

To: Oxfordshire Growth Board

Title of Report: Oxford to Cambridge Arc Economic Prospectus

Date: 30 October 2020

Report of: Bev Hindle, Director Oxfordshire Growth Board

Status: Open

Executive Summary and Purpose:

This report seeks endorsement from the Growth Board for the Arc Economic Prospectus. This has been submitted to Government with support from the Arc Leadership Group, the Arc Universities Group and the Arc Local Enterprise Partnerships from Oxfordshire and South East Midlands, as well as the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority Business Board.

Recommendation:

That the Oxfordshire Growth Board endorses the Oxford to Cambridge Arc Economic Prospectus (attached as Appendix 2);

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Oxford to Cambridge Arc Economic Prospectus Executive Summary

Appendix 2: Oxford to Cambridge Arc Economic Prospectus

Introduction

1. The Arc Economic Prospectus was submitted as planned on 30 September 2020 to the Secretary of State for the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), to Arc-supporting departments as well as all Arc MPs and Arc Leadership Group Leaders and Chairs. We understand this will now help to inform discussions internally within Whitehall now that departmental submissions have been made to Treasury ahead of the proposed Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) event – anticipated to be in November or December of this year.
2. The Prospectus sets out clear shared ambitions and seeks Government to back up its commitment to the Arc by supporting our collaboration through establishing a clear identity for the Arc, creating dedicated investment channels which in turn can unlock local and private sector funding confidence to support our sustained and sustainable growth ambitions.

3. The Prospectus highlights some of the extraordinary work being done between existing collaborations and institutions across the Arc, some well underway and others just emerging, including:
 - Development of a Life Sciences Network which includes the world-leading research, development and manufacture of vaccines
 - Testing and delivery of sustainable, carbonless commercial flight
 - Further development and roll-out of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles
 - Sustainable Zero-Carbon Energy
 - Positioning the UK as a world leader in space technologies and applications
4. All of these major initiatives are being led by or involving universities, businesses and organisations across Oxfordshire – all working on pioneering solutions for local, national and international markets.
5. But the Prospectus is also calling for Government to understand and respect that our strength is our people and our places and these need supporting through measures for greater inclusivity, including major skills investment and support, as well as protecting and improving our natural environment.
6. The Prospectus calls for sustainable and inclusive green growth which can positively benefit Arc communities now and in the future, but also can help the nation in terms of positive recovery and return on investment which supports regional and national levelling up.
7. The Prospectus is strengthened in its narrative through many projects and networks delivering here in Oxfordshire. Given the fact Government have identified the Arc as a region of national economic significance, officers feel that Oxfordshire can not only be a significant contributor to the Arc but can benefit very much from this regional collaboration.

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