

# Agenda



## **The Future Oxfordshire Partnership, (formerly the Oxfordshire Growth Board)**

**Monday 20 September 2021 at 3.00 pm**  
**Virtual meeting viewable by weblink**

Contact: Kevin Jacob, Future Oxfordshire Partnership Democratic Services Officer

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### **Members**

Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council

Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council

Leader of Cherwell District Council

(which holds the Vice-Chair)

Leader of Oxford City Council

Leader of Oxfordshire County Council

Leader of West Oxfordshire District Council

(which holds the Chair)

Chair, OxLEP

Chair, Oxfordshire Skills Board

Universities representative

OxLEP business representative - Bicester

OxLEP business representative – Oxford City

OxLEP business representative – Science Vale

Homes England representative

Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

Environment Agency representative

Councillor Sue Cooper

Councillor Emily Smith

Councillor Barry Wood

Councillor Susan Brown

Councillor Liz Leffman

Councillor Michele Mead

Jeremy Long

Adrian Lockwood

Professor Alistair Fitt

Miranda Markham

Peter Nolan

Angus Horner

Catherine Turner

Dr David Chapman

Emma Hill

### *Notes:*

1. *To watch this meeting, follow this link to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership's YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/WKOzvAjQNIQ>. Arrangements are subject to change at short notice so please refer to the agenda page at <http://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=635&MId=2976>*
2. *One member, one vote for each constituent local authority member only.*

## AGENDA

### 1. **Apologies for absence; declarations of interest and Chair's announcement**

### 2. **Minutes** (Pages 6 - 14)

To adopt as a correct record the minutes of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership meeting held on 19 July 2020.

### 3. **Public participation**

#### **Asking a question and addressing the Partnership**

Questions or requests to make an address (in full and in writing) must be received by **5pm on 14 September 2021**, three clear working days before the Future Oxfordshire Partnership meeting.

Questions and addresses should be no longer than one side of A4 paper in Arial 12 font. The address or question will be circulated to the Partnership and public speakers will be invited to speak at the meeting. Written submissions may also be read out by the Chair or Democratic Services Officer where requested or if the person making the request for public speaking is not able to attend the meeting. A response may be given at the meeting or a written answer supplied. The Chair will have discretion to manage the public participation procedure as they see appropriate. Questions and notice of addresses must be submitted to [democratic.services@oxfordshiregrowthboard.org](mailto:democratic.services@oxfordshiregrowthboard.org)

Note: This meeting may be recorded for live broadcast. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm the meeting is being filmed. By registering to speak you are consenting to being recorded and to the use of those video and audio recordings for webcasting.

### 4. **Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel update** (Pages 15 - 16)

To receive any recommendations from the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 13 September 2021.

### 5. **Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan Update** (Pages 17 - 41)

**For information:** To consider an update on the progress of the Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan, overseen by the Economic Recovery Task Group, and the headline performance of the Oxfordshire economy as it emerges from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 6. **Housing and Growth Deal Reports**

#### (a) **Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Progress Report - Quarter 1 , Year 4** (Pages 42 - 50)

**For information:** To receive the Quarter 1, Year 4 progress report for the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and endorse any amendments to the programme of work as necessary.

- (b) **Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Financial Report Quarter 1, Year 4** (Pages 51 - 56)

**For information:** To receive a financial summary for Quarter 1, Year 4 for the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.

- (c) **Housing Advisory Group update** (Pages 57 - 60)

**For information:** To receive an update from the Housing Advisory Group. Summary notes from the meeting held on 1 September 2021 are attached.

- (d) **Oxfordshire Plan 2050 sub-group update** (Pages 61 - 68)

**For information:** To receive an update from the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Group. Summary notes from the meetings held on 15 July 2021 and 12 August 2021 are attached.

- (e) **Environment Advisory Group update** (Pages 69 - 72)

**For information:** To receive an update from the Environment Advisory Group. Summary notes from the meeting held on 3 August 2021 are attached.

## 7. **The Oxford to Cambridge Arc Vision Consultation** (Pages 73 - 82)

**For action:** To consider a draft response on behalf of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership to HM Government's consultation on a draft Vision for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.

## 8. **Oxford to Cambridge Arc Update** (Verbal Report)

**For information:** To receive any relevant updates from the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Director concerning developments within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.

## 9. **Future Oxfordshire Partnership Forward Plan** (Pages 83 - 84)

**For information:** To note and comment on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership's Forward Plan.

## 10. **Updates on matters relevant to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership**

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership members and officers may verbally update the Board on progress on matters previously before the Board for consideration, listed in the forward plan, or relevant to the Board's future decisions. This is for the sharing of information and no decisions will be taken.

## 11. **Appointment to England's Economic Heartland Strategic Leadership Group**

**For action:** To note that England's Economic Heartland has adopted a revised governance model, consolidating the Strategic Transport Forum and the Leaders Group meetings into one, provisionally titled the "Strategic Transport Leadership Board."

The new Terms of Reference provide for the Future Oxfordshire Partnership to appoint

one representative to the new Board as a non-voting associate member, and the meeting is asked to appoint a representative for 2021/2022

## 12. Dates of next meetings

The dates of current confirmed Future Oxfordshire Partnership meetings are below. Please refer to for the most up to date information at [www.futureoxfordshirepartnership.org](http://www.futureoxfordshirepartnership.org) on times and locations.

- ~~23 November 2021~~, (now 30 November 2021)
- 25 January 2022
- 22 March 2022
- 7 June 2022
- 26 July 2022

## Councillors' duties on declaring interests

### General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

### What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your\* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the council's area; licences for land in the council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's register of interests which is publicly available on the council's website.

### Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your register of interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

### Member's Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Councillors' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". What this means is that the matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

\*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member themselves, but also those of the member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.



# Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE



## **Future Oxfordshire Partnership (formerly the Oxfordshire Growth Board)**

**HELD ON MONDAY 19 JULY 2021 AT 2.00 PM  
COUNCIL CHAMBER OF CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL, BODICOTE  
HOUSE, BODICOTE, BANBURY OX15 4AA.**

[Link to watch the meeting](#)

### **Present:**

Councillor Michele Mead (Chair), (West Oxfordshire District Council), Councillor Susan Brown, (Oxford City Council), Councillor Sue Cooper, (South Oxfordshire District Council), Professor Alistair Fitt, (Universities representative), Emma Hill, (Environment Agency), Councillor Liz Leffman, (Oxfordshire County Council), Adrian Lockwood, (Oxfordshire Skills Board Chair), Peter Nolan, (OxLEP business representative - Oxford City), Councillor Emily Smith, (Vale of White Horse District Council), Catherine Turner (Homes England) and Councillor Barry Wood, (Vice-Chair), (Cherwell District Council)

**Officers:** Andrew Down (Future Oxfordshire Partnership Director), Daisy Gladstone, (Future Oxfordshire Partnership), Ahmed Goga (Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership), Caroline Green (Oxford City Council CEX), Susan Harbour, (South and Vale Councils), Giles Hughes (West Oxfordshire District Council CEX), Yvonne Rees (Oxfordshire and Cherwell District Council CEX), Stefan Robinson (Future Oxfordshire Partnership), Paul Staines (Oxfordshire Growth Deal Team) and Nigel Tipple (Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership CEX)

**Other councillors:** None.

### **14. Apologies for absence; declarations of interest and Chair's announcements**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Jeremy Long, Miranda Markham, Angus Horner and Dr Kiren Collison. There were no declarations of interest.

### **15. Minutes**

The minutes were confirmed as a correct and accurate record.

## **16. Public participation**

The Chair explained that two questions had been received from members of the public – these were available on the Growth Board’s website. The first was from David Young on behalf of Need Not Greed Oxfordshire, and the second from Helen Marshall on behalf of CPRE Oxfordshire. Both referred to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. In the absence of public speakers at the meeting, and to expedite proceedings, the Chair explained that written responses to these questions would be published online.

## **17. Growth Board Scrutiny Panel update**

Stefan Robinson, Oxfordshire Growth Board Manager, provided a summary of the eight recommendations received from the Scrutiny Panel meeting on 12 July 2021.

The first two recommendations covered the issues of ensuring that the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report received good visibility and debate at a full council level, and the need to ensure a fast, but fair, transition to net zero.

Recommendations three and four concerned advocating for the discontinuation of gas boilers and the promotion of land use for solar energy generation. The Panel specifically asked for the Board to write to HM Government asking for the discontinuation of gas boilers as soon as possible.

Recommendation five covered the issue of exploring opportunities to pilot ground source heating schemes within Oxfordshire. The final two recommendations covered the integration of zero carbon building standards into the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, and a request to engage local councillors and community groups to identify the most effective locations to distribute physical consultation documents.

The Chair provided the Growth Board’s response to each of the eight recommendations, which would be published on the Growth Board’s website after the meeting. In summary, the Chair confirmed that:

- The Growth Board’s Environment Advisory Group would be reviewing the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report. Each council representative could then give consideration as to how the report might be used to drive action within their own organisation. In addition, the Group would be asked to consider how action can be taken to ensure that Oxfordshire transitions to net zero without negatively impacting disadvantaged communities.
- The notes of that meeting would be reported back to the Scrutiny Panel.
- Recommendations relating to individual Local Planning Authorities’ Local Plans were matters best discussed by those authorities rather than the Growth Board.
- The Board would write to HM Government offering support for the discontinuation of fossil fuelled gas boilers as soon as possible – while noting that there were ambitions at a national level to do this. The letter would, however, (by building on the evidence base set out in the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report) reference the need for stronger legislation to improve the energy efficiency of new and existing homes
- With respect to ground source heating initiatives, the Board itself did not have the resources available to undertake such a project.
- The Board agreed that opportunities to lock in zero carbon building standards should be explored through the development of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Decisions on such

matters would, however, be reserved for individual local authorities and be subject to consultation.

- Given the imminent need to publish and deliver materials, there was not sufficient time remaining in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 consultation programme to reassess material drop locations.

## **18. Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report**

The Chair invited Stefan Robinson, Oxfordshire Growth Board Manager, to introduce this item. Mr Robinson explained that while the summary document was included in the agenda, a hyperlink to the full report could be found in both the agenda pack and online. The Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report had been commissioned by 12 public, private and community organisations – including the six Oxfordshire councils – and been developed by the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford. It built upon a 2014 report concerning the low carbon economy.

All of Oxfordshire's councils had either declared or acknowledged a climate change emergency and the recently agreed Oxfordshire Strategic Visions had contained a range of environmental commitments. The Pathways Report was considered a comprehensive and independent evidence base that would become central to climate change policy thinking and delivery. It was, therefore, important that it gained a high profile among partner organisations.

Sam Hampton, Lead Author of the Pathways report from the Environmental Change Institute, explained that the 2014 Low Carbon Economy report highlighted opportunities to grow the sector and the competitive advantage that Oxfordshire has in this area. However, the context was now very different, and carbon reduction innovations are no longer a subset of the wider economy, but central to it. Oxfordshire is on track to achieve a 50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030. Solar energy is the most promising renewable asset available to Oxfordshire, and the report covers the need to ensure that land is allocated specifically for this purpose.

While progress has been made, the pathway to net zero will become increasingly difficult. Therefore, there needs to be a step change in the deployment of solar panels on rooftops and in fields. Moreover, the use of heat pumps must be scaled up significantly to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels for heating – these can, however, only work effectively if they are installed in energy efficient properties.

Sam explained that the report identified three pathways to net zero. The first focussed on social, behavioural, and cultural change, where residents are highly engaged in the process. The second has a technological focus, relying on innovations in areas such as hydrogen power. And the third is Oxfordshire Leading the Way, leading nationally on low carbon innovation and going faster than elsewhere to reduce emissions.

Myth busting was an important issue to consider, and the report brings clarity to the public discourse. For example, achieving net zero by 2050 was said to be very difficult, and achieving it well before then will be even more so. There may be opportunities to align targets and work collectively in this area to support delivery.

Local Authority members of the Board offered their thanks and support for the report, which was expressed to be excellent, timely and thought provoking. Members were of the



view that there must be joined up working in carbon reduction across councils and partner organisation if targets are to be met, and there is already some excellent work underway across Oxfordshire, including with the universities.

Some members emphasised the importance of setting aside land specifically for solar energy production, and the significant scale and cost associated with retrofitting the existing housing stock to improve energy efficiency, including in public buildings. The report brought some needed clarity to these issues which would be helpful in informing the next stages of council work. However, there was a need for strong support from HM Government to deliver fully in this area, such as through more effective regulations. It was confirmed that the report would be presented to the Environment Advisory Group meeting on 3 August 2021, where it could be considered in more detail, with the aim of developing some practical areas of action that can be taken forward.

Peter Nolan, OxLEP Business Representative, explained that heat pumps and PV Solar Panels were considered expensive. The cost of these items must come down to increase uptake. The emphasis on local innovation in the report was welcomed, but he highlighted the need to stimulate a competitive UK market to make use of the commercial opportunities created by retrofitting programmes.

In response to the comments made, Dr Hampton explained that newly built homes would, for the most part, be compatible with heat pumps. The significant challenge in this area would be their efficiency in relation to existing homes. With regards to the use of hydrogen as a source of energy for transport, he suggested that this may not be deployable until the late 2030s. Therefore, there remained scope to increase electric vehicle take up in the medium term.

