

OxLEP Board Meeting

25th June 2019

17.00 – 19.30

Milton Park Innovation Centre, Thames room, 99 Park Drive,

Milton Park OX14 4RY

MINUTES

Board Directors Present:	Jeremy Long (Chair), Alistair Fitt (AF) left at 17.51, Cllr Ian Hudspeth (IH), Nigel Tipple (NT), Penny Rinta-Suksi (PRS), Miranda Markham (MM), Adrian Lockwood (AL), Phil Shadbolt (PSh), Phil Southall (PSo), Angus Horner (AH), Di Batchelor (DB), Cllr James Mills (JM), Cllr Sue Roberts (SR), Cllr Emily Smith (ES), Patrick Grant (PG),	
Board Directors Apologies:	Peter Nolan, Cllr Susan Brown, Lorna Baxter	
Minutes:	Sadie Patamia (SP)	
In attendance:	Ahmed Goga (AG), Helen Mitchell (HM), Sebastian Johnson (SJ), Lyn Davies (LD), Richard Byard (RB), Giles Orr (GO)	
Item		Action/Responsible
Item 1 - Apologies and Declarations of Interest		
JM declared an interest in Item 5 AF and DB all declared an interest in Item 5/6.		
Item 2 - Minutes		
Minutes To approve:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes of Board Meeting 18 (11/03/19) <p>These were approved subject to the following amendments – Richard Byard and Philip Clare had both been in attendance.</p>	Approved with amendments as detailed
Items for Decision – Confidential Papers for approval as detailed Committee/Sub-Group recommendation (Exempt Information¹)		
Item 4 - Finance Report¹ (LD/JL)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annex 1 - Budget Performance Summary 2018/19 Annex 2 - 2019/20 Budget Performance Summary to Date¹ 		
<p>LD presented the paper and summarised the contents. She highlighted the forecast improved outturn position for 2018/19 and consequent improvement in the closing Reserves balance. An element of the 2018/19 underspend was due to committed expenditure being delayed, resulting in the recommendation from Finance and Audit Committee that £71k is added to 2019/20 budget. SR asked if there was any penalty associated with the underspent outturn position, LD confirmed there was not.</p> <p>LD highlighted the positive 2018/19 Audit outcomes to date, reflecting the active engagement of the external audit team with internal staff.</p> <p>Budget performance for current financial year to date was confirmed as in line with budget profile.</p>		

<p>Recommendation That the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes our forecast outturn position for 2018/19 and consequent improvement in Core Reserve balances; • Approves the recommendation of the Finance and Audit Committee that £71k is added to our 2019/20 budget for spending originally expected in last financial year; • Notes our 2019/20 outturn position to end May 2019. 	<p>Noted</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Noted</p>
<p>Item 5 - Skills Sub-Group (Board) – Chair’s Presentation (AL/RB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGF Skills Capital Call¹ 	
<p>AL presented an update the Board on the work of Skills Sub-Group and Skills Team. It highlighted the work done both locally and with partners across the Arc. He confirmed that the Skills Sub-Group will carry out the function of a Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) noting the existing terms of reference covered the SAP requirement already.</p> <p>SR asked whether the environmental sector skills were being picked up such as those needed to support improved environmental standards and retro-fit ? AL/RB noted that the primary role of the SAP was to identify and work with sectors to promote opportunity – SR was asked to advise who we should engage with in respect of the retro-fit skills requirements/opportunities.</p> <p>RB confirmed the Skills Sub-Group remit included horizon scanning and the identification of areas requiring support. The primary role would be to put the framework in place and work thereafter with government/DfE to secure funding for such activity.</p> <p>DB reminded the Board that T Levels will be delivered in colleges not in schools, noting that Activate Learning and Abingdon & Witney College are involved in a pilot scheme starting in 2020. This will need to be co-ordinated with general work Experience Activity to avoid multiple employer requests given T levels require a three-month placement.</p> <p>SR highlighted the pressure on Nursing and Caring professions. The Board recognised this and noted the interventions already in place. AF updated the Board on the scale of the sector challenge and measures already in place to support training however, the recruitment problems varied by region given different cost of living challenges and uncertainty associated with Brexit.</p> <p>BW wanted to place on record that the skills support and approach was terrific, noting the fact that without such commitment and proactive intervention there would have been no support to individuals and organisations. He reflected the inter-dependence between shortages in the</p>	

