

## **OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN**

### **Invitation to Tender - Consultancy Brief**

#### **The Task and Purpose**

To prepare a refreshed Oxfordshire strategic economic plan for building solutions which will drive productivity, prosperity, and wealth for all whilst accelerating our transition to Net Zero. The strategy should be accompanied by a strong 'place narrative' recognising the changing roles of Town and City Centres and demonstrating how Oxfordshire can capitalise on its world-class strengths in research, business, skills, science, and innovation. In so doing, take advantage of its growing leadership in emerging sectors such as Life Sciences and Net-Zero, while clearly demonstrating how sustainable and inclusive growth in Oxfordshire can benefit our communities and other areas of the UK in particular, areas which are targeted by the Levelling Up Agenda.

It should be dynamic enough to be able to respond to a rapidly evolving policy agenda support our efforts to set an ambitious pathway for long-term change towards a more sustainable future, drawing on our spirit of Innovation and Oxfordshire's global reputation to power change through the adoption of clean and sustainable technology. In so doing support our efforts to attract the investment required to address the County's short, medium and long-term challenges, while championing national sustainable economic growth.

The outputs of this work will be used in funding discussions with the government, engagement with potential investors, and it will serve as a framework for cooperative operation between national government, local leadership, Universities, the private sector, and key anchor institutions in Oxfordshire.

#### **Strategic Economic Context**

The Oxfordshire economy is home to world leading science, innovation, technology and a wide variety of R&D clusters. It hosts the largest concentration of R&D assets in Western Europe including the UK [Science and Technology Facilities Council](#) (STFC), [Harwell](#), and [Culham](#) campuses, [University of Oxford](#) and [Oxford Brookes University](#), and it has a significant number of R&D linked companies across a network of dynamic science, technology and business parks. The County is one of only three net contributors to the UK exchequer based upon pre-pandemic performance.

The Oxfordshire ecosystem generates 15.8% of all UK University spinouts, and it is one of the highest generators of new and innovative companies of any region. Its network of dynamic incubators nurtures innovation-driven businesses, enabling them to develop new products and services whilst creating manufacturing supply chain activity, and the associated job opportunities, right across the UK.

The Oxfordshire economy:

- Has approximately 32,000 SME VAT registered businesses supporting over 434,000 jobs, defined by the concentration of knowledge intensive clusters and high-tech firms.
- and has one of the highest [Gross Value Added](#) (GVA) per worker in the country at £58,150
- Is also a diverse economy which includes important Rural Land Based, Agricultural (Food and Farming) and Visitor Economy businesses supporting over 40,000 jobs pre-pandemic

However, at its peak, the pandemic saw as much as a 4% drop in employment levels in Oxfordshire, and it triggered an accelerated death rate of businesses. It caused significant negative impact on important parts of the local economy, particularly the Visitor Economy which includes Hospitality, Arts, Culture and Retail, while creating new opportunities in the life sciences and technology sectors.

The pre-pandemic, Visitor Economy, supported over 40,000 jobs, and it was the largest employer of women, providing flexible working opportunities for families, apprenticeships for young people, and routes back into work for those seeking to return to employment. However, the jobs which were lost in the Visitor Economy, were different from those that were created in the growing higher skill, higher value, scientific and technical sectors. Thus, those who lost their jobs were also the economically more vulnerable, who were unable to take up the specialised new jobs.

## **Policy Context**

### **a) The Local and the National policy environment**

In 2019, OxLEP and the Government published the [Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy LIS to 2040](#). The LIS was one of three trail blazing local industrial strategies, which were a key part of the UK's Industrial Strategy. It set a long-term vision, ambition and framework, for Oxfordshire to be a top three global innovation ecosystem by 2040. The LIS was followed by the [Delivery Plan](#) (IDP), which translated the ambitions of the LIS into a portfolio of 20 investable business cases and it had a further 20 project proposals in the pipeline. However, the pandemic interrupted the prospects for delivering the IDP, so the short-to-medium term [Oxfordshire's Economic Recovery Plan](#) (ERP) was developed as a response to the pandemic. The ERP was developed as a comprehensive and co-ordinated county-level economic route map for getting out of the pandemic while minimising its effect on People, Place and Businesses.

