Council is committed to ensuring that its services, policies and practices are free from discrimination and prejudice and that they meet the needs of all sections of the community.

We would therefore be grateful if you would answer the questions below. You are under no obligation to provide the information requested, but it would help us greatly if you did.

Q8 Are you male or female? Please tick one option only

☐ Male

☐ Female

Q9 What was your age on your last birthday? (Please enter your age in numbers not words)

Q10 What is your full postcode?

Q11 Do you have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? Please tick one option only

☐ Yes

☐ No

Q12 What is your ethnic group? Please tick one option only

☐ White

☐ Black or Black British

☐ Mixed

☐ Other ethnic group

☐ Asian or Asian British

Thank you.

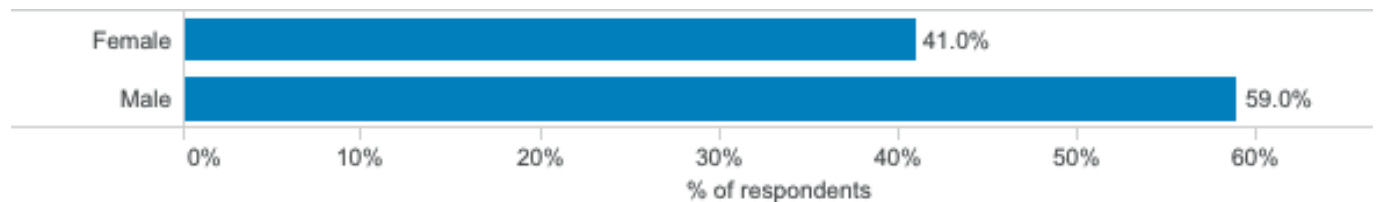
Please return by 20th October 2015 to: Combine Authority Consultation, Room 300B, Leicestershire County Council, Have Your Say, FREEPOST NAT18685, Leicester, LE3 8XR. No stamp is required.

Data Protection: Personal data supplied on this form will be held on computer and will be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for statistical analysis, management, planning and the provision of services by the county council and its partners. Leicestershire County Council will not share any information collected from the 'About you' section of this survey with its partners. The information will be held in accordance with the council's records management and retention policy. Information which is not in the 'About you' section of the questionnaire may be subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

