

OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD

MINUTES of the meeting held on Monday, 26 September 2016 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 3.52 pm.

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Ian Hudspeth – in the Chair

City Councillor Bob Price (Vice-Chairman)
District Councillor Matthew Barber
District Councillor John Cotton
Councillor James F. Mills
District Councillor Barry Wood – Cherwell District Council

Also Present: Alistair Fitt, Universities Representative
Richard Venables, OXLEP Business Representative – Oxford City
David Warburton, Home and Communities Agency Representative
Nigel Tipple, Chief Executive, OXLEP
Veronica James, Environmental Agency

Officers: Adrian Duffield, Head of Planning, South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse District Council
David Edwards, Executive Director, Regeneration and Housing, Oxford City Council
Caroline Green, Assistant Chief Executive, Oxford City council
Christine Gore, Strategic Director, West Oxfordshire District Council
David Hill, Chief Executive, South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse District Council
Bev Hindle, Acting Director for Environment & Economy, Oxfordshire County Council
Paul Staines, Oxfordshire Growth Board Programme Manager
Sue Whitehead (Corporate Services, Oxfordshire County Council)

The Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with [a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting][the following additional documents:] and decided as set out below. Except as insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda and reports [agenda, reports and schedule/additional documents], copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(Agenda No. 1)

Apologies were received from Jeremy Long, Chairman of OXLEP; Phil Shadbolt, OXLEP Business Rep – Bicester; and Andrew Harrison, OXLEP Business Rep – Science Vale and Adrian Colwell, Cherwell District Council.

41 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE ON THE BACK PAGE OF THE AGENDA

(Agenda No. 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

42 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 3)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2016 were approved and signed as a correct record.

43 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Agenda No. 4)

The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that the item he had agreed as urgent business on the Strategic Economic Plan Refresh be taken following item 6.

44 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

(Agenda No. 5)

In accordance with the Public Participation Scheme, the Chairman invited individuals and groups who had requested to address the meeting or who had submitted questions to present them to the Board.

Helena Marshall. Campaign to Protect Rural England, addressed the Board in relation to agenda item 6, Post SHMA Strategic Work Programme.

Chris Henderson, Vice-Chairman, Radley Parish Council, addressed the Board in relation to agenda item 6, Post SHMA Strategic Work Programme

Sarah Hamilton-Foyn, Regional Director, Pegasus Group, addressed the Board in relation to agenda item 6, Post SHMA Strategic Work Programme

The Board received questions from the following:

Tom Rice, Planner, Barton Willmore

Stephen Fry

Dr Pam Roberts, The Save Gavrey Meadows Campaign

Helen Marshall, Director, CPRE Oxfordshire.

Fiona Newton

Helena Whall, on behalf of the coalition Need not Greed in Oxfordshire.

Phil Clark, Chief Planner, Galliard Homes Limited

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.

45 POST SHMA STRATEGIC WORK PROGRAMME

(Agenda No. 6)

The Oxfordshire Growth Board had before it a report on the findings of the Post SHMA Strategic Work Programme (the Programme), that recommended the adoption of the proposed apportionment of the unmet housing need for Oxford and approval of a Memorandum of Co-operation including both the apportionment and timetable for delivery of Oxford's unmet housing need as derived through the Programme.

Paul Staines, Growth Board Programme Manager, in introducing the contents of the report stressed that the areas of search identified were not to be taken as proposed for development sites but were, as made clear in the report and appendix, evidence of Districts' ability to meet part of Oxford's unmet housing need. He explained the chronology of the Programme and how Officers had arrived at the recommendations in the report and finally set out the recommendations. He highlighted adherence to the set of 5 principles drawn up by leaders and the Board as guidance for the programme as evidence of its successful conclusion.

Councillor Cotton, Leader, South Oxfordshire District Council indicated that he had a long list of questions covering the detail in the report that he would send separately to officers for them to respond to but that at the meeting he wanted to raise some issues.

On transportation he queried whether officers were aware of the bias towards areas of deprivation. He also queried the lower score for transport of the Culham site, which was adjacent to a station, when compared to Grenoble Road, asking whether its scoring under the heading of accessibility to Oxford was correct.

On jobs a lot of weight had been given to the proximity to jobs. However he noted that these were existing jobs and he queried what effort had been made to identify future growth in jobs. He queried where the 5 key employment sites in the City were and he further queried how many jobs were associated with them over what period. Bev Hindle responded that existing jobs was the basis of the assessment since we were examining proximity to existing nodes of employment rather than new sites that might come forward.