However, since then, global security events have introduced additional challenges namely the energy crisis, supply chain challenges and the higher cost of living. At the same time, the funding landscape was changed significantly with UK Shared Prosperity Funds (SPF) replacing European Structural Investment Funds – and being delivered at district level.

In addition, government policy on regional growth and innovation continues to evolve rapidly, and includes the levelling up white paper, the British Energy Security Strategy, the National Innovation Strategy, the review of Local Enterprise Partnerships, the proposed introduction of Investment Zones and The Ten-point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution “accelerating our path to Net Zero”. It remains to be seen how the newly appointed Sunak administration will address regional and local growth. We would expect this commission to reflect any new policy announcements and changes in economic outlooks or forecasts as they emerge. It will be critical to position Oxfordshire at the vanguard of Governments Science Super Power ambitions [The UK as a science and technology superpower \(accessible HTML version of letter\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) .

Thus, there is need for a more dynamic framework that can take advantage of the strengths and resources of the region to better respond to the intensifying multiple challenges in the economy. This should also include growing existing and new sector strengths that helps us transition towards a zero-carbon economy. (Oxfordshire Baseline assessment from the [ERP](#)).

### **b) The Review of Local Enterprise Partnerships and the new role**

In March 2022, the government published the ‘Guidance on integrating Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) into local democratic institutions.’ The review anticipates that “LEPs will

eventually fully integrate into local democratic institutions in line with the government's mission to offer a devolution deal to everywhere that wants one by 2030".

However, Oxfordshire is not currently pursuing a Devolution deal and therefore, OxLEP's is leading the commissioning process for a new Economic Strategy for Oxfordshire, reflecting the post EU Exit ,Covid impacts, international crises, and our sustainable economic growth priorities. In doing so we will ensure the ambitions of our Inclusive Economy Partnership work and Oxfordshire Strategic Vision are embedded within the plan. This strategy will focus on the drivers that underpin local economies and boost productivity, increase our technical and digital skills capability, forging new international investment and trade opportunities, and, above all, translating our world leading research into innovative life changing opportunities for our communities.

### **c) Changes in how countywide plans will be delivered.**

In 2017, Oxfordshire (comprising OxLEP and the six local authorities) agreed a Housing & Growth Deal with Government worth £215m. This plan included support for the delivery of 100,000 new homes, preparation submission and adoption of a Joint Statutory Spatial plan (then called the *Oxfordshire Plan 2050*) covering all five districts, submitting Oxfordshire Local Plans and development of an Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (Trail Blazer).

However, the five local authorities have recently agreed that local Plans for the City and Districts will now provide the frameworks for long term planning in Oxfordshire. They also agreed that councils should co-operate with each other and with key bodies as they prepare their Local Plans, and that they must aspire to higher environmental and sustainability requirements. Thus, a consistent approach across the local authorities will still be required to ensure that the gains made through the overarching Oxfordshire plan 2050 approach are maintained.

Therefore, there is an opportunity to capitalise on the countywide convening and coordinating approach to development that we (OxLEP) have successfully developed to date. This also calls for a re-energised framework aligned to the [Future Oxfordshire Partnership Vision for Oxfordshire](#) and to re-define the nature of countywide coordination and partnerships.

## **Key Challenges**

### **a) The Covid pandemic**

Despite various interventions such as the Furlough and the Kick-start schemes, the Oxfordshire [ERP](#) economic baseline assessment (2020) indicated that the pandemic had multiple effects on Oxfordshire's people, places and businesses such as:

- over 4%, increase in unemployment from a historical low of virtual full employment.
- significant numbers of businesses in the visitor economy, which supports over 40,000 jobs closed or faced significant losses in sales and bookings.
- a negative effect on the prospects of young people who were about to enter the labour market or in the early stages of their career and adults in low wage, customer facing jobs
- a contraction in capital and investor readiness for technology start-up and pre-revenue businesses embarking on the next stage of raising equity investment

In addition, the impacts of the pandemic were unequal, in terms of:

- the spatial spread across the County; e.g. the city versus county
- between and within different business sectors; e.g. visitor economy versus technology
- individuals, households and vulnerable groups.

