

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF JOINT OSB/
 BUSINESS SUPPORT SUB-GROUP
 Tuesday 21st May 2024
 Microsoft TEAMS Virtual Meeting
 4:00pm – 6:00pm**

PRESENT

NAME	POSITION AND ORGANISATION	MEMBERSHIP
OSB		
Richard Byard	Director of Business Development, OxLEP	Chair
Richard Kennell	Chief Executive Officer, SOFEA	Member
Kate Berman	Director, Olamalu	Member
Nico Decourt	Head of Educational Partnerships, Oxford Brookes	Member
James Gilpin	DWP Oxfordshire Jobcentre Plus	Member's Deputy
Mark Vingoe	Chief Executive Officer, The Engineering Trust	Member
Eddy McDowall	Executive Director, Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers	Member
Paul Jones	Apprenticeships Lead, Oxford Professional Education	Member
Cllr Susan Brown	Leader of Oxford City Council	Member
Claire Farrow	IDE Lead, Reaction Engines Ltd	Member
Neil Brookes	Group Executive Director, Activate Learning	Member
Business Support Sub-Group		
Su Copeland	Priddy Marketing	Member
Stephen Clarke	Cherwell College	Member
Grant Hayward	OSEP	Member
Dr Olga Kozlova	University of Oxford	Member
Peter McLintock	Mills Reeves	Member
Tagore Ramoutar	IOD Oxfordshire SME & Start Up Ambassador	Member

IN ATTENDANCE

Simon Grove-White	Principal Economic Development Officer, Oxford City Council	Speaker
Nayeem Miah	Economy Projects Officer, Oxford City Council	Speaker
Chris Bailey	Oxfordshire Disability Employment Adviser Lead, Department for Work and Pensions	Speaker
Helen Brind	Growth Hub Manager	OxLEP Business
Sally Andreou	Skills Hub Manager	OxLEP Skills
Sarah Marlow	Deputy Skills Hub Manager	OxLEP Skills
Sarah Penn	Social Contract Programme Coordinator	OxLEP Skills
Clayton Lavallin	Economic Development Team Leader, OCC	Associate

APOLOGIES RECEIVED

Steve Clarke	Driftway Solutions	Member
Chris Meah	CEO, School of Code	Member
Prof Ewart Keep	Director, Centre for Skills Knowledge & Organisational Performance, Oxford University	Member
Emily Manser	Dept of Business and Trade	Associate
Jessie Dobson	Partnership Youth Development Manager, OCC	

PAPERS: LMI and Business Churn Data, previously circulated.

1	RB	<p>Welcome, apologies, members' declarations of interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, apologies were noted, and no declaration of interest was raised.
2	RB	<p>Previous minutes and matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes from the previous meeting were signed off.
3	RB	<p>Chairperson's Integration Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> OxLEP continues as a separate entity and have become a Teckal company. OxLEP will continue to deliver on behalf of OCC. Non-exec directors have resigned as members of OxLEP but have maintained their non-exec directorships. A single member (OCC) is now in place. Currently in phase 2 of the transition and will be moving onto phase 3. The next phase will involve reviewing the SEP with an aim to refresh and focus on net zero. Invites to summer workshops will be issued for the review to ensure county colleagues are happy with the SEP's core principles. Aiming to take SEP to cabinet and get sign off in early autumn.
4	RB	<p>OSB/BSSG going forward</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RB opened a discussion about how the OSB/BSSG meeting should run going forward. Individuals have started questioning the value and contribution that they are having to the group. Individuals feel better interaction could be achieved by changing the meeting format. The overlap between Skills & BSSG is recognised and should not be ignored. Reverting to the dedicated business support group was a suggestion. Suggested options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate meetings 3x a year and then have 1 combined meeting. Share minutes from separate meetings to all participants for cross pollination. Individual from Skills Group attends the Business Support Group meetings and vice versa for cross pollination. Create an SME net zero subgroup? Conversations with other subgroups? Request for more face-to-face meetings. Understand how the CC want to engage going forward. Suggestions will be taken away and discussed. RB suggested the September meeting remains a joint meeting where he will come back with some ideas and options to share.
5	SGW NM	<p>Match My Project - Work Placements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simon Grove-White took a request to FOP setting out project, opportunities, and a request for funding to help take the project to the next stage. Match My Project should be added to the agenda in future when there is more to discuss. Slides to be shared.
6	AM CB	<p>Work Well Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxfordshire was not successful in the bid for this project. This was a pilot project for 15 separate areas across the UK to try and link up a variety of services in communities to support individuals with disabilities. NHS employees who submitted the bid are still keen to see what they can do in the area. Job centres have a team of disability employment advisors (DEA) that provide job centre customer support with the aim of helping an individual

		<p>move forward. DEAs also help upskill work coaches and give them disability knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris will be sharing slides which has more information and some useful links. <p>Useful link: https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-speech-on-welfare-19-april-2024#:~:text=We%27re%20proud%20to%20ensure,because%20of%20injury%20or%20illness.</p>
7	SA	<p>Skills Hub Update SA's slides will be shared.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeship awards: PJ attended the event as a sponsor. Event was positive and helps raise profile of apprenticeships and show the value that individuals can add to an organisation. Highlights video is ready and available to watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MpGBf7Ftt1k • Currently focusing on raising the profile of apprenticeships to influence government policy and support on training. • CEC work: Working with 58 schools and colleagues including SEND. • Industry and regulatory committee: SA invited to talk at House of Lords about the future of skills. SA shared work about levy, skills for business programme, no limits programme, teacher encounters and the apprenticeship bursary scheme. Lords are going to create a report where OxLEP will be contributing with evidence. • Careers hub: Investigating how to support employers to become an inclusive employer. Offering a 2-day workshop to employers. Another course will be offered later in the year. Also working on the positive destinations project, Oxfordshire horizons project and the Cornerstone Group. • Careers fest: 73 exhibitors and just under 3000 students attended from 32 schools. Exhibitors contributed £14k to pay for school coaches. • Social Contract: Levy pledge target has been smashed. Currently at £3.5m. Trying to get small businesses to utilise the levy. • No limits: working with communities most impacted by Covid. 472 people supported in the first leg of the programme. Trying to raise more funds to keep the programme going. OCC application won and South & Vale application submitted. • Skills bootcamps: still in procurement. 34 tenders received from providers. Working through these with the aim to offer contracts out on 25th of June. • Funding flexibility: Trying to see if any unspent levy money could be used elsewhere. Industry & regulators committee are looking at ways that the levy could be used flexibly. <p>Useful link: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/oxford-industrial-decarbonisation-workshop-3-funding-and-finance-tickets-881866736147?aff=oddtcreator</p>
8	HB	<p>Business Support Group Update (Growth Hub)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slides will be shared. • This is the first time the team have been able to offer a 2-year business support programme and a reminder that they offer support from prestart to scale up. • Core growth hub support - total funding available was £437k. • 2023/2024 activity with the funding granted can be seen in HB's slides. • Visitor economy grants – project finished and being closed. • Code red is a new project. Aim to help businesses become more resilient. Working with Thames valley LEPs and Bucks. HB to share detailed information about the project via email and will share the outline of the

		<p>programme. Need to think about how we communicate with Oxfordshire residents for this project, currently testing text messaging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Startup bootcamps for Ukraine nationals • Summary of business needs – ‘grown my customer base’ still has highest need. • Touching on things that have been particularly successful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business drop ins - 3 done, well received. ○ Steph Thomas did some networking do's and don'ts. ○ Startup bootcamps are successful – The AI bootcamp has been popular. ○ Launched a networking landing page. ○ Resources landing page has improved. ○ Launched business directory. • Deliverables (2-year targets) so far: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 691 businesses have gone through the business support tool. ○ 1792 business support action plans have been produced. ○ 2153 hours of support have been given. ○ 222 jobs created against target of 80. <p>Networking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OXBOOST meet monthly. Currently 280 people in the group. • 169 organisations are part of the women in business network. • Social media posts and activity following the women’s events are immense and we are getting engagement from these posts. <p>Moving forward into 24/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding will not be increased. • Activity includes: Core Growth hub delivery, west Oxfordshire business support programme, WODC grant wrap around support, code red project, Cherwell Business Support Programme (in discussion), Cherwell Grant Scheme (in discussion), made smarter adoption programme and facilitate net zero discussions/ net zero show case (no funding available on net zero). • HB will give an update on Cherwell projects once more is known. • Ambassador programme has been set up and press release will be going out soon. <p>Mentoring challenges: this is a valuable service that is not being used enough. Support is only available for pockets of Oxfordshire. Potential challenges could be the business support tool. Team to investigate tool, advisor booking section, report produced, terminology and how information is presented to see if it can be made more user friendly.</p>
9	PJ	<p>Training Provider Network (TPN)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No major updates. Quiet on policy announcement front. • Apprenticeship front: When an apprentice reaches the end of their programme there is currently a logjam (various reasons causing this). DFE looking to implement a pilot scheme focused on the end point assessment process to try and speed it up. • Training provider network meeting will be on the 26th of June. Comments and feedback for that meeting are welcome. • RB highlighted that it would be useful to get a view on what obstacles there is around the levy.
10	RB	<p>A discussion on broader Economic Development Landscape – including Devolution, AEB, Foreign Investment. What are your Key Priorities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devolution opportunity for Oxfordshire was taken forward in previous round but can be reviewed in the future <p>Open floor discussion - if we had the opportunity to enter dialogue with government around devolution, what would our asks and offers be?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding progress of other regions, can regions be more joined up? • Greater freedom and flexibility around existing funding

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making sure we get international investment right. • Biggest organisations growth barrier is lack of skills and confidence. • 5 key investment asks from fast growth cities group final report: 1. Energy 2. Infrastructure 3. Water 4. Rail 5. Transport. CL to send these across to RB https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/532/download-the-fast-growth-cities-economic-research---the-case-for-support-and-investment • Cost of housing • Cost of transport • Social value • Economy as it stands
11	RB	<p>Future Meeting dates, Members' Updates and AOB: 3rd September 2024 3rd December 2024 Meetings to take place 4:00pm – 6:00pm (virtual)</p> <p>Member Updates None</p> <p>AOB None</p>

ACTIONS

Item	Details	Who	When
	Meeting slides pack to be shared with the group.	RM/ SP	June/July
	OSB/BSSG going forward. Future meeting ideas to be explored. RB to return to September meeting with options.	RB	By 3 rd September
	HB to share detailed information about code red project via email and HB will share the outline of the programme.	HB	
	Mentoring challenges: Growth hub team to investigate the business support tool, advisor booking section, report produced, terminology and how information is presented to see if it can be made more user friendly.	Growth Hub	
	Clayton to share the fast growth cities economic research.	CL	Completed – link shared in meeting Teams chat

THE MEETING CLOSED: 6:00pm