

Spatial Planning & Infrastructure Partnership Full Partnership Meeting Minutes

**10am on 22 APRIL 2010
Council Chamber, Oxford City Council**

| Attendee: | Organisation: |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cllr Barry Wood | Cherwell District Council |
| Mary Harpley | Cherwell District Council |
| John Hoad | Cherwell District Council |
| Jameson Bridgwater | Cherwell District Council |
| Cllr Ian Hudspeth | Oxfordshire County Council |
| Huw Jones | Oxfordshire County Council |
| John Disley | Oxfordshire County Council |
| Adrian Saunders | Oxfordshire County Council |
| Andrew Tucker | West Oxfordshire District Council |
| Mel Barrett | Oxford City Council |
| Mark Jaggard | Oxford City Council |
| Cllr Tony de Vere | Vale of White Horse District Council |
| Cllr Angela Lawrence | Vale of White Horse DC (OHP lead) |
| Anna Robinson | Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council |
| Cllr Ann Ducker | South Oxfordshire District Council |
| Jodee Katalanos | Homes & Communities Agency |
| David Doughty | Oxfordshire Economic Partnership |
| Warren Ralls | SEEDA |
| Sue Janota | SEEPB |
| Mark Dillon | Oxfordshire PCT |
| Rob Hathaway (Observing) | Audit Commission |

Apologies:

Cllr Barry Norton (WODC), Cllr Bob Price (Oxford City), Charlotte Frizzell (Natural England), Chris Farthing (GOSE), David Edwards (HCA), Rosemary Redmond (EA), Lindsay Tift, (HCA) Catherine Mountford (PCT), Paul Robinson (Highways Agency)

1. Minutes of meeting 1 March 2010

The minutes of the meeting were agreed with a correction to Item 5, bullet point 2, to read: *SPIP should prepare and approve a pre-Strategy briefing document. This would facilitate discussion of arrangements for commissioning work on a new Economic Development Strategy. Work on this Strategy would be undertaken by the Oxfordshire Economic Partnership and public sector partners through SPIP. (The pre-Strategy briefing document would be presented to the June 28 meeting of SPIP and strategy work would be undertaken over the summer and autumn period, giving time for account to be taken of the outcome of the General Election).*

2. Matters arising

It was noted that Item 7 on the agenda was a consequence of the above correction to the Minutes.

3. Regional Strategy Update - Evidence Submission (J Hoad: CDC)

John Hoad introduced the report on behalf of the SPIP Executive Group.

AGREED:

- That the Partnership should provide initial feedback to SEEPB on the basis of the report considered at the meeting
- That individual Councils should make their own, additional and/or detailed evidence submissions as they see fit (including any relevant technical document references)
- That, subject to consideration of any implications of the forthcoming General Election for the future of regional planning, the Partnership invites SEEPB to hold a special workshop for SPIP local authority members/officers and relevant partner representatives linked to its meeting on 28 June. The purpose of this workshop would be to provide feedback on issues to be considered in the new Regional Plan from an Oxfordshire point of view. Further that, if appropriate, SPIP follows up the workshop with a formal 'key Oxfordshire issues' submission to the Regional Plan process.

4. Local Investment Plan (LIP) Update

The Chairman and Mary Harpley introduced this item, explaining that the LIP had now been published. Copies were circulated for signature by the Local Authority partners. It was intended that HCA would sign off the LIP after the General Election 'purdah' period. The Chairman noted the Partnership's achievement in producing a high-quality Local Investment Plan. In particular, he acknowledged the hard work and commitment of the partners working on the project. The particular contributions of Mark Jaggard (acting for the Local Authority partners) and Lindsay Tift (acting for HCA) were recognised. The contribution of Mary Harpley in driving the project forward on behalf of the Partnership was also highlighted by Members.

Jodee Katalanos indicated that the Agency was very pleased with the outcome of the pilot project in Oxfordshire. The quality of the LIP had been noted by HCA at regional level and the Oxfordshire document would be used as an example of best practice.

5. Local Investment Agreement (LIA)

Jodee Katalanos gave a presentation on the next stage of the Single Conversation process, which would be to produce a LIA. *A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.* The intention was that the LIA would be a simple document based on the national HCA template (circulated with the agenda). It would cross-reference the LIP and HCA information on financial allocations as currently known. The financial information would be regularly updated.

The HCA presentation on the LIA included a summary of current HCA financial allocations for Oxfordshire. It was noted that under the 'Miscellaneous' heading there were likely to be a number of existing financial commitments which did not align to identified LIP priorities. This would give some scope for adjustment and re-allocation of funding.

In discussion it was recognised that the Partnership would need to play an active role in managing the detailed process of review and allocation of funding. This work would need to be undertaken by officers through the SPIP Executive Group and reported in summary form to the Partnership (probably on a quarterly basis). The detailed work on assessment of schemes and funding allocations would be undertaken using the LIP Assessment Sheet format. A standardised monitoring and reporting process and information system would be established by HCA for their work with the Partnership.

HCA indicated that they would undertake a first draft of the LIA and that it would be prepared on a timetable which would allow full sign-off by all parties at the June meeting of the Partnership.

Work on the Single Conversation (LIP and LIA) had now reached the stage where it was important to extend understanding and involvement to wider partners, in particular Housing Associations and private sector developers. This would be done through a further SPIP/Oxfordshire Housing Partnership Forum meeting to be arranged in July.

There was discussion about the timetable for completion of the LIA and the need for all Councils to make their own arrangements for approvals. There was strong commitment to adjusting this process to allow full sign-off of the Agreement at the June meeting.

