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- Title:** Local Industrial Strategy & Oxford-Cambridge Arc Productivity Programme
- Purpose:** To inform Board Members of the feedback received as part of the public consultation exercise on the Buckinghamshire Local Industrial Strategy and to outline the steps proposed to incorporate this feedback into the final submission to government.
- To outline the process for joint proposition development with government and the production of the final strategy document.
- To update members on the latest governance developments within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.
- Recommendation:** Note the feedback received on the Local Industrial Strategy draft and endorse the process for incorporating this feedback into the final submission to government and to note the process being developed to support the delivery of Local Industrial Strategy propositions alongside government departments.
- Note the emerging governance arrangements supporting the delivery of the productivity programme from across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.
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## **1 Buckinghamshire Local Industrial Strategy Consultation Process & Feedback**

The public consultation on the Buckinghamshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) commenced on February 11<sup>th</sup> and ran until the BTVLEP AGM on March 8<sup>th</sup>. A copy of the consultation draft is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report. During this period presentations on the strategy were provided to the Buckinghamshire Business Group, the Buckinghamshire Skills Board, the Westcott Space Board and to the scrutiny committees at Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe District Councils as well as to officer and member groups at Buckinghamshire County Council. An earlier presentation on the strategy had been previously supplied to Aylesbury Vale District Council alongside colleagues at SEMLEP.

The consultation process has also been supported through press releases, social media messaging and direct correspondence to the Bucks Business First membership and via the Local Industrial Strategy steering group.

Overall the response to the draft strategy has been very positive with the majority of audience members identifying with the key propositions and economic drivers highlighted within the strategy. As part of the local authority presentations the need to highlight the specific objectives of the LIS to meet the governments Grand Challenges and Foundations of Productivity and to show how it will support and complement existing strategies such as the Strategic Economic Plan and Bucks Growth Strategy.

This consultation process has been helpful in developing the final publication. A summary of the written responses is attached as **Appendix 2** to this report along with a view as to how this feedback may be incorporated into the final submission to government at the end of March.

The main structural change to the final submission will be to include a brief introductory place shaping narrative identifying the key characteristics of Buckinghamshire including its relationship with London and the international gateway of Heathrow, the critical importance of major transport corridors including the M40 and the Chiltern Rail Network and the significant potential afforded by the improved East West infrastructure. This enhanced introduction will also provide the opportunity to elevate the economic role played by the main Buckinghamshire urban settlements including High Wycombe and Aylesbury alongside the natural and rural economy that is a major feature of much of the county.

The final submission will also seek to clarify more clearly how the rural economy could be supported in developing innovation as part of the Living Lab programme, it will also highlight more clearly the transformative opportunity that a rail access to Old Oak Common could provide and further emphasise the role that our two Universities are already playing to deliver innovation and leading the connectivity and collaboration between academic institutions with business across the Arc.

Although the consultation has formally closed, we will continue to welcome any additional feedback up until March 25<sup>th</sup>.

At a government level our Evidence Base and Consultation Draft have both been assessed by the respective Local Industrial Strategy Programme Boards and have been congratulated on their clarity of message.

## **2 Production Schedule, Departmental Engagement and Proposition Development**

Final feedback from members after today's board meeting will also be incorporated to shape the final submission to government. The current timetable is that this will form the basis of a government issued publication for Buckinghamshire which is to be issued alongside the other Local Industrial Strategies for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc to be published in May 2019.

Over this period the next phase of government department engagement will be undertaken, earlier this week the BTVLEP CEO, along with representatives from the other three Arc LEPs met with Nick Chism Director General of Enterprise at BEIS to discuss joint priorities in a discussion that centred on skills, clustering of capabilities, physical infrastructure, delivery, commercialisation of innovation and the concept of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc as a Living Lab. Other joint meetings are planned in the coming weeks with the DIT looking at the Internationalism agenda and DCMS on the digital investment programme.