In concluding, Dr Hampton said that a further report in five years would provide a good opportunity to review progress and reassess the context of this work. He also offered support for the use of UK based companies which can provide energy saving products and innovations.

**RESOLVED:** That the Growth Board:

1. Welcomes the report as an authoritative evidence base for informing strategic planning in Oxfordshire with respect to local zero carbon ambitions.
2. Requests that the emerging Growth Board Environment Advisory Group consider the outcomes of the report at a future meeting.
3. Requests that each Growth Board member use the report to drive action at pace within their own organisations in the short and long term.

## **19. Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation**

Giles Hughes, Chief Executive of West Oxfordshire District Council, after giving thanks to the hard work of the team and partner councils, introduced the report. He explained that the development of a county wide spatial plan was an important step forward that was notable in a national context. The unique timeframe of the Plan also could help the county in meeting the long-term challenges that Oxfordshire faces.

Mr Hughes stated that Oxfordshire had received funding from HM Government to develop the Plan and were pleased to show good progress. It had been determined that it was now

an opportune moment to gather widespread feedback on the options document presented for consultation. He stressed that this exercise would be very important in informing the next steps in the progression of the project and, therefore, encouraged everybody to both respond to and promote the consultation. Mr Hughes emphasised that through this Plan, Oxfordshire could show what it wanted for the county's future and that this would feed into the wider context of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.

Adrian Colwell, Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Strategic Advisor, highlighted three main sections within the papers. The context and introduction set out the Plan's relationship with the Arc. This was followed by a policy section organised into five themes with 32 proposed policy options. Finally, there was five potential spatial options as to where future growth up to 2050 could be located in Oxfordshire. The Plan not only provided the opportunity to set out a long-term strategy for the county but could also be more ambitious than Local Plans in regard to issues such as climate change, healthy place shaping and zero carbon transport.

The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is closely aligned to both the ongoing work to refresh the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) and the development of a new Local Transport and Connectivity plan for Oxfordshire. It also builds upon the work the Local Industrial Strategy. The consultation will run from 30 July 2021 to 8 October 2021 and will primarily be web-based. In addition, there will be physical deposit locations across the county where people can access consultation materials and a series of both district-based and specialist workshops will also be held.

Paul Staines, Interim Head of Programme, in addition to thanking the team for producing the consultation materials, encouraged all partners to use their networks to promote the consultation as widely as possible.

Councillor Smith, Chair of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Group, also gave thanks to officers and members for their work to date. She said that it was an innovative document which had the issues of the environment and climate change at its heart. Furthermore, this was a genuine consultation presenting a series of options and it was, therefore, important that a wide range of people provided a response.

Catherine Turner, Homes England, explained that she was pleased to see this work come forward and would continue to support Oxfordshire in their work. Homes England were due to speak with Oxfordshire colleagues to discuss any pre-submission support that could be offered and looked forward to seeing the Regulation 19 document come forward in due course.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions. She highlighted that the recommendation under consideration was for the Growth Board to note and endorse the consultation document. It would be a decision for partner district councils to approve the draft plan for consultation later in July.

**RESOLVED:** That the Growth Board note and endorse the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation Document and ask partner district councils to approve the draft plan for consultation.

## **20. Renaming the Growth Board**

The Chair invited Andrew Down, Growth Board Director, to introduce the report. He explained that during the review of the Growth Board – undertaken in 2019/20 – several

suggestions were made about the Board changing its name. This issue resurfaced at the June 2021 Board meeting and it was requested that it be added to the agenda for this meeting. Officers had since consulted with members and the renaming option that had received the most support was the *Future Oxfordshire Partnership*. Mr Down confirmed that the Growth Board had the ability to change its own name and that it did not necessarily need to be the one suggested in the report.

Councillor Smith said that she advocated for changing the name as it did not accurately reflect the Board's role. As a body it made very few decisions and, therefore, the word Board was inaccurate. She argued that Partnership would be a much more suitable title. In addition, changing the name would show that the Board was listening and also that it was trying to be more open and transparent about its work. Nevertheless, it would have to be made clear to both HM Government and the public that a change in name did not mean an alteration to our terms of reference.

Councillor Leffman agreed. She explained that there had been a shift in emphasis in recent years away from economic growth and housing towards climate change and the environment. She stated that the Board needed to have a broader approach to planning for the future and that the proposed name change reflected that.

Councillor Brown explained that she supported using the word Partnership. She said that decisions at the Board were rare but that the name (and the perceptions of what it does) had caused challenges for communication. Moreover, since its creation the emphasis of the Board's work had changed. There was now an increased focus on working partnership. Councillor Brown did, however, highlight the need for the Board to not lose focus on addressing the big challenges, such as affordable housing and creating an inclusive economy, facing Oxfordshire.

Councillor Wood also mentioned the continued misapprehension about the role of the Board. He stated that although votes were rarely held, the perception was that they made numerous important decisions regarding the future of the county. He made clear that if the Board could continue to support progress on key issues around housing, the economy and climate change, then he was not concerned what name it used.

Alistair Fitt, Universities Representative, commented that the Growth Board was positively recognised by HM Government and that there was the potential to lose this if the name was changed. He also suggested that may be scope to reassess the name of the Board in conjunction with HM Government's potential review of the title of the emerging Arc Growth Body.

Adrian Lockwood, Skills Board Chair, supported Professor Fitt's comments. He expressed concerns about the potential to lose identity traction with HM Government.

Andrew Down commented that it was his belief that the name change could be managed with HM Government and would have a limited impact

Councillor Cooper supported many of the comments already made. She said that as the change in name was a communications exercise it was important to manage this with stakeholders. Further, as the alteration was for the benefit of local residents, she was happy to support it.

Although several members agreed that the Future Oxfordshire Partnership would not be everyone's first choice, it did, nevertheless, provide a better articulation of the role that the Board undertakes. The Chair noted the support for a name change and asked that for a short period the new name should be caveated with the phrase "formerly known as the Growth Board" in order to avoid confusion.

**RESOLVED:** That the Growth Board:

1. Be renamed as the Future Oxfordshire partnership, and authorises the Growth Board Director to make consequent changes to the Terms of Reference.
2. Notes that an implementation period will be required to update all relevant webpages, documents, and templates, before going live with the new name.

*Note: the name change will take effect hereafter in these minutes.*

## **21. Housing and Growth Deal Reports**

### **(a) Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Progress Report - Quarter 4, Year 3**

Paul Staines, Interim Head of Programme, introduced the report. He explained that it presented a positive picture of progress and that, therefore, Oxfordshire remained on target. Similar advances were also being made with both the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy refresh and the productivity strand of the Housing and Growth Deal. The infrastructure spend target for this year had been achieved and the Housing from Infrastructure trajectory remained on target (despite the challenges presented by the pandemic). The Affordable Housing Programme has entered its final year and it is possible that the full allocated amount will also be spent.

**RESOLVED:** That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes the progress as at Quarter 4, 2020/21 towards the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.

### **(b) Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Financial Report Quarter 4, Year 3**

**RESOLVED:** That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes the 2020/21 Quarter 4 financial report

### **(c) Infrastructure Advisory Group update**

Councillor Leffman, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council and Chair of the Infrastructure Advisory Group, highlighted that the OxIS consultation would be launched on 19 July 2021. She emphasised that volatility within the construction supply chain was having an impact on work and that this would need to be monitored going forward.

Councillor Leffman also thanked the Scrutiny Panel Task and Finish Group for their work on private investment in public infrastructure projects and supported their recommendation for inviting the UK Infrastructure Bank to attend a future meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership:

1. Notes the update.

2. Co-opts a representative of the Oxfordshire Strategic Transport Forum as a non-voting member of the Infrastructure Advisory Group for the 2021/2022 Growth Board year.

**(d) Housing Advisory Group update**

Councillor Brown passed, on behalf of the Advisory Group, her thanks to Councillor John Donaldson for his contributions to their work.

While she noted that many of the key items discussed had already been covered within this meeting, she could update them that the Group was looking into community-led housing. The key barriers to progressing this work were the need to establish a housing association and the high price of development in Oxfordshire. An update on HM Government's discounted market tenure was scheduled for the next meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes the update.

**(e) Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Group update**

Councillor Smith explained that at the previous meeting discussion had focussed on how to reach the maximum number of people through the consultation process. She also noted that the Advisory Group would be meeting as the consultation was ongoing to consider progress and to undertake more detailed post-consultation work planning.

**RESOLVED:** That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes the update.

**(f) Environment Advisory Group update**

Councillor Cooper explained that the Group's first meeting had been primarily focussed on organising and prioritising their work for the year. It had been agreed to concentrate upon climate change rather than nature recovery. This was designed to avoid any potential duplication between the work of the Advisory Group and that of the emerging Local Nature Partnership. This did not, however, mean that the issue of nature recovery would not be considered.

The Advisory Group, as part of their work programme, would next consider both the data available across the county to baseline carbon emissions and the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report. It was also hoped that communications support would be offered to the Group in the future.

**RESOLVED:** That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes the update.

## **22. Growth Board Forward Plan**

Stefan Robinson sought agreement for an update on the emerging Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) to be added to the Forward Plan for the September 2021 meeting. This would be brought forward by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

**RESOLVED:** That an update on the emerging Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan be added to the agenda for the next meeting in September 2021.

## **23. Updates on matters relevant to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership**

There were no updates.

## 24. Local Nature Partnership Update

Giles Hughes, Chief Executive of West Oxfordshire District Council, explained that several stakeholder events had been held to inform the development of a Local Nature Partnership (LNP) for Oxfordshire. Significant progress had been made in the last few months, leading to the development of a clear structure and composition of the Partnership with a broad range of representatives. The agreed purpose of the LNP was “to radically enhance nature, its positive impact on our climate and the priority it is given, helping to make Oxfordshire an exemplar county for people and nature to thrive.” Councillor Cooper would be the local authority representative on the LNP.

Councillor Leffman asked whether funding for the establishment of the LNP might be provided by Thames Water – for example, through a corporate social responsibility programme. Mr Hughes said it would be worth asking, as well as exploring other potential funding avenues.

**RESOLVED:** That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes the update.

## 25. Oxford to Cambridge Arc Update

Andrew Down, explained that a consultation would shortly be launched concerning the establishment of a vision for the Arc Spatial Framework. This would be an important stage in its shaping. Both Mr Down and Councillor Wood encouraged wide participation in the process.

In relation to HM Government’s ambitions for an Arc-wide Growth Body (which may be retitled/renamed), it was anticipated that Growth Boards from across the area would be important building blocks. Professor Fitt, the Universities Representative, added that suggestions were very welcome for potential candidates to chair the proposed Growth Body.

**RESOLVED:** That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes the update.

## 26. Dates of next meetings

That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership noted the dates of its next meetings.

- 20 September 2021
- 23 November 2021
- 25 January 2022
- 22 March 2022
- 7 June 2022
- 26 July 2022

The meeting closed at 3.35 pm

Chairman

Date

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**Future Oxfordshire Partnership’s response to recommendations of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel**  
**Recommendations made on 13 September 2021**

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership is requested to provide a response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel for decision at its meeting on Day Month Year.

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
<p>Recommendation 1: That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership request that HM Government consider ways to simplify and rationalise the process by which it considers local authority bids for funding through initiatives such as the Community Renewal Fund and Levelling Up Fund, so as to encourage a system wide approach.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 2: That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership agree recommendation 2 of the ERP report around the need for partners to continue to undertake a whole system response to securing economic recovery and that specifically, this includes, but not be limited to, a system wide approach to town centre renewal and the promotion of manufacturing as a sector.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 3: That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership provides feedback that the Economic Recovery Plan should draw on wider dis-aggregated data that helps to show how some sections of society may be</p>		

<p>disadvantaged through the economic recovery, particularly for young people who are not in education, employment, or training. This will be useful to inform targeted interventions.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 4: That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership be requested to strengthen its draft response to HM Government's Oxford to Cambridge Arc Vision Consultation to emphasise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The importance of environmental preservation and enhancement across all pillars of the proposed Vision and considerations for the future of the Arc.</li> <li>b. The importance of the securing adequate provision of data centres in order to support greater digital connectivity.</li> <li>c. The need for full electrification of the East West Railway as a current rather than future priority.</li> <li>d. The need to reduce dependency on private cars within developments through good site connectivity and design.</li> <li>e. The need to ensure that matters of housing viability and affordability are not used as reasons to compromise or weaken environmental building standards.</li> <li>f. Quantifiable and defensible targets and numbers should be set in order to give the welcome aspirations within the Vision more credibility and robustness.</li> <li>g. The need to recognise that inequality is not evenly distributed within Oxfordshire and that pockets of serious deprivation do exist within the county.</li> </ul>		





**To:** Future Oxfordshire Partnership (formerly the Oxfordshire Growth Board)

**Title of Report:** Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan Update

**Date:** 20 September 2021

**Report of:** Ahmed Goga, Director of Strategy & Programmes, OxLEP on behalf of the Economic Recovery Task Group

**Status:** Open

**Executive Summary and Purpose:**

This paper provides the Future Oxfordshire Partnership with an update on the progress of the Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan, overseen by the Economic Recovery Task Group, and the headline performance of Oxfordshire’s economy as it emerges from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also identifies the need to continue to undertake a ‘system-wide’ approach to recovery and co-ordinate resources and effort in order to maximise investment to support local communities and businesses to recover and thrive.

**How this report contributes to the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision Outcomes:**

The Economic Recovery Plan supports a number of the outcomes set out under the Strategic Vision including:

- Our local economy will be globally competitive, sustainable, diverse and inclusive
- Our county will be a more equal, fair and inclusive place for everyone

**Recommendations:**

1. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes the progress being made in delivering the Economic Recovery Plan and the key issues facing the economy
2. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership endorses the need for continued whole-system responses, through the Economic Task Group, to the economic challenges faced in Oxfordshire and the co-ordination of resources across partners to drive delivery and secure further investment to support businesses and local communities

**Appendices:**

Appendix One – Economic Recovery Plan - Monitoring Plan

## Introduction

1. The Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan (ERP) is part of an Oxfordshire ‘whole-system’ approach to tackling the impact of COVID-19 in the county. It sits alongside other plans and emergency response measures introduced by Oxfordshire partners to support residents, businesses and communities recover and adapt to the pandemic.
2. The ERP is led by OxLEP on behalf of Oxfordshire partners and is overseen by an Economic Recovery Task Group comprising chief officers from each of Oxfordshire’s six local councils, alongside senior representatives from both Universities, the Future Oxfordshire Partnership and the Government’s Cities & Local Growth Unit. The Task Group also draws on specific knowledge of the county’s Destination Management Organisations (DMOs), Experience Oxfordshire and Cotswold DMO, to provide insight on the visitor economy which supports over 40,000 jobs and contributes £2.4bn each year to the Oxfordshire economy.
3. The ERP was prepared during 2020 in response to the pandemic and comprises a range of interventions to support the Oxfordshire economy. It includes projects where:
  - a. funding is already secured by partners and is being flexed, where possible and within the parameters of each project, to respond to the changing needs of the economy;
  - b. specific response funding is available and being drawn down from Government to support recovery activity or be accelerated to deliver economic support, in line with the priorities set out under the ERP; and
  - c. there is a clear economic need and has been highlighted by the baseline assessment as a priority but funding has yet to be secured
4. The ERP is informed by a comprehensive economic baseline assessment of the Oxfordshire economy prepared by Cambridge Econometrics and Steer Economics which includes district level analysis, business and sector trends and short, medium and long term forecasts for recovery. It was undertaken in autumn 2020, with a further update of economic trends published in April 2021. The data has been used across Oxfordshire partners to support local and countywide planning and has also informed work on both the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy refresh, to ensure a consistent approach and understanding of the county’s economy.
5. Both the Future Oxfordshire Partnership and the OxLEP Board has received regular updates from the Task Group as the ERP was developed; there has been updates to the Scrutiny Panel too. In addition to this, member briefings have also been undertaken with individual Oxfordshire councils.
6. The full ERP and supporting economic baseline documents can be accessed via the OxLEP website at [Publications | OxLEP \(oxfordshirelep.com\)](https://publications.oxfordshirelep.com)

## ERP – Key Developments

7. A range of projects across the ERP are in delivery and making a positive impact on the ground to help local businesses and communities recover from the impact of the pandemic, across each of the themes under the plan – *Reskilling People*;

*Resilient Business; Reviving Places; and Rebuilding Connectivity.* Appendix One provides a high level update on the progress of projects to date and will continue to be refreshed on a quarterly basis, as part of the Task Group's work including evaluation and impact assessment of grants and support measures introduced at the start of the response phase.

8. Additionally, partners continue to seek to secure further investment from budgets and funds which have been released by Government in recent months, to support economic recovery in Oxfordshire.
9. OxLEP has secured investment of c£750,000 to support skills development within small businesses focusing on increasing opportunities for promoting apprenticeship pathways and investing in 'Green Skills'. It is anticipated that delivery will formally commence in October.
10. The County Council has co-ordinated a package of five projects with local groups worth c£2m for submission under the pilot Community Renewal Fund (CRF) to assist employment creation, community regeneration and energy advice to businesses across Oxfordshire. Alongside this, Oxfordshire's councils have individually submitted projects, in consultation with local MPs, worth a total of £45m under the Government's new Levelling Up Fund to support a range of local public realm, infrastructure and regeneration projects. We expect to hear the outcome of both the LUF and CRF bids by late September, at the latest.
11. Regardless of the outcome of these bids, a number of key projects within the ERP which have been developed and are ready for delivery, particularly to support skills development and retraining for young people, town centre renaissance initiatives and support for rebuilding the visitor economy and helping small businesses in supply chains to transition towards net zero, remain unfunded despite the urgency of need for these initiatives. It is imperative that Oxfordshire partners continue to work collaboratively as a 'whole-system' to co-ordinate and maximise the deployment funds which have been secured within the county to move these areas forward at pace.

## **Economic Recovery – Key Headlines**

12. The updated baseline assessment highlighted that, whilst it will experience a short but focused contraction, the Oxfordshire economy has, on the whole, been resilient to the challenges created by the pandemic. The county's diverse business base and technology sectors have adapted to the main shocks created. However, there are areas which have been exposed: most notably the visitor economy and areas of the labour market which have been vulnerable to furlough or redundancies, and for young people entering into employment.

### *Unemployment*

13. The latest monthly unemployment claimant count data (for June 2021) shows that Oxfordshire's unemployment rate is 4.3% (14,645) but remains lower than the national rate of 7.4%. A third of all claimants in the county are resident in Oxford City, with approximately 24% located in Cherwell – this remains in line with the projections set out in the baseline assessment.

### *Job Retention Scheme (Furlough)*

14. The JRS will be withdrawn by the end of September, with payments to employers beginning to taper from June. As of 31 May, there were 23,200 people still on furlough in Oxfordshire which is a rate of 7% and broadly in line with the national trends – c48% of the cohort are women and 52% men.
15. The main employment sectors with staff on furlough in Oxfordshire were:
  - Accommodation and food services (22.76%)
  - Wholesale and retail (14.08%)
  - Administration and support services (9.16%)
  - Manufacturing (8.2%)
  - Professional, scientific and technical (7.78%)
  - Education (7.78%)
  - Transportation and storage (7%)

### *Young People*

16. The pandemic has had a major impact on the ability of young people to enter and participate in the labour market. 16-24 year olds account for approximately 20% of all claimants in the County; the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) in May was nearly 300, which is significantly higher than 12 month ago.
17. Latest data indicates a reduction of 17% in those starting an apprenticeship, compared to the same time last year with major falls in arts, culture and creative areas in particular. However, there is encouraging evidence of some growth in some parts of the visitor economy and also in health and care. Opportunities in science remain much lower and this needs to be a key focus moving forward, encouraging more of our technology sectors to create pathways into apprenticeships and for young people to access these opportunities.

### *The Visitor Economy*

18. The Visitor Economy, comprising retail, tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage, is a vital component of our economy. It supports over 40,000 jobs and is the largest employer of women, provides vital employment and apprenticeship opportunities for young people, offer flexible employment which is critical for working families and also offers important routes back into work for people seeking to return to employment having had long term health matters.
19. The sector has been the hardest hit by the pandemic and is beginning the process of resetting itself and recovering with great caution, amid real concerns for the future. Intelligence from both the county's main DMOs report a mixed picture.
20. Anecdotal feedback from hotels in Oxford City and across the county indicates that weekend leisure bookings are currently strong – driven by discounted prices through the usual discounted ticket agencies. Occupancy levels at the weekends have been around 70%, with most being single night stays booked at the last minute. These are all from the domestic market, with up to 30% coming from London. However, business travellers and commercial group bookings are few and far between, and mid-week occupancy levels have been typically 20-25%. Similarly, due to the continued restrictions on travel, there are precious few international travellers or language students visiting the county.

21. The reliance on domestic and localised markets has had a major impact on overall visitor spend, which is well down, with the perception of Oxford as a day trip destination. This has significant implications for the rate of recovery and the ability of businesses to build back market share and employment. Whilst the relaxation of restrictions is expected to increase visitor numbers, there continues to be concern among the general population regarding public health safety in enclosed and populated areas. Covid secure measures have been retained in most restaurants and pubs to provide a safe-feel environment for customers and staff alike but this does impact on turnover and ultimately profitability, though many restaurants do report increased spend per head.
22. Crucially, there is evidence of a vicious cycle emerging in the sector impacted by reported recruitment issues. Furloughed staff are looking for alternative careers and not choosing to return whilst EU citizens chose not to stay in the UK during the pandemic and have reassessed their priorities, in light of post-BREXIT arrangements. This has resulted in businesses unable to increase service offerings due to a lack of staff and, thereby, operating at reduced capacity.
23. There have been some areas of the sector which are enjoying strong growth throughout the late spring and summer and into early autumn in the Cotswolds and other areas including self-catering, camping/glamping sites and outdoor-based 'family fun' activities and gardens. Many businesses have recognised the criticality of transitioning to, and having, a strong digital presence and investing in online pre-booking systems to build closer customer relationships, capture data for improved marketing and promotion and managing visitor flows and guest experience.
24. By contrast, indoor venues and destinations and those businesses over-dependent on overseas visitors, business travellers group based bookings continue to struggle.
25. The Christmas season has increased importance to the sector this year, if it is to preserve some of the uptick in revenues over recent months. However, despite the increase in the 'staycation' market, and evidence that many people have money to spend and are keen to spend it, the sector anticipates that it is unlikely that any real recovery in numbers and turnover will be experienced until the second half of 2022. This will be further pressured with the return to VAT for all hospitality businesses to 20%, from April 2022.
26. In light of the precariousness with which the sector still finds itself in, and the multi-faceted long term nature of the challenges it faces, it is essential that support for the visitor economy sector is strategically sustained. Oxfordshire partners need to pursue a whole-system approach, working with the private sector, transport providers and other key strategic stakeholders to maximise resources to businesses where it is needed most, and avoid unnecessary duplication and confusion in the marketplace to help rebuild the sector and opportunities for local residents to secure long term employment.

### **Financial Implications**

27. There are number of grants and funds which have been channelled into Oxfordshire to support the county respond and recover from the impacts of the pandemic. It is essential that Oxfordshire partners continue to adopt a system-

wide approach to deploying resources and ensure that these are channelled to support agreed priorities , with investment at the appropriate scale to mitigate duplication and confusion for end beneficiaries whilst also addressing need on the ground.

### **Legal Implications**

28. None

### **Conclusion**

29. Recent economic data shows that there remain key areas within the economy where there is a need to continue to focus limited resources in a co-ordinated way, in order to maximise support where it is needed most. Progress is being made in the delivery of the ERP with a number of projects making a positive impact on the ground. However, a number of key areas within the plan, particularly to support skills development and assist small businesses, which are positioned to commence delivery but still require resourcing to move forward. Work at a system-level will be key to being able to get these up and running and deliver at pace.

### **Background Papers**

30. The ERP Monitoring Plan, covering progress updates for the period between April and July, is including as Appendix One to this paper.

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**Economic Recovery Plan Update - Appendix One**

**Reskilling: People**

Funded Y/N Cap / Rev	ERP Theme	Funding Stream Project Title Lead Partner	Recovery Impact / How is the project responding to ERP objectives	High level - Recovery milestones - Recovery outputs / outcomes	2021-2022 Progress report and achievements	RAG																				
Y/C	1	<b>LGF Activate Learning Care Suite</b> Activate Learning	<p>An existing LGF college facility completed in 2016 that is aligned with the ERP objectives. The project is facilitating L3 and up qualifications concentrating on adult health and social care training, which is a key area of need in recovery due to clear skills shortages.</p> <p>Nationally, Health is one of the sectors that is causing real concern, partially due to longstanding labour shortages in the Health and Social Care Sectors. The development of the Care Suite in partnership with the NHS helped to fill the skills gaps and prepare young people and adults to learn the skills the NHS needs.</p> <p>Students who trained in the college' Care Suite are exposed to real life scenarios which help to prepare them for real work and accelerate their development in the workplace. The Care Suite has also supported NHS trusts by helping international nurses to prepare for their OSCE test and helped to speed-up the process of back filling the Health skills gaps.</p>	<p>The Care Suite usage was limited due to the Covid pandemic. One of the major impacts of not using the Care Suite was that some students were deprived of practical learning opportunities. Students have different learning styles, and some students perform much better in practical settings compared to theory sessions. Teaching had to shift from face-to-face to online teaching and learning at short notice. Students' engagement with online learning varied, but in general it was very positive. Some students enjoyed online breakout rooms and the opportunity to discuss their learning in small groups. Learners commented that they had better access to their teachers, as they could e-mail them questions and get quick responses. Learners had also commented on the support they received not only from their teachers but from fellow peers. Students used the online facilities to motivate each other academically and socially.</p>	<p>Achievement in 2020/21 September 2020- June 2021 239 learners are currently benefiting from accessing the Care Skills. All HSC learners are timetabled 2hrs per week.</p> <p><b>HSC Oxford</b></p> <table> <tr><td>HSC L1</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>HSC L2</td><td>44</td></tr> <tr><td>HSC L3Y1</td><td>43</td></tr> <tr><td>HSC L3 Y2</td><td>27</td></tr> </table> <p><b>Early Years Oxford</b></p> <table> <tr><td>Level 2</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>L3 Y1</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>L3 Y2</td><td>15</td></tr> </table> <p><b>HSC Banbury</b></p> <table> <tr><td>HSC L2</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>HSC L3Y1</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>HSC L3 Y2</td><td>12</td></tr> </table>	HSC L1	25	HSC L2	44	HSC L3Y1	43	HSC L3 Y2	27	Level 2	12	L3 Y1	19	L3 Y2	15	HSC L2	18	HSC L3Y1	24	HSC L3 Y2	12	
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HSC L3 Y2	12																									
Y/C		<b>LGF Advanced Digital and Science Centre</b> The Henley College	<p>An existing LGF set of college hubs completed in 2020 that is aligned with the ERP objectives. The project will facilitate L3 and up qualifications concentrating on key sectors such as digital skills, engineering and applied life sciences which will provide young people with clear pathways to develop skills in areas of demand.</p>	<p>The facilities developed are of exceptionally good standard, but due to the pandemic situation existing students have not had the full benefit of use and prospective students have only recently seen the facilities, although some access on-line was possible. The College now has capacity to increase student intake in all STEM areas and application numbers are buoyant for 21-22.</p>	<p>Student applications are up significantly for the first time in several years, with facilities playing a significant role in attracting students. The College is on track to deliver the additional 100 learners in STEM subject areas earlier than the planned 2024/25 academic year. The College will be able to provide evidence of the first phase in September 21, following the current recruitment phase.</p>																					