AGREED:

- HCA would prepare a first draft of the LIA.
- This draft would be considered by officers through the SPIP Executive Group and developed on a timetable which would allow informal consideration by Local Authority Leaders in good time to ensure final sign-off at the June Partnership meeting. (The SPIP Executive Group was asked to prepare a timetable to ensure this process stayed on track. This would necessitate the draft of the LIA being in circulation by the end of May).
- The Executive Group and HCA were asked to report to the June Partnership meeting on arrangements for management and monitoring of funding allocations and review of the LIP.

A number of other issues were noted for further consideration at a future date:

- Need for HCA to consider its methodology and arrangements for detailed project management of schemes with the Local Authorities and other partners.
- Need for HCA to clarify future arrangements for 'continuous market engagement' on National Affordable Housing Programme schemes.
- Need to address the role of the Single Conversation (LIP/LIA) in influencing other non-HCA government funding streams and alignment of those funding streams against local priorities.
- All partners would be alive to the issue of balancing pragmatic considerations about deliverability of schemes and projects against the key priorities in the LIP. This would be particularly important in respect of major development sites and schemes with difficult start-up or infrastructure problems. It was these schemes which would need to have special attention or support in many cases.
- All the mechanisms created to handle management of funding decisions needed to be practical and not overly bureaucratic.

6. Local Transport Plan 3 Update

John Disley introduced an update on the Local Transport Plan process and consultation work now underway. The Partnership was advised of the difficult funding circumstances facing the County Council and alerted to the need to manage expectations in respect of transport investment. It was noted that, in many cases, it would be necessary to simply maintain current infrastructure, rather than invest in new.

There was discussion about the nature of the consultation and the lack of clarity at the present time about the specific schemes which were under consideration for future investment. The issue of prioritisation of schemes was discussed. This was seen by Partnership members as particularly important in respect of the relationship to the LIP. The need to link public transport improvement schemes to Affordable Housing plans was also stressed.

John Disley noted that the Plan was developing around scenario work which would inform transport strategies over a long period of time (to 2030). This meant that often it would not be appropriate to consider specific transport investment schemes at this stage. These would emerge as the Plan was monitored and reviewed. John Disley referred to an explanatory diagram (shown at the meeting) which elaborated on this point.

Funding allocations and schemes would not be in total alignment with the LIP because the Local Transport Plan was seeking to address a number of infrastructure deficit issues across the County. 'Deficits' were not necessarily flagged from the LIP, as it was regeneration and development orientated in the main.

AGREED:

- That the Partnership requested a further update report at its June meeting. This should provide information on schemes likely to be considered as the LIP was developed.
- That, when the draft plan is in circulation (Autumn 2010) a further report be presented which identifies the specific schemes which are realistically likely to be funded in the next 5-10 years. The purpose of this would be to identify relationships and any potential conflicts with the LIP.

7. Economic Strategy Update

The purpose of this item was to clarify the uncertainty about how the strategy update would be commissioned as identified under the correction to the minutes (see above). Dave Waller was unable to attend for this item; Huw Jones explained the position in his stead. The background to the correction of the minutes was considered. The Partnership was anxious to ensure that there was good consideration of future Economic Development Strategy issues, but from the point of view of both SPIP and the Oxfordshire Economic Partnership (with its business-led and influenced role). This would necessitate a collaborative exercise on both commissioning and undertaking the strategy and review.

AGREED:

- It was agreed that this issue should be considered in detail at the Partnership's June meeting and that the Executive Group should report on options for collaborative work with Oxfordshire Economic Partnership on the strategy update.

8. High Speed 2 Rail Proposal

Jamie Bridgwater introduced the report and referred to a number of more detailed maps which were handed out at the meeting: *Copies of these were distributed at the meeting and are available on the DCLG (HS2) website.*

Adrian Saunders added his comments on the current position on consultation and scheme development.

JB noted that HS2 Limited had been invited to present to the meeting, but had declined as they would not be undertaking direct public consultation on the scheme until after the General Election.

AGREED:

- An Exceptional Hardship scheme consultation response should be submitted on behalf of SPIP. Cherwell District Council undertook to prepare a draft and seek agreement via e-mail exchange (*copy of Cherwell's letter attached and treated as SPIP response*). It was noted that this could be based on materials circulated by the Buckinghamshire authorities and pressure groups in that County.
- That HS2 Limited be invited to present to the June meeting of SPIP, prior to the public consultation exercise planned for Autumn 2010. This to facilitate SPIP consideration of its response to the overall proposal.

9. Oxfordshire 2030 Delivery Plan Refresh

Mary Harpley introduced the report on behalf of the Public Sector Board (PSB).

All Oxfordshire Partnership thematic partnerships had been asked to undertake a review and refresh of their delivery plans. In the case of SPIP this would need to be a wide-ranging exercise covering spatial planning, infrastructure issues, housing delivery, economic development and transport.

This work could be co-ordinated by the SPIP Executive Group but would require participation by a number of Local Authority officers in the areas of interest for SPIP.

AGREED:

- That the Partnership commissions the Executive Group to consider and prepare a draft submission for the PSB/Oxfordshire Partnership, taking into account current and projected performance against the indicators and objectives for which SPIP has responsibility.
- That the Partnership considers emerging recommendations by e-mail before approving the final submission to the Oxfordshire Partnership at its June meeting.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

It was agreed that it would be best to exclude this heading from future agendas.