The Economic Recovery Plan and its associated priorities undoubtedly catalysed significant support into our communities and businesses most impacted by the pandemic. However as

we move into the post pandemic era, new global challenges have emerged that are impacting the economy – globally, nationally and locally. At the same Oxfordshire demonstrated its strengths and solution focus by being at the heart of global efforts to secure a vaccine.

## **b) The cost of living**

The evolving global security events have triggered

- Higher inflation levels – currently over 10%
- Higher cost of living pressures
- Significant increases in domestic and commercial energy costs
- Increased costs of housing and mortgages

These challenges have changed the economic baseline and assumptions on which the ERP was developed. There is need for a better understanding of the current baseline.

## **c) Net Zero, Infrastructure and Connectivity**

The [Infrastructure Strategy \(OxIS\)](#) highlighted rising pressure across all areas with the electrical grid at capacity impacting on investment and development opportunities and full fibre connectivity at just 7%. Similarly, the ERP Economic Baseline Assessment highlighted three major challenges in connectivity:

- The shift of consumer behaviour towards digital services such as; remote working, shopping or access to public services and the implications on business.
- need for reliable and affordable public transport both for people who need it and for revitalising key sectors that are heavily reliant on footfall and visitors.
- inadequate Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure across the County to support a shift to EVs

More broadly, the county is severely constrained by an underdeveloped transport infrastructure which does not effectively connect critical hubs, science and technology parks together. In addition, there are challenges around air pollution, fuel poverty, emissions and energy leakage from the older building stock.

However, these challenges also offer opportunities for Oxfordshire to capitalise on its emerging leadership in research and innovation in Net Zero. For example, the Culham Centre for Fusion Energy, the UK's national laboratory for fusion research; the Cryogenics Cluster at Harwell Campus, the Diamond Light Source, the UK's national synchrotron facility: cutting edge energy systems research at the University of Oxford, and the emerging battery transport cluster in Cherwell all highlight the breadth and depth of our expertise and the opportunity for Oxfordshire to be at the forefront of inter/national transition to Net Zero

There is also an existing suite of Net Zero innovation projects such as The Energy Systems Accelerator (TESA), Project LEO (Local Energy Oxfordshire), the Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership, and organisations such as the Low Carbon Hub. Thus, the county can accelerate the pace of carbon emission reduction and make a major impact on climate change at pace as illustrated at the OX to ZERO event held in September 2022

However, achieving Net Zero by 2040 requires creating high skilled well-paid jobs in the zero carbon sector. The Pathways to Zero Carbon [Oxfordshire](#) sets out the challenges and opportunities supported by the emerging Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map & Action Plan.

## **d) Business Scale Up**

Whilst start up rates within the county are in line with the national average, Oxfordshire has not fully maximised our potential in translating business starts into sustainable high growth

businesses. The Scale Up Institute has identified Oxfordshire as a scale up 'hotspot'. The latest ONS data (2020) shows that there are 465 scaleups in the Oxfordshire LEP: 170 are classified as scaleups due to rapid growth in their employees, 380 are classified as scaleups due to rapid growth in their turnover and 85 are scaleups that are increasing both employment and turnover simultaneously, total number of employees 29094 with a total turnover of £6.01bn. Key Sectors other Manufacturing and Engineering, Property/land development and construction and other business and professional services for business.

It is noted in the annual Scale Up Institute report that Oxfordshire is in top 10 local areas for scaling pipeline businesses and in top 10 in pipeline growth, scaling pipeline density and scale up density.

The top barriers Growth barriers for Oxfordshire Scale Ups identified as access to UK and Internal Markets, Talent, Access to Government/Finance.

The scaleup community has faced another year of massive challenges. Emerging from the uncertainty of a world pandemic has not brought the relief that many had hoped for. Rising prices, geopolitical tensions and subsequent disrupted supply chains are all testing businesses which are still having to navigate a new relationship with Europe and respond to the threat of the Climate Emergency.

These macro-economic challenges are obviously having their impact on confidence among scaleup leaders who acknowledge it is becoming harder to grow a company and fear that the UK will increasingly become more difficult a location for business in the coming years.

**BUT** – it is testament to the resilience, focus and ambitions of our “Scale-Ups” that irrespective of the intensity of headwinds and concerns, the overwhelming majority still expect to grow in 2023.