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Y/C	<b>LGF Advanced Engineering &amp; Technology Skills Centre</b> , Abingdon & Witney College	An existing LGF college centre completed in 2017 that is aligned with the ERP objectives. The project is facilitating predominantly L3 and up qualifications concentrating on local, regional and national skills shortages in STEM subjects.	Reduced enrolments for 20/21 due to COVID. College marketing all courses heavily to increase learners 21/22.	Advanced Skills Centre formally opened on 20 April 2018.  46 new learners in 2020/21  3.3 jobs created to date.	
Y/C	<b>LGF AgriTech Skills Innovation Centre</b> Abingdon & Witney College	An existing LGF college centre completed in 2018 that is aligned with the ERP objectives. The project is facilitating full and part time qualifications concentrating on green recovery and opportunities for retraining high tech skills in the sustainable agriculture, food production and precision farming agenda.	Reduced enrolments for 20/21 due to COVID. College marketing all courses heavily to increase learners 21/22.	Agritech Building formally opened 17 May 2019  62 New learners in 2020/21  1.7 jobs created to date	
Y/C	<b>LGF City Centre Hospitality Training</b> Activate Learning	An existing LGF college centre due to be completed summer 2021 that is aligned with the ERP objectives. The project will facilitate L2 and above qualifications concentrating on the hospitality sector which was very affected by the pandemic.  During the course of the development, Activate Learning has extended the scope of the refurbishment at its own cost to add value to the overall project.	Completion of new hospitality training centre during September 2021 for a new student intake and support the recovery of the visitor economy in Oxford city and the wider county  Commence delivery of hospitality qualification outcomes in line with the original LGF plan during 2021/22 academic year. However, the impact of the ongoing pandemic on employment opportunities for the hospitality sector and young people's choice of programmes to study, will mean that achievement against project outcomes is expected to be backend loaded during the 4-year monitoring period.  Work with local hospitality businesses to support development of new staff, including apprentices who can be trained at the centre  Use the venue for "masterclasses" for those employed in the sector but with relatively low skills requiring short/sharp interventions Provide access to school pupils to raise the profile of the hospitality sector and training opportunities available.	Building works proceeding in line with revised timings caused by unexpected structural issues and asbestos during the build process  Due to be completed and handed over to faculty during September 2021  Formal opening currently provisionally planned for 4 November 2021 with Heston Blumenthal whose team at The Fat Duck Group has supported the redevelopment of the hospitality curriculum during 2020/21  Having a brand-new facility and expected return to on campus open events from autumn 2021 will help to drive new student recruitment in hospitality for Sept 2022 and beyond.	



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Y/C	<b>LGF Construction Skills Academy,</b> Abingdon & Witney College	An existing LGF college centre completed in early 2021 that is aligned with the ERP objectives. The project will facilitate apprenticeship and full-time students studying L1 and up qualifications concentrating on skilled construction qualifications.	Employers reluctant to employ Apprentices during pandemic has slowed down student recruitment.  Employer engagement increased and new Business Development Executive recruited to increase employer engagement.	Bicester building work complete  61 apprentices started, 19 recruited to start in September  6.0 jobs created
Y/C	<b>LGF Oxford Centre for Technology and Innovation,</b> Activate Learning	An existing LGF college centre completed in 2016 that is aligned with the ERP objectives. The project is facilitating L3 and up qualifications concentrating on local, regional and national skills shortages in STEM subjects.	As well as continuing to focus on the skills priorities and target groups in the original LGF project, we have also begun to run 'SSU' courses (Skills for Supporting the Unemployed) at the Oxford Centre for Technology and Innovation aimed at re-skilling adult learners with a particular focus on those who have been impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Our flexible space and variety of workshops has allowed us to focus these initial courses on Construction Trades and on specific skills areas like 'block and brick'. Another outcome of the pandemic was the classification of cycle technicians as key workers and the national shortfall of both technicians and actual cycles themselves throughout the pandemic. As well as continuing to run our Cytech Cycles Courses we have also prioritised running courses for the unemployed on a similar basis as the Construction Trades courses above. We have prioritised getting these programmes off the ground as quickly as possible and for the next academic year 2021/22 we plan to increase the scale & variety of programmes like this which aim to support the ERP.	We continue to see increased interest and applications in programmes at the Oxford Centre for Technology and Innovation. Last year (2020/21), despite the pandemic, restrictions to learning and the disruption to learning of lockdowns, we still saw an increase in student applications. This year (2021/22) we are continuing to see an increase in student applications. The quality of student work has been of a high standard this year. We were pleased to be able to continue our co-created and employer-endorsed Engineering Competition (The Craftsman's Cup) in collaboration with REME (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers) and were particularly proud the trophy returned to Blackbird Leys for the second time in 3 years. Planning for our Digital IOT (Institute of Technology) continues with a refurb in Reading and a Sept 2021 launch will be followed by significant new build capital investment at the Oxford Centre for Innovation and Skills. This digital priority and investment will complement the existing Engineering and Construction focus of the centre in Blackbird Leys and ensure our Technology offer is current as we continue to grow and improve.

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Y/R	<b>ESF Skills Support for the Unemployed</b> Activate Learning	<p>Hospitality courses are back on the timetable to support the visitor economy recovery. We are aware of lots of job opportunities within this sector and will support the unemployed to fill them. Project participants are encouraged to progress with their studies and build on their skills to support their employment. Working closely with Oxfordshire JCP's we are reacting quickly to local market needs and providing SWAP's to support recruitment. Extra support is being given to those at opposite ends of the working age scale 18-24 and 50+ to fill their skills gaps and find employment.</p> <p>We have a heavy focus on digital skills and offering basic IT skills for the first time user through to more advance Microsoft Office All of our courses were able to be moved to online delivery this ensured we were able to support our learners throughout the pandemic to continue on their upskilling journey. Some courses are now back to face to face delivery in classrooms but others will remain online.</p>	<p>All of our courses were able to be moved to online delivery this ensured we were able to support our learners throughout the pandemic to continue on their upskilling journey. Some courses are now back to face to face delivery in classrooms but others will remain online.</p>	<p>418 students delivered to, 38 have progressed into employment and 3 into further education (20 in the pipeline to claim in the next few months). Sub contractors have completed their work with us. Courses were all delivered online during COVID, this worked well we will continue in part with this delivery as it allows flexibility for our students. Some courses will return to the classroom where they are best placed to be and also to support those without access to technology. We have a wide range of courses to ensure upskilling for all sectors and are working closely with employers to ensure delivery supports future employment. Numbers of students did drop during the lockdown period but we are starting to see these increase as lockdown restrictions ease.</p>	
Y/R	<b>ESF Skills Support for the Workplace</b> Activate Learning	<p>Work is underway to see how we can support the Oxfordshire Visitor Economy as they look to recruit and start their businesses back up. Training courses for new starters will be available along with management and team leader qualifications for existing staff looking to progress.</p> <p>Strand 2 of the programme allows us to support those at risk of or have been made redundant. With the furlough scheme coming to an end in September we will be ready to support organisations in this position to provide training and upskilling for those seeking new employment.</p>	<p>All of our courses were able to be moved to online delivery this ensured we were able to support our learners throughout the pandemic to continue on their upskilling journey. Some courses are now back to face to face delivery in classrooms but others will remain online</p>	<p>SSW - 413 students delivered to, 15 progressions into further education and 30 progression within the work place. We are in the process of Subcontractor procurement; we hope to take on 2 sub-contractors to support delivery. During COVID it was hard to access employers to provide training due to many reasons, revised priorities, furlough etc. Of note our Mental Health First Aid courses and Mental Health Awareness were the most popular as organisations strived to support their employees. Courses also went online during COVID which worked well and enabled flexibility - as we move out of COVID some of these will stay online others will move back to face to face.</p>	
Y/C	<b>LGF Oxfordshire Advanced Skills Phase 3 Pilot,</b> UKAEA	<p>An existing LGF skills centre due to complete in late 2021 that is aligned with the ERP objectives. The project will facilitate L4 qualifications concentrating on the skills needed to secure employment opportunities in robotics, power engineering and space science.</p>	<p>Skills centre complete by March 2022</p> <p>40 new learners assisted in courses leading to a full qualification by March 2025</p>	<p>Preparation works are underway</p>	

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Y/R	2	<b>OC Community Employment Support Programme,</b> Oxford City Council	This is a response/ recovery pilot measure aimed at providing community based advice and guidance on employment and training opportunities in the City. In line with the ERP, it aimed to support those affected by recent or ongoing unemployment in target areas of Oxford. It meets the re-skilling and place based measures.	-20 people helped to enrol on FE courses, access support services or gain employment -15 community navigators completed Introduction to providing information, advice and guidance courses -Level 2 and in-house employability services training being developed -Impact monitoring ongoing	-7 month pilot completed March 2021 -Project extended to Sept 2021 with existing funds -Seeking funding to deliver the programme again in autumn 2021 if needed (after furlough ends and business funding measures cease). Early post pilot project report produced	
Y/C		<b>OC Community Employment Plan Delivery,</b> OxLEP	Re-skilling people themes under response and 'early wins', linking with place based measures	-TWO, OxLEP Oxford City Council has agreed a training, business and employment strategy for Oxford North -A separate employment plan will be developed for each phase of development -The Barton Park Community Employment Plan is being reviewed to produce a new strategy and plan for the second half of the development.	-Oxford North Strategy in place and first employment plan for Phase 1 development produced -Oxford North Monitoring to proceed as of Summer 2021	
Y/C	Page 27	<b>GBF Green Construction Skills Centre</b> Abingdon & Witney College	The Green Construction Skills Centre will provide a variety of training programmes including full time courses for 16 – 18-year olds (including T Levels), higher level programmes, apprenticeships, adult skills training programmes and short upskilling courses targeted at those already working in construction.	800sqm new learning/training floorspace in 2022  11.5 FTE jobs by March 2025  500 new learners assisted in courses leading to a full qualification - 10 by March 2022 - 65 by March 2023 - 160 by March 2024 - 330 by March 2025 - 500 by March 2026	Planning permission received June 21  Main building contract Heads of Terms signed June 21	
N/R	3	<b>Oxfordshire Social Contract - Careers Innovation Gateway (CIG)</b> OxLEP	A transformative programme focused on driving social mobility and long-term career opportunities for young people across Oxfordshire including those in County's most deprived communities. This will really help to address the challenges facing many of the County's younger residents who have suffered hardship as a result of COVID-19. This will help residents to define and get access to opportunities at an early stage as they leave school.	Programme due to start in September 2022 – subject to funding being secured, in order to expand the current Careers Hub model to all secondary schools in network.	N/A	
N/R		<b>Oxfordshire Social Contract - T-Level Programme,</b> OxLEP	Expansion of T-Level provision across the innovation ecosystem to offer a broader range of qualifications for young people covering Oxfordshire's key technology sectors. This will be particularly important in light of the LSG, meaning that training must be aligned with business needs to ensure those residents with increased access to training are able to gain employment opportunities from it	Programme ready to start – subject to funding being secured for Employers' Incentives and Travel Grants	N/A	