Our detailed propositions on the programme priorities have been refined and will be used for individual dialogue with departmental representatives to help produce more detailed delivery plans ahead of the May announcements.

## **3 Oxford-Cambridge Arc Governance & Economic Vision**

The economic vision document commissioned by the 3 LEPs and the combined authority is now nearing completion and will be used by the Arc Productivity Group to shape its future work programme. This group, which is one of four operational groups within the Arc governance structure, will by agreement be led at leader level by the BTVLEP Chair.

The economic vision, which builds upon the 4 individual local industrial strategies retains its 6 main investment themes as highlighted below:

 <p><b>Iconic brand</b></p> <p>A top five globally recognised economy, uniting citizens, businesses and investors</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A clear and distinctive brand that articulates the Corridor's unique proposition</li> <li>2. International presence in global markets</li> </ol>	 <p><b>Liveable &amp; Productive place</b></p> <p>A living laboratory</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Connected communities</li> <li>2. A centre for digital and physical connectivity</li> <li>3. Environmental sustainability solutions</li> </ol>	 <p><b>Dynamic business culture</b></p> <p>A test-bed for commercialising transformative technologies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creative and collaborative spaces for business activity</li> <li>2. Diversity of businesses from high-growth companies to Fortune 500 businesses</li> <li>3. Cross-sector network(s) for knowledge exchange</li> </ol>
 <p><b>Keystone assets</b></p> <p>An environment leveraging distinctive cross-Corridor physical assets to shape industries of the future</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sectoral clusters and economies of agglomeration</li> <li>2. Harnessing of innovation spill-overs</li> </ol>	 <p><b>Talent attraction &amp; retention</b></p> <p>The number one UK career destination providing a hotbed of skills</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Skills programmes to upskill and reskill across different institutions (e.g. FE, HE)</li> <li>2. Greater collaboration and partnering between industry and academia</li> <li>3. A hub for attractive and high quality jobs</li> </ol>	 <p><b>Strong financing</b></p> <p>A UK hub for attracting investment and maximizing returns</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Diversified funding strategy</li> <li>2. Magnet for investment from different funding sources (e.g. Foreign Direct Investment and Sovereign Wealth Investment)</li> </ol>

Earlier this week as part of the Chancellor's Spring Statement the government issued its joint ambition declaration for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, this includes a statement issued on behalf of all of the Local Authorities and the LEPs by the Chair of the Arc Leaders Group Barry Wood from Cherwell District Council. A copy of this document is attached as **Appendix 3** to this report. This declaration is notable for being led by an economic not a housing ambition and confirms the Governments long term commitment to the Arc.

Within the document there is reference to an Economic Assessment currently being undertaken by AECOM and Oxford Economics for the Government. LEPs have largely remained unsighted on this piece of work, despite asking for engagement and did not see the MHCLG document before issue, though it appears the contents page may have had advanced limited circulation. We should invite the authors to a future meeting of this board to discuss openness and transparency and indeed accuracy and perhaps reset the collaboration to managed the announced future development and consultation.

The government have also now commenced their recruitment process for the Independent Business Ambassador for the Arc. This is a critically important, high-profile role that will help deliver the Government's vision for the Arc. The Chair will provide expert advice to the government and local stakeholders, act as an advocate, and champion economic opportunities to help galvanise local, national and international support for the Arc. They will also chair and lead a new Oxford-Cambridge Arc Advisory Group that is being set up to bring together key stakeholders from across the Arc. For further information about the visit [www.veredus.co.uk](http://www.veredus.co.uk) the closing date for applications is 29nd March.

#### Members are asked to:-

- **Note the feedback received on the Local Industrial Strategy draft and endorse the process for incorporating this feedback into the final submission to government and to note the process being developed to support the delivery of Local Industrial Strategy propositions alongside government departments.**
- **Note the emerging governance arrangements supporting the delivery of the productivity programme from across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.**