



# Championing dynamic economic growth for Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) Ltd Annual Report 2016/2017



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**“Oxfordshire is a mainstay behind an effective UK PLC.”**

# Welcome to our annual report for 2016/2017

This report is entitled: *‘Championing dynamic economic growth for Oxfordshire’* reflecting our drive to ensure our county is not only a great place to set-up, grow or do business, but is also a mainstay behind an effective ‘UK PLC’.

Undoubtedly, the biggest development during 2016/2017 was the news that the UK had voted to leave the European Union and – as I write this note – businesses will feel nervous as to what the future holds in the lead-up to Brexit, as well as what the landscape will look like post-Brexit.

Ahead of the 2017 general election, the prime minister Theresa May committed to creating ‘a strong economy built on sound public finances, low taxes, better regulation and free trade deals with markets around the world’. Clearly it would appear Mrs May has an appetite for a global future post-Brexit, encouraging trade with countries from outside of the EU and aiming to create conditions for this to happen.

As is the case with any incoming government, the ‘proof will be in the pudding’ and – like all Oxfordshire businesses – we will continue to follow developments closely.

These developments are of course out of our hands – but whatever Brexit brings; we believe that the Oxfordshire economy is an agile one and our message to the county’s business community is that we have the capacity to rise to the challenge of a post-Brexit economy.

Away from Brexit – having an economic climate that embraces dynamic growth, like we do in Oxfordshire, is important, though so is the need for it to be underpinned by an equally-strong infrastructure that boasts good-quality, affordable housing and a sound transport network.

As new jobs are being generated – around 40,000 in the county over the last five years – Oxfordshire will undoubtedly attract more people. Therefore – growth and infrastructure development need to work as holistically as possible.

We continue to embrace this approach by maintaining our four priorities of: People, Place, Enterprise and Connectivity, all of which transcend our work.

This annual report looks at our key achievements over the past year and introduces you to many who have benefited from the wide-range of support services we offer at OxLEP.

Through OxLEP Business, we embrace business growth, innovation and inward investment for the benefit of Oxfordshire – whilst OxLEP Skills empowers people and employers to develop the right skills.

Our vision for Oxfordshire remains for the county to have ‘a vibrant, sustainable, inclusive, world-leading economy – driven by innovation, enterprise and research excellence’. This is our complete focus, as is our drive to champion Oxfordshire’s economic potential, acting as an ongoing catalyst and convener to drive growth.



Nigel Tipple - Chief Executive





**“We made considerable progress in ensuring the Local Growth Fund – that totalled £118.4m – made a positive impact across the county.”**

Diamond Light Source – Harwell Campus

## Our key achievements – growth funds

Since our inception in 2011, we have played a major role in driving forward a dynamic growth programme for Oxfordshire – securing in excess of £200m-worth of central government funds to support this ambition, including £56m through City Deal, £20m via the European Structural Investment Fund and £8.5m thanks to the Growing Places Fund.

A further significant amount of this funding has come via the Local Growth Fund (divided into two allocations – Growth Deal 1 and Growth Deal 2) with a total of £118.4m secured.

During 2016/2017, we made considerable progress in ensuring the Local Growth Fund made a positive impact across our four priority areas of People, Place, Enterprise and Connectivity.

**£200m**  
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT  
FUNDS SECURED SINCE 2011



Key achievements included:

### JUNE 2016

Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme route announced, protecting 1,200 homes and businesses across the city

### SEPTEMBER 2016

Activate Learning Care Suite completed and opened  
Oxfordshire Centre for Technology and Innovation opened

### OCTOBER 2016

Access to Headington transport scheme begins, improving access to major health and education sites  
Oxfordshire Business Support funding secured for three years  
Northway and Marston Flood Alleviation Scheme begins, reducing surface water flood risk to 110 homes in north Oxford

### DECEMBER 2016

Centre for Applied Superconductivity completed

### FEBRUARY 2017

Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme business case submitted to central government  
Advanced Engineering and Technology Skills Centre construction began





“We are home to many companies of global significance.”

MINI Plant Oxford

## OxLEP in numbers

As the Local Enterprise Partnership for Oxfordshire, not only are we home to many companies of global significance, but we are also consistently striving for excellence to meet our vision for the county to have ‘a vibrant, sustainable, inclusive, world-leading economy – driven by innovation, enterprise and research excellence’.