However, evidence collected by [Advanced Oxford](#) suggests that many Oxfordshire nurtured companies risk leaving the UK, just as they are about to graduate into large-scale manufacturing, technology or research-intensive businesses.

Developing the next generation and pipeline of scale ups is an immediate challenge with continued issues for business around their infrastructure (plant, testing facilities and machinery), leadership and management development and commercialising innovation and ideas.

## **e) Workforce Supply**

Oxfordshire is rapidly returning to virtual full employment following a near threefold increase in Universal Credit because of the pandemic. Employment growth has been significant over recent years - we have already created more than 51,000 new jobs against our 2031 target of 85,600. Employment growth had been largely sustained by EU migrants which has ensured a continued supply of labour into the economy. However, following the decision to leave the EU, businesses across all sectors are increasingly concerned that they will not be able to recruit staff to fill employment opportunities being created.

Approximately 15,000 people are currently registered for Employment Support Allowance. A flat-line trend over the past decade suggests that traditional approaches to maximising the opportunities for this cohort haven't always delivered the reductions in claimants expected. As migration controls are introduced following BREXIT this group will be an increasingly important cohort to support into employment.

## **f) Skills Development**

The [ERP](#) Economic Baseline highlighted that low-income families and vulnerable groups, particularly the young and old, have been hit hardest by job losses with those in the Visitor

Economy (encompassing retail, hospitality, tourism, arts and cultural and creative industries) being most affected.

The Oxfordshire Local Skills Plan and Report [2022](#) provides a comprehensive evidence base of skills and labour market intelligence. It highlights the six high level priorities required to help address Oxfordshire's skills and labour market challenges.

The emergence of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) overseen by Employer Representative Bodies adds a further layer of complexity to the already complex skills landscape. Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce are leading the development of the Oxfordshire LSIP with the report due to be completed by June 2023.

## **g) Social Mobility**

The differential impact of the pandemic in terms of geography and sectors in part reflects existing inequalities. Oxfordshire's largely affluent economy also masks significant levels of deprivation and social exclusion. For example, two areas in Oxfordshire are among the 10% most deprived nationally (up from one in 2010) with a further 13 areas among the 10-20% most deprived nationally. Together the 15 lower layer super output area (LSOA) in Oxfordshire that are among the 20% most deprived nationally include:

- in Oxford City, parts of Rose Hill and Iffley, Northfield Brook, Barton and Sandhills, and Blackbird Leys wards
- in Banbury, parts of Grimsbury and Castle, and Ruscote wards
- Abingdon, part of Abingdon Caldecott ward
- additionally, 25 LSOAs in Oxfordshire are among the 10% most deprived where education and skills are concerned.

The refreshed strategic plan will need to demonstrate how countywide levelling up can be achieved.

## **h) International Promotion and Positioning of the Ecosystem**

Oxfordshire's innovative industries and businesses face significant competition from established global hubs and other challenger regions, which are investing heavily to maintain their competitive position in key markets

Thus, despite its many strengths, Oxfordshire continues to face significant challenges which impact on our ability to maximise our economic potential – locally, nationally and on the global stage.

There is an urgency in upscaling the investor proposition and connecting Oxfordshire, and thus the UK to clearly defined international markets with investor potential through more targeted and responsive trade and investment programmes to compete globally.

### **The Oxford – Cambridge Pan-Regional Partnership**

#### **Purpose and structure**

The recently agreed partnership approach will provide an efficient and streamlined locally led partnership consisting of Local Government, Universities and LEPs providing a channel for direct Government and Business engagement at a significant economic scale (recognising that not all Local Authorities in Oxfordshire support the current approach). However, in working together it is intended to support the delivery of shared local and national policy priorities for sustainable growth and environmental enhancement:

- Three major programme areas – Economy, Environment and Communications
- Overall PRP programme overseen by a Pan-Regional Partnership Board

- Project Sub-Boards for Economy and Environment will comprise relevant partners/stakeholders/experts on a representational basis to oversee agreed thematic projects
- Communications and the Pan-Regional Innovation Partnership will initially be overseen by the Partnership Board
- A small team of programme management and admin/tech capacity hosted by a local partner supports Boards & programme
- A Local Authority will act as Accountable Body to underpin finance and resource management
- All Boards will meet quarterly with an annual public conference

### **Governance**

This Board's prime function will be to oversee the delivery of the partnership's work programme, as agreed by the membership. Detailed terms of reference will be developed for the Board. It is anticipated the Board will meet quarterly, with an annual conference where the activity of the region will be promoted, and all partners will meet as a plenary to consider future work priorities and progress.

