

## **Appendix One – Action plan update against each of the actions**

Updates provided by lead officers

### **Element One**

Expanding Oxford's knowledge economy: frameworks for key sector growth using the global connections of Oxford's universities and major/large employers to attract new companies, and promote new start-ups

Recommended Actions:

- Develop a clear assessment of the growth potential of the principal growth sectors, incorporating existing and planned research, defining inward investment and marketing plans, and identifying the key sites and infrastructure requirements for each sector. From this an integrated delivery strategy and action plan should be developed.
- Ensure there is a clear strategy and delivery plan agreed by partners for each of the major city employment sites.

### Action - Work with existing Business Networks to encourage and enable networking opportunities

Business Engagement Strategy: A bid for LGA Funding (£7,000) was successful to appoint consultants (Shared Intelligence) to undertake a project to develop a business engagement framework, which includes a proposals to create a 'Voice for Oxford' and an Account Management System. As part of this programme of work the consultants carried out research to establish a Top 100 companies and businesses in Oxford based on agreed set criteria. A final report on this project will be presented to the Economic Growth Steering Group on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2014, with key recommendations proposed. In meantime significant work has already been undertaken to engage with business, which has included Business breakfast events; B4 Event; 1.2.1 meetings and Leaders Discussion.

Tom Morris, Oxford City Council

### **Element Two**

Supporting the growth of existing employers including large, global companies, high value small and medium sized enterprise, the universities, and the health care sector.

**Recommended Actions:**

- Review and expand the choice and supply of accommodation for start-up and spin –out businesses in the city.
  - Establish a key account management function for key business clients on business growth and retention for those businesses who are supportive and build effective liaison with the wider business community using existing arrangements to avoid duplication.
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- A Strategic Employment Land Availability Assessment (SELAA) was completed and published in April 2013. This provided a detailed assessment of the amount of employment land currently available within the City, comprising both major sites together with small and medium sized sites. This included all key employment sites allocated in the Core Strategy, Sites and Housing, and West End AAP along with Protected Employment sites and outstanding planning permissions. Value: Provides an up to date assessment of employment land availability which can provide evidence to inform future decisions on City Deal, Economic Growth Strategy and Strategic Economic Plan.
  - A list of the Top 20 major development sites, comprising employment, housing and retail schemes has been prepared. Value: Provides a useful assessment of the range of different development sites coming forward in the immediate future, which can offer a useful context for economic growth, infrastructure and indeed transport proposals. This list can be used to quantify the amount and type of jobs likely to be generated in the future and provide a basis for matching job requirements with local skills required to meet this opportunity.
  - Starter Unit Review Report: Prepared in November 2013 and provided the first accurate assessment of the amount, type, range and occupancy levels of accommodation in Oxford. Value: The study provided an important baseline assessment to consider in detail the existing supply, demand and barriers for increasing the amount of units and where it could be secured. Amongst its recommendations highlights key shortages within the City, particularly within the City centre and put forward proposals for increasing the supply of accommodation. The evidence in this report provided a useful background context within which to support the proposal for new ‘serviced office accommodation’ to be provided in the Town Hall; which has now been secured in principle. It shows the City Council and its partners are keen to promote start-ups in Oxford, and are taking positive measures to achieve this aim.
  - Business Engagement Strategy: A bid for LGA Funding (£7,000) was successful to appoint consultants (Shared Intelligence) to undertake a project to develop a business engagement framework, which includes a proposals to create a ‘Voice for Oxford’ and an Account Management System. As part of this programme of work the consultants carried out research to establish a Top 100 companies and businesses in Oxford based on agreed set criteria. A final report on this project will be presented to the Economic Growth Steering Group on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2014, with key recommendations proposed. In meantime significant work has already been undertaken to engage with business, which has included Business breakfast events; B4 Event; 1.2.1 meetings and Leaders Discussion.

Tom Morris, Oxford City Council

**Element Three**

Ensuring a sufficient supply of employment land.