Our agile set-up means we are able to provide an integrated range of services and functions to support dynamic economic growth – it has resulted in the following:

### START-UPS

- **400** meetings held, leading to **120** new business start-ups
- **262** businesses or individuals signposted to partner organisations



£100k

INNOVATION FUNDING FOR OXFORDSHIRE SMEs

- **41** businesses supported via a face-to-face diagnostic
- **15** Oxfordshire SMEs accessing £100,000-worth of innovation funding
- **14** individuals accessing social enterprise support

### INVESTMENT

- **57** investments supported
- **122** investment enquiries received
- **37** investments made from abroad
- **821** jobs created or safeguarded

### APPRENTICESHIPS

- **41** employers introduced to apprenticeships
- **24** new young apprenticeship ambassadors recruited
- **28** apprenticeship workshops delivered in schools
- **16** drop-in events held to raise awareness of apprenticeships
- **12** employer events attended, promoting the benefits of apprenticeships

### WORK EXPERIENCE AND CAREERS

- **5,300** work experience placements secured
- **1,500** students and **50** exhibitors engaged at Careers Fest 2017
- **40** secondary schools engaged during academic year
- **38** school assemblies held giving career advice



**“We support businesses to recruit skilled people against a backdrop of very low unemployment.”**



Our People remain our main resource to support our drive to grow the Oxfordshire economy, supporting businesses to recruit people with the right skills – against a backdrop of extremely low unemployment.

During 2016/2017, we continued to meet our priority area of People through:

- Arranging over **5,300** work experience placements in the academic year, ending in July 2016
- Engaging over **1,500** students and **50** exhibitors at Careers Fest 2017
- Supporting a total of **41** employers to take-on an apprentice
- Linking **40** secondary schools with employers in the academic year, ending in July 2016
- Delivering **38** school assemblies to raise awareness of apprenticeships

- Delivering **28** workshops in schools, including information on apprenticeships
- Coordinating our Apprenticeship Ambassador Scheme – through **24** young ambassadors, supporting **59** events.
- Holding **16** drop-in events to raise awareness of apprenticeships with parents, employers and young people – including a five-day roadshow visiting five locations across Oxfordshire
- Attending **12** employer events to promote the benefits of employing apprentices

We also concluded activities delivered over the lifetime of the City Deal apprenticeship programme (April 2014 to March 2017), including:

- Apprenticeships promoted at **128** careers events and jobs fairs, plus **107** employer events
- Partnerships with **ALL** Oxfordshire secondary schools secured, delivering **73** apprenticeship assemblies and **45** workshops
- Delivering **42** drop-in sessions to advise employers, parents and young people on apprenticeships
- Delivering **11** ‘Making Sense of Apprenticeships’ events for employers
- Developing an Apprenticeship Ambassador Scheme with **42** apprentices trained from **22** different employers, supporting over **150** events
- Funding of nine individual projects – through partners – totalling **£480,000**, including Oxfordshire’s first apprenticeship training agency and the University of Oxford creating a programme now employing over **100** apprentices each year



**Over 5k**

WORK EXPERIENCE  
PLACEMENTS SECURED



**“We ensure growth is met in a sensitive and responsible manner, as well as recognising our many assets.”**



We have remained at the forefront of ensuring growth in the number of jobs is met – in unison – by a modern and considered infrastructure development, doing so in a sensitive and responsible manner, as well as recognising our many assets.

During 2016/2017, we continued to meet our priority area of Place through:

- Working ever-closer with the 2016 number one ranked university in the world, according to Times Higher Education – the University of Oxford
- Supporting the commitment to build up 31,000 new garden town homes in Bicester, Didcot and the Cotswold Garden Village
- Supporting the case to develop better infrastructure at Lodge Hill in Didcot and the Northern Perimeter Road in north Abingdon
- Continuing to work with Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) to meet objectives set in Strategic Environmental Economic Impact Plan (SEEIP)
- Encouraging the Oxfordshire population to benefit from a good ‘quality of life’ through a specific Network Navigator for Tourism and Visitor Economy
- For the first time we took the emerging Oxfordshire investment proposition to the international commercial property stage at MIPIM UK 2016, as part of a Greater Thames Valley offer

#### COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PLANS (CEPS)

OxLEP has worked closely with businesses and local authorities to develop a shared approach on recruitment, ensuring people get better access to employment and training:

CEPs are in-place with:

- Westgate Oxford
- Barton Park
- Bicester Eco-town
- Botley West Way redevelopment
- Crab Hill – Wantage

Results of the Westgate Oxford CEP – in partnership with Laing O’Rourke – include:

- 15 apprenticeships supported during construction
- 15% of on-site workers have an Oxfordshire postcode
- 40% of contracts awarded within the local supply chains
- 12 site tours provided to schools and colleges
- 61 individuals supported through sector-based work academies, with 13 later employed by Laing O’Rourke or one of their sub-contractors
- Three local social enterprises supported in the supply chain



COMMITMENT TO BUILD  
**31,000**  
GARDEN TOWN HOUSES





**“We benefit from an entrepreneurial appetite for start-ups and growth.”**

Milton Park Innovation Centre – near Didcot



Through Enterprise, we understand that – as a county – Oxfordshire benefits from a unique mix of academic excellence, world-class science disciplines (in particular; life science and space technologies) and an entrepreneurial appetite for start-ups and growth.

During 2016/2017, we continued to meet our priority area of Enterprise through:

- Successfully launching our jointly-funded growth hub/ERDF-specific Elevate start-up and growth support programme
- Commencing a three-year programme of free-to-access workshops and events on a range of business-related topics

- Launching a private/public match-funded ERDF start-up and growth competitive grant competition
- Launching a new programme of interactive and intimate Network Navigator roadshows
- Recruiting a new co-funded life sciences specialist to drive growth for Oxfordshire

We also continued to meet this priority area through:

- The opening of the Remote Applications in Challenging Environments (RACE) Centre, at Culham Science Centre
- The opening of Begbroke Innovation Centre
- The construction of the Harwell Innovation Hub
- The announcement of jobs created via the Innovation Support for Business (ISfB) programme – totalling 234 jobs, against a 214 job target

The above projects were delivered via City Deal – a £55.5m fund designed for schemes aimed at improving Oxfordshire’s position as a vibrant and sustainable economy.



ISfB PROGRAMME  
HELPED TO CREATE

**234 jobs**





**“We strive to ensure all communities in Oxfordshire – city, town or rural – benefit from a modern infrastructure.”**

Marriotts Walk Shopping Centre – Witney town centre



## Connectivity

With Connectivity, we strive to ensure that the county continues to benefit from an infrastructure that allows our population to connect well. This includes areas such as broadband, a modern transport network and relieving congestion in key locations.

During 2016/2017 – we continued to meet our priority area of Connectivity through:

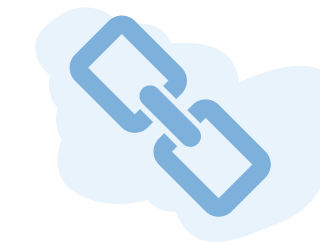
- The completion and opening of the A34 Milton Interchange improvement works
- The completion and opening of the Chilton Slips A34 junction improvement works
- The completion of Science Vale UK Enterprise Zone broadband project – accessible throughout at Milton Park

All projects were delivered via the Growing Places Fund – a £9m fund designed to accelerate infrastructure developments that may have stalled as a result of a restricted financial climate, to enable the creation of new jobs and homes.

We also continued to meet this priority area through:

- The completion of major road improvements in-and-around the Cutteslowe and Wolvercote roundabouts, a major section of the Oxford Ring Road
- The completion of the Hagbourne Hill road improvements near Didcot – part of Access to the Enterprise Zone
- The commencement of the Harwell Innovation Hub
- The commencement of the Harwell Link Road – also part of Access to the Enterprise Zone project

All projects were delivered via City Deal – a £55.5m fund designed for schemes aimed at improving Oxfordshire’s position as a vibrant and sustainable economy.



# £55.5m

OF CITY DEAL FUNDING SECURED



**“Our European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development investments support rural businesses to grow.”**




## European funding



Throughout 2016/2017, we continued to champion dynamic economic growth for Oxfordshire through a variety of schemes and programmes made available through considerable European funding.