### **The Commission**

We are looking to appoint suitably qualified consultants who can work with the Senior Executive Team and its stakeholders to develop the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan. The plan should be accompanied by a strong 'place narrative' demonstrating how Oxfordshire can support our Businesses and communities, be an economic engine for the UK, capitalising on our world-class strengths in business, skills, science, innovation, and capitalise upon our growing leadership role in sectors such as life sciences and Net-Zero. Importantly demonstrating how county-wide levelling up can be achieved as well as how investment in Oxfordshire benefits the rest of the UK.

It should also be dynamic enough to be able to respond to a rapidly evolving policy agenda, and economic circumstances. It must help us set out the case for attracting the investment that is required to address the County's short, medium and long term challenges, whilst influencing sustainable, inclusive national economic growth. The strategic plan will also serve as a framework for cooperation between national government, the private sector, local leadership and key institutions in Oxfordshire

The consultant is expected to thoroughly understand and build on existing strategies and documents including:

- The LIS and its attendant suite of documents
- The ERP economic baseline study and Plan
- [Oxfordshire's Economic Recovery and Action Plan](#) and its connected funded programmes (Visitor Economy Renaissance Programme and Oxfordshire Social Contract)
- [Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy \(OxIS\)](#)
- [Oxfordshire Energy Strategy](#)
- [Local Skills Plan and Report](#)
- [UK Innovation Strategy UK Research and Development Roadmap](#)
- [OxLEP Oxfordshire Internationalisation Plan 1220v3.pdf \(oxfordshirelep.com\)](#)
- [Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainable Development \(futureoxfordshirepartnership.org\)](#)
- [Pathways to a zero carbon Oxfordshire \(oxfordshirelep.com\)](#)
- [The Local Plans for each Council](#)

We would expect consultants to look closely at the above documents as a minimum. In addition, we expect them to have an innovative approach to finding and using additional sources of independent data (e.g. ONS). They will need to use appropriate methods to extrapolate local data using models that will allow them to draw out the supporting evidence base for framing the

vision. We also expect suppliers to demonstrate a deep understanding of public finance opportunities and international investment markets

### **The drivers and the principles**

The outputs of this work will be used in funding discussions with the government, engagement with potential investors, and it will serve as a framework for cooperative operation between national government, local leadership, Universities, the private sector and key anchor institutions in Oxfordshire.

The consultants should be aware that this call is driven by the following:

- A sense of urgency to respond to current and future challenges locally, nationally and internationally
- The need to build solutions which can drive good growth, productivity and wealth locally and across the UK in the post-pandemic economic environment
- The need to take advantage of our leadership in emerging critical sectors, (e.g. Net Zero) and so develop super clusters.
- Strengthening the innovation ecosystem to accelerate commercialisation and technology transfer of world class research into industry and deepen industry / academic collaboration in support of genuinely scaling up high growth companies.
- Creating pathways and mechanisms for young people to nurture and retain talent and develop the skills needed to capture opportunities in growth sectors, and facilitating social mobility for those at risk of social exclusion.
- Creating a 'place' which converts knowledge and innovation into community and business benefit
- Ensuring that the continued success of Oxfordshire demonstrably benefits other areas of the country aligned to governments Levelling Up priorities.

### **Key areas of delivery**

The project will need to deliver to the following:

- a renewed baseline economic assessment of the post-covid/EU economy. –This should build on the last baseline assessment of 2020 and should clearly inform the subsequent strategic plan and proposals.
- and, recognise the role of Oxfordshire in supporting both local and national levelling up ambitions alongside our ability to support sustainable economic growth through the development of a supporting “Future State” Economic Assessment based on economic scenario projections including key sectors, places and analysis
- setting a clear economic vision and narrative for Oxfordshire – based around delivering the 'good growth' principles detailed in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision, supporting clean and green growth, placing the county at the leading edge of thinking around Net Zero and Climate Action
- articulate our 'place narrative' while capturing the global potential of our emerging sectors in dealing with current challenges.

