

Oxfordshire Growth Board

Minutes of a meeting of the Oxfordshire Growth Board held at Council Chamber, Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 31 March 2016 at 2.00 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman)
Councillor Ian Hudspeth (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Matthew Barber
Councillor John Cotton
Councillor Sir Barry Norton
Councillor Bob Price

Also Present: Alistair Fitt, University Representative
Adrian Lockwood, Deputy Chair Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Skills Board Chair
Nigel Tipple, Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Apologies for absence: Andrew Harrison, Business Representative
Jon Mansbridge, Environment Agency
Phil Shadbolt, Business Representative (Bicester)
David Warburton, Director HCA

Officers: Sue Smith, Chief Executive, Cherwell District Council
Peter Clark, Head of Paid Service, Oxfordshire County Council
Bev Hindle, Deputy Director, Strategy & Infrastructure Planning, Oxfordshire County Council
Adrian Colwell, Head of Strategic Planning and the Economy, Cherwell District Council
Anna Robinson, Strategic Director, South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse District Councils
Christine Gore, Strategic Director, West Oxfordshire District Council
Natasha Clark, Team Leader, Democratic and Elections
Aaron Hetherington, Democratic and Elections Officer

20 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

21 **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 2 February 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

22 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

23 **Public Participation**

The Chairman reported that in accordance with the Public Participation Scheme five public participation requests had been received. None of the five individuals who had submitted questions was present at the meeting to present them to the Board. The questions were therefore circulated to Board members.

The Chairman advised that responses to the submitted questions would be sent directly to the parties who had submitted them, made available on the Growth Board webpages and published with the minutes of the meeting.

24 **Post SHMA Strategic Work Programme update report**

The Head of Strategic Planning and Economy (Cherwell District Council) presented the report of the Growth Board Programme Manager which provided the Growth Board (the Board) with an update on the Post-SHMA Strategic Work Programme (the Programme).

Resolved

- (1) That the both progress of the Programme to date and the fact that it will not be achieved without the full continued commitment of all partners to the Programme be noted and that commitment be reaffirmed.

25 **Strategic Transport Forum report**

The Growth Board Programme Manager and Deputy Director, Strategy and Infrastructure Planning (Oxfordshire County Council) submitted a report which provided the Growth Board with an introduction to the Strategic Transport Forum (the Forum), a newly formed sub-group of England's Economic Heartland Alliance. The report also advised on the proposed work programme the streams the forum is developing.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the executive officers group be instructed to bring a further report to the next Oxfordshire Growth Board meeting, outlining the connections between work strand LGF3 and our own internal county priorities.

Future Local Government Structures report

The Chairman introduced the report of Future Local Government Structures which recommended that the Board note that the five District Councils for Oxfordshire had together with partners commissioned a report into the potential for Unitary Councils together with a combined authority and that the County Council had indicated that they proposed to separately commission work that would review all options for local government structures.

A letter from Oxford City Council (representing the districts) addressed to Oxford County Council, together with a briefing note from Oxford County Council had been included with the agenda pack.

Councillor Barber proposed that the Board note the government's response to the devolution proposals presented in December 2015 which indicated that a different and stronger form of governance was required for the proposals to make progress. Councillor Barber reported that in order to forward a devolution bid, the five Oxfordshire district councils, together with South Northamptonshire Council and Cotswold District Council, have commissioned a feasibility study for a wide range of unitary local government options and proposed that the Board welcome this initiative and urge Oxfordshire County Council to join with the Districts in the commissioning and managing of this study, rather than duplicating this work by commissioning a separate study to cover the same ground

Councillor Price seconded the proposal.

Resolved

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That the Board notes that the response from government to the devolution proposals that were presented collectively to DCLG/BIS/Cabinet Office in December 2015 indicated clearly that a different and stronger form of governance was required for the proposals to make progress.
- (3) The Board also notes that, in order to forward a devolution bid, the five district councils, together with South Northamptonshire Council and Cotswold District Council, have commissioned a feasibility study for a wide range of unitary local government options.
- (4) The Board welcomes this initiative outlined in resolution (3) and urges Oxfordshire County Council to join with the Districts in the commissioning and managing of this study, rather than duplicating this work by commissioning a separate study to cover the same ground.

Work Programme

The Board considered its work programme and noted that an additional report outlining the connections between work strand LGF3 and our own internal

county priorities. would be submitted to the May meeting in accordance with the resolution at agenda item 7.

Resolved

That, subject to the addition of a report outlining the connections between work strand LGF3 and our own internal county priorities to the May meeting, the work programme be noted.

28 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 2.40 pm

Chairman:

Date: