



Culture & Visitor Economy Sub-Group Meeting

Monday 1st June 2020, 10-12

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Draft Minutes

Present:

John Hoy, Hoy Consultancy (Chair)
Ahmed Goga, Director of Strategy and Programmes, OxLEP
Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, Cabinet Member for Education and Culture, OCC
Bob Price, Pegasus Theatre
Ruth Taylor, Strategic Manager, Artswork
Miranda Markham, Bicester Village
Peter Lugosi, Oxford Brookes University
Lucinda Whiteley, Novel Entertainment
Hayley Beer Gamage, Experience Oxfordshire
John Newbigin
Paul Hobson, Modern Art Oxford
Hedley Swain, Arts Council
Lucy Shaw, University of Oxford GLAM

In Attendance:

Richard Bellamy in place of Stuart McLeod, National Heritage Lottery Fund
Helen Ryan-Wallis, OxLEP
Alexandra Capata, OxLEP
Josh Fedder, BEIS
Dr Vicky McGuinness, University of Oxford TORCH
Kate Macleod, OCC

Apologies:

Stuart McLeod, National Heritage Lottery Fund

	Item	Action
1.	Introductions and welcome JH welcomed all to the meeting, then described how the focus is about COVID-19 and its effect on the sectors. Welcome to Richard Bellamy standing in for Stuart MacLeod (NLHF). AG described virtual meeting protocols.	

<p>2.</p>	<p>Minutes from the meeting held on 24th February 2020 - due to shortage of time this item was postponed. However, here are the updates on matters arising from February:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update from Oxford Utd – verbal update received and delivered – positive progress being made • Big Tent and the Oxford Pass connecting – Big Tent has gone virtual. VM and HBG are connected. VM has provided a written summary on humanities engagement (including the ‘Big Tent’)- in AOB. • Publish the arts framework document onto OXLEP website, having gained an endorsement statement from the Arts Council – done, its on the OXLEP website under strategy documents. • Arts – a smaller working group will be created that will report into the CVESG meetings to drive actions – <i>BP to update.</i> • Market Towns Fund round 2 – opening, info in AOB • Creative Cities Convention - didn’t go ahead so no feedback • Creative Industries Showcase – on hold! • Tourism Zone Working Group – action was to have ‘a roundtable to engage with senior level at Local Authorities’ Now superseded with COVID related activities progressing in gaining more support for the Visitor Economy and EO. • Question re EO gaining funding from the LEP for the Oxford Pass - again now superseded by £55k support coming from OXLEP following COVID impact • CVESG delivery plan was shared with the February minutes • Festival 2022 - HRW will investigate if still planned, and how to engage • Arts Council Strategy as an item on the June agenda - Arts Council added as an item in relation to COVID instead. Carry forward to next meeting. 	<p>BP</p> <p>HRW</p> <p>HRW</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>LIS update & COVID Oxfordshire Impact</p> <p>AG delivered the COVID and LIS updates. The OXLEP Board session slides were circulated prior to the meeting. They encapsulated work done by teams in each key area. Highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a new Business Resilience Fund providing up to £10k grants (capital/revenue) for SMEs. - 1:1 resilience support is also on offer via the Growth Hub. - Experience Oxfordshire have received financial support from OXLEP to support Tourism businesses. - OXLEP are trying to fully utilise current EU funding programmes (ISFB and eScalate) to cover a range of sectors particularly cultural and creative). eScalate has approx. £600k of grants available (applicants need to do a 50:50 match), ISFB still has funding available (awaiting an extension on programme), Business 	<p>Links on programmes added</p>

<p>Resilience Fund has £600k available for grants. Total support is approx. £5-6 million for businesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BP enquired as to what types of projects were eligible from arts/cultural organisations for the Elevate programme – innovative new ‘digital’ delivery business models are being welcomed amongst other ideas. - MM enquired as to how many Bicester applications had been received? - Skills for Business are assisting businesses with workforce planning - LS mentioned the Oxfordshire Cultural Leaders Programme and how they are developing online sessions. - LW asked if there was somewhere to find info on grants etc - Growth Hub is the best place to start as they are also now performing a Triage function and connecting into other Local Authorities and their grant offers. Joint assessments are also taking place with regards Local Authority discretionary funds. - A digital Q &A was held on the Visitor Economy – thanks to HS and HBG for their time taking part. A follow up event is planned for late summer. <p>LIS update</p> <p>Work has begun on an Economic Recovery Plan, the majority of the work is already there as part of the LIS work. An investment plan will be ready for the OXLEP board in July which will capture the first wave of investment ready projects (15-20 all of which are being reworked to fit in a post COVID environment – market challenges/opportunities in new environment).</p> <p>There are four areas linked to this group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural and creative Industry Hub (a dedicated space (9,000 or 15,000 sq ft) in Cave St for start ups with possibly an incubator programme, co-working and studio space) & Visitor Economy Recovery programme are in the first wave. - Second wave projects are those needing more development, feasibility, infrastructure, planning or transport issues, or needing substantial capital still. Creative/Cultural related ones include OXIA-the Conference Facility, and Creative City. - Discussions have begun with Government regards potential investment October onwards. <p>Work has begun on an Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) with regards measures needed in the first 12-24 months of a 10 year horizon.</p> <p>Oxford’s economic role as part of the ARC will be included alongside showcasing Oxfordshire’s key role in assisting economic recovery for the whole of the UK. The Growth Board will drive actions. The LIS strategy remains robust and the guiding principles of ‘Invest in Oxfordshire deliver for the UK, Oxfordshire being the UK’s Innovation Engine, and Global Oxfordshire Global Britain’ being valid.</p> <p>The ERP focuses on year 1-2 of the 10 year horizon, outlining activities to stabilise the economy, and deal with immediate labour market</p>	<p>HRW to enquire with growth hub</p> <p>HRW to connect LS to skills team</p>
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	<p>challenges (ie after the furlough period, effect on self employed). The LIS work will progress alongside, moving wave 2 projects to investment ready by year 3.</p> <p>It was noted that Local Authorities are all facing financial difficulties post COVID, and Oxfordshire may have to adapt.</p> <p>LLG said OCC were facing a £30million hole in finances due to COVID.</p>	
<p>4. COVID Impact (please also refer to the slide deck for details) a. Arts & Cultural Organisations</p>	<p>Arts Council - Hedley Swain presented ACE findings.</p> <p>All info on grants and support are on the ACE website, and shared across social media. There are three phases of activity: Rescue, Recovery (March onwards), and Reset (next few years).</p> <p>£160 million was made available as emergency funds, split into three packages: support for national portfolio organisations, individuals, and other. The latter two are now fully funded, with most applications being successful.</p> <p>The national portfolio fund will aim to support those on the brink of collapse. It is thought some reserves will be left in this fund.</p> <p>Evidence gathering is being shared with Government for the need for future funding support for the arts and culture sectors.</p> <p>There has been a great deal of innovation of organisations, particularly around digital. Lots of work is being progressed on how to reopen venues.</p> <p>LS - ACE support, not just funding, but also information and relaxation on NPO reporting and funding deadlines etc has been greatly appreciated.</p> <p>HS also mentioned ACE can provide data on funding, once ready.</p> <p>AG asked HS if there is something you would like JF to follow up on through his contacts in Whitehall? JF to pick up direct with HS.</p> <p>Arts Working Group - Bob Price</p> <p>BP described the local arts and culture sector post COVID – social distancing requirements will be a key issue for all audience related businesses. It is also proving very hard to plan for the future. The ACE funding and furlough scheme have assisted many organisations however from December onwards many will face difficulties. Others that have funding for the next few months will then face future difficulties due to the large losses from incomes. Most major festivals have all been cancelled ie the Literary Festival, Festival of the Arts – both of which have culminated debts from this.</p> <p>AG mentioned we are looking to get a meeting with Neil Mendoza (on the new Cultural Task Force) in the next few weeks and will ask if he can join the next CVESG for a special session sooner than this, if possible.</p>	<p>JF</p> <p>AG</p>

