



Innovation Sub-Group Meeting

Thursday, 24th of February 2022 , 2:30pm – 4:30pm

Virtual Meeting

Draft Minutes of the meeting

Members present:	<p>Lesley Thompson (LT): VP Academic and Government Strategic Alliance, Elsevier Sarah Haywood Price (SHP): Managing Director, Advanced Oxford Agne Milukaite (AM): Founder, Cycle Land Andrew Harrison (AH): CEO, Diamond Light Source Adam Stoten (AS): SVP Academic Partnerships, Evotec David Legg (DL): Regional Manager, UKRI James Colgate (JC): Operations Director, Williams Grand Prix Engineering Barbara Ghinelli (BG): Director, Business Development and Clusters, Harwell Campus (STFC) Ian Chapman (IC): CEO, United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority Roger Neal (RN): Technical Services Manager, Sophos UK</p>
Apologies:	<p>Jane Galsworthy (JG): Managing Director, Oxford Innovation Services Chas Bountra (CB): Pro Vice-Chancellor for Innovation, University of Oxford Linda King: Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research & Global Partnerships, Oxford Brookes University Paul Beasley (PB): Prof of Energy Systems and Head of R&D Siemens UK Stuart Martin (SM): CEO, Satellite Applications Catapult Stuart Wilkinson (SW): Assistant Director, Innovation & Engagement Simonetta Manfredi (SM): Associate Dean for Research and Knowledge Exchange, Oxford Brookes University</p>
In attendance:	<p>Nigel Tipple (NT): Chief Executive, OxLEP Thandiwe Hara-Msulira (THM): Strategy Development Executive, OxLEP Alexandra Capatra (AC): Strategy Development Assistant, OxLEP Sebastian Johnson (SJ): Head of Innovation and Inward Investment, OxLEP Sally Andreou (SA): Skills Hub Manager, OxLEP Ross Burton, (RB): Area Lead for Oxfordshire, BEIS</p>

	Item	Lead
1.	Welcome, Introductions and Apologies	Lesley Thompson
2.	Matters Arising & Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th of September 2021 Minutes were approved as true reflection of the previous meeting	All
3.	Looking towards the future Levelling up White Paper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The WP has sets out clear medium-term ambitions, which include health and wellbeing, pride in place, and support for skills. - It is content heavy, and much of the action is yet to emerge. - It reflects some of the directions and outcomes that have gone on in the LEP review process. - For two tier areas like Oxford, LEPs will continue to provide various functions including business support, strategic innovation, and skills. - For Mayoral and Combined Authorities, the LEP's role will continue to be independent. - There is going to be some work to align areas and integrate functions which are not coterminous with their LEPs. This is particularly important in areas which are pursuing county deals. - It appears that Government will support LEPs with finances in 2022/23 based on the status of the local areas. This means there is continuity for at least the next 13 months. This will allow confirmation and clarification on longer term changes that may be required. - Currently, the direction of our corporate plan is consistent with the WP and output of the LEP review. - English regions that want devolution deals, i.e. devolved powers and associated process are encouraged to do so with Govt support. This is not mandatory, but it is the direction that Government is giving steer towards. - There will be a rebalance of how R/D investment is distributed. In practice, this may mean balancing it out of South East. This is a signalling of intent, but the logistics are not yet mature. - The focus will be on supporting places and local leadership and reducing inequalities, including Health and Wellbeing. - There is talk of transparency including special consideration in decision making, improved coordination in decision making, greater focus on local place and in the distinctness of those places. These are plans to recognise economic geographies while also considering inclusive growth. - There is a levelling up cabinet committee, and there is a proposal to appoint up to 9 levelling up Directors including the devolved regions. It is possible that these may be aligned to the previous 9 RDA regions but there is no further details on these. These directors will be interface between place and govt. So the levelling up director will also be the person interfacing with the region on the UK shared prosperity fund. Critical to all this will be effective and sustainable economic growth. 	Nigel Tipple

Ross Burton fed back:

- Ministers are taking forward the moves to have the first wave of the 9 Directors, possibly by September. The director job descriptions are being hatched out.
- On the LEPs, 2 letters are about to come out from the Government. The first is on the role of LEPs and what they are doing and setting the remit and expectation for LEPs in the new environment. The second will be about funding. These are expected in March.
- The approach is a “whole government” approach in which there is a role for all Govt departments – there is a lot of detail that needs to come out over time.
- There will be statutory reportable targets regarding levelling up.

UK Shared prosperity Fund

- This has been in development for 3 years and the guidance for the fund has now been launched.
- It is the successor to the EU structural funds and it covers both revenue and capital. Under the European Fund, Oxford used to get around £20m.
- There will be some formula and criteria around how the funding will be allocated. It is not clear whether the new formula will lead to allocation similar to EU levels.
- The difference is that this will be unallocated fund rather than a bidding one. The allocation process will be at appropriate levels of governance in each area. e.g. Mayoral and Combined Authorities through the MCAs, or Unitarians through the Unitary Authority and in two-tier authorities this will be at the lowest level of governance. We need to think how we will utilise whatever we get effectively.