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N/R	<b>Oxfordshire Social Contract - OxLIFE</b> OxLEP	A comprehensive skills programme to support Oxfordshire's workforce to rebuild their skills capability and connect with opportunities in the future economy being created across the innovation ecosystem to support people to have longer and more flexible careers as demand for skills change. This is particularly important in light of COVID-19 in which many industries have had to transform.	Programme ready to start – subject to funding being secured	N/A
N/R	<b>Inclusive Economy Commission</b> Oxford City Council, OxLEP	Whilst this commission has a broad, long-term focus on tackling social mobility and economic hardship, it will also help meet re-skilling objectives under the 'early wins' theme of the ERP. It should also be seen a source of longer term target proposals over the ERP Plan and beyond	Work is at the partnership and project inception and development phase where key output and outcome metrics will be developed by the partnership and working groups.	The Inclusive Economy partnership has been established. Key proposals include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of an Inclusive economy charter for organisations to sign-up to and monitor their impact against</li> <li>- Communication and engagement work-stream to understand resident aspirations and promote involvement</li> <li>- Inclusive Employer WG</li> <li>- Procurement and social value working group for anchor organisations</li> <li>- Place based initiatives WG</li> </ul> Educational attainment working group
N/R	<b>Improving labour supply within and across sectors</b> OxLEP	Rebuilding skills and developing new competencies to access jobs being created in other sectors of the economy across Oxfordshire	Programme ready to start – subject to funding being secured	N/A
N/R	<b>Tackling Social Mobility &amp; Economic Hardship</b> OxLEP	To help low Income families, vulnerable groups and the most deprived areas. Utilising SOFEA's expanding food larder network for those furthest from the workforce to be offered basic Digital IT Skills training from Oxford Learning Network and Activate Learning. Once trained, they will receive refurbished IT equipment from Oxfordshire Community Foundation.	Programme ready to start – subject to funding being secured	N/A

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## Resilient: Businesses

Funded Y/N Cap / Rev	ERP Theme	Funding Stream Project Title Lead Partner	Recovery Impact / How is the project responding to ERP objectives	High level - Recovery milestones - Recovery outputs / outcomes	2021-2022 Progress report and achievements	RAG
Y/R	1	<b>ERDF Innovation Support for Business, OxLEP</b>	Supporting the Innovation community to Innovate, grow but where required move into an effective renewal phase following the COVID-19 pandemic and potential effects of Brexit. Through Go Create grants, one to one support and webinars.	Support SMEs to innovate, pivot, support the development of the innovation ecosystem and improve business access to research institutions. Continued achievement and completion of ERDF targets in line with agreed contract. Revisit Go Create grant offers where appropriate due to changing circumstances of businesses. This has been required in the majority of cases due to businesses pivoting, struggling supplies etc.	We have now completed 19 grant rounds and approved grants of £648,329 against total project costs of £1,734,997.  To date through workshop delivery we have provided 2,475 hours of support to 471 businesses.  A total of 77 workshops have been delivered to date and 831 hours of 1:1 support to 323 businesses.	
Y/R	29	<b>ERDF eScalate OxLEP</b>	Supporting Scale up, Growth and Social Enterprises to develop, grow but where required move into an effective renewal phase following the COVID-19 pandemic and potential effects of Brexit. Through a series of events, one to one support, webinars.	Build on and continue to raise awareness and strengthen the range of support available from Oxfordshire Business Support (Oxfordshire's Growth Hub).  Successful delivery of ERDF programme – supporting Social Enterprise and Access to Finance.  Revisit grant offers where appropriate due to changing circumstances of businesses. This has been required in the majority of cases due to businesses pivoting, struggling supplies etc.	Since the launch of eScalate we have completed 21 grant rounds. Round 21 closed on 16 <sup>th</sup> April. This was the final grant round for the eScalate programme as the grant funding has now completely fully committed. We have committed 53 grants totalling £638,930.26 against a total project value of £1,277,860.52.  A total of 43 webinars have been run since April 2020 plus 6 peer networks. A total of 148 hours of 1:1 support has been delivered to businesses since the start of the programme.  This programme has been flexed since March 2020 to ensure that Oxfordshire Businesses have been supported, irrelevant of their fit with eScalate.  We continue to do so having intensified the support we offer, for example power hours and through a series of power hours which have just launched.  Revisit grant offers where appropriate due to changing circumstances of businesses. This has been required in the majority of cases due to businesses pivoting, struggling supplies etc.	
Y/R		<b>ESF Skills for Business OxLEP</b>	Enabling people and businesses to access the training and skills they need.	Supporting SME's navigate the Skills landscape in order to upskill, train, employ new staff including Apprentices and offer placements via internships or T Levels. DWP decision on PCR to extend the programme for a further 12 months expected 19.7.21	68 Skills Needs Analysis (SNAs) completed 65 SME delivering against their Training and Development plan	

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Page 30	<p><b>Y/R</b></p> <p><b>ERDF</b> <b>OxFutures Phase2</b> Low Carbon Hub</p>	<p>In response to Covid-19 the project moved on-line but neither the LCH nor Oxford Brookes had to furlough staff. There was significant marketing activity to try to ensure applications for audits and grants remained high. Following government guidance during the first lockdown Oxford Brookes did not conduct energy audit site visits, but as restrictions lifted empty buildings were audited in person and virtual visits were undertaken, with a member of the business' staff showing our assessors what they needed to see virtually. After the easing of restrictions in the autumn of 2020 two businesses were able to complete large-scale OxFutures grant funded energy efficiency projects. One of these, the installation of the air handling system at Chipping Norton Theatre, had been delayed more than 9 months, some of which could be attributed to the pandemic. In-person socially distanced site visits resumed once the audit team were fully vaccinated in 2021.</p> <p>Existing SME innovation projects were significantly delayed by lockdown, furloughed staff and uncertainty. Several innovation businesses, such as Halliday Hydro, weren't able to fully launch their new products or services to the market and so have yet to fulfil their carbon saving potential. The poor economic climate, Brexit uncertainties and Covid have reduced the appetite to set up new low carbon businesses and existing businesses have access to considerable amounts of alternative government support, which has reduced the number of grant applications. This and a lack of energy efficiency grant applications led to our quarterly December 2020 GreenFund Board being cancelled. In no previous quarter since Sept 2019 has this happened. Businesses are still being impacted by the pandemic and completion of their energy efficiency and innovation projects is slow. Three examples are Restore (contractor delays), Cogges Heritage Trust (closure delays), and Windmill Conference Centre (furloughed staff).</p>	<p><b>High level - Recovery milestones</b> Our audit pipeline is very healthy and we are on track to deliver the 45 additional audit target for 2020-23. There were 8 businesses who requested an audit in the nine months April-Dec 2020, compared to 16 in the first seven months of 2021. Four of these have been received in the last fortnight.</p> <p><b>High level - Recovery outputs / outcomes (April 2020- June 2021)</b> Completed audit reports and 12 hours of support (C1 4b) - 14 Innovation 12 hours of support (C1 4f) - 1 Duffin Associates New start-ups (C5 4f) - 0 New products and services (C29 4f) - 2 Oxfordshire Community Land Trust and Duffin Associates Innovation Carbon Savings (C34 4f) - 276.7 tonnes from Hallidays, EV Carshop, Duffin Ass, Electrogenic Energy Audit Carbon Savings (C34 4b) - 210 tonnes</p>	<p>The project has been successful in minimising the impact of the pandemic and is on track with the majority of its targets (<a href="#">see attached Excel</a>). Project spend by our SME businesses has been delayed, but extensions to their delivery timetable have been agreed to allow them more time to implement. We predict grant claims in Q3 2021 and Q4 2021 will be significant. The implementation of the Magdalen Road Studios project this coming autumn would not be feasible without OxLEP match funding (Business Investment Fund).</p>
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Y/C	<b>LGF9 Centre for Applied Superconductivity</b> University of Oxford	An existing LGF project that is aligned with the ERP objectives. The project is coordinating the interaction between key industry players, Oxford University, cryogenics companies, and end users on the large-scale innovation campuses.	Continued support for local superconducting industry  Proposal submission to UKRI for future S/C projects	Completed 3 Master's projects largely remotely finished June 2021 Recruited 2 new D. Phil. students to start in person September 2021 Recruited 2 new Masters students to start in person September 2021 Secured additional beam time at Diamond (2 of 5 day sessions)
Y/C	<b>LGF Earth Lab</b> Earth Trust	An existing LGF project including two centres at the Earth Trust that are aligned with the ERP objectives in the following ways: People Theme -the project added to the creation of a skilled workforce in Oxfordshire better versed in sustainable development and the options and choices available throughout the design and build process -provides education and engagement facilitates with a focus on skills development for green recovery and access to secure jobs and that are more inclusive Business Theme -provides space to support start-up and growing rural businesses, contributing to clean growth -increased investment in the supply chain, championing the use of small subcontractors with innovative sustainable solutions -provides a range of spaces to encourage innovation through active demonstration of innovative material and design solutions Places & Connectivity -provides indoor and outdoor spaces that help Earth Trust drive visitors to its site	Our horizon-scanning work to assess the issues raised by the pandemic identified that demand for our mainstream education sessions would fall but interest in our Countryside Skills offer was likely to rise. This proved to be the case from May 2021 onwards and we were able to refocus resources to meet increased demand from SEN schools and groups. Earth Lab has increased our capacity and capability to deliver education and engagement focussed on in-demand industries such as Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Low carbon and Construction. Working practices have changed during the pandemic so our plans to fit-out Innovation Hub were postponed while we reassessed the potential use of Innovation Hub and how we best fit it out to ensure its commercial hub spaces catalyse innovation and boost local economic growth.	-We have welcomed 1200 children from 26 different schools to Earth Lab since May. -4 new volunteers have been recruited and are being trained to deliver talks about Earth Lab and its sustainable development story and we are planning to increase this number over the year. -5 new volunteers have been recruited to help with landscaping and planting around Earth Lab. -We welcomed 90 supporters to our first event in Earth Lab in July, showcasing the new building and its contribution to Earth Trust's mission to help address the climate, nature and health crises -Innovation Hub is ready for use and we are in the process of recruiting a Business Manager to oversee office and desk space rentals to rural businesses with a view to having people or businesses using the spaces from the Autumn.

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Y/C	2	<b>LGF Oxford Brookes Enterprise Hub,</b> Oxford Brookes University	An existing LGF Enterprise Hub due to complete in late 2021 that is aligned with the ERP objectives. The project will provide premises for spinout and early-stage companies, comprising laboratory, office and co-working space plus a multi-purpose enterprise space for events and training.  Supports ERP objectives for catalysing innovation and business growth	Milestones: Facility opens January 2022, First start-ups supported and jobs created by end 2022  Outputs / outcomes: 74 jobs created and 17 start-ups by March 2025	Asset under construction with handover scheduled for November 2021. Design fully specified.  First enquiries received from start-ups / prospective tenants
Y/R	Page 32	<b>UKG Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BLS),</b> British Business Bank	The UK Government made available several billion pounds in loan guarantees through the British Business Bank (BBB) to businesses of various sizes to help access finance and manage their company operations to mitigate the economic impact of the pandemic. These ranged from larger loans for small and medium sized firms of c250k to £50k for very small micro businesses; alongside this, specialised bridging loan and equity finance was made available for early stage technology and R&D based companies which were awaiting next stage finance from investors at the time of the onset of the pandemic and had seen finance removed at short notice. The most recent available data indicated c13000 businesses across Oxfordshire had accessed some form of support through these UK measures worth c£650m.  The BBB will undertake a long term evaluation of the various support measures and will provide information in relation to Oxfordshire, once this is made available.		
Y/R		<b>UKG Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Schemes,</b> British Business Bank			
Y/R		<b>UKG Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme,</b> British Business Bank			
Y/R		<b>UKG Future Fund</b> British Business Bank			
Y/R		<b>UKG Local Restrictions Support Grants,</b> Oxon District Councils			
Y/R	<b>UKG Lockdown one-off grants</b> Oxon District Councils	Approximately £150m of UK government financial support has been passported through Oxfordshire's five local district councils for relief and emergency response to help Oxfordshire businesses recovery from the economic impact of the pandemic. This has included direct grant awards to help with three national lockdowns which have prevented businesses from opening or have severely curtailed ability to trade over the past 18 months. Additionally, there has been targeted support for the most affected businesses to receive relief on business rate payments as well as specific funding to support the re-opening of local High Streets and Town Centres in a safe and COVID-19 compliant manner to encourage increased visitor activity across the county.			
Y/R	<b>UKG Additional Restrictions Grant,</b> Oxon District Councils				