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<p>Nursing/Caring professions and the cost of housing and infrastructure constraints. He proposed the need to review the Key worker definition in order to respond to changing economic and social pressures.</p> <p>JL raised the issue/need for longer term skills planning and whether the Skills Sub-Group would be picking this up in the near future. RB confirmed the group had reviewed previously the strategy to respond to changing trends and that one of the primary roles of the Skills Group/SAP will be to take that longer-term view and explore intervention.</p> <p>AH highlighted the challenge of ensuring parents, not just young people, know and understand the career opportunities which exist across the county. It was noted our work experience and the CEC teams already highlight the importance of awareness raising as part of their operational activity but that we must continue to raise the profile of our employers</p> <p>Both Alistair Fitt and Di Batchelor declared an interest in this item and took no part in the discussion or decision. RB presented the LGF Skills Capital Call paper. He explained the assessment process, explained the background to the call and availability of additional resources. He advised that following the targeted Skills Call we had received four applications with three meeting the gateway criteria, all three of which went forward for assessment and scoring. The Skills Sub-Group and Programme sub-Group both agreed that the UKAEA project should be supported on this occasion.</p> <p>PRS reminded the board that the funding was restricted to skills capital projects only, hence the approach taken and that through the assessment process the Programme Sub Group had been impressed with the quality and standard of the applications. As such they recommended the two remaining projects should be added to the “project pipeline” should other Skills Capital funding be made available.</p> <p>Recommendations -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the UKAEA project to be funded (£534,610) • Approve the remaining two projects to be added to the project pipeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abingdon and Witney College • Oxford Brookes University 	<p>Approved Approved</p>
<p>Item 6 - Programme Sub-Group – Chair’s Report (PR-S)</p>	
<p>Both Alistair Fitt and Di Batchelor declared an interest in this project and took no part in the discussion or recommendations. PRS presented the paper highlighting a number of matters. She advised the Board that following last year’s Annual Performance Review(APR), that we had been asked to review both our project pipeline and spend profiles given slippage on a small number of large and complex schemes. In response we had prepared and agreed a plan to mitigate delays in project spend (Project Improvement Plan) utilising our capital programme flexibilities, it was</p>	

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<p>noted this was not a criticism of the programme management or operational activity, rather a reflection of the complexity of our programmes and delays to some projects.</p> <p>PRS noted that the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme was now confirmed as requiring a CPO and Public Enquiry process, as such the forecast spend to March 2020 was now looking unlikely and that alternative arrangements were being agreed to allow the funding for the project to be safeguarded.</p> <p>AL suggested that even if the Featherbed Lane land acquisition was problematic (one of the delayed projects) perhaps it would still be possible to improve the junctions? NT confirmed we were looking at options with OCC currently.</p> <p>JL stated he felt this way of reporting from the Programmes Sub Group was much more effective.</p> <p>Recommendations -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Board notes the report and, • Approves the UKAEA project to be funded (£534,610) • Adds the remaining two projects to the project pipeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Abingdon and Witney College ○ Brookes University 	<p>Noted Approved Approved</p>
<p>Item 7 - Business Visitor Economy Study¹ (MM/AG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study Findings Presentation¹ (Giles Orr) 	
<p>MM introduced the background to the study that had been completed to explore the potential of the business visitor economy in the county and its feasibility to support a multi-purpose venue in Oxfordshire. She stated that the study had taken about six months and that it was very comprehensive and focused, in the first instance, on the market potential, rather than site specific options which would be the focus for a future stage.</p> <p>GO introduced himself and presented the findings of the study. He highlighted to the board that there were no venues in Oxfordshire that could accommodate more than 2000 people at a time.</p> <p>IH stated that the Oxford brand, was critical and should be visible and promoted more. He stated he felt the project should be pursued and highlighted a number of locations where aligning the ambition for such a facility might be supported by strategic infrastructure connectivity.</p> <p>AH reflected upon his experience of exploring such facilities previously. He highlighted proposals for a similar facility in Reading though it seemed to have stalled currently. He felt that if the Reading proposal was to progress, this would, impact upon the viability of a scheme in Oxfordshire and therefore asked whether we might consider some form of collaboration with the reading promoters. The team acknowledged the point and agreed to explore as part of the next stage of project development.</p> <p>AL stated that he felt the scale of ambition was good but that we should ensure we were appraised of the status of the Reading project. He also reflected the importance</p>	

