



Report to:	Council	19 July 2021
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr Bridget Smith, Leader of the Council	
Lead Officer:	Liz Watts, Chief Executive	

Oxford-Cambridge Arc - Update

Executive Summary

1. This is the regular update on the work of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

Recommendations

2. That Council note the report.

Reasons for Recommendations

3. Given the increasing profile and momentum of the Arc, it is important that all councillors are updated regularly on activities as they relate to the Arc geography, and to the Council in particular.

Details

4. The Arc Leadership Group met on 24 May and 4 June. This is the group of all leaders from across the Arc, and representatives from MHCLG.
5. On 24 May, there was an update from Chris Pincher MP, Minister of State for Housing and lead minister for the Arc. He confirmed the government's view that the Arc is a place of 'tremendous opportunity' for growth, noting that Cambridge alone has 19 times the national patent rate, and stating that the government wants to combine the work of the spatial planning framework with a new growth body to deliver the opportunities that exist along the Arc. (It is expected that an announcement will be made before the Summer recess on the growth body and a verbal update will be given at Council if it has been made by the time of the meeting).
6. The minister noted the government's aspiration for strong environmental policies in the Arc to ensure that the growth is sustainable and that local communities are engaged fully. To this end the consultation on the spatial planning framework is planned to be 'innovative and far reaching', to include younger people and people from ethnic minorities who traditionally don't engage in planning consultations.

7. On 4 June leaders considered a presentation on the growth body from MHCLG Arc Head of Strategy, Liz Kohorn-Hill. There was considerable discussion around the purpose of the new growth body, and how local leaders will be represented on it and be able to engage with it. Details are expected (as stated above) imminently.
8. A presentation was also given at this meeting by the Arc Universities' lead, Sir Peter Gregson on the ongoing work of the Arc, including the four key workstreams of Sustainable Aviation, the Arc in Space, Life Sciences and the Environment.
9. Finally it was confirmed that a letter had been sent on behalf of all Arc Leaders to the Minister for Roads, Buses and Places, urging government to electrify East West rail from day one.

Options

10. To note the report.

Implications

11. There are no significant implications.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

12. The Arc will contribute to three of the Council's priority areas, through growing the local economy, providing increased affordable housing, and ensuring that the Arc is a Green Arc and meets the aspirational environmental standards set out in the Environment Principles.

Background Papers

n/a

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