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Y/R	<b>UKG8 Rate Relief for businesses</b> Oxon District Councils															
Y/C	<b>GBF Business Investment Fund, OxLEP</b>	<p>The Business Investment Fund (BIF) will allocate up to £2.1M in capital grants of £25k - £100k (at 50% match funding co-investment) to support scalable businesses across Oxfordshire. Part of the national Government's £900 million 'Getting Building Fund' designed to deliver jobs, skills and infrastructure across the country. Created to support Oxfordshire's innovative business community to move into an effective renewal phase following the COVID-19 pandemic and potential effects of Brexit.</p> <p>A co-investment grant fund to support scalable SME businesses to move from response into economic renewal phase by co-investing grants of up to £100k, with business match funding.</p>	<p>High level outputs:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Co investment</td> <td>£1,5m</td> <td>£2,245m</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jobs created</td> <td>27</td> <td>220</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jobs safeguarded</td> <td>225</td> <td>225</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Businesses supported</td> <td>45</td> <td>34</td> </tr> </table> <p>220 jobs created by March 2025</p> <p>230 jobs safeguarded by March 2025</p> <p>34 businesses assisted</p>	Co investment	£1,5m	£2,245m	Jobs created	27	220	Jobs safeguarded	225	225	Businesses supported	45	34	<p>BIF launched in March 2021. 108 EI were received and following due diligence 76 businesses were invited to submit a full application. Having undertaken further due diligence 52 applications were reviewed by an independent panel. 34 grants were awarded as a result of the panel review. All grant offer letters have been signed. A robust procurement process is now being undertaken by awardees. OxLEP is supporting 25 grant awardees through this process. Claims are expected in September and December. All applicants and awardees are being encouraged to use additional support being offered through the Growth Hub including Foundations for Growth, Peer Networks and NED days.</p>
Co investment	£1,5m	£2,245m														
Jobs created	27	220														
Jobs safeguarded	225	225														
Businesses supported	45	34														
Y/C	<b>GBF The Energy Systems Accelerator Pilot, University of Oxford</b>	<p>TESA, will be a multi-disciplinary, multi stakeholder space on Osney Mead that will underpin UK innovation in net zero carbon systems, ensuring the UK meets legal targets and achieves global leadership. As a small-scale interim, Holywell House at Osney Mead will be transformed into a co-working space for up to 100 workstations, it will include an ideas-exchange hub where different disciplines and organisations can develop radical thinking.</p>	<p>827sqm commercial floorspace in 2021</p> <p>102 jobs created by March 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 by March 2022</li> <li>- 12 by March 2023</li> <li>- 32 by March 2024</li> <li>- 62 by March 2025</li> <li>- 102 by March 2026</li> </ul>	<p>The Mini TESA project has commenced. A project manager has been engaged, the contractor procurement process is in final sign-off, the risk register has been created and the project programme established. The project is on budget but current expectations are that completion may be delayed slightly until September 21. The project agreement has been signed and sealed and most of the project preconditions satisfied.</p>												

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Y/C		<b>GBF Clinical BioManufacturing Hub</b> University of Oxford	This project is an enabling project of a larger project which ultimately aims to expand the Clinical Bio-Manufacturing Hub. The Clinical BioManufacturing Facility (CBF) is a UK leader in producing vaccine products (including the UOXF ChAdOx1 vaccine against COVID-19) to early phase trials, rapidly and cost effectively.	28 jobs safeguarded by March 2022  5 new learners assisted in courses leading to a full qualification by March 2025	Internal refurbishment work has commenced.  Second apprenticeship will commence Oct 2021.	
N/R	3	<b>The Oxfordshire Internationalisation Plan</b> OxLEP	An integrated programme with the Department for International Trade to expand the Oxfordshire's global brand and attract trade and investment opportunities that support business growth, job creation, recovery and renewal and adapt to post-EU transition	Programme ready to start – subject to funding being secured	N/A	
Y/C	Page 34	<b>LGF The Creative and Cultural Industries Hub</b> Oxford City Council	This project is an 'early-win' under the 'resilient businesses' themes that aims to consolidate and expand the creative and cultural sectors through a physical hub for the sector providing workspace, networks, funding and support that meet early stage business needs.	16 to 27,000 sq. ft. of space potentially delivered supporting up to 230 jobs	City Council pursuing options on council owned sites.  - Phase 1 George St Hub under construction (7,000 sq. ft.) - Options for a larger phase 2 sight being explored Option for phase 2 to be agreed in summer 2021.	
N/R		<b>The Recovery and Investment of the Visitor Economy (THRIVE),</b> OxLEP	A suite of deliverable projects to aid the economic recovery of the Visitor Economy. The four key areas of focus are supporting business recovery and survival; improving business competitiveness; strengthening the resilience and capacity of Oxfordshire's Destination Management Organisation (DMO); and providing leadership, support, and coordination to rebuild market share across international markets	Programme ready to start – subject to funding being secured	N/A	
N/R	4	<b>Business Support Booster</b> OxLEP	The target proposals will address personalised business support and activities for Oxfordshire businesses to adapt to economic challenges created by the pandemic and build back market share, innovate to create new products and services and support business productivity.	Programme ready to start – subject to funding being secured	N/A	
N/R		<b>Supply Chain Matters</b> OxLEP	An integrated programme to strengthen the performance of small businesses within the supply chain to become more resilient to economic shocks, develop investment plans for technology adoption and support the transition to net zero by greening processes, machinery and operations to reduce carbon and energy costs	Programme ready to start – subject to funding being secured	N/A	

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## Reviving: Places

Funded Y/N Cap / Rev	ERP Theme	Funding Stream Project Title Lead Partner	Recovery Impact / How is the project responding to ERP objectives	High level - Recovery milestones - Recovery outputs / outcomes	2021-2022 Progress report and achievements	RAG
Y/C	1	<b>LGF A40 Improvement Works</b> OxLEP	An existing LGF transport project due to complete in late 2021 that is aligned with the ERP objectives. The project will improve connectivity in the north of the city which in turn is set to compliment the Oxford North development.	Improvements to the A40 between the A34 flyover and the Wolvercote roundabout complimented by the Oxford North development which will deliver <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 90,000 sqm employment land</li> <li>- 480 new homes</li> <li>- 2,500 sqm local retail space</li> <li>- A hotel</li> <li>- Highway improvements</li> <li>- Cycle ways</li> <li>- Public open spaces</li> </ul>	A40 improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Works are progressing well and due to complete by the end of December 2021.</li> </ul> Oxford North <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enabling civil and infrastructure works Reserved Matters Application approved by Oxford City Council</li> <li>- Hill Group appointed to commence £15 million infrastructure contract works w/c 23.08.21</li> <li>- Skills &amp; Employment Strategy approved by Oxford City Council</li> <li>- Canalside new homes: Hill Group appointed as residential partner to delivery phase 1 of new homes. Designs being progressed for Canalside's loop road, with a view to submitting in the future a Reserved Matters Application. Note: Public consultation on the emerging plans due to commence in September 2021</li> </ul>	
Y/C	1	<b>LGF The Wood Centre for Innovation</b> The Oxford Trust	An existing LGF project in 2 phases, phase 1 completed in early 2021 and phase 2 is due to complete in late 2021. The project will provide office space, R&D laboratories and technical workshop space.	Phase 1 of the funding is now fully drawn and the outputs (c. 4300 sqft of advanced laboratory space including allied facilities and CL2 spec) have been exceeded, with the first occupiers moved in. Phase 2 funding has been agreed and is currently at an early stage but on track. Being a project that only existed post pandemic, there have been no internal changes, however the project addresses a number of pandemic related issues, including providing much needed lab space to companies growing quickly in the enhanced funding environment for life sciences in Oxfordshire.	Project is on track. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4300sqft of laboratory conversion completed on time and on budget.</li> <li>- 2 of 4 occupiers moved in, with remaining due to move in before end Aug.</li> <li>- Design and planning for phase 2 (a further 3000sqft) started in earnest, with consultants lined up and early discussions with potential occupiers started.</li> <li>- Phase 2 due diligence and HoTs complete and agreed, funding agreement in process.</li> </ul>	

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Y/R	2	<b>OC New Delivery and collection Solutions (Delivery and freight hubs),</b> Oxford City Council	Rebuilding connectivity outcomes	To follow	Currently scoping solutions alongside the ZEZ roll pilot and future roll-out	
Y/C	2	<b>GBF Meanwhile in Oxfordshire</b> Oxford City Council	Town Centre Renaissance ‘Reviving Places’ Measure to support businesses to locate in new Meanwhile spaces and vacant premises.	-10 leases agreed with landlords -60 buildings under discussions or negotiations -240 occupier applications received for space and support  Expected targets are 300 jobs supported, 112 organisations supported into spaces and 20,800 sq. ft. of space identified for Meanwhile Use.  1935sqm commercial floorspace by March 2025  112 businesses assisted by March 2022  300 jobs created by March 2022	-Makespace consortium appointed to deliver the project -Project Working group Established -Project launched and identifying landlord and units, agreeing leases, commencing fit-outs and engaging with potential occupiers -Challenging timescales from the outset means this project remains at amber	
Y/C	2	<b>OCC1: Repurposed Physical/Digital signage,</b> Oxfordshire County Council / District Councils	Improve overall signage across Oxfordshire to improve communications between key centres, hubs and routes and improve visitor and customer experience including through increased use of immersive technologies and digitally interactive displays	Project at concept stage and subject to further review and development by local authority partners	N/A	
Y/C	2	<b>GBF Rural Gigabit Voucher Programme</b> Oxfordshire County Council	A digital connectivity improvement project that will provide 400-600 rural premises to be connected with full fibre broadband. This will help to protect local employment, support remote working/learning, and create employment opportunities in predominantly rural areas.	400 new super/ultrafast broadband connections by September 2022  30 jobs created by March 2025  70 jobs safeguarded by March 2025  50 new learners assisted in courses leading to a full qualification by March 2025	There are currently 19 schemes that have been approved by DCMS under the top-up scheme.  No delivery to date as this takes approx. 6 to 9 months from scheme start to finish depending on supplier and a dispute over the terms of the scheme between BT plc and DCMS has halted all of their schemes since March 2021.	
Y/C	2	<b>OC4 Visitor Coach Arrivals</b> Oxford City Council	Connectivity outcomes and visitor economy investment,	Agreement of new drop off location/s  Agreement of new layover locations  Survey of visitor coach providers  Communication of new solutions to stakeholders including the Confederation of Passenger Transport	An additional temporary stop off point is being drawn up and consulted on with key stakeholders as a trial step towards reducing the pressure on existing drop off points. Survey and comms work is prepared but requires the industry to be in a recovery phase.	

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N/C	4	<b>Town Centres' Renewal, OxLEP &amp; District Councils</b>	A comprehensive package of measures aimed at boosting footfall and spend in city and town centres across Oxfordshire including improvements to public realm, support to return vacant property units back into use through extended 'meanwhile' uses and business start-up opportunities and better public experiences of spaces	Programme ready to start – subject to funding being secured	N/A
N/C	4	<b>Visitor Economy Renaissance, OxLEP</b>	A comprehensive package of measures to support the rebuilding of the Visitor Economy sector through an integrated promotions campaign, technology adoption programme to accelerate online products, services and customer engagement, use of new immersive technologies for the arts and creative sectors to reach new audiences and measures to support safe reopening of venues / attractions.	Programme ready to start – subject to funding being secured	N/A

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## Rebuilding: Connectivity

Y/C	1	<b>CONN2</b> Engage further with 38 communities to use voucher funding for delivery of full fibre to cabinet 3500 premises by June 2022, Oxfordshire County Council	Facilitation role to help communities access Gigabit Voucher Funding to secure full fibre connectivity	Applications approved for c 1,800 premises and a pipeline of c 3,000 expected to deliver the connectivity by June '22	Administration delays at DCMS and new voucher T&Cs holding up Openreach agreeing terms are slowing progress	
Y/C	1	<b>CONN3</b> Lead a procurement which will connect 200+ public sector buildings to full fibre by June 2023 Oxfordshire County Council	Direct OCC procurement of a contract to deliver full fibre to a range of public sector buildings and further incidental FTTP coverage in adjacent areas	Two bids received which fit affordability criteria. Evaluation underway and cabinet approval to be sought on 20 <sup>th</sup> July.	Project currently under further refinement	
Y/C	1	<b>CONN4</b> Connect a further c 2000 business and residential premises with full fibre connectivity by June 2023 Oxfordshire County Council	Contracted delivery by BT and Airband	C 350 contracted premises now able to order FTTP	Broadly in line with delivery plan and will complete ahead of target June 2023 date	
Y/C	1	<b>CONN5</b> Engage with commercial telecoms operators resulting in a commitment for 6,000 premises in Banbury to be connected to full fibre by 2024 Oxfordshire County Council	Openreach committed to build FTTP to the Banbury exchange area, now followed by a further 11 exchange areas in Oxfordshire totalling some 20,000 premises to be delivered with FTTP by 2024	Openreach delivery in Banbury has started	In line with forecast	
Y/C	1	<b>CONN6</b> Finalise a procurement strategy to get all premises in Oxford connected to gigabit broadband by 2025, Oxfordshire County Council	Project paused pending further supplier commercial delivery announcements	N/A	Still predicting Oxford will have significant FTTP delivery completed by 2025	

RAG Status Key	Project is on track	Project has minor issues and/or delays	Project has significant issues and/or delays
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LGF – Local Growth Fund; ESF – European Social Fund; OC – Oxford City Council; GBF – Getting Building Fund; OCC – Oxfordshire County Council; UKG – UK Government; ERP Theme: 1 – Existing Activities; 2 – Response Measures; 3 – Early Wins; 4 – Target Proposals; Y/N – Funded or not; C/R – Capital / Revenue; Cells highlighted in YELLOW are project ready and are AWAITING funding investment to commence delivery.

