



GOVERNMENT OFFICES FOR THE
SOUTH EAST
EAST MIDLANDS
EAST OF ENGLAND

Milton Keynes & South Midlands Growth area e-bulletin

July 2006, issue 7

This is the 7th in a regular series of updates to keep key partners and stakeholders in touch with news, initiatives and developments across the Milton Keynes and South Midlands growth area. It is produced by the Government Offices for the South East, East Midlands and East of England. Editions of the e-bulletin are archived at www.gose.gov.uk/gose/ourRegion/growthAreas/mksmGrowth/?a=42496

If you have any questions or comments about this update, or any potential contributions for the next edition, please contact Urselle Mumford, email urselle.mumford@gose.gsi.gov.uk or telephone 01908 353733.

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Department for Communities and Local Government

On May 5, the creation of a new Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) was announced, under the leadership of Ruth Kelly as Secretary of State.

DCLG has a powerful new remit to promote community cohesion and equality, as well as responsibility for housing, urban regeneration, planning and local government. It unites the communities and Civil Renewal functions previously undertaken by the Home Office, with responsibility for regeneration, neighbourhood renewal and local government previously held by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Full Community Infrastructure Fund Approval for three Northamptonshire Road Schemes:

DfT and DCLG Ministers have given their full approval to the Cross Valley Link Road (£9.69m), the Sandy Lane Relief Road (£4.51m) and the Sandy Lane Improvement (£5.72m), at a total cost of £19.92m. The schemes were provided provisional approval in April 2006 and have now been granted full approval, following further work on the environmental impacts. These three road upgrades to the west of Northampton will help to unlock the development of 4,000 houses, ease traffic congestion in the centre of Northampton, and create a more sustainable, orbital transport system for the town.

MKSM Architecture and Built Environment Centre

ABEC Chief Executive Carlton Roberts-James has been engaged in meeting partners and stakeholders across MKSM and identifying immediate priorities including business planning, funding arrangements and brand development. A programme of early key deliverables is under consideration by the Board and plans are being made to officially launch the ABEC later in the year.

Contact: Carlton Roberts-James carlton-mksm@hotmail.co.uk

Oxford to Cambridge (O2C) Arc

The Arc is dedicated to bringing together, business, government, research and academic interests. Following the appointment of Executive Director Dr Nicholas Miles, the Arc is in the process of forming a Board made up of partners including the RDAs, Economic Partnerships, the private sector and the HEI sector.

Priorities for the next few months will be building relationships with leading knowledge-based businesses, developing a register of assets, re-launching the Arc prospectus and developing a Business Plan for 2006-08.

Contact: Dr Nicholas Miles nicholas.miles@mkelp.co.uk

Ministerial visit to MKSM

Baroness Andrews visited ProLogis Park in Dunstable on June 22 to see the redevelopment work in action. ProLogis Developments Ltd acquired the former AWD site in 2005 and is now building speculatively two large warehouses of 536,000 sq ft and 239,000 sq ft. Both buildings have been designed to suit occupiers in either the distribution or manufacturing sectors and could bring around 750 new jobs to the town.

Commenting on the development, Baroness Andrews, DCLG Lords Minister for Housing, said:

"Everyone knows we must build more houses in the greater South East but equally we must have jobs for the people who are going to live in the new homes. I was delighted to see how ProLogis in Bedfordshire is committing to bringing new jobs and new skills to the area."

Following the visit, Baroness Andrews went on to chair the Inter-regional Board meeting at the offices of South Bedfordshire District Council.

Local Delivery Vehicles

Milton Keynes Partnership

The long-term vision for how Milton Keynes could grow has been submitted by MKP as an advisory document to the Government's South East Plan Examination in Public (EiP) Panel. As resolved at the Milton Keynes Partnership Committee meeting on 12 June, MKP is not asking the Panel to consider any matters relating to housing growth in Milton Keynes beyond 2026. The local authorities will be making their own statements to the Panel on the growth strategy and on proposals for growth up to 2026.

The key decisions on the growth strategy now rest with Milton Keynes Council and the adjoining local authorities as they take forward the outcomes of proposed growth at a local level through the statutory planning process. Milton Keynes Council and Buckinghamshire County Council intend to carry out further public consultation on the Growth Strategy during summer 2006. This will be supported by Milton Keynes Partnership. The outcomes will be reported by the local authorities prior to the EiP which commences in November.

The draft Growth Strategy is available online at www.mkweb.co.uk/mkpartnership. Further consultation will take place between July and September. The MK2031 Project website is at: www.mkweb.co.uk/mk2031

Contact:

Jane Hamilton
Chief Operating Officer
Milton Keynes Partnership
1st Floor Central Business Exchange II, 414-428 Midsummer Boulevard, Milton Keynes, MK9 2EA
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Tel: 01908 353628

West Northamptonshire Development Corporation

From April, West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (WNDC) has planning powers to help deliver the infrastructure and co-ordinate regeneration and development of West Northamptonshire. WNDC will deal with all strategic planning applications in the urban development areas of Northampton, Daventry and Towcester and with all applications for new development and change of use in Northampton town centre. Further information about the WNDC can be found at: www.wndc.org.uk.

Contact:

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P.O. Box 355, Franklin's Gardens, Weedon Road, Northampton NN5 5WW
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North Northants Development Company

The North Northants Development Company (NNDC) has been created by the merger of Catalyst Corby (Urban Regeneration Company) and the North Northants Together partnership. NNDC is co-Chaired by Sir Patrick Walker and Richard Lay and the Chief Executive is Bob Lane. The NNDC is supported by DCLG, EMDA and EP as well as by the local authorities and Northamptonshire County Council. The NNDC area covers the whole of North Northamptonshire and includes the districts of Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough.

Over the next 12 months, the principal focus will be on moving forward the key projects underway in Corby. GAF projects such as the Parkland Gateway will be a priority along with transport improvements such as the Northern Orbital Road, supported by CIF funding. NNDC will also aim to accelerate key projects in Kettering and Wellingborough town centres and Wellingborough East. Further information is available from www.nndev.co.uk

Contact:

Bob Lane
Chief Executive
North Northants Development Company
1 Exchange Court, Cottingham Road, Corby, Northamptonshire, NN17 1TY
Tel: 01536 274 979

Luton/Dunstable/Houghton Regis & Leighton Linlade

The local authorities' Joint Planning and Transport Committee met on 16th June.

Further information can be found at: http://www.southbeds.gov.uk/your-council/committee_timetable.phtml?action=view2&id=488&csubitemid=4771.

The local authorities support the case for a UDC as the most appropriate vehicle for delivering growth. In the meantime, they have been discussing with DCLG and GO East options for adding more immediate capacity to support growth.

Contact:

Ian Slater
Luton Borough Council
Town Hall, George Street, Luton LU1 2BQ
slateri@luton.gov.uk
Tel: 01582 546 329

Aylesbury Vale Advantage

A major piece of work is being carried out which will provide a long-term context and vision for Aylesbury and its town centre over the next twenty years. The Town Centre Vision Framework project is led by Aylesbury Vale Advantage in collaboration with SEEDA, English Partnerships, Aylesbury Vale District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council. Part 1, which provides an analysis of current strategies has been completed and can be found at:

www.aylesburyvaleadvantage.co.uk/pdf/vision_framework.pdf

Further information about AVA is available at: www.aylesburyvaleadvantage.co.uk

Contact:

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Managing Director
Aylesbury Vale Advantage
Exchange Street, Aylesbury, HP20 1UB
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Tel: 01296 585896

Renaissance Bedford

Renaissance Bedford have appointed consultants to provide the first phase of a long term growth prospectus to present a clear offer and unified vision for the Bedford growth area up to 2021. An out-commuter study of railway users has been commissioned to support inward investment activity (report due in September.) The creation of the Wixams development of 4,500 houses to the south of Bedford has moved into the next phase of planning following the signing of the Section 106 agreement with the local planning authorities.

Contact:

Chris Watts
Executive Director, Renaissance Bedford
Salamander House, 2-10 St John's Street, Bedford MK42 0DH
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Tel: 01234 440053

Strategic groups supporting delivery

Inter-regional Board

Chaired by a DCLG Minister, the Inter-regional Board brings together local authority leaders, senior management from Government agencies and other key stakeholders in the Growth Area. Baroness Andrews chaired the most recent meeting in Dunstable on June 22, where the Board considered a range of items including MKSM input into the CSR07, an Action Plan for the MKSM SRS Annual Monitoring Report, and issues around the economy and skills agendas. The next meeting of the Board is planned for October and further details will be included in the next edition of this e-bulletin. Meetings are open to the public, who may submit questions. Further information about tabling questions, and minutes from previous Board meetings can be found at: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1140180>.

Following on from the success of the MKSM *Going Forward* Conference in March, arrangements are in hand for a follow-up stakeholder event to take place in May 2007. This will involve members of the former Growth Implementation Group (now operating as a virtual reference group) together with the District Councils and the private sector.
Contact: Urselle Mumford: urselle.mumford@gose.gsi.gov.uk Tel: 01908 353733

A range of sub-groups undertaking detailed thematic work in the growth area report to the IRB. Regular meetings of the Chairs of these sub-groups take place prior to each meeting of the IRB.

A smaller technical working group will guide the production of the Annual Monitoring Report on behalf of the Regional Assemblies.

In addition, the IRB has commissioned work to prepare a growth area submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR07), with a view to helping partners in the Growth Areas better deliver the services and infrastructure essential to the development of sustainable communities. For specific enquiries on the CSR work please contact Ian Achurch at Northamptonshire County Council, iachurch@northamptonshire.gov.uk

Health and Social Care

This sub-group focuses on public health and planning for services delivery. It is also responsible for public health initiatives including workshops and the development of a planning checklist, and for work with the Housing Corporation on key worker housing requirements.

Following the announcement in April on the reorganisation of the Strategic Health Authorities, the Chairs and Chief Executives of the SHAs covering the MKSM growth Area have been announced. Details can be found at:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/PressReleases/PressReleasesNotices/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4134513&chk=7NAIh8

The report 'Bridge to the Future' commissioned by the MKSM SHAs is available from Leasha Perkins on 01536 494447. (mksm.projectoffice@northants.nhs.uk).

