

Supplementary Papers

Oxfordshire Growth Board

held in the First floor, 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB
on Tuesday, 8 June 2021 at 2.00 pm

4. **Public participation** (Pages 87 - 90)
For action: Copies of public questions and addresses are attached.
5. **Growth Board Scrutiny Panel update** (Pages 91 - 97)
For action: To receive any recommendations from the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 1 June 2021. (To follow)
8. **Housing and Growth Deal Advisory Group Updates**
 - (a) **Infrastructure Advisory Group update** (Pages 98 - 100)
For information: To note an update from the Infrastructure Advisory Group meeting held on 26 May 2021.

Public speakers

8 June 2021



1. Suzanne McIvor on behalf of Cherwell Development Watch Alliance¹

In April 2021 all of Oxfordshire's Local Authorities agreed the Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire.

The principles in the Strategic Vision, which we are told '*reflect local people's opinions and priorities*' (i) have not been the subject of any statutory consultation.

Despite the Growth Board's announcements to the contrary (ii), we are concerned that the Strategic Vision will not have any effective influence on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (OP2050), or in fact any other future plans or strategies. Our reasoning on this is as follows:

OP 2050 will be the subject of a Regulation 18, part 2 consultation in the summer of 2021. This spatial plan supposedly has the Strategic Vision as its 'cornerstone'. (iii)

Yet at the same time, in the summer of 2021, Growth Board Officers have said (iv) that they will be working on the Strategic Vision and in particular on how to measure success, appropriate reporting and when it will be appropriate to review and update the Strategic Vision.

Can the Growth Board explain how the Strategic Vision can be a 'cornerstone' of OP2050 if fundamental aspects of the Strategic Vision, such as measuring outcomes and reporting, will still be incomplete during the period when OP2050 is undergoing the Regulation 18, part 2 consultation?

2. Suzanne McIvor on behalf of Cherwell Development Watch Alliance²

Growth Board Officers have indicated (v) that the relationship between the Strategic Vision and OP2050 might require legal opinion to ensure that it strengthens the Board's approach to strategic plan-making.

We suggest that the Strategic Vision, sitting as nothing more than a statement of ambition alongside the statutory OP2050, will not strengthen the Board's approach to strategic plan making.

In fact we predict a situation where growth targets for the next thirty years (economic and housing) are 'set in stone' via OP2050 but the protection of ensuring this is 'Good Growth' is offered by the Strategic Vision which will be subject to unilateral review and updating by the Growth Board.

- a) Has the Board clarified its thinking on whether the Strategic Vision strengthens the Board's approach to strategic plan-making and if so what is the result?
- b) Has legal opinion been sought? If not, why not and when will legal opinion be sought?

¹ See endnotes/references at end of this document

² See endnotes/references at end of this document

3. Michael Tyce on behalf of CPRE Oxfordshire (address)

It is CPRE's happy task today to congratulate the Growth Board for its expressed commitment to keep planning decisions regarding the notional Arc within the control of the relevant local authorities, in its response to the Scrutiny Committee point six.

It is not only right and just that planning decisions should only be made by the representatives of the people most affected – that is, those of us who already live and work here – but it is the only position consistent with the commitment in the 2050 Vision that future plans will be “Oxfordshire-specific and reflective of local people's views.

Nevertheless, there is also room for concern in the Growth Board's response, which is at best capable of misinterpretation. Scrutiny recommends that “local planning decisions should be for local authorities”. That could be taken to mean all planning decisions that affect people locally or just those deemed to be within the competence of local authorities by MHCLG. The Growth Board responds that planning decisions should be taken “at the right level”. Who decides what the right level is? What does the phrase “planning decisions” encompass? Is it in the narrow sense of responses to planning applications, or in the widest sense as including spatial strategies?

At the heart of this is whether in principle plans for the Arc will be bottom up – starting with the informed wishes of local people, with decisions made by locally elected representatives, with only unavoidably central decisions like the routes of railways made centrally, and then by local authorities in concert rather than imposed by Government; or whether it will be top down with detailed strategies decided in London, issued as policies, and local authorities able only to decide the minutiae of detail, metaphorically the colour of the door knockers, even then constrained by Government mandated design guide policy.

We all deserve to know clearly how this process is to be conducted, not just because it so personally affects us all but because in practical terms it is essential to get hearts and minds on board from the start – especially as we have already been promised (to repeat) that the future will be Oxfordshire specific and reflective of local people's views. It is unfortunate that there is so much room for misinterpretation, and it is recommended that the Growth Board should revise and amplify its statement against OxCam Arc Recommendation 6 to make it clear and unequivocal.