- set out the investment requirements for us to truly embrace our leadership role in responding to emerging challenges, particularly climate change and outline the risks to UK PLC of not investing in Oxfordshire.
- be strategic and include a rallying call for investment showcasing a compendium of projects and project areas within a renewed investment plan.
- articulate immediate priorities while clearly outlining the medium and long-term plans.

## **Approach**

The development of the plan should be an iterative process involving national, regional and local partners. Close working between the consultancy team and the commissioning group and its partners, will be critical and tenderers should set out in their methodology how this will be managed.

The breadth of partners with whom the process will need to engage will be wide and varied ranging from local bodies such as local authorities and Universities to employers and business bodies to national agencies including Catapults and [UKRI](#). Tenders will need to demonstrate how the consultancy team would approach this task and set out innovative ways, including in the use of technology and communication platforms, by which we can capture input and ambitions, ensuring that the final outputs are shared and owned across local, regional and national stakeholders.

## **Key Stages**

Below are the headline milestones which suppliers will need to consider as part of their proposals. In addition, key stages and outputs of the commission to meet these milestones are listed; these are indicative at this stage, we will work with the successful supplier to develop a more detailed work plan as part of the Inception Meeting.

### **Stage 1**

#### **Evidence Base and Analysis**

- analysis of current economic data, evidence and supporting material, strategies and documentation
- alignment with the Plan for Growth or latest approach, as well as the ERP challenges identified around reskilling people, building businesses, reviving places and rebuilding connectivity.
- detailed inception meeting with commissioning group to frame deliverables for each stage of development. We expect this to be an updated state of play with new data that goes beyond what we already know and leading to the “Future State” Economic Assessment.
- presentation of findings to OxLEP Board and Future Oxford Partnership

### **Stage 2**

#### **Interim Report - Vision:**

The report should reflect and respond to the following aspirations:

- a refresh of the key strengths, clusters of excellence and opportunity areas that were identified in the LIS, plus capturing the emerging opportunities since the LIS, recognising the importance of appropriate infrastructure to support the ambition whilst working with the grain of our natural environment.
- a statement identifying the potential for a Net Zero led growth, plus how we can cultivate and nurture the supply chain within high growth and emerging industries through

acceleration of R&D, and the adoption and translation of new technologies which can drive growth across the UK.

- a framework for how we can develop interconnected superclusters and partnerships around our core strengths and also the mission technologies identified within the [UK Innovation Strategy](#).
- how we can develop integrated support for investment and collaboration with scale ups in globally significant markets.
- realigning the report with the Vision for Oxfordshire and articulation of county-wide relationships, providing the framework and direction for engagement for further detailed work with Government.
- Up to 4 stakeholder workshops to test the emerging strategic plan and propositions.
- presentation to OxLEP Board and the Future Oxford Partnership

### **Stage 3**

Final Report and Delivery Plan:

- Final report and strategic plan which relates to the key principles, drivers and aspirations detailed in this brief.
- A high-level Delivery Plan identifying projects, lead delivery partners, timetable and budgets required to support further negotiation with government. This should include conditions required to deliver each project, so that the partners can monitor the delivery of this plan.
- Presentation of final document to OxLEP Board and the Future Oxford Partnership.

### **Core Outputs**

- A freestanding report for Oxfordshire looking out to 2050 comprising the evidence base and data analysis which supports the plan, which can be interrogated and used for dialogue with Government (central/Local) and potential investors. It should set out key findings from the evidence exercise and a preferred option for the plan, its focus and objectives.
- final report setting out the vision, strategic plan and the potential for investment in thematic and sectoral areas of strength for Oxfordshire.
- PowerPoint and pdf slide pack summarising data analysis, evidence base, vision and the strategic case for the plan for use and briefings across stakeholders and Government.
- high level delivery plan setting out investment opportunities and funding options in the ecosystem, sectors and clusters.
- final report to be produced in Word and PDF format including in hard copy, high resolution print format for partner briefings.
- digital material, infographics and collateral which can be used on social media, online and digital platforms.

### **Headline Milestones**

- Week beginning 14th Nov – publication of consultancy brief
- 28<sup>th</sup> Nov (TBC) – In person supplier briefing event
- 14<sup>th</sup> Dec. 4pm – deadline for submission of tenders to OxLEP Ltd
- Week beginning 9th January – interviews and appointment of consultants
- 19<sup>th</sup> January – inception meeting
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb – 17<sup>th</sup> March - fortnightly updates and engagement meetings with commissioning team
- 17th March – Stage 1 presentations to OxLEP Board / Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP TBC)
- 20<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> March 2023 workshop sessions with all key stakeholders including: OxLEP Board and FOP members.
- 24<sup>th</sup> March to 15<sup>th</sup> May – fortnightly update and engagement with commissioning team
- 15<sup>th</sup> May– Stage 2 presentation to OxLEP Board / FOP

- w/c 9<sup>th</sup> June– Stage 3 (final draft) presentation to OxLEP Board / FOP
- w/c 26<sup>th</sup> June – formal approval by OxLEP Board and FOP

### **Submission Deadline and Selection Process**

All submitted proposals will be scored against a set of pre-determined criteria, set out below:

| <b>Criteria</b>                           | <b>Percentage of Overall Score (%)</b> |
|---|--|
| Methodology and Approach                  | 30% (0/30)                             |
| Creativity Innovation and fresh material  | 20% (0/20)                             |
| Consultancy Team, Skills and Competencies | 20% (0/20)                             |
| Overall Proposal                          | 20% (0/20)                             |
| Overall Price                             | 10% (0/10)                             |
|   | <b>Total Score (Out of 100)</b>        |

**A supplier briefing event will be held on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November** (time to be confirmed PM likely) at Harwell Campus. Suppliers interested in attending should register via Eventbrite on the OxLEP website at [www.oxfordshirelep.com/events](http://www.oxfordshirelep.com/events).

Please note that the briefing will be restricted to one attendee per supplier.

Please send all tender submissions to: [info@oxfordshirelep.com](mailto:info@oxfordshirelep.com) **by 4pm on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December** – please note, late submissions will not be considered.

Please state **‘Oxfordshire Economic Plan 2022 Consultancy Proposal’** in your email correspondence.

Shortlisted suppliers will be notified by Tuesday **20<sup>th</sup> December 2022**, and be invited to a panel interview at the OxLEP offices at Harwell Campus in the week beginning **9<sup>th</sup> January 2023**. All tenders should clearly state the key point of contact for the supplier and their contact details.

### **Additional Information**

#### *Freedom of Information*

All information provided by you in your response to this ITT will remain confidential and will not be disclosed to any other party except where required for official audit purposes or to the extent that OxLEP Ltd considers that disclosure is required pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or any other applicable legislation, legal requirement or code of practice.

#### *Confidentiality*

By receiving this ITT you agree to keep confidential the information contained in the ITT or made available in connection with further enquiries and questions. Such information may be made available to your employees and professional advisers for the purpose only of responding to this ITT.

#### *Material Changes*

At any time before the award of the contract, OxLEP Ltd reserves the right to disqualify any organisation whose circumstances change to the extent that it ceases to meet the selection criteria or makes a material change in respect of its proposal unless substantial justification can be provided to the satisfaction of OxLEP Ltd. Where a Bidder becomes aware after having submitted a Bid of a change in circumstances or information supplied, it should notify OxLEP of this as soon as possible.

## **Budget**

The economic plan will be a critical document which will shape Oxfordshire's future economic priorities and form the basis for our relationship with Government and investors. We would welcome and encourage proposals to set out creative approaches to pricing for this commission.

**We anticipate a total maximum budget of £120,000 plus VAT.**

The commissioning party will be OxLEP Ltd and contractual arrangements will be based on the standard terms adopted by the Company. This will be agreed with the successful applicant following the selection process.

## **Client Contact Details**

A steering group comprising representatives from OxLEP and key stakeholders will oversee the commission. Further detail will be shared at the Inception Meeting.

**The primary point of contact for the commission will be Dr Thandiwe Hara Strategy Development Executive** and can be contacted via [thandiwe.hara-msulira@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:thandiwe.hara-msulira@admin.ox.ac.uk)