

Supplementary Papers

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership

Scrutiny Panel

held in the Virtual meeting viewable by weblink
on Monday, 13 March 2023 at 6.30 pm

6. **Arrangements for Managing the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal**
(Pages 2 - 3)

Copy of a letter sent from Rt Hon Lucy Fraser KC MP, Minister of State for Housing and Planning, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to the Leaders of Oxfordshire local authorities.

Agenda Item 6



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Cllr Barry Wood
Stephen Chandler,
Cllr Liz Leffman,
Cllr Susan Brown,
Cllr David Rouane and
Cllr Emily Smith.

Rt Hon Lucy Frazer KC MP
Minister of State for Housing and Planning

Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

www.gov.uk/dluhc

Cc: Layla Moran MP, John Howell MP, Anneliese
Dodds MP, Victoria Prentis MP,
David Johnston MP and Robert Courts MP

05 December 2022

Dear leaders,

Thank you for Councillor Wood's letter of 2 November, written on your behalf to the Secretary of State about the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. I have been asked to reply as this matter falls within my ministerial responsibilities.

As you know, the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal was a flagship announcement by my predecessors that signalled both Oxfordshire and the Government's commitment to transformative housing and growth in the county. It put you at the forefront of supporting the critical jobs and industries that your county has rightly championed, but also showed genuine leadership in tackling the housing and affordability challenge. My predecessors wholeheartedly supported you in that agenda.

However, progress since that point has not been as positive as we had hoped for. The Deal set out two commitments by the Oxfordshire authorities: the submission and adoption of a joint statutory spatial plan and to plan for and support the delivery of 100,000 new homes between 2011 and 2031 – backed up with a credible plan for delivery. With your abandonment of the joint statutory spatial plan and the delay to your Local Plans (with some districts now planning to deliver this number of homes to a 2036 timetable), the Oxfordshire authorities have failed to deliver on both of these commitments. Further, I note that the affordable housing funding was not fully utilised and that the Housing for Infrastructure funding requires a significant time extension to be delivered as envisaged.

The Delivery Plan is clear that Government may withhold funding if milestones have not been met, as they have not been. However, given the housing affordability pressures and the need for additional affordable housing, I am willing to release further funding, but only in line with a much firmer grip on delivery by the Accountable Body (which I understand is Oxfordshire County Council [OCC]).

To that end, the remaining £30 million Housing for Infrastructure funding will only be released subject to the following conditions:

- OCC S151 to confirm that all recycled funds have been returned to the programme and spent before further funding will be provided;

- OCC S151 to confirm any changes to the anticipated spend and housing delivery profile for the next 3 years (22/23-24/25) on a quarterly basis (February/May/August/November, unless otherwise agreed);
- OCC S151 to confirm expenditure on qualifying 'Housing from Infrastructure' schemes in-year on a quarterly basis (February/May/August/November, unless otherwise agreed), payment to be made in arrears;
- No funding will be available beyond FY24/25, Oxfordshire authorities to cover any expenditure beyond this date, or reconsider which projects to prioritise if necessary;
- Oxfordshire authorities remain responsible for funding any cost increases in project/programme spend;
- As part of quarterly monitoring, Oxfordshire authorities to provide an update on Local Plan progress; and
- To agree with my officials the format for detailed monitoring.

I expect Oxfordshire districts to work with the county council to ensure timely provision of the necessary information to my officials. Based on the information that has been provided, unless agreed otherwise with my officials, we will assume the following profile:

Scheme type	Accelerated housing by end FY22/23	Accelerated housing FY23/24	Accelerated housing FY24/25	Total housing supported
Housing from Infrastructure	5487	1398	1588	8473
Schools/other	905	118	103	1126

	FY22/23	FY23/24	FY24/25	Total
Anticipated further expenditure required once capital recycled*	£0m	£14.5m*	£15.5m*	£30m*

* Subject to qualifying Housing from Infrastructure schemes.

As requested, I would also like to understand the approximate percentage of affordable housing unlocked by the Housing for Infrastructure programme.

I am copying this letter to the Members for Oxfordshire.

Yours sincerely,



RT HON LUCY FRAZER KC MP