	<p>JH mentioned we should try to engage in the same way with the Visitor Economy Working Group - perhaps via Kurt Janson (Tourism Alliance) or Bernard Donoghue (ALVA). HBG mentioned she was connected into these.</p> <p>AG - the skills team is looking at the risks to apprenticeships where they are currently furloughed and also where they are due to start with businesses in the autumn. We know that the visitor economy is a key employer of apprentices in Oxon but it would be useful to get a steer on the degree of apprenticeships in the arts, cultural and creative sector.</p> <p>RT - Artsworld runs a creative apprenticeship scheme across Hampshire/Southampton and offered to link OXLEP with their CEO if helpful</p>	<p>HRW/HBG</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>HRW to connect RT to Skills Team</p>
<p>b.</p>	<p>Creative Industries</p> <p>Creative Industries National picture presented by John N</p> <p>Online digital businesses are doing well, yet there are massive inequalities of businesses in this sector. Larger companies are able to readily access government support schemes, whereas micros and self-employed haven't.</p> <p>The Creative Industries re-energised quickly after the 2008 crash, signifying a strong reason to support them. Initiatives such as the British Business Bank investment fund for small creative businesses could work well, and lobbying is happening to get this working. A similar creative specific investment in Bristol saw £25 million being administered jointly with Triodos Bank and Creative England - details here</p> <p>Buckinghamshire LEP are looking to set something similar up.</p> <p>Other methods of support for recovery could include: Reducing costs (rent & rates deferral/offering 'meanwhile space'/cheap loan finance) to enable creatives to get going again. Part payments such as the Crowdfunder Pay it Forward scheme are also positive. Other ideas could include re-energising previous schemes such as Thatchers Enterprise Allowance Scheme and Brown's Future Jobs Fund (launched in 2019 allowing creatives to take on young apprenticeship/work experience) therefore opening up career opportunities for the younger generation.</p> <p>Larger companies will need to support the smaller companies (be more socially responsible). A Cooperative Structure where self employed and micros join as members would enable growth. Voucher schemes (trialled 10 years previously in Manchester) saw £4k worth of vouchers being redeemable at smaller creative companies (ie web design, marketing). This saw a big positive impact on innovation for SMEs as the swap and trade of expertise all occurred within the local economy, also forging cross-sector innovation.</p> <p>Lucinda Whiteley presented the local Creative Industry post COVID</p>	

Hayley BG - EO is currently supporting the visitor economy through vital business support. EO was originally set up as a 100% funded organisation, now they are only 5% funded so rely on 95% of funding coming from income generation. This has meant COVID has led to the immediate closure of public facing elements (the VIC and walking tours) seeing a loss in revenue. Also bulk partnership renewals usually sent out in March has meant that income was also not gained as businesses cannot afford to join.

The 60 DMO structures in the UK are all facing similar difficulties with only 8 being fully subsidised by local authorities meaning they are financially secure. A further 50 have a mixed public/private commercial model and several may go bust. The Tourism Society has written papers calling for a review of structures in the county. VE and VB have made it clear they cannot function without DMOs and the role they play at the local level.

HBG thanked OXLEP for their financial support to keep EO functioning to support tourism businesses.

HBG then described the Experience Oxfordshire Covid19 Visitor Economy Business Impact Survey (Oxon was one of the first to do this nationally) and its key findings - £137million being lost per month in revenues, 85% are reliant on the furlough scheme, future bookings totally crashed.

With regards to their role providing business support, they have received over 1,500 COVID related enquires and sent out E Comms to over 10,000 individuals.

Other info collated includes many businesses may not reopen at all during 2020, loans are not helpful as no guaranteed income to pay these back. We may be about to see high levels of unemployment in this sector for the first time ever. The 4th July seeing some hospitality being able to reopen is welcomed yet there is no guidance on how to do this yet.

The international market is not considered to come back until Easter 2021 at the earliest and the immediate focus is on the local market – 'Dream Oxfordshire' is a campaign to promote 'buy local'.

A "stay safe" chartermark is being developed by VE with some advice on this due 15th June. It will be a self-assessment scheme to show that the business is COVID safe.

LS - The Chartermark has met with mixed response from the museum sector amid concerns from smaller organisations that they won't be able to meet the criteria.

HBG said it should be in line with public health england advice and would be the minimum standard to open safely - giving destinations the option to do more. HBG welcomed input from museums to feed into the scheme development.

Activity is to focus on promoting Oxfordshire as a safe destination to regain consumer trust. This will be key to recovery of the sector.

