

Oxford Strategic Partnership Steering Group



Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th June 2009, 10.00am at Oxford Town Hall

Steering Group Attendees:

Jackie Wilderspin, NHS Oxfordshire
Mel Barrett, Oxford City Council
Rex Knight, Oxford Brookes University
Sarah Maxfield, Oxford Inspires
Cllr Keith Mitchell, Oxfordshire County Council
Andrew Murray, Thames Valley Police
Cllr Bob Price, Oxford City Council
Warren Ralls, South East England Development Agency

Additional Attendees:

Brad Andrews, Box Clever Group
Stephen Capaldi, Oxfordshire County Council
Michael Crofton-Briggs, Oxford City Council
Andy Couldrick, Oxfordshire County Council
Lesley Donoghue, Oxford and Cherwell Valley College
Alistair Ferrier, Oxford City Council / Oxfordshire CC
Peter Griffiths, Business Link
Kate Hill, Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action
Mark Jaggard, Oxford City Council
Sebastian Johnson, Oxford City Council
Val Johnson, Oxford City Council
Bianca Kerley, Thames Valley Jobcentre Plus
Robert Kirtland, Critchleys / ProOxford
Rob McKay, South East England Development Agency
Dawn Pettis, Oxfordshire Economic Partnership
Martin Towers, Learning and Skills Council
Philip Wootton, Business Link

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Joe Barclay, University of Oxford

Alison Baxter, Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action - Kate Hill attended in her place

Debbie Dance, Oxford Preservation Trust

Sally Dickets, Oxford and Cherwell Valley College - Lesley Donoghue attended in her place

David Doughty, Oxfordshire Economic Partnership – Dawn Pettis attended in his place

Chris Farthing, Government Office for the South East

Jackie Wilderspin welcomed all those attending the meeting for the economy discussion (item 2).

2. Economy Discussion

Warren Ralls introduced a presentation on the Oxford economy

Key points from the presentation included:

- Oxford has a higher proportion of working age residents than five selected urban areas of Ashford, Crawley, Milton Keynes, Portsmouth and Reading and is above the rates for the South East and England
- Numbers of Job Seeker Allowance claimants is increasing (up to 2914 in April) but perhaps not as steeply as had been expected
- Oxford has a lower proportion of Jobseekers' Allowance claimants (2.17%) than the selected five urban areas and the South East and London at 4.1% (acknowledged that large student numbers may
- Oxford has a significantly higher number of jobs in public (funded) sector (47%) than other areas.
- Business confidence in Oxfordshire is positive with a majority of businesses expecting the business climate to generally improve over the next three months.

Warren's presentation was followed by a further three presentations:

- Dawn Pettis presented on the work of the Oxfordshire Economic Partnership and the Oxfordshire Learning and Skills Partnership
- Peter Griffiths presented on the work of Business Link (Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire)
- Rob McKay presented on SEEDA's work on Investor Development

All presentations will be published on the OSP website at www.oxfordpartnership.org.uk.

A discussion followed and the following key points were made:

- Robert Kirtland reported that the ProOxford's (a group bringing together Oxford's professional services companies) view is that things are going to get tougher with businesses needing cash and banks not lending.
- It was suggested that all purchasers should "think locally" e.g. company car schemes should be targeted at Mini purchases
- It was acknowledged that the large number of jobs in the publicly funded sector will provide challenges for the City at times when public funding is reduced and this may happen after a more general "upturn" is perceived in the wider economy.
- It was noted that the OSP should be preparing for the upturn and working to ensure that the capacity exists to redress the public/private balance (building, space, planning, transport, economic development and skills)

- It was noted that a reduction in public sector funding would have a likely long term impact on the voluntary sector and the large numbers employed in the sector and receiving services from the sector
- Skills and particularly the skills shortage in the middle level / technical level was noted as an issue and recognised as an area where more resource and focus is required
- The airport has seen number of flights drop from 160,000 to 40,000. Promoting the airport was suggested as a way of bringing investment and wealth into Oxford and Oxfordshire
- Business and private sector involvement and membership on the OSP was discussed and it was welcomed that representatives from the business sector were present.

In summing up Jackie Wilderspin made the following points and suggested next steps:

- The economy is a cross cutting theme in the Sustainable Community Strategy and has strong links with all the flagship issues, therefore the leadership and implementation of plans on the economy belongs to everyone in the partnership.
- The OSP must work and influence to improve and increase the prosperity in the City but always within the context of tackling inequalities and targeting the most deprived
- As the OSP moves forward into its implementation phase we will be expecting the Champions of each flagship issue to report on how specific issues and challenges around the economy are being taken forward in action plans.
- The OSP will explore with the lead partners what role it has in the development of the Economic Assessment, Economic Development Strategy and Regional Economic Strategy
- The OSP will complete its review of membership and that will include agreement of a process for bringing in new members. The OSP recognises the importance of having business representation and welcomes the interest being shown
- Jackie thanked all the presenters and participants in the discussion.

3. Minutes of the last meeting held on 5th March 2009

The minutes were agreed as correct.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Regeneration Framework Update

Mel Barrett gave an update on the Regeneration Framework and reported that a number of stakeholder sessions and consultation events had taken place and were taking place over the coming weeks.

Mel also reported that the Homes and Communities Agency had responded very positively to the Regeneration Framework, as had other bodies.

Links to the private sector and businesses were discussed and it was noted that the role of the private sector is critical and should include the involvement of the Federation of Small Business and the Chambers of Commerce as well as those present at the meeting.

Copies of the Regeneration Framework were made available to all present at the meeting and any further comments were requested by 19th June 2009.

4.2 Regeneration Inspection

Mel also reported that the Regeneration Inspection report was both positive and complimentary and that the formal report is due to be published on 13th June 2009 and will report a rating of “Good with promising prospects for improvement”

4.3 Terms of Reference and Membership Review

The Terms of Reference were discussed and the following points were noted and agreed:

- The OSP is not striving to be a representative partnership, but striving to be inclusive and fit for purpose to take forward our strategy, vision and the flagship issues
- The OSP will be seeking wider community representation in the Delivery Groups focussing on the implementation of the action plans for the flagship issues

It was also agreed, following discussion and as minuted under item 2 above, that the OSP will complete its review of membership and that will include agreement of a process for bringing in new members.

The Terms of Reference together with Membership Review and Process will be brought back to the next meeting for agreement.

5. Action Planning and Monitoring – Future Plan

Sebastian Johnson presented an update on the action planning and monitoring.

It was agreed that we would take stock at a future meeting in the autumn to review overall progress to date and look at performance management of the OSPs work.

6. Comprehensive Area Assessment Briefing

Jackie Wilderspin presented the briefing paper that had been sent out and reported that the author, Tracey Luck, would be attending the September OSP meeting to talk through in more detail.

7. Any Other Business

7.1 Probation Centre and Oxford Brookes University Master Plan

Robert Kirtland expressed his personal support for not locating the new probation centre in Mill St and suggested Macclesfield House as an alternative location. Robert also expressed his personal support for the Oxford Brookes University Master Plan.

8. Future Meeting Dates

Sebastian Johnson alerted all members to the following future meeting dates set through until December 2010 and requested that they be put in everyone's calendars.

- Thursday 16th July 2009, 10.00 – 12.00
- Thursday 3rd September 2009, 10.00 – 12.00
- Thursday 15th October 2009, 10.00 – 12.00
- Thursday 3rd December 2009, 10.00 – 12.00
- Thursday 21st January 2010, 10.00 – 12.00
- Thursday 4th March 2010, 10.00 – 12.00
- Thursday 22nd April 2010, 10.00 – 12.00
- Thursday 3rd June 2010, 10.00 – 12.00
- Thursday 22nd July 2010, 10.00 – 12.00
- Thursday 2nd September 2010, 10.00 – 12.00
- Thursday 21st October 2010, 10.00 – 12.00
- Thursday 2nd December 2010, 10.00 – 12.00

The meeting finished at 12.00 midday.