

Oxford Economic Growth Strategy - Supporting note for Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee, 30th January 2013

Introduction

1. The Oxford Strategic Partnership (OSP – a partnership of key public sector, universities, private sector and voluntary bodies in the City co-ordinated by the City Council) commissioned the development of a new Economic Growth Strategy in May 2012.
2. The purpose of the new Strategy was to update and replace the economic development action plan that formed part of the Regeneration Framework that was adopted by the OSP and the City Council in 2009.
3. Economic development, growth and regeneration is one of the OSP's key priority areas of work in the recently revised and adopted vision statement, aims and priorities.

Development of the Economic Growth Strategy

4. Consultants Shared Intelligence were contracted to work with and on behalf of the OSP to develop the Strategy. A small Steering Group oversaw the project chaired by Cllr Bob Price, Leader of Oxford City Council. Other members of the Steering Group are:
 - Phil Clare, University of Oxford City Council
 - Richard Venables, VSL and Partners
 - Tom Flanagan, Oxfordshire County Council
 - David Edwards and Michael Crofton-Briggs, Oxford City Council
 - Sebastian Johnson, Oxford Strategic Partnership
 - Lee Shostak and Patrick McVeigh, Shared Intelligence
5. As part of the development of the Growth Strategy an Oxford Economic Narrative was produced and shared with partners in July 2012. The narrative sets out the state of Oxford's economy as of early 2012. It is intended to support the development of the Economic Growth Strategy. The narrative builds on the wealth of existing work that has been carried out previously, and uses up-to-date statistics to provide a complete understanding of Oxford's economy as at 2012.
6. As part of the development of the Growth Strategy a wide-ranging series of interviews, focus groups and workshops took place – the participants are listed in appendix one of the Oxford Economic Growth Strategy.
7. Draft versions of the Economic Growth Strategy were presented to the OSP in the summer and autumn of 2012. In November 2012 comments on the draft Strategy were invited from all who were informed at the outset of the process to develop the Strategy and invited to participate in interviews, focus groups and workshops. This included businesses, business and professional groups, universities and colleges, Local Enterprise Partnership Board and other partnerships, public sector organisations/partners (including Leaders, Chief

Executives and Economic Development Officers of all Oxfordshire local authorities).

8. Comments were received from a number of respondents including businesses, County Council, adjoining district councils, University of Oxford and others.
9. The Steering Group met on 20th December 2012 to consider all comments and noted how the overwhelming response to the draft Strategy at meetings and presentations has been welcoming and positive.

Agreement and Adoption of the Strategy by the Oxford Strategic Partnership

10. Following the Steering Group's review of all comments, a further revised draft version of the Strategy was presented to the Oxford Strategic Partnership on 17th January 2013 where a few minor amendments were agreed.
11. The OSP has now agreed and adopted the Oxford Economic Growth Strategy and has also invited the Oxfordshire LEP to use the Economic Growth Strategy, evidence and recommendations as part of the county wide growth plan.

Summary of recommendations in the Strategy

12. In summary, the Strategy identifies 11 main elements and recommendations for growth (see section 4) which are as follows:
 - Expand Oxford's knowledge economy using Oxford's universities and major large employers to attract new companies and to promote new start-ups.
 - Support the growth of existing employers.
 - Ensure sufficient supply of employment land.
 - Strengthen Oxford city centre's retailing offer.
 - Expand the value of Oxford's tourism across the region.
 - Improve educational and skills attainment
 - Increase housing development in locations easily accessible to the city centre.
 - Investment in broadband infrastructure.
 - Address environmental challenges and opportunities
 - Invest in physical and transport infrastructure.
 - Secure an effective partnership for implementation and 'single team' delivery

Next Steps

13. The next steps are for the Economic Growth Strategy Action Plan to be developed by partners and to build stakeholder commitment to delivery of the action plan
14. As part of this, an officers group at Oxford City Council will be developing the City Council's response to the Strategy and the actions that need to be undertaken by the City Council. A report will be prepared for CEB.
15. Comments from Scrutiny Committee on 30th January will be welcomed and taken into consideration in drafting the CEB Report.

Michael Crofton-Briggs, Head of Service, City Development
Sebastian Johnson, OSP Manager
18th January 2013

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