Y/C	1	<b>CONN7</b> Work with Government to finalise a procurement plan to connect c 90,000 premises with full fibre by 2025, Oxfordshire County Council	Planned collaboration with DCMS under Project Gigabit. Oxfordshire is in 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase.	Procurements (led by DCMS) expected to get underway during Q1 '22/'23	Slower start by DCMS than expected. Some concerns as to supplier interest, esp Openreach	
Y/C	1	<b>CONN8</b> Work with the Mobile Network Operators to facilitate rollout of 5G in Oxfordshire, Oxfordshire County Council	Project to allow open access agreements with MNOs to build small cell 4G and 5G on street furniture	Anticipating up to 90 small cells in Oxford by 2023, with other towns to follow	N/A	
Y/C	1	<b>TRAN 1</b> Connecting Oxford, Oxfordshire County Council	Supporting the continual development of alternative form of sustainable transport infrastructure.	Scheme is still in strategy development stage and no interventions directly delivered at this stage. Stage 0 Options Appraisal Stage 1 Feasibility Design Stage 2 Design and Procurement Stage 3 Construction/Delivery Stage 4 Close out.	Further transport modelling development.	
Y/C		<b>TRAN2</b> Oxford City Zero Emission Zone Oxford City Council	Improving the air quality and environment.	Scheme is still in Strategy development stage and no interventions directly delivered at this stage. Stage 0 Options Appraisal Stage 1 Feasibility Design Stage 2 Design and Procurement Stage 3 Construction/Delivery Stage 4 Close out	Cabinet Member Decision Note approved by City and County Council agreed to progress pilot scheme in Oxford City Centre in late 2021.	
Y/C	1	<b>TRAN3</b> E-Scooter Trial Oxford City Council	Supporting the continual development of alternative form of sustainable transport infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voi to commence implementation (Headington)</li> <li>- Review of data/analysis (6-week review) with proposals being developed for roll out across Oxfordshire</li> <li>- Voi to commence phase 2 stage of rollout plan (eastern arc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Service in the expanded area is due to start on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021</li> <li>- 200 e-scooters will initially be made available across the widened 'phase 2' operating area (an increase of 80 units on the current fleet). This has capacity to be incrementally increased over the following weeks, dependent upon success of the scheme in the new area.</li> </ul>	
Y/C	1	<b>TRAN4: Zero Emission Buses Regional Areas (ZEBRA) Scheme,</b> Oxfordshire County Coun	OCC will be working with Oxfordshire's main bus operators (Oxford Bus Company and Stagecoach) to develop a business case for submission to DfT for funding for c.160 zero emission buses and associated infrastructure for bus services in the Oxford area.	<p>Sept 21 – Jan 22: Business case development (competitive process)</p> <p>February 22: DfT funding decision on successful bids</p> <p>March 22: Funding awarded (subject to successful submission)</p>	Following submission of an Expression of Interest, DfT have shortlisted Oxfordshire's bid to progress to business case development stage	

RAG Status Key	Project is on track	Project has minor issues and/or delays	Project has significant issues and/or delays
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LGF – Local Growth Fund; ESF – European Social Fund; OC – Oxford City Council; GBF – Getting Building Fund; OCC – Oxfordshire County Council; UKG – UK Government; ERP Theme: 1 – Existing Activities; 2 – Response Measures; 3 – Early Wins; 4 – Target Proposals; Y/N – Funded or not; C/R – Capital / Revenue; Cells highlighted in YELLOW are project ready and are AWAITING funding investment to commence delivery.

Y/C	1	<b>TRAN5</b> <b>EV Infrastructure,</b> Oxford City Council	Park & Charge County wide charging project along with EV Infrastructure strategy to enable wider investment in charging	Park & Charge opened its first site in Bicester In June. EV Infrastructure Strategy was adopted by County Council, West Oxfordshire, Cherwell, South and Vale District Councils	Park & charge is dealing with a change in project delivery partner this will delay but not stop the project. Changes by OFGEM have increased prices and ruling on VAT for EV Charging as also increased costs increasing pressure on viable business models
Y/C	1	<b>TRAN6</b> <b>Active Travel Tranche 2 Programme,</b> Oxfordshire County Council		Key milestones: Stage 2 – Design and Procurement Stage 3 – Construction and delivery Stage 4 – Close out <b>Key outputs/outcomes:</b> - Implementation of Bicester and Witney schemes. - Roll-out of Cowley Low Traffic Neighbourhoods - Consultation on East Oxford Low Traffic Neighbourhood. - Consultation on Quickways and quietways proposals for Oxfordshire County Council. Next steps: - Delivery of remaining schemes for substantial implementation by March 2022.	Further details to follow



RAG Status Key	Project is on track	Project has minor issues and/or delays	Project has significant issues and/or delays
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LGF – Local Growth Fund; ESF – European Social Fund; OC – Oxford City Council; GBF – Getting Building Fund; OCC – Oxfordshire County Council; UKG – UK Government; ERP Theme: 1 – Existing Activities; 2 – Response Measures; 3 – Early Wins; 4 – Target Proposals; Y/N – Funded or not; C/R – Capital / Revenue; Cells highlighted in YELLOW are project ready and are AWAITING funding investment to commence delivery.

Y/C	1	<b>TRAN7 'Community Activation'</b> Oxfordshire County Council	Supporting the continual development of alternative form of sustainable transport infrastructure	<p><b>Key Benefits/milestones</b></p> <p><b>Active travel behaviour</b> To increase levels of cycling and walking in Oxfordshire by promoting modal shift to active travel</p> <p><b>Inequalities</b> To reduce inequalities in active travel (by geography and key demographics) - improving understanding of the local barriers to active travel and building local capacity to address them.</p> <p><b>Physical Activity impact</b> The change in proportion of children who have walked/cycled at least once a week to get to school or other places Change in the total duration of physical activity per week on average</p> <p><b>Environmental outcomes</b> Reduction in CO2 emissions across the network Changes in vehicle traffic volumes, travel mode (bike/walk/car)</p> <p><b>Recovery outputs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project 1: Community Cycling &amp; Walking Activation – projects to be delivered : Cogges Farm Tea, Talk &amp; Walk, Street Tag loyalty scheme, Wheels for All (Witney) Street Tag promotion at Bicester Market (Bicester).</li> <li>Project 2: School Streets – Ebbes (Oxford) and St Nicholas (Abingdon) due to go live on 28 June</li> <li>Project 3: Street Tag – evaluation report to be submitted</li> <li>Project 4: Comms Campaign (2) – Creating and implementing plan for co-promotion of AT infrastructure and soft measures</li> <li>Project 5: Wayfinding – RFQs for route markings and materials</li> <li>Project 6: Kidlington Health Routes – surveys to be sent to schools and routes signed off</li> </ul>	Further details to follow
Y/C	1	<b>TRAN8 Future Mobility</b> Oxfordshire County Council	Set of projects supporting new Tech mobility – Primarily funded by Innovate UK and H2020 in collaboration with external partners	Projects are on target Endeavor CAV project moved onto Phase3, MultiCAV moving onto public services in Autumn – Drone project will also start initial trial flight September	Some concern from industry that focus on IUK funding at moment is primarily short-term projects under 12months, which is and can have impact on ability to attract and retain staff to support projects as lack of funding certainty.
Y/C	2	<b>ADD1: Bus Renewal,</b> Oxfordshire County Council	Project being taken forward with operators and the Oxfordshire Strategic Transport Forum as part of wider response to UK government's National Bus Strategy	Further details to follow	N/A

**To:** Future Oxfordshire Partnership (formerly the Oxfordshire Growth Board)

**Title of Report:** Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Progress Report – Year 4, Quarter 1

**Date:** 20 September 2021

**Report of** Paul Staines: Interim Head of Programme

**Status:** Open

### **Executive Summary and Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to update the Future Oxfordshire Partnership on progress, at the end of the first quarter Year 4 (2021/22) with the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (the Deal).

The report provides a summary of the following strands of the Deal.

- Housing from Infrastructure Programme
- Affordable Housing programme
- Oxfordshire Plan 2050

The fourth strand of the Deal, Productivity, is reported separately to the OxLEP Board.

Oxfordshire County Council, as the Accountable Body, provide a separate assurance statement, detailing the financial position of the Growth Deal elsewhere on this agenda.

### **How this report contributes to the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision Outcomes:**

The Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal has a key role to play in delivering well-designed infrastructure and homes, sufficient in numbers, location, type, size, tenure and affordability to meet the needs of our county, as set out in the Strategic Vision.

You can refer to the Vision outcomes on the Future Oxfordshire Partnership website – [here](#).

### **Recommendation:**

That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes the progress as at Quarter 1, 2021/22 towards the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.

**Appendices:** None

## Housing from Infrastructure Programme

- 1) The Homes from Infrastructure Programme (Hfl) is a £150m investment in strategic infrastructure to support the acceleration of already planned housing in Oxfordshire.
- 2) The Hfl programme has two aspects.
  - Firstly, the commitment to spend £30m per annum over 5 years on named strategic infrastructure projects, identified as accelerators for planned housing growth in Oxfordshire.
  - Secondly that this infrastructure expenditure will then accelerate 6,549 planned homes that might not otherwise have come forward at this pace. This is because either the completed infrastructure allows housing to be built earlier than otherwise or the planned investment provides developers with confidence to build out sites faster than they might otherwise.
- 3) The Hfl timeline originally agreed in the Deal was a five-year period from 2018/19 to 2022/23. This has been extended for up to two years to March 2025 to allow schemes to complete.

### Infrastructure

- 4) Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) are the lead delivery partner for the infrastructure element of Hfl which they deliver through their capital projects governance framework.
- 5) The infrastructure element of the Hfl programme comprises 23 infrastructure projects that include road, rail, cycle routes and footpaths, as well as social infrastructure such as schools. A link to a list of the schemes can be found [here](#).
- 6) The commitment from Oxfordshire is that we will programme schemes such that we can draw the grant down in five equal tranches of £30m per year. Previous reports have highlighted the challenge of this linear draw down of grant and the fact that this does not align to the typical spend profile of an infrastructure project, which usually sees expenditure towards the latter stages of the project when construction is completed. Nonetheless, we have been able to draw down grant as required for each of the first three years of the Hfl programme
- 7) In the last quarter, in addition to progressing scheme delivery, officers have also been engaged in an annual review of the programme, designed to ensure that the schemes included in the programme are both deliverable within the timeframe for the programme and costs are controlled.
- 8) This review, reflecting both scheme specific issues and the effect of the COVID pandemic upon the programme has resulted in revised timelines for several schemes that will now complete during the two-year extension

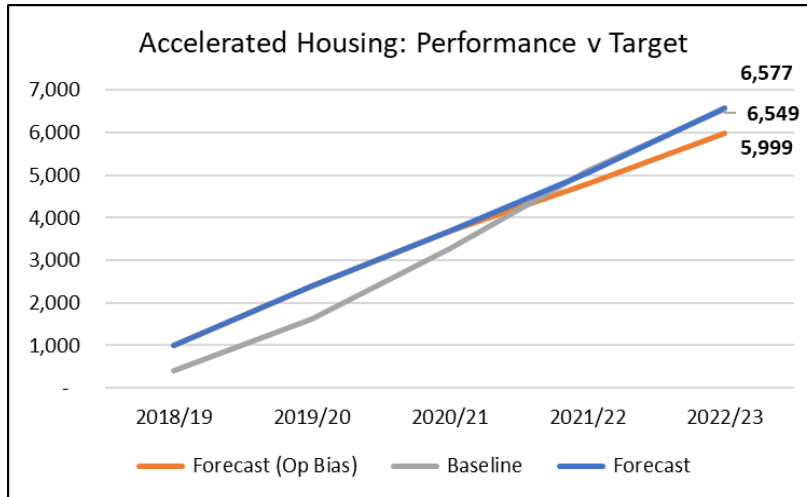
period for the programme. However, although there are delays to scheme completion, this will not affect the drawdown of grant for the schemes as they will be funded via recycled grant, committed earlier in the programme and now reclaimed.

## **Risk Management**

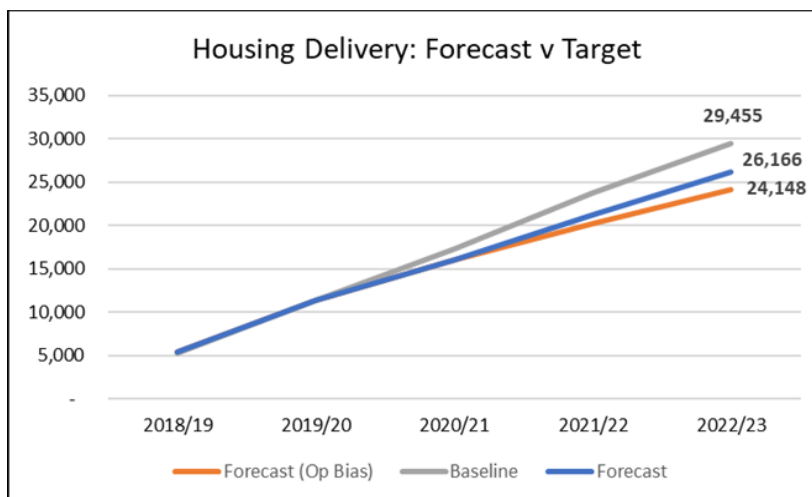
- 9) The OCC manages each infrastructure project, in conjunction with relevant partners and all risks and issues are identified and mitigated.
- 10) Officers have, as part of their performance management of the programme, identified all relevant risks to each project and supplied a RAG (Red/Amber/Green) rating for each scheme. The Growth Deal Programme Board receive monthly reports of risks alongside any mitigations to ensure that we continue to manage risks appropriately. This also forms part of the quarterly monitoring information provided to Homes England.
- 11) At a strategic level, the overall programme also has a Risk Register or RAID Log, updated quarterly, and reported to the Programme Board. This Strategic RAID Log holds the following risks to the Hfl programme together with actions proposed to mitigate.
  - The backloading of the programme, an issue compounded by the pandemic that has led to concerns that some schemes may fall outside of the 5-year timeframe of the Hfl programme. Government recognised this issue and have extended the programme for a further two years to enable the completion of delayed infrastructure schemes.
  - The continuing commitment to spend £30m annually on the Hfl programme when this linear financial profile does not reflect the reality of infrastructure project spend, which is typically heavily backloaded to the build phases.
  - Managing the impact of the Hfl programme upon the Oxfordshire road network- recognising that there are other significant infrastructure investment programmes in the same timeframe.
  - Shortages of both labour and materials causing delays to projects. This is a growing risk to the programme and is a recognised national phenomenon.
  - Potential project delays due to the need for some schemes to secure land through adversarial routes such as compulsory purchase.
  - Reliance on third parties (developers / network rail, etc) for delivery.
  - The continuing impact of the pandemic, for example further delays to schemes caused by current and future restrictions, safe work practices restricting productivity, interruptions to supply and labour chains and the wish of contracts to be renegotiated by infrastructure providers to reflect their new operating environment.