On education Councillor Cotton suggested that the information provided was not transparent and that it would be good to see it school by school. He questioned the information sitting behind the assessment/scoring suggesting that it was based on misinformation about the long term capacity of sites. Bev Hindle, responded to the concerns commenting that there was a balance between current need and potential.

Councillor Cotton also questioned the density figures quoted for Oxford which he felt were incorrect and that current density was lower than quoted. He also referred to criteria that underpinned the assessment of their areas of search considered in the Programme and questioned whether excessive weight had been given proximity to or communication lines with Universities Bev Hindle indicated that the Executive Officers Group had felt that the weighting given was correct. They had not consulted with the Universities as proximity to or access to university facilities is a matter of fact.

Councillor Cotton remained unconvinced that every option had been pursued for meeting the need in Oxford and highlighted the greyhound site referred to by one of the earlier speakers as a site that could potentially accommodate housing that then need not be provided by the rural districts. He concluded that without such certainty he was unable to support adding to South Oxfordshire County Council's existing high housing need figure. He would therefore be unable to sign the Memorandum of Cooperation. However he stressed that nonetheless he would continue to co-operate and discussions would continue.

During further discussion the remaining members of the Growth Board generally supported the recommendations and agreed to sign the Memorandum of Co-operation. They recognised its importance as a vehicle in order to demonstrate their compliance with the Duty to Co-operate and that it was important in order to progress Local Plans. They highlighted all the work that had gone into the final report. It was emphasised that the sites set out in the document were indicative, were not intended to propose, suggest or even infer where housing should be developed and that the decision on where housing was to be provided lay with the District Councils as the Local Planning Authorities through their Local Plans. Councillor Barber proposed an amendment, to the Memorandum of Cooperation which was seconded and agreed, to make this clear.

Following a vote, by a show of hands, it was:

RESOLVED: (by 5 votes for to 1 against) to:

- (a) approve the apportionment of the agreed working figure for the unmet housing need for Oxford, in the interest of complying with the Duty to Co-operate;
- (b) approve the attached Memorandum of Co-operation setting out the apportionment and timetable for delivery of the unmet housing need for Oxford, subject to the following addition as a new 3.6 to Section 3:

3.6 The Programme does not identify, propose, recommend or seek to identify, propose or recommend any site or sites for additional housing within any district. Each LPA will remain responsible for the allocation of housing sites within its own district and through its own Local Plan process.

N.B In light of the vote officers were authorised to make such minor editing changes to reflect that South Oxfordshire District Council will not be signing the Memorandum of Cooperation.

- (c) formally recommend the approved apportionment to each of the Oxfordshire Local Planning Authorities for consideration in the preparation of their Local Plans, in the interest of meeting the objectively assessed housing needs for Oxfordshire.

46 URGENT BUSINESS - STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN

(Agenda No. 9)

The Chairman had agreed that this item be considered as an item of urgent business in that it had always been the intention to review the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) at this meeting but it was left off the original agenda due to an administrative oversight.

Nigel Tipple, Chief Executive OXLEP, gave a presentation on the refreshed SEP, setting out the factors that influenced the refresh, the vision, programmes and priorities and the consultation and engagement process.

Members highlighted concerns that had been raised by District Councils during their consideration of the SEP refresh. Nigel Tipple confirmed that feedback would be consolidated in the final document although substantive items may need to be considered by the LEP Board.

RESOLVED: to note and endorse the Strategic Economic Plan.

47 GROWTH BOARD WORK PROGRAMME REVIEW

(Agenda No. 7)

The Board was invited to consider key areas of focus for the future work programme of the Board and to charge officers with bringing back detailed proposals to the November meeting. The Board agreed that the work streams highlighted in the reports appendix should be addressed and in addition it was proposed by Councillor Barber, seconded and:

RESOLVED:

- (a) Following the publication of the PwC and Grant Thornton reports on local government in Oxfordshire it is clear that there are several areas where joint working may help us realise significant savings and improvements of public services. A working group should be established including Chief Executives and Leaders of local authorities, CCG and LEP to explore how these transformational changes can be progressed in areas including, but not exclusively: infrastructure, skills, economic development, strategic spatial planning, public assets, business rates, health and social care. The working group will investigate, but will not be restricted to reviewing the future function of the Oxfordshire Growth Board and to consider the feasibility of establishing a combined authority for Oxfordshire; and
- (b) The Oxfordshire CCG should be invited to become a non-voting member of the Growth Board from our next meeting.

48 OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

(Agenda No. 8)

The Board considered its Work Programme.

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RESOLVED: to note the Work Programme and to ask officers to facilitate a meeting with partners in respect to a commitment to secure apprenticeships through planning gain and legal agreements and to a facilitation of that by the CDC owned Apprenticeships Training Agency (ATA) and to report back.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing

2016