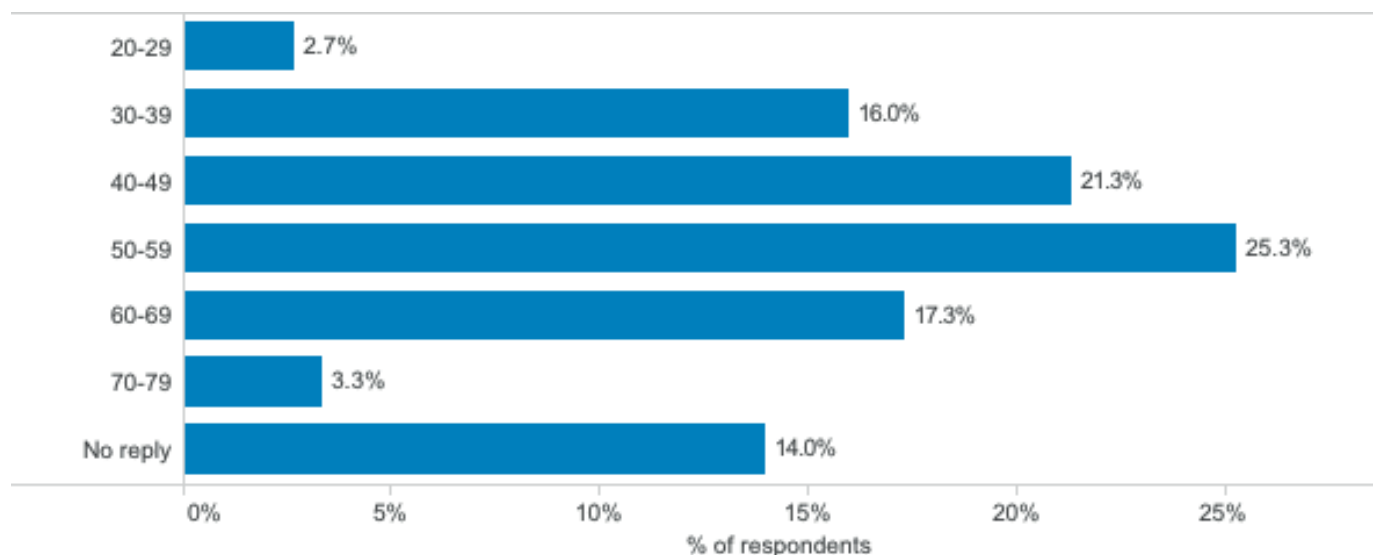
Appendix 2 – Respondent profile

The charts below show the demographic profile of the members of the public who responded to the survey (stakeholders were not asked these questions).

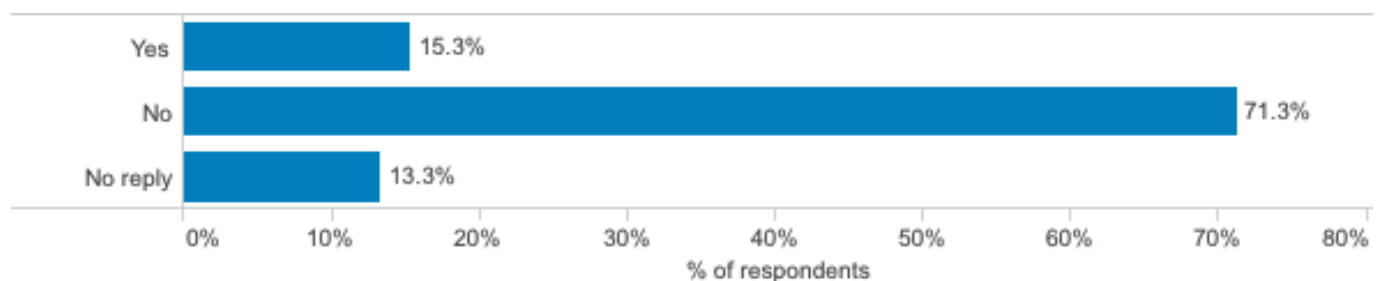
Are you male or female?



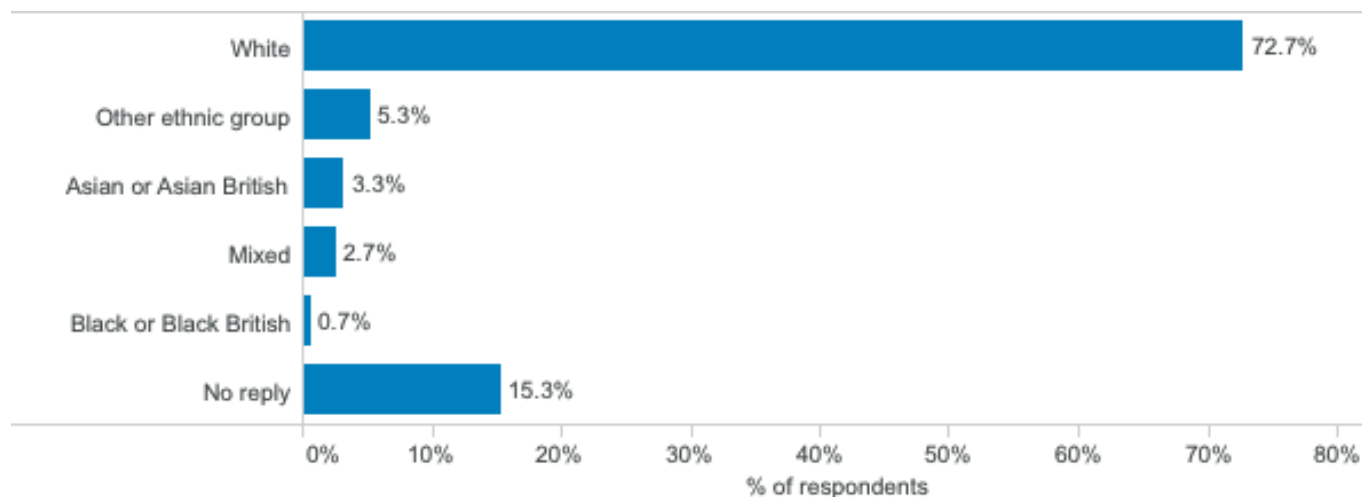
What was your age on your last birthday?



