



<u>Subject:</u> Confidential - Chief Executive's Report	
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Summary

The report provides an update on operational activity supported by the team over the Q3 reporting period. Specific updates on the work of our Skills and Programme Teams is covered under separate items on this agenda. The Communications update is supported by a Communications Activity Tracker attached at Annex 1. The report also highlights the completion of the Ox-Cam arc Vision, previously circulated to Board, the final document is attached at Annex 2.

Recommendation

That the Board:

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

1.) Communications

During the last quarter, the Communications team has continued to focus its efforts on two primary key areas, aligned with our current communications strategy:

- Building on a narrative that Oxfordshire can be/and continues to be a 'global asset' to the UK economy,
- Creating meaningful engagement with the Oxfordshire business community, promoting the strength of our economy.

Activity Undertaken

Quarterly House of Commons economic briefings, focussing on the four transformative technologies outlined in the Oxfordshire Science and Innovation Audit (hosted by Oxfordshire MPs)

Our third and fourth economic briefings took place on 19 March and 21 May, hosted by Anneliese Dodds MP and Victoria Prentis MP respectively. The focus of these briefings were digital health and technologies underpinning quantum computing.

A total of 135 targeted guests attended both events, ranging from international investors, foreign embassy representatives and private sector businesses.

Media outputs from the two events in March and May include:

- Article in the FT (quantum computing event)
- Two 20-minute podcasts featured in the national online magazine, Physics World
- Creation of two business case studies (Sensyne Health and Oxford Quantum Circuits) that have featured across the Government Communications Service channels

The next round of briefings are proposed for:

- 8 October 2019 – Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (hosted by Robert Courts MP)
- 21 January 2020 – Life sciences (hosted by Ed Vaisey MP)

Additional Media coverage

- Working with CNN International, creating a feature on Oxford Space Systems, based at Harwell Campus and highlighting Oxfordshire's economic strengths, post-Brexit (3 April)
- Ongoing series to appear on BBC South Today, focussing on the four transformative technologies – the first of which focussed on quantum computing (28 May)
- Two blogs highlighting Oxfordshire's economic strengths and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc headlined on the National Industrial Strategy website

'Insight' quarterly report

- Informing, UK decision makers of inward investment successes in Oxfordshire. Third and fourth reports published in March and Ma 2019 respectively.

Q&A events

- We held the latest in our series of Q&As on 25 April: 'Oxfordshire 2040 and Generation Z: Are education providers and young people prepared for the jobs of tomorrow?' at Blenheim Palace. In total, 54 people attended the Q&A event and formed part of a wider 'Skills' morning that engaged 120 people.

Next scheduled events:

- 9 July: 'Productivity in Oxfordshire – is there still room for improvement?' (European Space Agency, Harwell Campus)
- 24 September: Title to be confirmed (TOAD, Gin Distillery)

We partnered with UK Property Forums to run the second [Oxfordshire Property Festival](#) on 11th April 2019 including a range of talks and presentations about property and investment opportunities in Oxfordshire and an awards ceremony and dinner in the evening.

[Venturefest Oxford](#) will be held in September 2019 with a focus on inward investment and international trade opportunities alongside the four Grand Challenges in the UK Industrial Strategy. We are supporting the development of the 2019 programme.

Oxford-Cambridge Arc communications Continued work alongside other 'Arc' LEPs and England's Economic Heartland – developing narrative and key messages to be implemented across all partners' communications work.

Oxfordshire Business Awards - Leading on all PR and communications for the 2019 Oxfordshire Business Awards, taking place on 14 June.

‘Cluster communications’ – promoting Oxfordshire science and innovation strengths. Working alongside Oxford University Innovation – leading on the creation of an Oxfordshire ‘science and innovation’ communications group.

2.) Business Team Update

Since the March Board update we have signed a contract with MGHCLG for the eScalate programme. This takes our current programmes to an impressive £11 million of business support available to our SME’s. This support is split between two live projects, Innovation Support for Business (ISfB) and Elevate along with the latest eScalate programme which will officially launch in September.