## Recommended Actions:

- Undertake a county-wide review of employment land requirements, including taking into account the needs of existing businesses and the requirements of Oxford's key growth sectors.
  - Build a clear delivery plan for each of the major city employment sites both inside the City's boundaries, and with the relevant District Council and owners, for those sites near Oxford. The Delivery Plan will set out the key stages required to be carried out to 'unlock' these sites and ensure their timely development.
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- A Strategic Employment Land Availability Assessment (SELAA) was completed and published in April 2013. This provided a detailed assessment of the amount of employment land currently available within the City, comprising both major sites together with small and medium sized sites. This included all key employment sites allocated in the Core Strategy, Sites and Housing, and West End AAP along with Protected Employment sites and outstanding planning permissions. Value: Provides an up to date assessment of employment land availability which can provide evidence to inform future decisions on City Deal, Economic Growth Strategy and Strategic Economic Plan.
  - As part of the work on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) some economic forecasting was undertaken by SQW for Oxford and all the other Districts within the housing market area. This has produced some important findings that highlight the significant economic growth and new jobs that will be created in the City to 2030. In addition it shows the need for Oxford to provide the necessary housing to accommodate the local workers required to fill these jobs.
  - Consultants have prepared some background evidence to explore the potential sites available to accommodate future employment and housing growth adjacent to Oxford as part of any future Green Belt Review.
  - The City Deal and more recently the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) identifies some major sites in Oxford, such as the Northern Gateway and the BioEscalator, where future funding on infrastructure and transport should be directed to drive forward economic growth.

Tom Morris, Oxford City Council

The Northern Gateway is a strategic development site allocated for employment use with housing in the Core Strategy. The City Council has decided to produce an AAP for the site to add another level of detail to the Core Strategy allocation and to proactively shape the future development. The first stage in the AAP process was to produce and consult on the Options Document which sets out the range of possibilities for future planning policies. This was published in January 2014 and consultation held between 14<sup>th</sup> February and 28<sup>th</sup> March. Over 430

groups and individuals responded to the consultation. We are currently analysing the responses and will be publishing a report of the consultation responses shortly; at the same time we are continuing to investigate a range of technical areas including transport and access. Using the consultation responses and the background evidence we will be drafting planning policies for a draft AAP in July 2014. The draft AAP will be published for another period of consultation over the summer, before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in the Autumn. In addition we are continuing to meet and work with partners and stakeholders to progress the wider Northern Gateway project in a timely manner including for example applying for and securing funding towards the sites significant infrastructure requirements.

Rachel Williams, Oxford City Council

Funding has been secured for both the Begbroke Accelerator and BioEscalator through the City Deal and through matched funding from the University. The BioEscalator will be sharing a single plot on the Park Hospital site with the proposed Amenities building, as the two functions have some complementary activities. Detailed proposals for both buildings are now being worked up, and are being progressed appropriately through the planning process.

Stuart Wilkinson, University of Oxford

Oxpens – SPD adopted in November 2013; Landowner discussions ongoing

Station Gateway Redevelopment – Tripartite of City, County and Network Rail; Draft Master Plan prepared by consultants following stakeholder engagement; Launch July 2014

Westgate Shopping Centre – Outline planning achieved; Reserve matters application August 2014; Construction work to commence January 2015 with completion in 2017

Fiona Piercy, City/County Council

City of Oxford College has commenced the redevelopment of its city centre campus to create a new £6m complex, which will bring together a new fitness suite, hair and beauty salons together with a cafe, gallery, function room and outside space fronting the river. Work is now well underway by the contractor, Kingerlee, and students enrolling on courses starting this September will be among the first to benefit. All facilities will be open to the public, with the salons and gym opening during the evening, weekends and holidays in line with other commercial operations.