Sub-Group contact: Dawn Bason: (dawn.bason@northantsheartlandspct.nhs.uk)
Tel: 01536 494258

Transport and Planning

Key activities for this group are developing an action plan from issues emerging from the Annual Monitoring Report, leading on the submission to Government on the Comprehensive Spending Review, and ongoing development of a transport and delivery programme for transport and sustainable growth.

Sub-Group contact: Ian Achurch (iachurch@northamptonshire.gov.uk). Tel: 01604 236057

Environment and Quality of Life

This group encompasses environmental issues, community safety and cultural dimensions. A task and finish group considering Water Services Infrastructure issues is in the process of finalising a best practice guide aimed at Local Authorities, LDVs, developers and others.

On the culture side, the MKSM Cultural Task Group will be advertising in July for a MKSM Cultural Co-ordinator. There are numerous partners in the post, the aim of which is to work with LDVs and other partners in MKSM to ensure that the cultural contribution to sustainable communities in the growth area is maximised.

Sub-Group contact: Louise Johnson (louise.johnson@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Tel: 0115 8462619

Economy, Learning and Skills

This group has been re-aligned to focus more closely on economic considerations. Chaired by the RDAs in MKSM in rotation (currently SEEDA), it is working with the Oxford to Cambridge Arc to develop future relationships and responsibilities. On the Skills side, a Skills Masterplan is currently under development, funded by the LSCs. This has now been endorsed by the Inter-regional Board and the LSCs are now working on the way forward to produce a 'Learning Plan' for the region.

Sub-Group contact: Mark Sloan (mark.sloan@gose.gsi.gov.uk) Tel: 01483 884843

Funding

The areas of work for this group are on driving forward the potential of the strategic tariff principles and addressing the revenue needs of growth areas. Other areas of focus include work on the submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review 07, the need for a consistent approach to funding affordable housing across the growth areas and tackling how revenue funding in public services can better respond to growth. Other growth areas facing similar funding issues to those in MKSM including Cambridge and Ashford have been invited to join the group.

Sub-Group contact: John Walker (tonjwalker@aol.com) Tel: 01908 234348

In addition to these groups, there is also a **Local Delivery Vehicle Reference Group** to facilitate interaction and help MKSM LDVs shape a common strategic agenda for the growth area. Meetings of this group take the form of workshops on specific themes and they additionally provide opportunities for networking.

Contact: Urselle Mumford (urselle.mumford@gose.gsi.gov.uk) Tel: 01908 353733

Government Office contacts

Each of the three Government Offices in the growth area takes a locality lead on MKSM for those parts of the sub-region that lie within its boundary. *Contacts:*

Government Office for the South East:

Head of Growth Areas: Nigel Welbourn (nigel.welbourn@gose.gsi.gov.uk) Tel: 01483 882402

Government Office for the East of England:

Team Leader: Michael Bingham (michael.bingham@goeast.gsi.gov.uk) Tel: 01223 372569

Government Office for the East Midlands:

Team Leader: Giles Hughes (giles.hughes@goem.gsi.gov.uk) Tel: 0115 9714733

In addition, a Government Office team based within the growth area deals with strategic MKSM-wide issues and promotes development of partnerships to support delivery, including acting as secretariat to the IRB and GIG.

Contacts:

Team Leader: Tim Higginson (tim.higginson@gose.gsi.gov.uk) Tel: 01908 353944

Urselle Mumford (urselle.mumford@gose.gsi.gov.uk) Tel: 01908 353733

Diary – forthcoming events

10 th July	Aylesbury Vale Advantage Board meeting, 2.00pm, Broughton Suite, Holiday Inn, Aston Clinton Road, Aylesbury. Contact: wendy.reynolds@aylesburyvaleadvantage.co.uk
11 th July	Milton Keynes Partnership Committee meeting 5.30-7.00pm, Christ the Cornerstone Church, Milton Keynes Contact: mkpc@englishpartnerships.co.uk
24 th July	North Northants Development Company Board meeting, 10.00am NNDC offices, Corby. Contact: Heidi Mills on 01536 274979 or email: heidimills@nndev.co.uk
14 th August	Milton Keynes Partnership Committee meeting 5.30-7.00pm, Christ the Cornerstone Church, Milton Keynes Contact: mkpc@englishpartnerships.co.uk
15 th September	South Bedfordshire Joint Planning and Transport Committee meeting. Further information from: http://www.southbeds.gov.uk/contact/index.html
18 th September	Aylesbury Vale Advantage Board meeting, 10.00am, Broughton Suite, Holiday Inn, Aston Clinton Road, Aylesbury. Contact: wendy.reynolds@aylesburyvaleadvantage.co.uk
19 th September	West Northamptonshire Development Corporation Board meeting, 1.00pm-3.00pm, South Northamptonshire Council Offices, Towcester. Contact: Tracey Anthony-Winter on 01604 586604 or email: tracey.anthony-winter@wndc.org.uk .