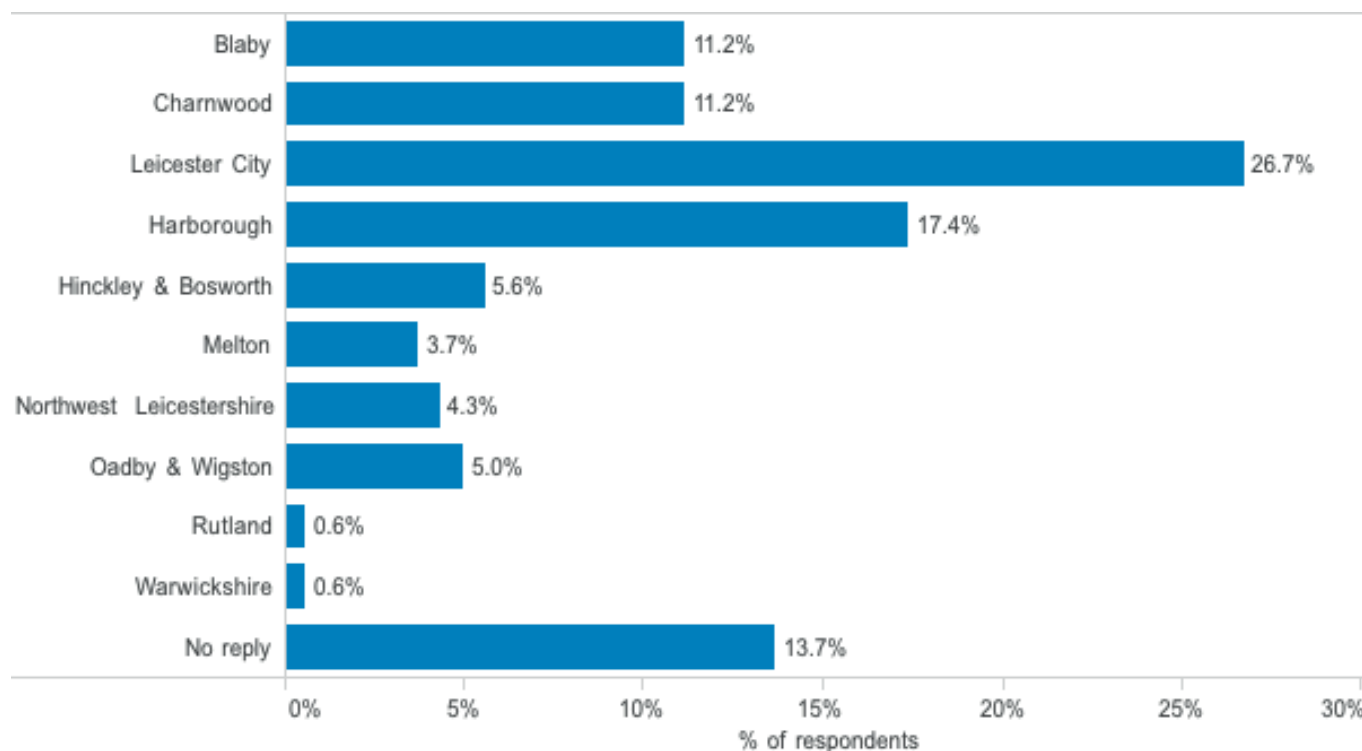
Do you have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity?



What is your ethnic group?



District (What is your postcode?)



Appendix 3 – Are there any other functions that you think should be included in the scheme?

Code	Sub code	Count			
Environment	Waste Management	22	Arts/leisure	Leisure facilities	4
	Recycling	9		Arts/culture	4
	Environmental concerns	9		Museums	1
	Green/Renewable/Sustainable - Energy	2		Libraries	1
	Energy	2	Emergency Services	Police	6
	Maintenance of parks/verges	1		Fire services	3
	Green/Renewable/Sustainable - Transport	1		Emergency services	1
	Green/Renewable/Sustainable - Other	1	Other	Other	9
No/Don't know/NA comment	No/Don't know/NA comment	43	General improvements	Improve operations - General comment	5
Health	Health	19	Housing	Housing	5
Transport/Highways	Transport	3	Regulatory	Licensing	2
	Parking	3		Trading Standards	1
	Traffic management	2		Registrars	1
	Street lighting	1		Coroners	1
	Road gritting	1	Planning	Planning	4
	Road cleaning	1	Tourism	Tourism	2
	Lorry parking	1		Festivals	1
	Lift freight delivery restrictions	1	Skills/training	Training	1
	Highways/roads	1		Apprenticeships	1
	Freight priority lanes	1	Funding	Funding schemes	1
	Depots	1	Justice	Courts	1
	Cycling infrastructure	1	Poverty	Poverty	1
	Consolidation centres/freight parks	1	Sports	Sports development	1
			Statutory services	Statutory services	1
Social care	Social care/social services	14			
	Meals on wheels	1			
	Care for elderly	1			
Council back office	Procurement/commissioning	5			
	Admin	3			
	IT infrastructure	2			
	Consultation	2			
	Human Resources	1			
	Finance	1			
	Equality and diversity	1			
All services/functions	All services/functions	12			
Education	Education	11			
	School meals	1			

Base = 144

Note each response could contain more than one comment/point of view

Appendix 4 – Additional consultation responses



East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire)

Response to consultation on the formation of a Combined Authority for Leicester and Leicestershire

East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire) welcomes the opportunity to provide its views on the proposed development of a Combined Authority in Leicester and Leicestershire, an area in which it has over 900 members.

The Chamber's comments relate in the main to the proposed functions, focus and activities, as opposed to the proposed governance arrangements. We would, however, note that the proposed role for the Chair of the LLEP is welcome. Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership has been a success for the area to date in helping promote the needs of business and its continued involvement would be an important element in any Combined Authority model.

It is also important to clearly state that it is vital for the success of a combined authority that it not be seen as another layer of governance, and therefore ensuring a strong, coherent plan of activity and communication of that is of the utmost importance.

Economic development, regeneration and transport are all areas that the Chamber believes would be more effectively addressed at the proposed combined authority level. Businesses and employees cross boundaries as a matter of course and so it is appropriate that an approach to economic development also looks cross-border. The Chamber would highlight three areas where better joined up activity would support enhanced business growth:

- **Skills provision:** in particular, ensuring that colleges and training providers are understanding and responsive to the needs of local employers and that provision can be designed around these needs, both for today and into the future.
- **Planning/land availability:** considering both commercial and residential developments, the lack of consistent local plans creates barriers in planning and creates a system that is disjointed and often weighted towards local pressures/drivers as opposed to the strategic needs of an area. Chamber members frequently highlight frustrations with planning as it stands, both from the viewpoint of developers and also businesses looking to move premises and struggling to find something suitable.
- **Transport:** ensuring a cross-boundary approach to investment in road networks – many journeys on these networks are transitory across boundaries and by understanding and responding to key travel flows a 'whole journey' approach can be developed, reducing congestion and boosting productivity.

While the Chamber is wholly supportive the intention to develop a joint economic vision and strategic growth plan to 2050, it is vital that any such vision and growth plan also be cognisant of – and engage with – activity taking place in localities surrounding the proposed Combined Authority area, where there are many joint economic interests and opportunities. Indeed, the importance of getting this right is only

heightened by similar moves in neighbouring areas, where developments are at a more advanced stage. A Combined Authority for Leicester and Leicestershire will support this by putting the area on a closer to equal footing.