The Activate Learning group has been awarded a £1m grant to create a £3m Technology and Innovation Centre at its City of Oxford College campus in Blackbird Leys. The project will create new buildings and refurbish existing facilities at Blackbird Leys to provide an engineering centre complete with learning zones, workshops and modern design and fabrication spaces. The facilities have been designed to meet the skills and training needs of local STEM employers, identified as a priority by the Local Enterprise Partnership in Oxfordshire. The centre will also support training for construction trades by providing improved facilities for emerging green technologies. It is anticipated that the centre will lead to the creation of 60 new apprenticeship places, and 60 new full-time programme places in engineering and new technologies. The centre will also increase the provision of part-time professional courses in the local area, to help meet the skills needs of existing employees and employers. Now that funding has been agreed, Activate Learning will be submitting a planning application for the centre with a view to starting work in the summer. It is hoped that the centre will be up and running by September 2015. This project is a dual phase delivery, phase one as above with phase two expected to commence in 2015 for a 2016 completion date. It will completely transform the Blackbird Leys site to become Oxfordshire Centre for Technology and Innovation subject to securing the necessary funding

City of Oxford College invited local employers to a business breakfast on Friday 2 May so they could find out about the college's plans to launch a Career College in Construction at the Blackbird Leys campus. A career college is a specialist vocational training centre for students aged 14 to 19. Vocational training, which is created in partnership with employers from industry, is delivered alongside core subjects. Career colleges exist within established FE colleges, and City of Oxford College plans to launch one for construction in 2015.

UTC Oxfordshire is proposed to open in Didcot in September 2015 with 140 places for girls and boys in Year 10 and Year 12 and will eventually grow to 600 students aged 14 to 19 - specialising in life sciences, physical sciences and advanced engineering. 15 mile catchment area including Oxfordshire, Newbury, Reading, Aylesbury and West Wycombe and supported by leading local employers to offer specialist learning and employer accreditation. Key Stage 4 curriculum (Years 10 and 11) – core GCSEs and options to include additional GCSEs and BTEC qualifications – and Key Stage 5 options (Years 12 and 13) – A-levels, BTEC qualifications, specialist learning and a strong emphasis on leadership and employability skills with clear progression for all students into higher education, further education, employment and apprenticeships

Ian Francis, City of Oxford College

Oxford Brookes University officially opened the Abercrombie extension in June 2013. The Abercrombie Extension is the first stage of the University's Headington campus redevelopment, with the John Henry Brookes Building having its phased opening during 2013/2014. The

Abercrombie Extension, which has been in use since July 2012, is particularly focused on the needs of built environment students. The open-plan work areas encourage close working, collaboration and idea sharing between disciplines and year groups.

In February 2014 the John Henry Brookes Building was opened and has won the RIBA South Architectural Awards Building of the Year and Sustainability Award. The building will now be considered for the RIBA Sterling Prize. The John Henry Brookes and Abercrombie Buildings are designed to meet the University's vision for a holistic approach to enhancing the student experience. Oxford Brookes' campus redevelopment provides an adaptable and flexible environment for a dynamic range of teaching and learning spaces.

Department for Education (DfE) officially gave the UTC Swindon, of which Oxford Brookes University is a co-sponsor the green light in 2013. The announcement will see a £10m capital investment with which to construct the University Technical College's home in the heart of Swindon's rail centre. The UTC Swindon is aiming to open in September 2014.

#### **Element Four**

Strengthening Oxford's city centre retailing offer.

Recommended Actions:

- Use the proposed Westgate redevelopment as a catalyst to raise the quality and range of the retail offer, including investment in public spaces, transport and environment.
- Support and revitalise the independent retail offer where this is practical.

All actions, dates, milestones, outputs and outcomes to be reviewed when the new City Centre Manager comes into post in July 2014. Change in focus and timeline on some actions has occurred as a result of other initiatives and the resource limitations with no city centre manager in post. Key points of update are:

*Improve accessibility to city centre retail offer for customers from outside the city* - this has changed from an Oxford focus to the Science Transit proposal within City Deal, and taken on life as a transport only project. Suggest could refocus on 'Oxford open for business' initiative during construction of Westgate. This Action needs to await the start of the new City Centre Manager in July 14.

*Develop a comprehensive public realm enhancement plan* - this always was a slow burner. In the absence of a City Centre Manager since January there has been no action. There are smaller public realm proposals relating to Westgate and its more immediate environs. Suggest leave in action plan but indicate longer term project, albeit still relevant and of greater potential if SEP emerges as a possible source of capital funding.