ALL

	<p>HBG also mentioned that there are two new chairs of VB and VE - Rt Hon Sir Patrick McLoughlin CH as Chair of the British Tourist Authority (3 yrs), and Nick de Bois as Chair of the Visit England Advisory Board.</p> <p>The sector deal is also still on the table.</p> <p>MM gave a Bicester Village update</p> <p>BV have launched and trialled overseas shopping protocols (details currently confidential until launched in UK), and a code of conduct for visitors. They plan to open on 15th June and again their focus is initially the local and domestic market.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>BVE – Conference facility (joining just for item 5)</p> <p>Update on Oxford United</p> <p>HRW provided the update from Oxford Utd following a call with NM that morning. Significant progress has been made and they are in serious talks over the acquisition of the preferred site. They are also looking at creating an overall future Sporting Destination concept.</p> <p>Update on conference plans at Bicester Motion presented by Sarah-Jane Curtis</p> <p>SJC was welcomed into the meeting. She presented the slides showing the site's masterplan which has four quarters: Heritage, Innovation, Experience, and Wilderness. Key areas of interest to this group are:</p> <p>The hotel and conference provision – short term plans are to complete on the hotel conference and spa – a four star hotel with 200 rooms also offering 300-500 sized conference facilities. An operator has been appointed and design work has begun. Due to open 2025.</p> <p>There is an events and cultural business activity already in play utilising Hangar 113 (45,000 sqft).</p> <p>The Experience quarter is due to gain planning by the end of 2020. A Bicester Aerodrome company has been developed to make more use of the airfield. This summer they will be hosting drive in cinemas.</p> <p>The Wilderness Quarter is 85 acres with public open space amounting to 30 acres. This is to be open within 3 years. Also a reserve style safari element is being planned.</p> <p>The Innovation Quarter is to go to planning July 20 and has a focus on the future of mobility. This will start on site within 2 years.</p> <p>Delivery of the site:</p> <p>Hotel open by 2025</p> <p>Wilderness - public element by 2023, Reserve by 2024</p> <p>Hangar 113 – open and in use already</p> <p>The smaller hangar behind the hotel could also be used for conferencing.</p> <p>Innovation quarter open 2024/5</p>	

	<p>Its an ambitious masterplan with the aim to fully complete within 5-7 years.</p> <p>Opportunities for this group: A 2-3,000 sized conference facility could be developed in one of the hangars should a partner or grants be secured to drive this forward.</p> <p>JH thanked SJC and applauded the plans. SJC left the meeting.</p> <p>AG also mentioned that Bicester Motion have been part of the Department for International Trade's southern activities and had featured at MIPIM last year. A key challenge for the site would be to ensure it is now COVID proof.</p> <p>MM said the site's advantage is that it is very accessible by car and train and there is lots of outdoor space which is good in this post COVID environment.</p> <p>JH mentioned the group needs to consider its next steps with regards the OXIA ambitions and how we integrate with either or both of these projects in order to secure the best outcome for Oxfordshire. Perhaps a smaller working group should convene?</p>	<p>JH/HRW to discuss</p>
<p>6. Any other business</p>	<p>Due to time constraints this was not covered. However some AOB is in the slide deck circulated already including info on Oxford Brookes hosting a webinar on social distancing for the hospitality sector. Link here.</p> <p>Update from VM with regards Humanities Research Engagement, University of Oxford: In light of the current remote times we find ourselves in, much of the research engagement support and events is taking place online in various ways. https://torch.ox.ac.uk/torch-goes-digital-1</p> <p>The 'Big Tent!' was a large marquee on the site of the future Stephen A. Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities. This was to be a temporary public engagement events space where we would host a series of around 40 events led by researchers, students and cultural partners. Instead, one of the digital strands is the live-online event series 'Big Tent - Live Events' - https://torch.ox.ac.uk/article/launch-big-tent-big-ideas</p>	
<p>7. Dates of next meetings:</p>	<p>Monday 14th September 10.00-12.00 OXLEP Boardroom or virtual TBC</p> <p>Monday 23rd November 10.00-12.00 OXLEP Boardroom</p> <p><i>Electronic invitations have gone out</i></p>	