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<p>of Hotel bed space and other facilities in the vicinity of such development. The team acknowledge the point and highlighted this would be part of the site selection and development process.</p> <p>PG supported the approach and ambition, however he did suggest we might want to explore Cities of a similar size/catchment and how they have developed sustainable facilities.</p> <p>JM asked whether we had firmed up locations and whether sites in West Oxfordshire were being considered. AG confirmed that no specific locations had been chosen at this stage and that site options and connectivity would be key criteria in moving forward with a market driven proposal.</p> <p>PSH asked when the next report could be expected. AG confirmed it would be the end of the financial year.</p> <p>Recommendation -</p> <p>That the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • endorse the findings of the Business Visitor Economy study • agree for the CVESG to work with partners to explore with potential commercial operators detailed market testing of the concept of conferencing and performance venue including potential locations 	<p>Endorsed</p> <p>Agreed</p>
<p>Items for Decision</p>	
<p>Item 8 - Chief Executives Report (NT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex 1 – Communications Activity Tracker • Annex 2 - Ox-Cam Arc Vision 	
<p>NT presented the paper noting progress across the teams and increased scope of the communications activity as detailed in the tracker at Annex 1.</p> <p>The Board also discussed the Ox-Cam Arc Vision detailed at Annex 2 which had previously been circulated to the Board and had been signed off by the OX-Cam Arc Productivity working group and OX-Cam Arc Leaders/Chairs group. BW reflected on the increased importance of the Arc and governments commitment to work with partners to realise its potential and importantly the places within the geography and their communities. He highlighted the discussions which were progressing in respect of the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR 2019) and the importance of having a clear set of propositions both in Oxfordshire and as an Arc in preparation for discussions with official's and Ministers.</p> <p>SR asked whether the proposed Expressway should be highlighted in the Vision document, BW/NT explained that the Expressway was a Highways England project and nothing to do with the LEP or the Ox-Cam Arc. It is being promoted by Highways England and a further consultation on the preferred Corridor and routes was expected in the Autumn.</p> <p>AL stated that few people locally understood the rationale for the Arc or its benefits both locally and nationally. He highlighted the confusion which exists regarding the</p>	

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National Infrastructure commission's recommendation for employment growth and housing in the Arc. He noted various groups had reported inflated housing figures associated with Oxfordshire which were not substantiated and that the forthcoming consultation provided a platform for highlighting these concerns.

AH agreed that it was important to ensure people understood the benefits of the Arc and the need for balanced employment and housing growth with the right infrastructure.

DB reflected a concern that as drafted the document appeared to overstate the need for new institutions of education, rather than strengthening and building upon our existing infrastructure particularly strengthening schools' educational attainment and transition to FE/HE. The point was noted and linked to the Skills update, SAP's in each area would be looking at provision and capacity as part of their work to define future skills needs and trends.

In response to further questions from SR about the Vision document, Oxon-LIS and Expressway, NT further clarified the difference between the OX-Cam Arc Economic Vision document, our Oxfordshire LIS and the work of Highways England's responsibilities. Whilst it was noted that the documents, particularly the Vision and LIS shared common themes, they were developed for different purposes, the Vision for instance was simply setting out a collective ambition not specific interventions at this stage and was helpful in setting a direction of travel. Our LIS by contrast was location specific and focused upon our ambitions and capabilities, identifying measures we would like to see put in place in supporting Oxfordshire's prosperity and business productivity, responsibilities and outcomes should not be conflated. Both NT and AG offered to provide additional briefing to help understanding and clarify the purpose, focus and responsibilities associated with each.

NT stated that there would be a full Enterprise Zone update in September following changes to personnel and the EZ Sub-Group membership post local elections. Progress continues to be monitored and quarterly reporting, though initially delayed, is now back on track thanks to joint working with the South and Vale team. The next meeting on the Sub-Group will be late August prior to reporting to Board.

ES asked for clarity in respect of Board voting if Directors and approvals process should this be necessary. NT advised that the Board Articles and By-Laws provide for majority voting, not unanimous voting. BW noted the difficulty of new Board Directors being asked to approve a document when they did not take part in the work that had occurred to bring it to this stage. In light of those concerns and on reflection it was agreed that the Board could note the Ox-Cam Arc Economic Vision rather than approve it.

Recommendation

That the Board:

- **Notes the report and activity supported to date.**
- **And, therefore Noted the Ox-Cam Arc vision attached at Annex 2**