*Develop the evening economy retail and leisure offer* - a bid is to be made this month to retain the Purple Flag accreditation, but in the absence of a City Centre Manager since January no progress has been made. This Action needs to await the start of the new City Centre Manager in July 14. Suggest leave in action plan but indicate that the city centre will not change until after the opening of the new Westgate in Autumn 2017 which itself have much longer trading to which the rest of the city centre will want to respond.

*BID and/or micro BIDs* - this is something that can only progress if lead by the private sector. The Town team has not been able to make any progress on this, which must follow on from its other priority initiatives. Suggest leave in Action Plan but indicate this is relevant to a much later phase, once other initiatives have been implemented.

*Covered Market strategic review* - the review is complete. There has been consultation of the consultants' report. The City Council's City Executive Board has received a report and as a result the City Council has recruited a Covered Market Manager, who is due to start work soon. Suggest this can be 'closed'

*'Oxford Local' initiative to provide direct support to independent retailers* - Oxford participated in Small Business Saturday last Autumn, with a number of offers of support for local independents. Not much enthusiasm or take up it must be said. Suggest that this can be closed as despite a lot of trying no real interest shown by independents. Alternative would be to leave in Action Plan but indicate awaiting interest from independents before resurrected

*Improve the quality and distribution of footfall by seeking to attract more 'county/high value' shoppers and by encouraging shoppers/visitors into lower footfall retail areas* - the launch of Christmas in Nov 13 was accompanied by a three day 'event' but a subsequent appraisal of the

event has agreed that in 2014 this needs to be different and scaled back. The out-going City Centre Manager has prepared a discussion paper. This Action needs to await the start of the new City Centre Manager in July 14. Suggest leave in Action Plan but indicate two elements. One is the arrival of new Westgate. Two is possible joint Culture Service and Town Team initiatives to publicise a series of events through the year.

Michael Crofton-Briggs, Oxford City Council

### Element Five

Expanding the value of Oxford's tourism across the region.

Recommended Actions:

- Build on the success of Visit Oxfordshire, the Destination Management Organisation and extend the tourism and cultural offer and event calendar.
- Focus attention on increasing the quality of the tourism offer and driving up standards across the sector.
- Extend the range of tourist accommodation, in particular hotels, to support extended trips and visitor expenditure across the region.

- **Development of a Destination Management Plan for Oxford and Oxfordshire**

In January the Board of Experience Oxfordshire approved a 3 year business plan, incorporating the organisation's approach to developing Oxfordshire as a visitor destination in partnership with businesses, local authorities and other organisations. The plan has been informed by extensive discussions with businesses and local authorities, has been tested against guidance from Visit England, and forms the basis of a Destination Management Plan for Oxfordshire.

Next steps are to confirm the detail of partnership arrangements with rural district councils, and to raise awareness of the Plan and Experience Oxfordshire's ambitions with businesses and partners.

- **Increasing the number of quality hotel rooms in and around the city**

Sites coming forward and or investment in the hotel market include the following:

- Planning permission was granted at Tyndale House, Cowley Road for the conversion of a former office building to a hotel (66 beds) for Travelodge in this District centre location. It is however understood that the proposed operator is now unlikely to implement this permission;
- A recent planning application for the demolition of an existing building and erection of a new hotel (Travelodge) comprising 83 bedrooms on three floors has been allowed on appeal at the former UK Bathroom warehouse site, in Abingdon Road, Oxford, which is an out-of-centre location;
- Planning permission had been granted for an 87 bedroomed hotel on land adjacent to the Priory public house on Grenoble Road in Littlemore, which is an out-of-centre location. The City Council as Local Planning Authority have accepted that construction work has started and therefore that the permission is valid. Progress however has not proceeded any further at this stage.
- The Oshmanti Group has received planning permission to convert 15-19 George Street in the City centre into a 40 bedroomed 4 / 5 star hotel.
- Planning permission was recently granted at the Eastgate Hotel, City centre for an extension to add 12 bedrooms and upgrade this 4 star hotel.
- A significant refurbishment has been undertaken by the operator of the Old Parsonage in St. Giles / Banbury Road, City centre, principally to improve both the standard and quality of this boutique style accommodation;
- There are potential additions to the supply of hotel accommodation likely to come from the Oxpens site, in the City centre, which now has approved Supplementary Planning Guidance that proposes the inclusion of a new hotel;
- There is some early master planning work that has been undertaken by consultants for the redevelopment of the Oxford Station site, in the City centre. This includes the potential opportunity for a further hotel.

- **To increase number of overnight stays (from visits)**

Measured by an annual visitor economic impact assessment, the latest of which is for 2012. Headline County results:

2,603,000 staying trips (domestic & overseas), an increase of 1.4% compared to 2011;

In total, £609,621,000 spent by staying visitors on their trip, an increase of 4.0% compared to 2011

- **Business Tourism – Improving the awareness of Oxford as a conference destination (link to inward investment)**

Experience Oxfordshire, through its ‘Meet Oxfordshire’ activity continues to bring together businesses to invest in collaborative destination marketing activity. Recent activity has included a new collaboration with B4 to produce and distribute The Venues Guide 2014. A new website is planned for summer 2014, and regional meetings organisers are being invited to:

**Summer Showcase Spectacular**, Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August, 3-7pm. Said Business School - please come along.

- **MICE review – review Oxfordshire’s position in the market and identity gaps in city provision**

Not progressed to date. First steps will be to scope and cost the work required.

- **Review visitor information provision alongside city development plans**

Coach parking and pre-arrival coach information and communication improvements are under consideration by the City and Experience Oxfordshire. The city’s mobile website to aid city centre navigation and how content and visitor usage might be increased is under discussion by the City and Experience Oxfordshire.

Giles Ingram, Experience Oxfordshire

### **Element Six**

Continuing to improve educational and skills attainment to support future economic growth opportunities.

#### Recommended Actions:

- Extend current initiatives to raise schools attainment and to bring greater co-ordination to the existing education/business initiatives, University volunteering schemes and relevant voluntary sector programmes to scale up support for schools (e.g. STEM engagement).
- Work with schools to improve employability skills amongst leavers, to ensure that they are better equipped for the world of work.
- Review with the business sector whether there is the potential to sustain a stronger apprenticeship and skills programmes across the city and county to expand existing initiatives. Link this with the OSP development programme to support and develop employability for young people and adults who are currently excluded from the workforce.

Work is continuing through the a number of programmes through the Skills Board and locally through the “Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation” and “Back to Work” Groups on work with schools to improve employability skills amongst leavers, to ensure that they are better equipped for

the world of work. And also on review with the business sector to sustain stronger apprenticeship and skills programmes across the city and county to expand existing initiatives.

#### Educational Attainment

- Evaluation of literacy project to be completed 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014. In depth review of programme delivery to be undertaken between June and November 2014
- Outcome targets: 95% achieving level 2 in Reading at age 7; and 84% achieving Level 4 in English and Maths at age 11 by 2016/17
- Housing scheme agreed with Catalyst: will be operational on approval from Financial Conduct Authority
- Digital inclusion project with schools in partnership with Internet Institute, University of Oxford – target of up to 50 students to benefit
- Improving links between schools and businesses by sponsoring the BiTC Business Class Project in 6 City Schools

A review has been undertaken to look at how unemployed people (younger and older age groups) can access the opportunities created by physical regeneration schemes supported by Oxford City Council, such as the Westgate development, Barton and the Northern Gateway. This has included interviews with developers, builders, colleges and the job clubs, with an aim to strengthen the referral processes to training and employment opportunities. City and County Council are running an event in partnership on 12th June to try and encourage SME's to recruit apprentices

Val Johnson, Anna Wright, Steve Northey, Neil Holman, Oxford City Council

#### **Element Seven**

Increasing the annual rate of housing development in locations which are easily accessible to the city centre and other main employment areas by cycle, bus, and rail.

#### Recommended Actions:

- Review the city housing requirement in the context of the forthcoming county-wide assessment to seek to reduce the burden of in-commuting, and improve the city housing-employment balance.
- Develop with adjoining District and County Councils, through SPIP, a set of compacts sharing the benefits and costs (under the Duty to Co-operate) to address the requirements of regional economic growth.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published in its final form in March 2014 and the Milestones section has been updated to reflect this. Since then, the Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP) have been trying to agree next steps in the process. A key step is to understand the capacity of Oxford against its Objectively Assessed Need as set out in the SHMA. The City Council are progressing with their SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) which will be reviewed by independent consultants. This will help determine the level of unmet need in Oxford. Under the Duty to Co-operate, the Oxfordshire authorities will need to co-operate effectively and work in partnership to address this strategic planning issue. The Actions, Milestones and Outputs have been adjusted to reflect the SHLAA workstream.

Laura Goddard, Oxford City Council

### **Element Eight**

Ensuring continuing investment in broadband infrastructure.

#### Recommended Actions

- Work with the Better Broadband initiative to enhance broadband provision across the county, including the wider connections between Oxford's research infrastructure and the Enterprise Zone.
- Deliver the Super Connected Cities Programme to further enhance the competitiveness of the city region in the knowledge economy.

Joint working, led by the City Council with the County Council, Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) and the two universities, is taking place under the steer of the Oxford Super Connected City Project Board. Key achievements and deliverables to date include:

- Confirmation that Government allocated just under £5m to the Oxford project - £3.1m vouchers; £1.5m wireless concession; £0.23 wireless on public transport
- In January 2014 we negotiated funding for a new project – wireless hotspots in free to enter public buildings. BDUK agreed to wire £530k and £325k secured from the Local Enterprise Partnership Growing Places Fund.
- Broadband Voucher Connection Scheme launched in Oxford in March 2014 - <https://www.connectionvouchers.co.uk/oxford/> and online application form launched following month - <http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decB/BroadbandConnectionVouchers.htm>. Low take up of vouchers across the 22 cities taking part. Six vouchers issued in Oxford as at 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2014. Marketing and demand stimulation activities continuing
- Mott MacDonald engaged to provide specialist advice and expertise on delivery of the wireless projects.

- Contract with one of Oxford's bus companies to be signed in June 2014 and wireless to be provided on all their buses operating in the Oxford Smart Zone by January 2015
- Procurement for wireless hotspots (including University of Oxford and other partners eligible buildings) due to commence in June 2014 with delivery by March 2015
- Procurement for wireless concession due to commence in July 2014 with delivery by March 2015
- The Oxfordshire Better Broadband Programme is working to extend better coverage of broadband across Oxfordshire, including some exchanges in and around the city, beyond the reach of commercially-funded deployments. Signed an initial contract with BT in August 2013 to extend fibre enabled broadband to at least 90% of Oxfordshire premises by the end of 2015, together with a Universal Service Commitment of at least 2Mbps for any premises not getting the higher-speeds enabled by the investment in fibre-based broadband. County Council reports good progress with the deployment of this contract and are ahead of the projected milestones. Recently secured additional public funding to further extend better broadband across Oxfordshire with the aim of increasing coverage to 95% by 2017. In order to efficiently deploy this additional funding, County Council intend to call-off additional coverage from the existing BT contract, and/or procure a separate contract(s). As part of this new process, County Council are now commencing an Open Market Review (OMR) to establish existing and planned (next 3 years) commercial coverage of broadband services in Oxfordshire by all existing, and any prospective, broadband infrastructure providers.

Sebastian Johnson and Gerrard Barker, Oxford City Council

### **Element Nine**

Addressing the environmental challenges and opportunities presented by economic growth.

#### Recommended Actions:

- Develop a more strategic framework (city and region) to address and join up projects as well as increase involvement of the private sector in key areas such as energy and waste management.
- Identify with the universities, LEP and partners, applied research which could be developed on a practical scale to deliver low carbon solutions in the city and across the region.

**Develop a more strategic framework to link projects and increase involvement of private sector**

- **To consolidate and develop the Low Carbon Oxford partnership to meet 40% carbon reduction by 2020 target**

Low Carbon Oxford programme management is being delivered by Low Carbon Hub for 2014-15. In this year outputs will include an update on the development of the partnership. A scoping exercise will be carried out to consider the carbon emissions of the partnership however it is possible that this will require additional funding to be carried out.

In its capacity as a pathfinder, the county council has funded a Low Carbon Oxford project with the University of Oxford to undertake a review of Oxfordshire's Low Carbon Economy and the opportunity for growth in this sector. This report will be launched at VentureFest in July 2014.

The city council will work with the Low Carbon Hub in summer 2014 on the forward plan for Low Carbon Oxford in future years. This work will run in parallel with scoping the future of the OxFutures project and setting out a well-defined scope and relationship for both initiatives.

- **To drive forward Green Deal Plus task force to network supply chain, community, commercial companies and promote delivery of retrofit for carbon reduction in Oxford**

Through the OxFutures European funding, the Warming Barton project has installed external wall insulation on 16 houses in Barton and a further 9 are expected to be installed pending confirmed finance. Despite this success the national policy framework (Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation (ECO)) have proven to be incredibly difficult to access finance for targeted communities. In addition to the complex nature of ECO and its failure to fully fund measures, Government policy changes every few months making it even harder to act as a trusted broker for householders. A funding gap has been met for Barton from the Low Carbon Hub's funds and the City Council's fuel poverty fund for 2013-14. This is clear not a sustainable or scalable way to deliver these projects.

While there is value in maintaining links to the local Green Deal supply chain (i.e. energy efficiency installers and assessors), the OxFutures programme will no longer fund delivery of domestic retrofit programmes based on ECO or Green Deal finance. The Low Carbon Hub has used some of the OxFutures finance development budget to develop an alternative model for domestic retrofit delivery and finance. This is in the early stages of development and they will take this forward independently of council/EU funding.

- **Establish the OxFutures Fund to mobilise private & public sector investment in renewable energy and retrofitting projects**

Low Carbon Hub is near to completing an investment and contract readiness process to develop its finance/business models to secure up to £5m of investment for a revolving construction finance fund which will support projects delivered through its Community Benefit Model (e.g. community projects, business solar pv roof and solar schools projects). The City Council's Executive Board is meeting on June 11<sup>th</sup> to consider whether the city council will provide a £2.3m loan facility to this fund.

### **Identify with the Universities, LEP and partners applied research projects to deliver low carbon solutions**

- **To support Low Carbon Oxford in the initial development of a scheme to nurture local low carbon/clean technology start-up businesses.**

Unfortunately the Low Carbon Hub/Oxfordshire County Council bid for EU funding to deliver a scheme to support 'clean tech' start-up businesses was unsuccessful. However strong relationships have been built with the LEP and the Low Carbon Oxford project officer is now working with the LEP on the strategy for delivering EU SIF, 20% of which is required to be spent on low carbon projects. Innovation is central to the LEP's strategy and so low carbon/clean technology business support is likely to be a major part of its EU delivery.

- **To develop and implement an approach for heritage buildings to play their role in low carbon reduction**

Following the DECC Pioneer Places heritage sustainable assessment, and further development working with the Centre for Sustainable Energy, a tool kit for heritage buildings has been published and Oxford City Council employees have delivered presentations as part of CSE's promotion of the work. The tool helps to assess the heritage value as well as suitable energy efficiency opportunities for a building. An internal presentation to city council planners is also in preparation to ensure we are making the best use of the outcomes of the project.

- **To identify and take forward projects for District Heating (ie. West End, Regeneration areas, Blackbird Leys)**

A successful bid to DECC's Heat Network Delivery Unit (HNDU) has funded a strategic review of Oxford city area's opportunities for heat networks. This will provide clarity on the highest priority opportunities and it is expected that we will use this as the basis for an application in upcoming funding rounds from HNDU.

Mairi Brookes | OxFutures Programme Manager  
Environmental Development | Oxford City Council

**Element Ten**

Investing in the physical infrastructure and transport required to enable economic growth.