We did this via:

- Launching three major programmes through our £7.5m European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme, supporting small and medium sized enterprises to grow. The three programmes being:
  - Elevate – £1m
  - Innovation Support for Business (ISfB) – £2.6m
  - Growing our Low Carbon Economy – £1.4m

 **£7.5m**  
OF PROJECTS LAUNCHED THROUGH EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (ERDF)

- Launching a £2.5m European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) programme, focussed on supporting rural businesses to grow
- Continuing to support the long-term unemployed through our European Social Fund (ESF) programme via:
  - A £1.2m Building Better Opportunities project, helping more than 300 long-term unemployed people access training and jobs – delivered by Activate Learning
  - A £345,000 Oxfordshire Community Grants scheme, providing grants to community groups to support better movement towards the labour market – delivered by Oxford City Council
- Delivering our European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) programme for 2014 to 2020

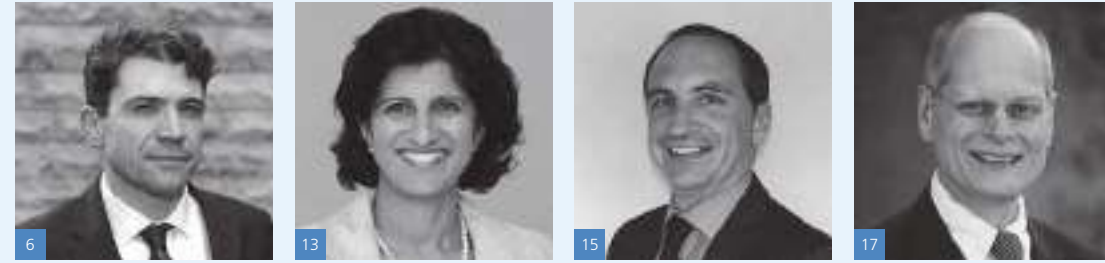
We also:

- Launched the Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire – a widely owned ‘economic route map’ focussed on supporting economic performance and the actions required
- Launched the Creativity, Cultural, Heritage and Tourism Investment Plan for Oxfordshire, promoting four key priorities of:
  - Collaboration
  - Creative place-making
  - Productive and engaging experiences
  - Skills talent development and business growth



## Our Board members

The current OxLEP Board consists of the following members. All Board members are registered as directors of the company 'OxLEP Ltd' with Companies House.



## Governance

In recent years, it has become common for companies and public bodies to produce a corporate governance statement to assure stakeholders of the steps taken by organisations to act in a responsible and ethical manner.

The OxLEP Board has a duty to ensure our financial affairs are conducted in an environment of good governance and financial probity – it does so by maintaining a governance framework to ensure our staff work within the parameters set out by the Board. That governance framework consists of policies and procedures, control systems and external validation to ensure the organisation is fulfilling its obligations.

All business contains an element of risk and, while the framework exists to manage risk to a reasonable level, it cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve aims and objectives.

POSITION	NO.	NAME	REPRESENTING
Chair	1	Jeremy Long	Private sector
Deputy Chair	2	Adrian Lockwood	Oxfordshire Skills Board (private sector)
Vice Chair		Cllr. Barry Wood (Apr - Jun 2016) Cllr. Ian Hudspeth (Jul 2016 - Mar 2017)	Chair of Oxfordshire Growth Board
	3	Cllr. Matt Barber	Vale of White Horse District Council
Local authority representatives	4	Cllr. John Cotton	South Oxfordshire District Council
	5	Cllr. Ian Hudspeth	Oxfordshire County Council
	6	Cllr. James Mills	West Oxfordshire District Council
	7	Cllr. Bob Price	Oxford City Council
	8	Cllr. Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council
Private sector representatives	9	Bob Bradley	Chamber of Commerce
	10	Sally Dicketts	Further education
	11	Prof. Alistair Fitt	Higher education
	12	Prof. Andrew Harrison	Private sector – Science Vale Oxford UK
	13	Penny Rinta-Suksi	Private sector
	14	Phil Shadbolt	Private sector – Bicester Vision
	15	Phil Southall	Private sector
16	Richard Venables	Private sector – Oxford Strategic Partnership	
17	Prof. Ian Walmsley	Higher education	
OxLEP Ltd Chief Executive	18	Nigel Tipple	Attends <i>ex officio</i> and is not entitled to be admitted to membership





Radcliffe Camera - Oxford city centre

## Financial performance

Outlined below is the financial performance for OxLEP Ltd between April 2016 and March 2017.