Finally, while it is appreciated that this consultation marks one stage within a process, the Chamber recognises that the development of Combined Authorities and the wider devolution agenda is politically a fast moving one. Therefore, we would urge decision makers in Leicester and Leicestershire to continue to be seek opportunities for enhanced partnership working, both within the city and county boundaries but also with others where the interests are similar and deeper partnership would further support the positive development of the Leicester and Leicestershire economy and those who live and work in it.

To discuss this submission further please contact:

Scott Knowles, Chief Executive, scott.knowles@emc-dnlc.co.uk

Chris Hobson, Director of Policy and External Affairs, chris.hobson@emc-dnl.co.uk



FSB Response to the Combined Authority Consultation

Q3 - We strongly agree.

Businesses do not recognise authority boundaries as helpful to an effective transport system. They want seamless movement of labour across the whole LLEP area. There are opportunities for improved productivity and convenience through smart ticketing across such a seamless area.

Businesses do not consider authority boundaries as helpful in the execution of economic development strategies from the LLEP. They introduce significant handicaps into the process for providing development space for housing and economic activity. The differences in approach to inward investment activity between the City and County have been depressing to observe. Businesses expect consistent deployment of business support, such as local sign-posting to LLEP and other sources, to be consistent across post codes.

However, the successful delivery of these expectations will rest on effective governance arrangements and truly integrated working with an absence of frontiers. We look forward to an opportunity to comment on proposals to achieve this. Issues of accountability, transparency and accessibility for business input will be of particular interest.

Q4 - We strongly agree.

Part of the transport rationale for a combined approach is outlined in Q3. In parallel with the delivery of transport services, there is the underlying issue of transport infrastructure, both the development and maintenance thereof, where authority boundaries make no apparent sense when it comes to rational allocation of scarce resources.

Planning authority partitions are demonstrably disabling the mechanisms required to meet the needs of the local economy. For instance the City boundary appears to be a real obstacle to providing adequate workplace development space for LLEP key industries such as food. There is a wide-spread and continuing need for affordable work space for small businesses – the life blood of the local economy.

With the area still growing well, and approaching nominal full employment, then we urgently need more housing to attract more labour. The location of that housing and how it links to the employment centres, together with the necessary social infrastructure of schools, healthcare, retail outlets etc, is a pressing task that has to be addressed under one authority without frontiers.

Businesses expect that a combined planning authority will deliver planning decisions and regulation more consistently than the situation they currently have to deal with.

The vital, parallel approach to nominal full-employment has to be a drive for increasing productivity in the LLEP area. The statistics show that this area is below national averages in educational attainment, in skill levels and consequently in productivity. Standard of living rests fundamentally on productivity. The “living

wage” issue will only be solved, as opposed to mitigated with unintended consequences, by increasing productivity. Productivity rests on investment and on training. We look to the combined authority to take a seamless approach to delivering a workforce through the FE colleges and other routes that meets the needs of businesses. That may need a change to what the colleges understand by “meeting demand”. Too often this appears to mean meeting demand expressed by students seeking to enrol. This approach delivers surpluses who cannot apply their training and chronic shortages illustrated by vacancies which cannot be filled.

However, the same comments on governance made in Q3 still apply.

Q5 –

As a consequence of combining planning functions, we believe that Section 106 funds should also be pooled and applied to development infrastructure where rationally required, rather than within the local authority boundary within which it is “earned”.

Inward investment should be specifically identified as within the ambit of the combined authority. Business people cannot understand the apparent lack of clarity, over a protracted period, of the role, scope and remit of the inward investment effort in the County vs the City. Potential investors also need to see a single entity and single point of contact for the whole LLEP area.

It would be helpful if the Combined Authority was specifically tasked with the development and maintenance of a “foreign office” for developing plans and joint ventures with authorities in neighbouring LLEP areas.

Q6. – Tend to agree

We tend to agree that the review correctly outlines the existing governance arrangements. However, the language used needs to be sharpened up to differentiate the roles of the Combined Authority from that of the LLEP.