**Recommended Actions:**

- Ensure that infrastructure and transport strategies for the city centre and the wider city are comprehensive and supported by investment and delivery plans.
  - Use the strategic enhancements to the rail services and the redevelopment of Oxford station as a catalyst for central area regeneration (City centre, Frideswide Square and Oxpens) and mixed use development to create employment and residential opportunities.
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- We will incorporate appropriate and relevant infrastructure projects and actions that are emerging from the work relating to the City Deal bid
  - Links to some of the priorities and actions relating the university, education, high tech and innovation sector support (element one), also emerging key projects for the City Deal bid

Although some items were delayed due to being overtaken by events, there are other projects, e.g. Oxford City Cycling Strategy, that have continued apace. Also, Freight Consolidation Study and Cowley Branch Line feasibility studies have recently been commissioned and CIL priority list currently being updated.

On 4<sup>th</sup> June it was announced that Atkins has been appointed to undertake the Oxford Transport Strategy commission – the OTS will pull together strategies for the city centre, North Oxford, and the Eastern Arc (principally Headington and Cowley) and provide an over-arching framework covering the whole city. Building on Connecting Oxfordshire, the strategy will be split into two parts: 2014 – 2020 and 2020 – 2035. This will allow the strategy to reflect the level of ambition set by Councillor Hudspeth’s vision and respond to the long term challenges facing the county, whilst providing a more detailed short and medium term strategic framework and evidence base for transport in the city.

I suggest that the infrastructure programme needs a complete refresh and that future updates could be synchronised with the work of the City and County Core Officers Group and the update information collected once.

General updates:

- City Deal signed January 2014 – Northern Gateway and Hinksey Interchange
- Local Growth Fund business cases submitted May 2014 – City Centre and Station projects now part of SEP LGF bid
- Frideswide Square Scheme approved, enabling works due to start in September 2014
- Access to Headington baseline report completed April 2014
- Cycling Strategy part 1 completed June 2014
- North Oxford Transport Study (NOTS) completed June 2014
- Overall OTS delayed due to work on Westgate, City Deal and LGF now due to be completed September 2014
- Final Report of Station master plan and bid for LGF submitted May 2014

Tom Flanagan, Oxfordshire County Council

### **Element Eleven**

Securing an effective partnership for implementation and ‘single team’ delivery.

Recommended Actions:

- Create a single City-County-Universities executive – with LEP resources as appropriate -- to take responsibility for ensuring the delivery of each of the elements of this Economic Growth Strategy. This would result in a visible ‘step change’ in partnership working.
- Develop a clear proposition for a single executive serving the LEP and SPIP to implement a measurable ‘step change’ in integrated partnership working across the city and regional partnerships and institutions, which if successful, will move towards a ‘single team’ delivery in driving employment and growth.

The priority actions referenced in this strategy will only succeed if the City Council is able to exert leadership and influence, with priority actions delivered with the support of a solid evidence base.

The Oxfordshire LEP is emerging as a key partner for delivery of economic growth for the City: The Autumn Statement 2012 included the first part of government's response to Lord Heseltine's Report, No Stone Unturned – in pursuit of economic growth. Through this route, government announced a greatly increased role for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) which will be resourced in part through £10m of capacity funding for which individual LEPs will need to bid.

There have been a number of emerging priorities which the LEP has taken a lead role, noticeably: the finalisation of the City Deal; the preparation of the Strategic Economic Plan for the LEP area and the development of an EU Structural Funds Investment Strategy. Each of these has involved a 'virtual team' drawn from across partner organisation in the County.

Whilst the 'virtual task and finish groups' assembled to develop the LEP strategies were acceptable there is still considerable capacity building and establishment of stronger governance structures within the LEP to be done before joint delivery teams can be established.

Whilst the LEP is building its role and capacity it will be essential that the OSP and City council maintain their positions to offer continuity and focus for growth in the City

Element 11 of the Growth Strategy will be reconsidered in 12 months

Robert Hetherington, Oxford City Council