A summary of the support offered to date across the two live programmes is:

• Active enquiries	1330
• Signed application forms	1000
• Total number of grants granted	60
• Value of grants paid to date	£200,000
• One to one support	600
• Workshops delivered	80
• Two Market place events	220 individuals (total attendance)

Elevate

Activity on the Elevate project is due to end in December of this year, with financial close down by the end of March 2020. As such, the workshop activity is winding down for the project. Start-Up workshops have finished and there are five Growth workshops running between now and the end of September. One to one support through our Network Navigators continues until the end of September as does one to one support via OBE. To finish off the programme we are planning to run a final bootcamp, a growth accelerator and a celebration event.

Innovation Support for Business (ISfB)

This is our Innovation programme which officially launched in September 2018. We offer Go Create grants up to the value of £50k, workshops and 1:2:1 support. Despite a slow start with partner delivery we have now run 10 workshops across a variety of specialisms, we have committed in excess of £380k of grant monies and provided 1:2:1 support.

We have submitted a Project Change Request to MHCLG to extend this programme through to 2022. A decision is anticipated later this month.

eScalate

eScalate is a three year project, running from 1st January 2019 until 31st December 2021. The programme will target SME’s, including scale-ups & those with scale up potential, access to finance needs and social enterprise SME’s across Oxfordshire. This will be delivered through 1:2:1 support, workshops and grants.

The main Social Enterprise support is being procured. The closing date for tenders was the 17 June and we anticipate contract award by mid-July allowing for the September launch.

We are planning to launch the first grant round on the 1st July. Over the three year project we have timetabled to complete five grant rounds. Further support activity such as 1:2:1 support and workshops will commence towards the end of 2019 once all procured contracts are in place.

Inward Investment Team

Inward investment successes and enquiries: Our Inward Investment team has been active in account management with businesses and working with our wider partners in the county and with the Department for International Trade (DIT) on inward investment opportunities. Key achievements to date include:

- Initial data for 2018/19 indicates 38 Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) successes supporting over 700 jobs. These are draft figures due to be finalised by mid-July.
- A total of 114 Account Management engagements were recorded for the year 2018/19
- As of May 2019, we have a pipeline of 75 live FDI enquiries.
- A total of 30 account management engagements have been recorded by OxLEP and partners for year 2019/20 so far

National feedback from across the FDI network suggests that enquiries and successes for 2018/19 are lower than previous years. This is the case for Oxfordshire as we have seen a reduction, however, we have exceeded our six-year baseline average of 31 successes. We are optimistic that Oxfordshire will continue to deliver above our baseline average and as part of our wider Internationalisation Delivery Plan we have identified a number of actions in partnership with DIT and local partners that we can implement to support inward investment success.

Growth Deal Productivity Theme – Internationalisation:

- We have progressed discussions with DIT colleagues and initiated a number of projects that are promoting the wider internationalisation opportunities. These focus on DIT's three work areas – investment and FDI, international trade and capital investment. DIT report that Oxfordshire (through OxLEP) is the only region in the UK where DIT is working across the three strands in such a strategic way.
- We have developed a draft Internationalisation Delivery Plan with DIT, this is identified at agenda item XX.
- Working with colleagues across the Ox Cam Arc, we have led the development of an Arc and DIT Investment and Trade Group that is looking at investment and trade promotional opportunities. The Group is chaired by Alan Pain, Regional Director at DIT, Sebastian Johnson our Head of Innovation and Investment is vice chair. The group is leading work on an Ox-Cam Arc Investment Brochure and supporting the development of a cross Arc Delivery Plan; based on our Oxfordshire Delivery Plan.

Strategy Team Update

Creative Industries Showcase 27th June 2019

This is the first dedicated event of its kind in Oxfordshire, bringing together innovators, local and national businesses, entrepreneurs, national sector bodies and representatives, industry leaders and influencers, to celebrate the extraordinary vibrancy and dynamism of the Creative Industries in Oxfordshire.

