

## **Supplementary Papers**

# **Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel**

held in the Virtual meeting viewable by weblink  
on Tuesday, 16 March 2021 at 6.30 pm

3. **Public participation** (Pages 146 - 147)

The attached public questions have been received.

## Growth Board Scrutiny Panel Public speakers

16 March 2021



### Question

#### 1. Suzanne McIvor on behalf of Cherwell Development Watch Alliance

a. Growth Assumptions: The single most significant factor in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will be how much new development is to be provided for. This could range from meeting the needs of the existing population of the county to pursuing a policy to promote a high level of growth (encouraging migration of people and jobs into the county). The next consultation, which we have been told will include options, should therefore include policy options on the level of growth to be planned for.

Can the Scrutiny Panel obtain assurances from the Growth Board that the Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation will give real policy options on the level of growth planned for Oxfordshire?

b. Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA): Assumptions relating to need and any policy choices to pursue growth beyond local need are fundamental to the plan. However, we have been told that the OGNA will not be available until the start of the Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation in just a few months' time. Given the significance of this document I don't think it is unreasonable to ask to see it before the consultation starts. This is work that has been paid for by the taxpayer and should not be withheld without good reason. The original date set for the OGNA is long past, so I hope it is now completed and finalised. However, if it is still in a draft form it should be possible to provide at least one of: a meaningful interim report (with numbers); a summary of initial findings; or a draft report.

Will the Scrutiny Panel ask Oxfordshire Growth Board to release the OGNA (or some meaningful interim information) immediately?

c. OGNA / ICENI: The OGNA contract was originally awarded to IcenI. In response to a Freedom of Information request, in November 2019, we were told that we were not able to see any output from that work and that '*it is anticipated that the completed paper is likely to be published for the next stage of public consultation which is timetabled for Spring 2020*'. We are now in Spring 2021 and assume that the contractor received payment for this work.

In the interests of public accountability could the Scrutiny Panel obtain an explanation for this together with publication of, at least, a meaningful summary of that work and its conclusions?

d. Environmental Concerns: I went to a Growth Board Review Workshop in November 2019. Whilst it was disappointing to see that the Growth Board thought it was acceptable to review itself, I was slightly encouraged to see that this review was taking place. The overriding messages that I took away from this workshop were that the groups involved were not content with (i) the emphasis on growth well in excess of local need and (ii) the total lack of representation from a group which had environmental concerns as its focus. As we approach the Part 2 Consultation, despite the concerns raised back in November 2019 and

also during more recent consultations, it seems that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will have been prepared without due representation on the environment.

Will the Scrutiny Panel ask the Growth Board to state exactly how the critically important environmental considerations in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 have been addressed, including details of the arrangements for representation on and consultation by the Growth Board?