There is such widespread use of “strategic”, “economic development”, “growth” etc that the lines get blurred. For instance, under heading 6, “There is no single formally constituted body with responsibility for taking decisions related to economic growth....” “...no single entity with responsibility for taking decisions on economic development....”. Any suggestion of dilution of the role of the LLEP would be retrograde and very damaging. Sharper distinction between delivery and strategy might help.

It would be helpful if the language used separated the topic of spatial planning from that of economic development for governance purposes.

There is no discussion about how a newly constituted Combined Authority would be represented on the LLEP Board.

Dave Nicholls

Regional Chairman



(t) 0161 489 3751
(m) 07958 876663
jon.bottomley@eastmidlandsairport.com

20 October 2015

Simon Lawrence
Programme Manager
Leicestershire Combined Authority

By E-Mail

Dear Simon

Consultation on the Proposed Combined Authority for Leicestershire

We are responding to the public consultation on the proposal to create a combined authority for Leicester and Leicestershire. As one of the County's major businesses, East Midlands Airport welcomes the opportunity to make comments and provide some observations on the proposed arrangements for closer collaboration and joint-working between the local authorities in Leicestershire.

East Midlands Airport is located in North West Leicestershire and is the largest single employment site in the County. It is a significant regional airport handling 4.5 million passengers a year serving the Midlands and part of East Anglia. The Airport also plays a national role as the UK's largest express freight hub. Some 7,000 people work on the Airport site and it is estimated that the Airport generates £263m of annual GVA for the East Midlands region.

The local authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership have a range of priorities and policies to boost the County's economy, to create jobs and to improve transport and planning. A more unified approach through a combined authority would provide a greater level of clarity, reduce duplication and importantly provide a strategic approach and direction for developers and investors. This would ensure that across the County, the focus is on strategies, policies and measures that seek to deliver the greatest overall benefit for Leicestershire. A collective approach through a combined authority will also give the local authorities and partners across the County a single and stronger voice in discussions with Government, regional partners, businesses and investors.

MAG



CommunityMark
Developed by Business & the Community



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Registered Office: East Midlands International Airport Ltd., Castle Donington, Derby, East Midlands, DE74 2SA, England, UK. Registered in England No. 2073271

East Midlands Airport supports the approach to closer and more collective working between local authorities. This will enable clearer and more strategic decision-making, delivering an ambitious approach to transport, planning and the development of jobs and skills. Combined Authorities have been established in neighbouring areas and it is important that Leicester and Leicestershire are able to capitalise on the benefits that such a partnership will bring.

We hope that these comments are helpful as part of the consultation process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Bottomley', followed by a long horizontal line and a stylized flourish.

Jon Bottomley
PRINCIPAL PLANNER

From: **BRIDGEN, Andrew**
Sent: **20 October 2015 15:21**
To: **Leader**
Subject: **RE: Combined Authority**

Dear Nick,

With reference to the Combined Authority, I have real concerns that our bid will not be seen as substantial enough. Around us we have Northamptonshire combining with Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, Lincolnshire looking at East Yorkshire and Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire are combining with the prospect of a Mayor and the powers that would bring. I also understand that a lot of their bid centres on the employment opportunities around East Midlands Airport based of course in our County and in my constituency.

I do feel that it is inevitable that we will have to form some alliance with these two counties given our historic links being part of the so called Golden Triangle. I understand yesterday that the leader of Nottinghamshire County Council extended an invitation for Leicester and Leicestershire to join their bid and whilst I understand you have said recently it is 'too late', I would urge you to look at this again and see what options there are to join that bid. I will be happy to raise the matter with the Secretary of State to see what assistance he and his Department can offer to facilitate this, indeed I am in receipt of a handwritten note from him following my speech in the House last week agreeing with my promotion of the idea. I fear if we do not act soon, the County and the City will be left behind as our bid simply will not have the critical mass required.

Kind Regards,

Andrew Bridgen

You can view the latest information in a number of ways

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