**Noted
Noted**

Item 9 - Local Industrial Strategy (AG)	
<p>AG presented a report which set out the progress made to date following our submission in December 2018. He noted the changes made to the document in respect of format and flow referring to the document shared via the web link as the latest draft. He noted that the changes ensured consistency between the 4 LIS documents prepared across the Ox-Cam Arc and the two published documents, Manchester and West Midlands LIS's respectively. He confirmed that the document would be finalised in consultation with CLG colleagues over the next week or so.</p> <p>JL stated that this document was a formal LEP document, developed in partnership with stakeholders and partners, jointly produced with HMG and that we did not anticipate any major changes to the draft prior to sign off. However, given the process and as detailed in the paper we were seeking the boards agreement to delegate the final sign off process to the Chief Executive and Chair.</p> <p>In response to questions from the Board around next steps, AG and NT confirmed that we would be progressing an Investment Prospectus setting out in more detail the intervention we would like to see supported, responsibility for delivery and timetable. This work would run in parallel with a similar but strategic review of joint working between LEPs at an Arc wide level.</p> <p>PG welcomed the progress and direction of travel; however, he also noted the importance of securing the infrastructure needed to support the Innovation ambition and that we must focus efforts on securing such commitment. AG acknowledged the challenge and this along with others associated with Skills, Business Scale Up support and Internationalisation were matters to be picked up in the Investment prospectus.</p> <p>MM asked where we were with the development/approval of our LIS vis-à-vis OX-Cam Arc LEP partners. NT confirmed we were making excellent progress and close to sign off, others were finalising their documents respectively but that the intention was to sign off all 4-week beginning 22nd July.</p> <p>SR stated that she was not happy signing off the document as she felt it was not a 'people's LIS' and that there was, by implication far too much development in it. She felt that it had not been discussed with the people of Oxfordshire or subject to full public consultation and that from her perspective it had little engagement with the Local Authorities.</p> <p>NT responded by clarifying governments requirements, its purpose and fit with both the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan and Oxfordshire Infrastructure strategy building upon the refreshed Strategic Economic Plan 2016. Furthermore, that the LIS working group, Growth Board Executive Officer Group and indeed Growth Board had been involved throughout its development. He also noted that each Local Authority had taken a view on how they wanted to socialise the work with their members, Some via Cabinet, Executive or specific briefings building on the engagement of their respective</p>	

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<p>CEO's and senior officer teams including South and Vale Officers and members previously. Again responding to the specific challenges around scale of growth implied in the strategy, NT clarified that the Growth Board and individual LA teams had been actively involved in working groups, workshops, working group oversight and drafting alongside government. He emphasised the alignment with the emerging spatial planning work, connectivity and Infrastructure and Environment; noting the 25 year Environment plan, Natural Capital Plan and inclusivity ambitions. With regard to statutory process and planned growth, these would be matters addressed through the statutory process and therefore any projects coming forward would have to respond to those criteria developed.</p> <p>JL also noted SR concerns but reminded the Board this was a response to Government Industrial Strategy Challenge, that we were identified as a "Trail Blazer" area and that we have ensured a wide-ranging engagement process including democratically elected officials and officers. JL also recognised that it was absolutely right for SR to raise concerns, the process and document were the start of a negotiation process with government leading up to and beyond CSR. Many of the issues raised were subject to decisions to be taken through the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan or other strategies and therefore we anticipate addressing some of the concerns regarding Housing numbers through that process. Furthermore, South and Vale Officers and Members, along with many other stakeholders had been involved in developing the LIS for over a year. We have followed governments process for agreeing the LIS, remembering this is a Co-Authored document and as such we were recommending approval of the draft subject to the delegation provisions.</p> <p>The Board approved the document by majority noting that both SR and ES abstained.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>That the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notes the changes and updates made to the draft strategy since the March 2019 Board • delegates final sign off of the strategy to the Chairman and Chief Executive, under written procedures. 	<p>Noted</p> <p>Approved</p>
<p>Item 10 - Internationalisation Delivery Plan (SJ/RB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex 1 – Delivery Plan 2019 V7.2 	
<p>SJ presented the paper and outlined progress to date by way of a presentation. The board welcomed the presentation and detailed update, noting the agenda time constraints the Board were happy to note progress and endorse the delivery Plan recognising this was a living document and that further updates would be presented as we move forward.</p> <p>PSH noted by way of update that we were one of the only LEP's to be working with DIT in this way (across all 3 work strands) and that it was proving to be both highly successful and increasing visibility of our collective offer.</p> <p>Recommendation -</p> <p>That the Board:</p>	<p>Noted</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notes the collaborative approach to the development of the Internationalisation Delivery Plan • notes the ambition and aspirations of the Internationalisation Delivery Plan • endorses and agrees the Internationalisation Delivery Plan 	<p>Noted Endorsed</p>
<p>Item 11 - Energy Strategy Delivery Plan (AG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex 1 - Draft Delivery Plan¹ 	
<p>Due to time pressures and the extensive discussion associated with the Arc Vision and LIS it was agreed that the Delivery Plan would be circulated under written procedures for approval and that a further detailed report would be included on the September agenda. reviewed in detail in September. SR enquired whether there would be any delay implementing the Energy Strategy, AG confirmed we would progress subject to written procedures approval and as such this would not have a negative impact.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
<p>Item 12 - Assurance Framework/APR 2019 Update (NT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex 1 - Board Induction and Training Plan 	
<p>NT briefly reported progress against the Assurance framework and confirmed that we were compliant with all requirements of the APR/Assurance process including specifically the 2020 gender target. BEIS had recently confirmed compliance following spot checks and review.</p> <p>He also drew the Board’s attention the fact we had agreed to pilot the Board Training and Induction Process developed jointly with the LEP Network.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>That the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes the progress made to date and compliance with the Assurance Framework and APR requirements. 	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Item 13 - Meeting closes</p>	
<p>The meeting closed at 19.35</p>	