It is also unfortunate that in the spirit of engagement and transparency, the spatial options emerging for the 2050 Plan, which the committee considered in mid-March, had not already been consulted on with stakeholders like CPRE or with the public. The earlier the engagement the more closely the public will feel part of the process, and, indeed, who knows, the public and stakeholders could have valuable insights to offer, and might indeed have supported options that will have been rejected internally before the consultations officially begin.

CPRE recognises the need for economic growth and its potential to benefit both urban and country people. We applaud the 2050 Vision in recognising that the environment is an equal priority – not least as Oxfordshire's economic success is largely attributable to its unique quality. So too is people's quality of life. These must be absolute constraints on the amount of Arc development that our County should accommodate, especially as we have already done our share through the Growth Deal and need to preserve the exceptional qualities of Oxfordshire for future generations.

A vital ingredient in that mix is that the people most affected – those of us here already – feel engaged throughout in the process and can be assured that decisions affecting our lives will be taken to the greatest practicable extent with their our participation.

4. Ian Ashley on behalf of Need Not Greed Oxfordshire

We are hopefully coming through a time when our lifestyle and expectations have been changed by the Covid pandemic, which has highlighted the importance of good public health and local determination.

Is now the time for you, as our elected local leaders, to start joining up your thinking around climate change and the natural world, recognising the need for only sufficient economic prosperity to meet the needs of people and planet? This would require you to push back on government action to overheat the southeast rather than keep their election promise to level up the UK. It would also mean you would have to look to face up to the challenge of how to deal with the chronic under-funding from central government that previous elected local leaders tried and failed to resolve by committing to build houses that are way beyond local need. Is the logical extension of this position that Oxfordshire local authorities should now withdraw from the Arc Leaders Group, which looks set to entrench rather than resolve these problems?

5. Councillor Jane Murphy, (South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council) (address)

Thank you chair for allowing me to address the Growth Board. I will be short, and to the point.

As a previous Chair of the Board, I recognise that it is an onerous responsibility, one where the good work achieved by the Board is often hidden and incorrect pre-conceptions about the role of the Board tend to dominate. However, I wanted to congratulate Cllr Smith on her time as Chair, and the manner in which she has represented not only this Board, but residents across Oxfordshire. The work of this Board in taking forward a positive environmental agenda, building on the work of the climate emergencies declared by the local district and city councils has been pleasing to see.

This work is vital, and it is with pride that I recall I was Chair of this board when my own Council, of which I was then Leader, declared a climate emergency and I would commend the Board and the officers across Oxfordshire who have undertaken the work needed to achieve delivery of our collective aim to take forward policies and approaches that will support us to reach net zero and increase bio-diversity. It is clear that working with the Ox-Cam Arc, which is far from being our enemy and will be key to our achieving this, is vital and the impact of our officers, and of Cllr Smith on arc policy development is clear and I wish to applaud that.

Cllr Emily Smith has led this board with distinction, and with fairness to all parties, councils and partners – however, as she has said at this board before, I feel that its name – the Growth Board - is misleading and the cause of considerable confusion, after all the predominate ‘power’ of this meeting is to share information and to develop collective influence. Can I suggest that it would be fitting, as the Chair moves on to another, for the next meeting of the Board to reconsider its name, and to look forward with ever increasing positivity about the role it can play in the promotion and delivery of climate and ecological recovery.

ENDNOTES/REFERENCES to Questions 1 and 2.

i) Extract from the Growth Board website at 14th May 2021: *Oxfordshire's Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainable Development sets out what future growth in Oxfordshire should look like based on improving social, environmental, and economic wellbeing for all. It prioritises tackling climate change and reflects local people's opinions and priorities as given through a range of engagement exercises. The Vision provides a number of shared ambitions that reflect the priorities of the county, underpinned by a definition of 'good growth' and a set of Guiding Principles.....*

ii) Extract from the Growth Board website at 14th May 2021: *Now the strategic vision has been agreed, it will not replace or set the specific vision for any individual communities or partner organisations but instead will act as a framework for future plans and strategies for Oxfordshire, such as the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.*

iii) Extract from Supplementary Papers, Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel, held in the Virtual meeting viewable by weblink on Tuesday, 16 March 2021 at 6.30 pm, pdf page 7, para 34 states in respect of the Strategic Vision: *'It is hoped that this balanced statement of ambition reflecting the priorities of the county will become the cornerstone of all future plans and strategies for Oxfordshire.'*

iv) As for iii above but pdf page 6, para 31 states: *'The next steps will then be consideration of how we will measure progress against the ambitions of the Vision. Officers intend to develop a business case for this next phase of the project over the summer of 2021. This will include agreement of how we measure success, appropriate reporting of these and when it would be appropriate to review and update the Vision, something that was supported in the engagement process'.*

v) As for iii above but pdf page 7, para 33 states: *'Although the Vision is explicitly non statutory, the Board will recall that in the October report introducing the Vision, officers suggested that the relationship between the Vision and OxPlan may require legal opinion to ensure that it strengthens our approach to strategic plan-making. Once the Board endorses the Vision officers leading the OxPlan will consider whether commissioning this advice is appropriate and report any conclusion through reports on the Oxplan.*

To: Oxfordshire Growth Board
Date: 8 June 2021
Report of: Growth Board Scrutiny Panel
Title of Report: Recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel meeting on 1 June 2021

Purpose of report:	To present recommendations from the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 1 June 2021 to the Growth Board.
Scrutiny Lead:	Councillor Andrew Gant, Chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel.
Recommendation:	That the Oxfordshire Growth Board states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report.
Appendix:	1. Growth Board response template to Scrutiny recommendations.

Introduction and overview

1. The Scrutiny Panel would like to thank Sarah Haywood (Managing Director, Advanced Oxford), Ahmed Goga (Director of Strategy & Programmes, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership), Richard Byard (Director of Business Development, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership), Andrew Down (Oxfordshire Growth Board Director), Stefan Robinson (Oxfordshire Growth Board Manager) for presenting and attending the meeting to answer questions.
2. The Panel discussed the Growth Board’s to response to Scrutiny Panel Recommendation 1 at its previous meeting on the 22 March 2021 which asked the Growth Board to ensure the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA) work is published as soon as that work is completed; or clarify the reasons and timescale for publishing it as part of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 public consultation. The Board’s response to that recommendation was that OGNA was not yet complete due to changes being incorporated in light of the ever-changing circumstances caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.
3. The Panel also noted at its meeting on 1 June that the OGNA was due to be published in approximately 4 weeks’ time, however it deemed that it was

important to allow a maximum amount of time for the consultees to review this assessment and all supporting evidence based documents before responding to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 regulation 18 Part 2 public consultation. The Panel then decided to repeat the above-mentioned recommendation and reiterate its importance which was also emphasised by a public address to the Scrutiny Panel.

Recommendation 1: That the Growth Board ensures that the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment work is published earlier than scheduled along with all supporting evidence based documents which would allow the maximum amount of time for consultees to review the document and also ensuring there is a genuine choice of all realistic options rather than presenting a fait accompli to the consultees responding to the Regulation 18 Part 2 public consultation.

4. The Panel received a presentation on 'Powering up the Green Recovery' from Sarah Haywood and Ahmed Goga. The Panel noted that the presentation suggested there was a lack of larger office spaces and labs space in Oxford City centre for start-ups. The Panel voiced its concern that increases in total office space in the centre of Oxford would encourage increased car journeys and would be incompatible with the Growth Board's ambitions to reduce carbon emissions as outlined in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision and the commitments of individual councils.
5. The Panel also discussed that one of the alternatives would be to focus on areas with good rail links in areas such as Bicester and Banbury to Oxford city to promote the creation and development of employment space which is in line with local aims for development countywide. Furthermore, the Panel also discussed that it is important for places of Science and Innovation such as Culham and Oxford's Universities are connected to the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) companies such as the ones based at Howbery Park by sustainable means of transport such as cycle lanes and routes, light passenger railways and autonomous vehicles.

Recommendation 2: That the Growth Board, in its consideration of Advanced Oxford's report on Powering Up for the Green Recovery, considers the Scrutiny Panel's feedback set out below. The Board is encouraged to reflect how these views can inform key future plans and strategies:

- i. **Future Growth Board work and strategies should consider how any increase in total office space can remain compatible with the long-term carbon reduction ambitions of the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision, and the wider need to design any future Oxford city employment spaces to be car-free and include facilities for sustainable travel**
- ii. **There needs to be a balance of focus on areas outside Oxford City along the knowledge spine within the Oxford- Cambridge Arc to promote the creation and development of employment space in areas with good rail links to Oxford such as Bicester and Banbury.**

- iii. **There needs to be a focus on sustainable means of transport such as cycle lanes and routes, light passenger railways and autonomous vehicles when designing new spin-out and high-tech spaces. In addition revisiting recommendation 3 made on 16th March 2021 that the Growth Board undertake further work to understand the impact that changes in local rail services do and may have on modal shift with regards to personal car use, consideration should be given to the building of new trains stations on existing lines in areas such as Kidlington- Begbroke-Yarnton.**
 - iv. **In placemaking, consider designing communities, employment spaces, housing, and transport options holistically, especially in light of changes to working practices in a post-pandemic world and how it is likely to reduce levels of commuting in the long term.**
6. The Panel also received a report from Richard Byard presenting an Overview of the local Skills Landscape. The Panel noted Oxfordshire's key skills needs and shortages, and that there is a demand for higher technical skills which is not being satisfied by the existing education and skills system. The Panel also discussed continuous or lifelong learning and upskilling which is crucial to people with gaps in their employment and also the need attract young people to Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) fields and other wealth creating industries. The Panel also briefly discussed barriers in learning and the lack of diversity, especially gender-diversity in top jobs, in STEM sectors.

Recommendation 3: That the Growth Board in noting the Overview of Local Skills Landscape report undertakes to actively consider diversity of leadership, responsible business practices, attracting youth to Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) fields, and addressing traditional imbalances such as the under-representation of women in STEM based businesses.

Future Work

7. As well as reviewing the Growth Board's response to these recommendations at its next meeting on 12 July 2021, the Panel will also be considering in detail:
 - Report on Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire
 - Regional development updates within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc
 - Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation
 - Quarter 4 Year 3 (2020/21) Housing and Growth Deal Progress and Financial report

Report authors

Councillor Andrew Gant
Chair of the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel
Andrew.Gant@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Officer contact

Amit Alva
Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Officer
amit.alva@southandvale.gov.uk

**Growth Board Draft response to recommendations of the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel
Recommendations made on 1 June 2021**

The Growth Board is requested to provide a response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel for decision at its meeting on 8 June 2021.

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
<p>Recommendation 1: That the Growth Board ensures that the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment work is published earlier than scheduled along with all supporting evidence based documents which would allow the maximum amount of time for consultees to review the document and also ensuring there is a genuine choice of all realistic options rather than presenting a fait accompli to the consultees responding to the Regulation 18 Part 2 public consultation.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 2: That the Growth Board, in its consideration of Advanced Oxford's report on Powering Up for the Green Recovery, considers the Scrutiny Panel's feedback set out below. The Board is encouraged to reflect how these views can inform key future plans and strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Future Growth Board work and strategies should consider how any increase in total office space can remain compatible with the long-term carbon reduction ambitions of the Oxfordshire 		

<p>Strategic Vision, and the wider need to design any future Oxford city employment spaces to be car-free and include facilities for sustainable travel.</p> <p>ii. There needs to be a balance of focus on areas outside Oxford city along the knowledge spine within the Oxford - Cambridge Arc to promote the creation and development of employment space in areas with good rail links to Oxford such as Bicester and Banbury.</p> <p>iii. There needs to be a focus on sustainable means of transport such as cycle lanes and routes, light passenger railways and autonomous vehicles when designing new spin-out and high-tech spaces. In addition revisiting recommendation 3 made on 16th March 2021, that the Growth Board undertake further work to understand the impact that changes in local rail services do and may have on modal shift with regards to personal car use, consideration should be given to the building of new train stations on existing lines in areas such as Kidlington-Begbroke-Yarnton.</p> <p>iv. In placemaking, consider designing communities, employment spaces, housing, and transport options holistically, especially in light of changes to working practices in a post-pandemic</p>		
---	--	--

<p>world and how it is likely to reduce levels of commuting in the long term.</p> <p>Recommendation 3: That the Growth Board in noting the Overview of Local Skills Landscape report undertakes to actively consider diversity of leadership, responsible business practices, attracting youth to Science Technology Engineering Mathematics (STEM) fields, and addressing traditional imbalances such as the under-representation of women in STEM based businesses.</p>		
---	--	--

Notes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Oxfordshire Growth Board Infrastructure Advisory Group

**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26 MAY 2021 AT 11.00 AM
VIRTUAL VIA MS TEAMS**

Present:

Members: Councillors , Pieter-Paul Barker, Duncan Enright, Alex Hollingsworth, Liz Leffman, Lynn Pratt, Judy Roberts and Phil Southall

Officers: Amit Alva, (Oxfordshire Growth Board), John Disley (Infrastructure Strategy & Policy Manager, Oxfordshire County Council), Rose Sutton (Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator, Oxfordshire County Council), Hannah Battye (Head of Infrastructure Delivery, Oxfordshire County Council), Kevin Jacob (Oxfordshire Growth Board) and Paul Staines, (Interim Head of Programme)

1 Introductions & welcome to new members; Apologies for absence and notifications of substitutions

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor Ed Turner substituted by Councillor Alex Hollingsworth and apologies from Councillor Jeff Haine.

2 Appointment of temporary Chair for this sub-group meeting

Councillor Liz Leffman was appointed Temporary Chair for the meeting.

3 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Role of the Infrastructure Sub-Group; Terms of Reference

The role of the Infrastructure Advisory Group and its Terms of Reference were noted by the group.

5 Notes of the previous meeting

The notes of the meeting held on 1 March 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

6 Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy Stage 1 Update

The advisory group considered an update, introduced by John Disley, Infrastructure Strategy and Delivery Manager, Oxfordshire County Council, on the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) which aims to set out the infrastructure needs for Oxfordshire to 2040 forming part of the evidence base for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The report produced by City Science followed the completion of OxIS stage 1 up to the year 2040 ahead of its public and stakeholder consultation. OxIS stage 2 would continue to be aligned with the aim of complementing and providing evidence base for the emerging Oxon Plan 2050. The report was delivered by Jo Muncaster and Laurence Oakes-Ash from City Science with support from officers. The advisory was updated on several aspects of stage 1:

- The OxIS stage 1 considers infrastructure schemes to 2040 within existing Districts' Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDP), Local plans and also wider sources such as Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP), Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and utility providers applying a 'needs-based approach' appraisal aligned to OxIS themes to re-prioritise strategic infrastructure schemes. It also aligns itself with Regulation 18, part 2 of the Oxfordshire Plan Consultation and the District Local Plans forecast.
- The group was also updated on Growth trajectory to 2040 on local housing projections beyond 2020 and projected increase in population by 2030, in addition the group was also presented with data on remaining approximate allocated strategic employment floorspace during core Local Plan periods within Oxfordshire towns and rural communities. The group was also presented with a table of Oxfordshire's future needs to 2040 with key policies and strategies on the core OxIS themes of Environment, Health, Place-Shaping, Productivity and Connectivity.
- The group was also presented with data on Strategic Infrastructure Scheme Identification and Outcomes in addition to focusing on gaps and additional scheme requirements to 2040. The methodology used for the multicriteria OxIS scheme appraisal and new & emerging funding streams for deliverability were also outlined.

In discussion, members discussed the need for clarity on timescales and objective scoring for the projects, it was agreed that City Science would provide standardisation of the results and a summary report and scheme list would be circulated to members and officers. In addition, member also felt the need to assess the approach, progress and output including next steps which would be included as a full technical report.

The group also discussed the need to fill some of the gaps in the outlined Infrastructure schemes such as health infrastructure with regards to hospitals in areas including Banbury and transport link to surgeries in Bicester, intra urban cycle routes, building innovation, employment land and transport hubs. The group noted that OxIS was developed prior to the gap analysis done by City Science in this update which was in its early stages and OxIS stage 2 alignment to Oxfordshire Plan 2050 would be key in looking at spatial options with high level principles and more detailed specific infrastructure schemes at a granular level.

Members also discussed infrastructure opportunities in rural areas in relation to environmental travel access and other Highway projects such as A34 improvements, the

group noted that there are current ongoing efforts in lobbying the Department for Transport (DFT), however the objectives of DFT are to co-ordinate improvements by bringing together smaller infrastructure projects like Kennington Bridge and Lodge Hill. The group also discussed the need to look at water resources especially River Thames as an avenue for infrastructure projects.

Officers welcomed feedback on gaps in infrastructure schemes and further feedback including on OxIS public & stake holder consultation. It was agreed that OxIS Stage 1 Summary and Technical Report and Scheme List would be circulated in due course, previous figures of participation through the Open Thought portal would also be produced and circulated, in addition the Infrastructure Advisory Group would be considered as a pilot for the OxIS public and stakeholder consultation.

7 Infrastructure Sub-Group Forward Programme

The group noted items on the forward programme which is an update on the Local Transport and Connectivity linked to OxIS and Infrastructure Programme Delivery reports.

8 Dates of next virtual meetings

The dates of future meetings in the Agenda were noted except for 31 August 2021 which may be subject to change due to alignment with next stage of OxIS to allow for reporting.

The meeting closed at 12.40 pm

