

Draft Minutes of OxLEP Enterprise Zone Sub-Group Meeting

7th June 2023

Clover Meeting Room, Bee House, Milton Park and MS Teams

1.	<p>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</p> <p>Apologies noted from Monika Zemla and Nigel Tipple (Members); and Ross Burton and Robert Curtis (HMG CLGU).</p> <p>Sebastian reported that Ross is leaving his role as Area Lead for Oxfordshire and the Sub Group wanted thanks for Ross’ involvement in the Sub Group to be noted. Robert will be covering until a new Area Lead is appointed.</p> <p>Cllrs Thomas and Rouane provided updates following local elections. No changes in Leadership at either Council but some changes in Cabinets and appointment of a Science Vale Champion. Cllr Rouane reported that the Liberal Democrat and Green Alliance is continuing despite the Liberal Democrats now having overall control of South Oxfordshire District Council.</p>
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Cllrs Thomas and Rouane declared an interest in agenda item 6 as the reimbursement is to South and Vale District Councils.</p>
3.	<p>Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising</p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting held on 7th March 2023 were agreed.</p> <p>Matters Arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed additional independent business representatives – Sean gave a verbal update on suggestions and recommended that we approach up to three companies with a focus on beneficiaries and suggested Clearwater Hampers and Hachette plus one other. Angus and Phil suggested that a science focus business should be approached to reflect the sectors and clusters of Science Vale. It was agreed that the Officer Group will make further consideration and Sean will email short biographies of proposed reps to the Sub Group members for comment and once agreed invites will be emailed out. ACTION: SEAN AND THE OFFICER GROUP
4.	<p>Progress Update</p> <p>Sean presented the quarterly performance paper with key points to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As of the end of March 2023, at least 2,666 new jobs have been created within the Enterprise Zones (EZs). Planning permission for Project Resilience, the new Moderna facility located at the Harwell Campus, was granted on 6 April. Located on a 3.98 hectare site the development, officially named the Moderna Innovation and Technology Centre (MITC),

	<p>will consist of two buildings and will encompass research, development and manufacturing facilities along with a clinical biomarker laboratory.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new draft Local Development Order (LDO) for the Didcot Technology Park, revised to address points raised by the 2022 public consultation, was released for internal consultation on 12 May. The Enterprise Zones team is reviewing this document and will be submitting a response by the deadline of 10 June. Discussion took place about LDO's and whether other site owners are looking to develop LDOs based on the positive experience of Milton Park's LDO. It was noted that the Harwell 2040 Plan provides information on development plans. • Job numbers across the whole of the EZ sites and not just those for businesses receiving the business rates discount are being collated based on FAME Database information but there is a time lag of a year and some work will need to be undertaken to breakdown numbers where businesses have more than one site. Sean is continuing to look at this and will provide an update at the next meeting. With that in mind the job numbers are marked as amber on the RAG rating because they are lower than target but there is an expectation that when all numbers are collated they will be higher. ACTION: SEAN • An update was provided by Sean on the four business rate relief applications from tenants in Zephyr Building at Harwell. They have lodged challenges with the Valuations Office Agency to revise the date at which they became liable to pay business rates to within the eligibility window for EZ1. So far, two of these businesses have been successful in their challenge and we are now in a position to process their applications. We await the outcome of the challenges for the other two businesses. This news was welcomed by the Sub Group. Further update at next meeting. ACTION: SEAN • The monitoring return to HMG DLUHC that was provided with the papers was noted
<p>5.</p>	<p>Draft EZ Strategic Plan</p> <p>Sean presented the first draft of the Strategic Plan with the following key points noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy should be looking at how we can maximise income generation through the EZs and deliver jobs and floor space • Audience is primarily internal and key stakeholders, and we should publish on websites and be transparent about the strategy and ambitions • Focus on tactical actions to 2028 • Marketing – think about partnership liaison and community focussed liaison (e.g. people who live here) • KPIs – as well as jobs, floorspace etc, financial targets based on performance vs forecast can be looked at but recognising that delivery is not entirely in our gift (e.g. VOA valuations etc) • Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) – to be woven in as the SEP is completed • Font size to be looked at in final design as hard to read when small • Overall it was well received, and Sean and Jon were congratulated on their work to date. <p>The Plan will be discussed further by the Officer Group and a revised version brought to the next Sub Group meeting. ACTION: SEAN, JON AND THE OFFICER GROUP</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Review of reimbursement of EZ Management Costs</p> <p>Lyn presented the paper that had been circulated and the Sub Group agreed to recommend to the OxLEP Finance and Audit Committee the reimbursement to South and Vale Councils the sum of £92,720 from the EZ2 Retained Business Rates fund, being the actual costs incurred in 2022/23 on managing the development of the EZs.</p>

7.	<p>Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)</p> <p>Richard provided a verbal update and reflected on the four themes that are emerging from the work to develop the SEP and how these align to the Guiding Principles adopted by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. The SEP should be completed and agreed by the time of the next Sub Group meeting.</p>
8.	<p>Power Infrastructure / Energy – Update</p> <p>Andrew reported on a positive meeting held between Leaders and the DNOs following the letter previously shared that was sent to the DNOs. Work is continuing, led by the County Council, on the development of Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs).</p> <p>The updated Oxfordshire Innovation Engine Report was published on Tuesday 6th June and references the power challenges as significant. Sebastian reported on the growing list of investors, companies and sites that he is aware of with power challenges and is meeting with Government officials and the Energy Minister in relation to one particular investment.</p>
9.	<p>LEP Transition</p> <p>Richard provided an update on LEP transition and reported that the initial period of consultation with key stakeholders had concluded and that the responses seen by OxLEP were positive about the impact OxLEP is having. It is possible that we will have further clarity by September</p>
10.	<p>Forward Plan and Future Meeting Dates</p> <p>The next meeting will have the following as agenda items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs, Development and Marketing Update • Sites update • Annual report on actual and forecast EZ business rates growth income and spend commitments from EZ1 and EZ2 • EZ Five Year Strategic Plan • Strategic Economic Plan update • Power Infrastructure / Energy Update • LEP Transition update <p>Future meeting dates confirmed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5th September 2023, 14:00-16:00 (MS Teams) • 29th November 2023, 14:00-16:00 (MS Teams) <p>Sebastian confirmed that Peter Nolan will be taking over as the new Chair from September meeting. Penny was thanked for her time and commitment and for the excellent work she has overseen as Chair of the Sub Group.</p>

Attendees

Members:

- Penny Rinta-Suksi, OxLEP Board Member (Chair)
- Cllr David Rouane, Leader, South Oxfordshire District Council
- Cllr Bethia Thomas, Leader, Vale of White Horse District Council
- Angus Horner, OxLEP Board Member
- Philip Campbell, Commercial Director, Milton Park (MEPC)

In attendance:

- Kathy Wilcox, Asst S151 Officer, Oxfordshire County Council
- Andrew Down, Deputy Chief Executive - Partnerships, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils
- Susan Harbour, Strategic Partnerships Manager, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils
- Simon Hewings, S151 Officer, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils
- Sean Thornton-Mills, Enterprise Zones Partnership Manager, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils
- Jon Palmer, Enterprise Zones Project Support Officer, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils
- Richard Byard, Director of Business Development, OxLEP
- Lyn Davies, Director of Corporate Services, OxLEP
- Sebastian Johnson, Head of Innovation and Inward Investment, OxLEP