

Oxford Strategic Partnership

Minutes of Meeting 12th July 2022

Attendees

Paul James, River Learning Trust (Chair)	PJ
Cllr Shaista Aziz, Oxford City Council	Cllr Aziz
James Baughan, Oxford City Council	JB
Tom Bridgman, Oxford City Council	TB
Cllr Susan Brown, Oxford City Council	Cllr Brown
Rebecca Cullen, Oxford University Hospitals Trust	RC
Stephen Gabriel, Oxford City Council	SG
Caroline Green, Oxford City Council	CG
Simon Grove-White, Oxford City Council	SGW
Emily Lewis-Edwards, Oxfordshire Community First	ELE
Jeremy Long, OxLEP	JL
Matt Peachey, Oxford City Council	MP
Supt Bruce Riddell, Thames Valley Police	Supt Riddell
Robin Rogers, Oxfordshire County Council	RR
Dave Scholes, Oxford City Council	DS
Cllr Chris Snowton, Oxford City Council	Cllr Snowton
Mish Tullar, Oxford City Council	MT
Stuart Wilkinson, University of Oxford	SW

Apologies

Gillian Aitken, Oxford University
Phil Clare, Oxford University
Dani Granito, Oxford City Council
Ian Green, Oxford Civic Society
Frank Nigriello, Unipart
Cllr Glynis Phillips, Oxfordshire County Council
Claire Taylor, Oxfordshire County Council

1. Welcome and apologies

Caroline Green welcomed everyone and introduced new Chair, Paul James, CEO of River Learning Trust.

2. New Chair: Paul James

Brief introduction from Chair:

- Drawn to the role by what can be achieved through collaborative working – that's very much the case for schools.
- Strongly aligned with the vision and mission of the OSP. We need to work hard to address inequalities in the city

3. Draft minutes of the last meeting & matters arising

Minutes of the last meeting were agreed. No actions for further follow up.

4. Oxford City update (Caroline Green)

- Finance: All Council income streams hit during Covid (car parks, commercial property, Town Hall lettings etc), now challenge of inflation and ongoing cost of living crisis
- Budget challenge for next 4 year period of up to c£5.5m pa of income and savings. There will be some tough decisions and we need to work with partners on new models of delivery – eg. leisure provision. We recognise others organisations are facing similar challenges.
- Still plenty of positives – eg. opening of Energy Superhub Oxford – Europe’s most powerful EV charging hub at Redbridge Park & Ride, and the development of an EV Strategy for Oxford.

PJ: To what extent should the funding gap inform our thinking? Need to target resources to have greatest impact – is it too early to factor in?

CG: Not too early as other organisations are grappling with similar issues. We will be crystallising budget proposals for November – but could be some key themes for our OSP forward plan.

5. UK Shared Prosperity Fund (Simon Grove-White)

- Govt fund focusing on communities and place, supporting local business, people and skills (replaces European Structural and Investment Programme, which ends in 2023). Range of potential interventions, from community and economic development, regeneration.
- City Council role to develop an investment plan for approval by UK govt – with a small allocation of £1m which is split across three years from 2022/23 to 2024/25
- Therefore we are engaging with partners and focusing on areas where there is momentum and shared ambition and ability to generate match funding seeking opportunities for match funding
- Our proposed plan is aligned with the Oxford Economic Strategy and City Centre Action Plan. It focuses on:
 - Greening the economy – if we are to develop a retrofit pipeline we need to upskill local population so we can employ people locally. This is targeted for 24/25
 - Community wealth building – we want to localise procurement spend and embed more social value into our contracting – 22/23
 - Animating the city centre – we’re proposing investment in wayfinding and public realm infrastructure – St Michael St, Covered Market – we want to create more opportunities for pop up events and increase dwell time. 22/23
- 22/23 investment plans need to be submitted end July. Year 24/25 plans can be firmed up over time over time.

RR: Skills work could be most efficiently delivered in concert with countywide initiatives on skills.