OxLEP Ltd receives grant funding to support its day-to-day core activity from:

- The UK Government
- The European Union
- Other restricted grants
- Management fees, generated by OxLEP Ltd activities

The company is supported by Oxfordshire County Council as its accountable body, responsible for managing the major capital investment programmes on our behalf.

The financial information was presented to – and approved by – our Finance and Audit Committee on the 22 August 2017 and the main Board on the 12 September 2017.

	2015/16	2016/17
	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>		
Government grant	500,000	500,000
Restricted grant income	112,850	1,466,922
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>612,850</b>	<b>1,966,922</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Staff costs	316,612	1,405,359
Contracted services	169,561	181,607
Office/administrative costs	53,550	216,775
Consultancy, legal and professional services	73,127	163,181
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>612,850</b>	<b>1,966,922</b>

## Nominations and Personnel Committee

The Nominations and Personnel Committee met twice during this financial year.

These included approving the terms of reference for the committee, papers on the organisational structure and policies and procedures for staff – as well as approving the processes for recruiting new Board members during the year.

Two non-executive director vacancies became available during the year, following the completion of respective five-year terms for Board directors. Their replacements were recruited through an open Nolan-compliant process.

The committee – in developing the applicant pack – identified gaps in key sectoral representation on the Board, which was used as a guide for shortlisting and interviewing. Following a process that saw six candidates interviewed, two were recommended and these individuals were appointed.

Diversity is recognised as an important issue. We recognise that improvements can continue to be made to the level of diversity on our Board and it is our aim to work with groups to enhance this, ensuring we are both diverse and representative of the business communities we support, when recruiting new Board directors.

Irrespective of gender, religion or ethnicity, we aim to recruit high-calibre individuals to our Board, supporting us to meet our vision for Oxfordshire as a *'vibrant, sustainable, inclusive and world-leading economy'*.

## Finance and Audit Committee

The Finance and Audit Committee met three times during this financial year.

During this time, the committee reviewed and agreed its terms of reference; they also prepared and agreed our risk register for the organisation.

In this financial year, the committee received and agreed an operating budget and also prepared and agreed the company's financial regulations.

The committee held responsibility for the preparation of the company accounts throughout 2016/2017, as well as having oversight of an external audit process.



WE AIM TO RECRUIT  
**HIGH-CALIBRE**  
INDIVIDUALS TO OUR BOARD





**“Our work recognises a holistic understanding and approach is required to continue to move Oxfordshire’s economy in the right direction.”**

## In summary Jeremy Long, Chair

Thank you for taking the time to read our annual report for 2016/2017.

We hope that *‘Championing dynamic economic growth for Oxfordshire’* has clearly demonstrated our focus on contributing both practically and strategically to shaping the prospects of the county’s economy.

By embracing business growth, innovation and inward investment for the benefit of Oxfordshire, through OxLEP Business, as well as empowering people and employers to develop the right skills for the county – via OxLEP Skills – our work recognises a holistic understanding and approach is required to continue to move Oxfordshire’s economy in the right direction.

Our four priorities mirror this holistic requirement extremely well.

By focussing on the four priorities: People, Place, Enterprise and Connectivity, and recognising the need to see these as very much interconnected objectives, we believe these are the right ingredients to develop a thriving regional economy, playing its part nationally, and internationally too.

Oxfordshire is a region with tremendous strengths and great opportunities.

All four priorities of People, Place, Enterprise and Connectivity – and an integrated approach to promoting economic growth – will be our overriding focus in the coming 12 months and beyond.

As Nigel stated at the beginning of this report, our vision for Oxfordshire truly remains for the county to have *‘a vibrant, sustainable, inclusive, world-leading economy – driven by innovation, enterprise and research excellence’*. I believe the many achievements outlined in this report show we are making excellent progress in meeting this ambitious vision.

**Jeremy Long – Chair**





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Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership