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Cllr Bob Price
Chair, Oxfordshire Growth Board,
Leader of Oxford City Council

15th November 2017

Dear Bob

I am delighted to hear the progress of the Oxfordshire Place Based Sustainable Growth Package deal. I therefore wish to indicate most strongly to the Oxfordshire Growth Board that the University whole-heartedly supports the package and urges the continued partnership working with Central Government to unlock the funds that will enable the actions outlined in the proposal, as well as investment in activities that directly drive productivity.

This proposal seems to me to be a unique opportunity to further our collective agenda for knowledge-led, sustainable, economic growth and to build toward the aspirations of the Oxfordshire Green Paper, taking shared responsibility for delivering that vision and accruing shared benefit across the region. The University sees the deal as having the potential to create a local environment in which the University can fulfill its mission of providing high-quality education, world-class research and impactful innovation while helping to enhance the quality of life in the region.

The University has achieved the top position in the World by Times Higher Education World University Rankings for the second year running. In order to maintain and enhance our global competitiveness in research and innovation into the future, and therefore continue to be an asset to the region and nation, we believe that it is vital that the Oxfordshire region become a thriving, vibrant, innovation-driven economic powerhouse. We recognise that our efforts working with regional partners in securing a deal are vital. The University and the region have a co-dependence on one another that is crucial for each other's success.

Both as a major local employer and a contributor to the local and national economy, the University supports a deal that will provide catalyst to speed up the delivery of necessary housing, improve and deliver infrastructure and strengthen the regional economy. A priority issue for the University is the impact the lack of affordable housing and poor infrastructure has on the recruitment and retention of staff, in particular research and post-doctoral positions, as well as traffic congestion for those who live in the City and surrounding areas.

Another priority is to invest in enhancing the ability of the region to deliver new jobs based on knowledge-led innovation indicated, for example, in the recent Science and Innovation Audit, deriving from the high-quality research that the world-leading universities and science campuses provide. Beyond removing the obstacles to growth through infrastructure, new innovation centres bringing together the key elements of enhanced productivity will be vital.

We support this deal and look forward to a continued dialogue as the deal develops.

Sincerely