There are three priorities:

Place: Including health and wellbeing, safety, and leadership largely through LA interventions. This is about local pride and community empowerment and local leaders identifying priorities. Local areas will be asked to prepare investment plans

Business: This is in line with what we are already doing e.g. the Growth Hub, business programmes and internationalisation plan etc. The focus is on boosting communities through quality jobs, investment and existing industries and Covid recovery plans. We are well positioned with our Economic Recovery Plan and work on the inclusive economy

People and skills: This are aligned with the work of the skills advisory panel on how we can work these changes. We have an agreement to deliver this via the ERP. Skills appears to be one that will be funded last.

Now reflecting on both the WP and the UKSPF and will be putting in a draft document to board on the 8th of March and this will set the direction of travel. Key priorities are around skills, internationalisation, innovation, and inward investment, and the supply chain. These will be delivered via a series of programmes in the next 2 years and also depends on government plans.

As Oxford, we need a strong handle on maintaining momentum and not lose the strength of the partnership and avoid submitting find distinct and weak bids. The changes are significant but there is a lot that isn't clear just yet.

This allows us to plan effectively over the next 2 years while policy emerges and initiatives that Govt is promoting such as UKSPF to come to life.

SHP: agree with the partnership approach. We need to recognise the importance of coordination and avoid putting in five underpowered bids as competing plans will

<p>not be advantageous. This group could be a sounding board of the plans regarding innovation.</p> <p>RB: There are several allocation models being looked at and this should be finalised soon, and there will be a judgment based on the appropriateness of the allocation and also what that means in context with leveling up agenda and leveling up White Paper as well as what might have previously expected through European funding</p> <p>NT will continue to lead this work as the neutral party across the county and this can be delivered via the Economic Recovery Plan Task group to make sure we've got the right balance and seniority of partners.</p> <p>Next steps and engagement for the group</p> <p>Corporate Planning: We are reflecting on the levelling Up WP and UKSPF and drafting a final Doc to board to set direction of travel. There is the Joint subgroup chairs meeting in March and operational meetings on 23/24 March to sign off corporate planning process internally. OxLEP will continue its current direction</p> <p>The next step for this group is to complete a review of where we are at and where we are going. We can use the June meeting to review where we are going.</p> <p>Action: Next meeting to review the group's mission and direction.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>4. Connecting Global</p> <p>The connecting global work is currently paused to reset and will take into account the direction of the LEP review and the corporate priorities. When this is done, we will bring it back to the group for discussion.</p>	<p>Sebastian Johnson</p>
<p>5. Advanced Oxford Skills Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills is a priority for AO members hence the project - Data was collected using qualitative and quantitative interviews, and questionnaires, were collected between May and Oct 2021. - The time points of reference were in pre-pandemic 2018, and post pandemic 2021 so see at any differences. - Looked at hard to fill roles, and the routes used for attracting talent, the impacts of Brexit and anticipated changes in five years' time but it was difficult to disentangle effects of Brexit from the effects of the pandemic. <p>Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The hardest roles to recruit were reported as: engineering, computer science, data specialists and general scientific skills. - The use of apprentices was pretty low across the science and technology community. - There wasn't a consistent approach to bringing apprentices in, even though all of the companies are experiencing challenges in bringing in new talent in into their organizations. - Even those who reported using apprentices had just used one, in the last few years. - There was a lack of understanding what apprenticeships are, how to get started on them, and of available support to take them up. This was cited as one of the reasons for low involvement, noting that a few of the younger start-up companies, may be led by people who are new to the UK system. - There is a strong perception of a lack of organisational capacity to supervise and offer training to apprentices. 	<p>Sarah Haywood Price</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was a sense for increasing need for commercialisation skills over the next five years. - There was some comparison between hard to fill roles and anticipated need in the future, so that the same skills that are in demand now are expected to be in demand in the future. - There is need in terms of digital marketing support for in terms of how they use their channels to promote what they do - There are lots of companies who do not use all the channels. This is important in terms of making sure that the connecting global jobs portal has the ambition as a portal for the vibrancy of the innovation labour market <p>Sally Andreou fed back:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We need to up skill and re-skilling our population in priority and new sectors such as the zero-carbon economy. - We are promoting apprenticeships to ensure that more businesses understand the opportunities that apprenticeships offer businesses and how businesses can apprentices' progress. - We have around 270 eligible businesses and only 44 of them access the apprenticeship levy. If they don't access it, goes back to treasury. We need this to remain in Oxford, we are employing two apprenticeship advisors to businesses. - Through the social contract funding we have £1.7m to unlock the apprenticeship levy. - We are delivering careers and enterprise work in over fifty school to promote awareness and opportunities of apprenticeships and at Harwell and Culham. - Some of this can include things like work placements, and promoting the benefits of staying in Oxford, and not in other areas. - We have invested £20m on infrastructure and we want to invest more with our provider network. 	
5.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Dates of the next meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6th of June, 2:30pm- 4:30pm • 1st of September, 2:30pm-4:30pm • 1st of December, 2:30pm - 4:30pm 	All