

Notes

OF A MEETING OF THE



Oxfordshire Growth Board Oxfordshire

Plan 2050 Advisory Sub-Group

**HELD ON THURSDAY 17 OCTOBER 2019 AT 10.00 AM
COMMITTEE ROOM 2, WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL,
COUNCIL OFFICES, WOODGREEN, WITNEY, OX28 1NB**

Present:

Members: Councillors James Mills (Chair), Pieter-Paul Barker, Colin Clarke, Jeff Haine, Alex Hollingsworth, Jeannette Matelot and Judy Roberts

Officers: Giles Hughes (West Oxfordshire District Council), Kevin Jacob and Rachel Williams (Oxfordshire Plan 2050)

23 Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes; declarations of interest; Chair's announcements

Apologies were submitted by Councillor Sue Roberts, (South Oxfordshire District Council) who was substituted by Councillor Pieter-Paul Barker.

There were no declarations of interest.

24 Notes of the previous meeting

The notes of the meeting held on 25 July 2019 were agreed.

25 Presentation from Ahmed Goga (OxLEP) on the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)

The sub-group received a detailed presentation from Ahmed Goga, Director of Strategy and Programmes, (OxLEP) on the Local Industrial Strategy, (LIS) and its relevance and linkages to the spatial planning process. The presentation covered the following key headings:

- An explanation of the Local Industrial Strategy and what it aimed to achieve as a headline commitment in the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal
- The vision underpinning the LIS was to position Oxfordshire as one of the top three global innovation ecosystems by 2040 building on the regions world leading science and technology clusters to be a pioneer for the UK in emerging transformative technologies and sectors.
- The guiding principles of the Local Industrial Strategy which were to:
 - Invest in Oxfordshire, Deliver for the UK

- Oxfordshire – The UK's Innovation Engine
 - Global Oxfordshire, Global Britain
- A vision underpinned by an evidence base segmented into four parts – a baseline Economic Review, Future State Assessment, Local Industrial Strategy and an Investment Prospectus. As part of the vision, it was intended to:
 - Double the Oxfordshire economy to be worth £46bn GVA
 - Deliver a 2% minimum of per annum growth in productivity
 - Create a minimum of 108,000 net new private sector jobs in Oxfordshire.
 - Contribute towards HM Government's 2.4% research and development target.
- The programme of extensive engagement undertaken with business, HM Government and OxLEP's partners in the development of the Local Industrial Strategy.
- The strengths and challenges of the Oxfordshire Economy.
- Oxfordshire's Critical Economic Sectors, Assets and Growth Opportunities.
- A timeline illustrating the significant number of business start-ups associated with Oxford University since the 1950's, the majority of which had occurred since the mid 1990's. This was across a wide range of sectors and the aim was to double the rate and outside of the university.
- Eight key points emerging from economic analysis undertaken as part the Local Industrial which included:
 - Oxfordshire Economy was growing rapidly and outstripped UK and South East England performance with increasing demand.
 - There was a strong interdependency between the competitiveness of the Oxfordshire economy and access to a strong and highly skilled labour market.
 - Oxfordshire was a world leader in innovative technologies
 - The price per foot for commercial property was at record levels.
 - Oxfordshire's pool of natural talent was declining which meant there was a need to grow the labour market and improve productivity in order to sustain the area's success and ambitions.
 - Despite its strengths, there was a need to strength the Oxfordshire proposition to compete against other global ecosystems.
 - Available, affordable and flexible housing was needed to attract, recruit and retain the right labour market.
 - There was a need for an integrated approach to connectivity, (physical, digital, business, finance and talent) in order to maximise the areas potential.
- The Local Industrial Strategy was based upon the five foundations of productivity, places, business environment, infrastructure, ideas and people.
- Developing a social contract between Oxfordshire business and its communities in order to support flourishing communities was very important. The Living Labs concept was an example of this methodology.
- Aims for the future for OxLEP included:
 - Development of an investment prospectus.
 - Mobilisation of the business and civic leadership
 - Further connection with Oxfordshire communities
 - Deliver at pace.

In discussion of the presentation and the points raised, members discussed the modelling of surveys associated with the Local Industrial Strategy and noted that OxLEP was fully confident of the robustness of the modelling and numbers, but that further data could be provided to individual members if they wanted further information.

The sub-group noted that the creation of the Oxford Science Park in 2014 had been a significant event in terms of Oxfordshire reaching a level of provision available in other business ecosystems and contributed towards Oxfordshire's status as a location people wished to live and work in.

A key point interlinked with everything was access to skills and the rippling out of commercial property rental costs as a result of paucity of supply which effected not just Oxford, but the entire county. This particularly effected companies in the transition from initial start up to medium sized business and it was important that such accommodation was available across the county so as not to overheat the Oxford city core.

The aim of developing a social contract was the aim of taking the opportunity through the Local Industrial Strategy for business to connect with their local communities and to redefine how business operated in their civic roles to develop a long-term framework for engagement. This could include showcasing the technologies being used to local communities so that can see what was happening in their locations and have a stake in it. Innovative and ground-breaking work was being undertaken and there was a need to share this more.

Members referred to a gap in skills and experience of people coming out of graduate or post graduate education and that more needed to be done to assist them with skills in the transition to employment and for more adult skills training to assist people in retraining. Help for MOD personnel in transitioning into civilian employment was also raised as they had valuable skills the Oxfordshire economy needed.

Members discussed and acknowledged the linkages between the strands of the Local Industrial Strategy, particularly in respect to place and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. This included how to work with the built environment to deal with the challenges Oxfordshire faced and was wider than the provision of new housing alone and included how new digital technologies could be used to support communities and fitted into environmental objectives such as carbon reduction.

Members noted the challenge for the Oxfordshire Plan in shaping growth across the county to not to overheat any location and there were different granularities to consider, for instance connectivity to transport hubs. In respect of Oxford, rail connectivity was very important.

HM Government's next Comprehensive Spending Review expected in Spring 2020 would be a significant opportunity which there was a need to mobile business and civic leaders for.

The Chair thanked Ahmed Goga for the presentation and the sub-group welcomed the offer of potential site visits to see the kind of innovation and technologies taking place within local business.

26 Consultation and engagement update

Rachel Williams, Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Lead provided the sub-group with an update on public consultation and engagement relating to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

The sub-group was reminded that a combination of public consultation and stakeholder events had taken place in Spring 2019 ranging from bus roadshows, to video, website and social media as well as stakeholder panel workshops.

An observation from the consultation had been that most respondents had been aged 35 to 65 plus and therefore it was recognised that there was a need to increase representation and input from younger people. Geographically, some areas within the county had generated more responses than others.

To add further value to the engagement, process a market research company had been engaged to run several focus groups. The composition of the groups had been designed to be representative of the Oxfordshire community and the format allowed for a more in-depth discussion of the issues and testing what the vision for the future should be. A full report of the sessions would be produced in due course, but initial feedback was that the groups focused on housing affordability and need for better transport links. It would be interesting to see if participants were able to identify the links between the issues discussed.

In addition, the sub-group was informed of the local authorities and other prescribed bodies which were consulted on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 as part of the statutory duty to co-operate.

The amendment to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 programme had allowed for an additional opportunity for informal engagement during the winter 2019 period. In addition, studies or discussion document had been commissioned as 'think pieces' to stimulate discussion on issues such as future trends and patterns e.g. the way that people would be living and working in Oxfordshire in the future and the impact of factors such as connectivity and climate emergency. Engagement by young people as part of this would be sort.

A discussion took place on the potential linkages between the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 engagement process and the role of Local Nature Partnerships. If such a partnership existed their views would need to be taken account of as part of the process. There would be only one partnership in the County, and it would be necessary to take their views into account.

Members of the sub-group welcomed the development of the 'think pieces' papers, but commented that it was important for them to be drafted in such a way that reflected prudent practical observations and that they not fall into the trap of becoming over optimistic in terms of aspirations and ambitions Members also referred to the Oxford Citizen Panel as a possible model for public engagement.

The sub-group noted the update.

27 Timetable update and next steps - September Growth Board report

Rachel Williams, Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Lead provided the sub-group with an update on the revised programme for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and linked projects as endorsed by the Growth Board at its meeting on 24 September 2019. Key points highlighted to the sub-Group included:

- Although the adoption date for the Oxfordshire Plan had been extended by a year to March 2022, the timetable remained challenging and there were dependencies with other projects which could impact upon it.
- Discussions with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government were on-going regarding the extension. It was felt that HM Government recognised that it

was better to do a higher quality piece of work even if the timetable was extended, but formal ministerial sign off was required.

- Further engagement was expected during November and December 2019. Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation was expected to take place during June/July 2020.
- The revised timetable had been informed by the expected timetable of the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway consultation managed to be managed by Highways England. This was a project outside of the Growth Board's control and which was likely to be affected by national events including a potential general election. This and other external factors.
- The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 team were continuing to analyse and where necessary apply learnings arising from the consideration of the West of England Joint Spatial Plan.
- The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will face the same tests as a Local Plan at examination although it is a very different project. Oxfordshire was a front runner in developing this kind of plan. A challenge would be to ensure the right evidence base developed.
- As per the process followed for the Regulation 18 Part 1 consultation, a single report would be sent to all the local planning authorities seeking approval to go out for the Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation in the summer of 2020.
- Oxfordshire Plan 2050 officers were leading work on the development of the Plan on behalf of all the Oxfordshire Growth Board partners but were also dependent on close working with local planning authority teams.

In discussion, members of the sub-group referred to the interlinkages of the Oxfordshire Plan to external projects such as the Expressway and the need to align the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, (LTCP5). It was felt that the LTP5 and Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy, would on completion, help provide a strong case to the Planning Inspectorate alongside the Oxfordshire Plan itself. Members also commented that a central challenge was to ensure coordination of Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to other appropriate plans.

The sub-group noted the report.

28 Any other urgent business

It was clarified that in future guidance to members could be provided on the status of particular agenda reports when they were issued in the agenda.

29 Future meetings

Dates for the rest of the calendar year were noted as:

- 14 November
- ~~12 December~~ (proposed to be cancelled in light of the General Election)

The meeting closed at 12.15 pm