Action for all – Feedback from all OSP members invited [by email](#) by Monday 18th July

6. Affordable Housing provision (Dave Scholes + Tom Bridgman)

- Decades long issue re land supply in Oxford– led to a housing affordability crisis. Challenging context incl limited land, unaffordability, number on Housing Register, build cost inflation, rising borrowing costs, govt policy (e.g. First Homes)
- £1,500 average monthly rent – compared with £850 nationally. 3,000 people on Oxford’s housing register, 28k additional homes needed countywide.
- Delivery challenges:
 - Green belt, heritage, floodplain – so mainly small infill brownfield. Also competing uses for land from universities.
 - Highly demanding planning policies 50% affordable, of which 80% social rent.
 - Delivering at 40% below building regs carbon.
 - First Homes policy – seeing 25% of homes sold at £250k is challenging and will deliver 1 bed – not what is needed.
 - Lots of local opposition to some sites
- Seeking to address challenges through planning policy – 10k additional homes required in Oxford by 2036 – but need more – so need a further 15k in strategic sites close to the city to meet Oxford’s unmet need. These will be available to people with an Oxford connection
- How we can deliver more affordable homes?
 - Employer-linked housing included in last local plan to encourage university and hospital sites to come forward for key workers.
 - Marketing materials advertising shared ownership properties could be shared by employers
 - Council’s housing company OX Place to build 1,600 affordable homes in the next ten years
 - 30-40 sites in current development pipeline
 - JV partnerships and working with housing associations
 - Building support for community-led housing
- Upcoming Oxford Local Plan 2040 will discuss housing - Government has said will not be applying top down targets – *to come to October OSP meeting*
- We want to understand what OSP members’ land supply position is – what need for own development purposes and what could be utilised for house building. There will be a call for sights for the Local Plan 2040.
- Can we also build OSP support for the [Oxford Needs Homes](#) campaign
- Housing targets will now be delivered locally. If we don’t get it right we can be in a position where the economy grows not met by land supply or new housing

Action for MT – Bring back Housing on the Forward Plan for OSP, if not already on there

7. Oxford City Council Thriving Communities Strategy (Stephen Gabriel)

- Introduction of the strategy aims and next steps (see slide deck). We are moving away from the previously described “asset-based community development” approach. Need to simplify terminology:
 - People – simply description of how we want to work with people
 - Pride – promote and celebrate diversity
 - Place – better utilise our physical assets – in particular leisure
 - Progress – Need to agree a meaningful matrix of measures to evidence impact

- Does the discussion paper align with what is needed to deliver? There's a bigger focus on collaboration and a whole-system approach:
 - We want an enabling approach, working with communities rather than delivering on their behalf.
 - Can we better integrate our service delivery?
 - Want to work more closely with primary care networks and public health
 - Need to refresh our leisure contract and ensure it delivers against all needs
- We have held a number of conversations with different partners.
 - Have set up a cross-party group of Councillors
 - Undertaking a whole series of conversations in the autumn with different groups.
 - Must ensure the strategy is evidence-based – will take data from the County Council's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment etc

PJ: bold and ambitious values and aims – but very complex given the partner landscape. Needs to be real at the granular people level. What is the implementation gap? Education – we know the impact high quality education can have in reducing inequality and increasing opportunities for young people. Need to understand what other sectors can do: affordable housing, support parent power and increase their connections with communities, need to better understanding the role schools can play as anchors in a community. Post COVID – need to recognise that many Year 7 and Year 8 children are struggling with socialisation of being back in schools. Those doing better have supportive parents. Need to our role in supporting that as part of Thriving Communities.

Clr Brown: Must throw in school exclusions – this is increasing issue...at risk of exploitation – needs to be collectively addressed.

SW: What involvement with other orgs in voluntary sector, social enterprises etc? Skills in later life is also really important.

SG: We're very keen that we engage with business and voluntary sector communities

PJ: We may want to revisit this at the October meeting. Will circulate slides.

Action for PJ: Decision on whether or not to bring the topic back for further discussion

Action for all – Feedback from OSP welcomed [by email](#) between now and end of September 2022.

8. Future Strategic Planning for OSP (Paul James)

I would like to follow up with OSP members individually to get a sense of what they get out of the partnership and the value we can add to it.

Clr Brown: would partners want to meet physically – we can then have side discussions?

SW: need to reflect accessibility and where we are at in the pandemic waves and how this will impact

CG: Could some of our future meetings be held in person?

Action for PJ + MT: Short survey of members to identify appetite for face to face meetings and set up individual 1+1s for Paul James

9. AOB

- Next meeting is Tuesday 11th October at 2:30pm to 4pm