The Creative Industries comprise nine sub-sectors and are part of a much wider creative economy. DCMS defines the Creative Industries as 'those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property'. In Oxfordshire, these dynamic businesses are employing in excess of 30,000 people and contribute over £1.4bn to the local economy. The sector has been identified as a creative industries cluster with high concentration and growth in the Creative Industries Sector Deal and is central to our ambitious Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) Trailblazer, which aims to position Oxfordshire as one of the top three global innovation ecosystems by 2040 with which

we are working with both DCMS and BEIS. The event is also a 2019-20 key priority of the Culture Visitor Economy Sub group, and also moves forward commitments in the productivity stream of the Oxfordshire housing and growth deal work with HMG to progress ambitions of sector deals which include the creative industries.

The event's theme is *"harnessing new technologies to power innovation across the creative industries"* and is being developed in partnership with Creative England, Creative Industries Federation, Digital Catapult and Arts Council England. There will be a ministerial keynote from Andrew Stephenson, followed by 17 expert panellists from across the UK debating three areas: 'Future of Storytelling', 'Cross-sector innovation and the skills required', and 'New Technology, New Audiences: Exploring the power of Immersive, 5G and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to connect with untapped audiences'. We will host a fourth Q & A session with Jason Kingsley OBE from Rebellion, the award-winning video games developer and TV, film, book and comic publisher, headquartered in Oxford.

We anticipate an exhibition of c20 Oxfordshire creative and technology businesses. Business surgeries will be held in 'Pods', hosted by sector bodies such as Creative England, CIF, Arts Council England, Digital Catapult, amongst others. These will offer informal 'drop in chats' for businesses attending the event. Our Skills and Business Growth Hub teams will be available in the "OXLEP Pod" to signpost and advise businesses. Additionally, the event will highlight the exciting work at Oxford Brookes University and their planned £25m teaching, research and knowledge hub, positioned at the intersection of creativity, design and innovation. It will also showcase the University of Oxford's MPLS division's strengths in Artificial Intelligence, Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality and Robotics.

Significant benefits of holding this first event will be to encourage the Creative Industries to act as enablers to other industries, discover more about the broader creative cluster, whilst beginning the process of accelerating cross sector collaborations by co-locating and connecting creative and technical talent. (Nesta research indicates that the fusion and co-location that characterise Creative Clusters could also have spillover benefits for the wider economy through the knowledge, products and networks they generate.)

For further information please see the link below.

<https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/events/event/oxfordshire-creative-industries-showcase-2019>

3. Ox-Cam Arc

The Board will recall that we commissioned the Ox-Cam Arc Economic Vision along with Bucks TV LEP, SEMLEP and the Cambridge and Peterborough CA. The document sets out a joint Economic Vision for the Ox-Cam Arc and working through the productivity Theme Working Group we have secured sign off by partners and via the wider OX-Cam governance arrangements. The Cities and Local Growth Team welcomed the publication and have already used this as a basis to begin discussions around a future Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) submission and associated joint working arrangements. Again the document is cross referenced in each of our respective Local Industrial Strategies (LIS) and forms the basis of a common chapter in each document.

Attached at Annex 2 therefore is the final version of the document for information and approval. We will begin to develop a series of Cross Arc propositions through the Productivity Theme working Group over the summer and socialise these as part of the proposed CSR timetable.

4. Enterprise Zones

Management of the Enterprise Zones (EZ) currently sits with Vale of White Horse District Council. Significant EZ staffing changes have taken place at South and Vale District Councils in the last six months resulting in challenges in both the management, marketing and delivery of monitoring returns to Government. We have been working with South and Vale District Councils to

support the delivery, monitoring and marketing of the EZ. An interim Business Development Manager (BDM) has recently been recruited by Vale of White Horse District Council on an initial contract up to six months with extension option if required. The Interim BDM has EZ experience and is leading on a review of site and investment opportunities and the EZ offer and working closely with our Inward Investment Team. We are supporting the Interim BDM and South and Vale DC in providing completed monitoring returns to Government for the year 2018/19 and ensuring the right processes are in place to deliver quarterly monitoring returns to Government going forward.

Discussions are taking place with South and Vale DCs about management and staffing of the EZ going forward and we are reviewing membership of the EZ Sub Group to ensure the appropriate level of management and oversight are in place. The EZ Sub Group is due to meet on 19th August 2019 and a report on the EZ and future management arrangements will be presented to the Board at the Board meeting on 10th September 2019.