## **Delivering Housing from Infrastructure**

- 12) Oxfordshire has agreed with Homes England that the Housing from Infrastructure delivery trajectory will be revised every six months with an interim report including changes only by exception.
- 13) Accordingly, the estimated position for the Housing from Infrastructure (Hfl) programme as of 30th June remains as follows:



14) The graph shows that partners continue to anticipate that accelerated housing trajectory over the original five years of the Deal will still be above target at 6,577 homes against a baseline of 6,549. However, when applying the 20% optimism bias for the remaining years of the Deal the trajectory falls to 5,999.



15) Partners also expect that overall completions will be 26,166 homes against the target of 29,455 homes and when the optimism bias is applied to the remaining years of the Deal this falls to 24,148.

16) The Growth Deal team are working with partners to establish a half year position in time for the quarter two report. This will include an assessment of whether the revised timelines for some schemes in the infrastructure programme referred to in paragraphs 7/8 impact upon the accelerated housing trajectory.

## Risk Management

17) The risk management of the housing element of the Hfl programme has two elements. Firstly, there is the impact of the related infrastructure programme described in the earlier section but there are also non infrastructure related risks to housing delivery. The partnership has developed a two-tier risk assessment process that allows for consideration of both sets of risks and

issues, reported monthly to the Programme Board and quarterly to Homes England.

18) Partners have also developed a Strategic Risk Register or RAID Log that names and addresses the following programme wide risks and issues.

- The pace of infrastructure delivery, particularly that identified as crucial to the acceleration of homes and the consequent impact on the pace of related housing development.
- Any macroeconomic issues that cause a potential slowdown of housing development.
- Shortages of both labour and materials causing delays to projects. This is a growing risk to the programme and is a recognised national phenomenon.
- The speed of resolution of any planning issues needed to unblock sites.
- Potential impact of external market factors and the health of the economy- for example, the stamp duty holiday has had a positive effect upon demand for housing, but recent market analysis suggests that the market is slowing.

## **Affordable Housing Programme (OAHF)**

19) As reported to the July meeting, officers met with both Homes England and MHCLG in May to provide a full year end report on progress with the OAHF. The headlines of this report were:

- Agreement that we had achieved our agreed Year 3 target of 275 additional affordable homes and a total grant drawdown of £11,282,175, (quarter 4 grant of £5,211,175) received on 24<sup>th</sup> May.
- Advice to MHCLG that we had developed a Year 4 programme of 806 units sent to Homes England along with a contingency programme of 896 units from which we can draw the required 664 homes required units to meet our target.
- An anticipated first quarter grant drawdown of £3,019,200 for 60 units

20) The July report also advised that:

- There was a commitment from council partners to apply an additional £4.5m of local authority funds to the programme - specifically to help the development of low or zero carbon homes and other strategic priorities. The Year 4 programme has 366 homes classified as such.
- The OAHF will, upon completion, lever in more than £4m of RCGF (Recycled Capital Grant Fund) from Registered Providers to Oxfordshire.

21) The achievement of 36 units in the first quarter of year four reminds partners of the challenge of delivery of the final year of the OAHF. Addressing the challenge of delivery is a constant one for the OAHF and officers use a comprehensive programme management regime involving close engagement with all partners that enables us to track schemes closely and project manage risks and issues where possible to ensure delivery.

## **Risk Management**

22) The key risks to delivery of individual schemes within the OAHF, are primarily from delays in scheme development, planning and tender

processes, together with financial challenges to schemes viability. The partners manage these risks at district/city level.

23) In addition to these site-specific risks, there are more general risks identified for the Programme, these are identified in the RAID Log as:

- That the OAHP is not large enough to withstand the expected dropout rate of schemes that typically occurs through the programme. The programme needs to have the ability to allow for such drop out and still deliver to target. Mitigation of this risk is a persistent challenge, but one important response has been the development of the contingency programme, which can be used to draw in other units as required.
- The risks to the OAHP of a downturn in the economy, slowing housing completion rates and thence the affordable units developed.
- MHCLG review and reduce the budget for the OAHP.
- Shortages of both labour and materials causing delays to projects as well as affecting costs and viability. This is a growing risk to the programme and is a recognised national phenomenon.

## **Oxfordshire Plan 2050**

24) The focus of the Oxfordshire Plan Team (the Team) in this quarter has been on finalising the Oxfordshire Plan Regulation 18 document into a finalised Plan ready for consultation, whilst also preparing the consultation framework.

25) The key work areas have been:

- Finalising the spatial policy options for the consultation.
- Finalising and agreeing the policy options and supporting evidence.
- Developing the Consultation Framework.

### **Finalising the Spatial Policy Options for the Plan**

26) Whilst it will not be the role of the Oxfordshire Plan to allocate sites for development it will offer an assessment of strategic development options for local plans to reflect in their next iterations. At this stage of the Oxfordshire Plan's development, councils are looking to establish and consult upon a range of spatial policy options that could inform later decisions. The Oxfordshire Plan team have been working with partner councils and the Oxfordshire Plan Advisory Sub-group on agreeing a suite of spatial policy options that will be a key focus for the Regulation 18 consultation.

### **Finalising and agreeing the policy options and supporting evidence**

27) Alongside the spatial policy options the Oxfordshire Plan Regulation 18 document will also consult on a suite of related policy options designed to establish what future development could look like and how it addresses issues such as the environment, low carbon development, nature preservation and recovery, future transport and others.

28) These two key components of the Oxfordshire Plan are then supported by an evidence base made up of a range of technical studies that provide valuable baseline information, mapping, projections, and analysis on topics related to environmental, social and economic factors that will influence the

Plan. The evidence base studies have been published alongside the Plan (Regulation 18 part 2) consultation document so that those engaging with the consultation can understand the work that has informed its drafting.

- 29) Following the Regulation 18 consultation the evidence base will support decisions on spatial options and form part of the supporting evidence for the consideration of the Plan at Examination by an Inspector.

### **Developing the Consultation Framework**

30) The consultation of the Regulation 18 document began on time on 30<sup>th</sup> July.

31) As previously advised, the primary consultation route is a bespoke website, using the Oxfordshire Openthought platform that was successful for the part one consultation.

32) To complement this the Team are hosting a series of seminar/workshops throughout August and September. These are a mixed of generic workshops for interested residents caulked with specific themed workshops on the environment. There are also specific by invitation workshops with the CPRE and developers.

33) There will also be focus groups commissioned to offer a representative view of local people and seminars with local colleges, a method of engagement that has proved beneficial in the past are also planned.

### **Risk Management**

34) The following key risks to the production of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, previously reported remain important considerations:

- Challenges of being a front-runner, producing a new type of Plan with little bespoke guidance in national policy – this has become more relevant with the publication of the Planning White Paper.
- Challenging timeframe for production of the Plan given the complexities of the topics it will cover and of partnership working – this is mitigated by the new timetable outlined above although there is no further contingency.
- The development of a clear, agreed spatial strategy to form the basis of the policies; without this the defence of the Plan and its policies would be impossible – development of the Strategic Vision seeks to help to fill this space.
- Links with external projects, for example the OxCam Arc Spatial Framework.
- Links with and relationship to district Local Plans.

35) Officers have developed a detailed risk register including mitigations to ensure that risks are appropriately managed.

### **Deal Governance**

36) The Growth Deal Capacity Fund continues to be monitored by the Programme Office with monthly financial statements reported to the Growth Deal Programme Board. No key issues to report and monitoring, from



Quarter 1 2021/22, represents the balance of funds remaining in the Capacity Fund, following the transfer of the Oxfordshire Plan budget balance from Oxford City Council responsibility at the end of 2020/21.

- 37) An internal audit of the Capacity Fund, by Oxfordshire County Council, is currently in progress. An update will be shared once the outcome of the report has been received.
- 38) The draft budget reforecast for 2021/22 – 2023/24, to reflect the agreed extension of the Growth Deal within the constraints of the remaining budget of the Capacity Fund, is under review. As soon as the figures have been agreed, the Capacity Fund financial statement will be updated.
- 39) The Strategic RAID (Risks, Assumptions, Issues and Dependencies) Log continues to be monitored and reported to the Growth Deal Programme Board on a monthly/quarterly basis. Further detailed work with the risk and issue owners on the specific actions to lessen the impact and probability of key risks and issues will continue during Quarter 2.
- 40) During Quarter 1, the Programme Office has also been responsible for progressing with the recruitment vacancies within the Oxfordshire Plan team. Progress on the recruitment to be reported in Quarter 2.

## **Legal Implications**

- 41) None arising from this report.

## **Other Implications**

- 42) None arising from this report.

## **Conclusion**

- 43) This report outlines progress against the agreed Growth Deal milestones.
- 44) The report shows that despite these challenges Oxfordshire continues to make good progress towards meeting our commitments under the Deal and there are continually evolving robust best practice partnership and management arrangements, both within each council and across the partnership to address risks and issues as they arise. MHCLG recognised these arrangements as best practice in the year end meeting discussed earlier in the report.
- 45) The report asks the Future Oxfordshire Partnership to note progress with the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021, the first quarter of the fourth year of the Deal and the achievement against the milestones committed to.

## Background Papers

None

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**To:** Future Oxfordshire Partnership (formerly the Oxfordshire Growth Board)

**Title of Report:** Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Financial Report Quarter 1 2021/22

**Date:** 20 September 2021

**Report of:** Director of Finance, Oxfordshire County Council (Accountable Body)

**Status:** Open

**Executive Summary and Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to update the Future Oxfordshire Partnership on the 2021/22 financial position at the end of Quarter 1 for the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. The report covers the three grant funding streams:

- Infrastructure programme
- Affordable Housing programme
- Growth Deal Capacity Fund

The report is prepared by the Director of Finance for Oxfordshire County Council in the capacity of Section 151 Officer of the Accountable Body for the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and gives assurance over the grant funding and expenditure.

The fourth strand of the Deal, Productivity is reported through the OXLEP Board under separate arrangements

**Recommendation:** That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes the 2021/22 Quarter 1 financial report.

**Appendices:**

Annex 1: Infrastructure Programme  
Annex 2: Capacity Fund

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the financial position for Quarter 1 2021/22 of the following three stands of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and associated funding streams from Homes England (HE):

- Infrastructure Programme.
- Affordable Housing Programme.
- Growth Deal Capacity Fund.

1.2 The report is prepared by the Director of Finance for Oxfordshire County Council (the County Council) in the capacity of Section 151 Officer of the Accountable Body for the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and gives assurance over the grant funding and expenditure.

1.3 Funding for the fourth strand of the deal Productivity Programme is managed by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) and financial performance is reported independently to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

## **2.0 Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Fund Financial Governance**

2.1 In accordance with the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Delivery Plan, the County Council is the accountable body for the financial management of the three key financial streams. A quarterly report is provided to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. Responsibility for the management of each financial stream is held by the programme lead.

2.2 As the Accountable Body, the County Council is responsible for ensuring that:

- Funding is received from Government.
- Recommendations to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership on schemes to be funded are in accordance with the grant conditions.
- Regular monitoring reports are provided to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

2.3 The County Council also holds the risk should Government require funding to be repaid if it is unspent or deemed to have been misused.

## **3.0 Financial Summary Quarter 1 2021/22**

### **3.1 Infrastructure Fund**

3.1.1 The Infrastructure Fund totals £150.0m. The grant funding is being paid to the Accountable Body in five equal annual instalments of £30.0m. 2021/22 is the fourth year of the Infrastructure Fund Programme.

3.1.2 The full list of schemes and latest profile of spend over the programme is set out in Annex 1. The total forecast spend on growth deal schemes reported for 2021/22 is £24.9m with actual spend for Q1 of £3m.

3.1.3 The majority of schemes are now progressing through the pre-construction phases with planning submissions expected in 2021/22 and construction and

completion from 2022 onwards. This is reflected in the forecasted spend profile for 2022/23 & 2023/24.

- 3.1.4 Based on the latest estimated cost plans recently submitted for certain scheme, the figures will be updated to reflect the reallocation of grant funding. This will be reflected in the next report. As schemes progress through design to contract let, further variations are anticipated but are expected to be funded from within the total infrastructure fund allocation.

### **3.2 Affordable Housing Fund**

- 3.2.1 The Oxfordshire Affordable Housing Programme (OAHP) is expected to provide funding to support the delivery of up to 1,322 units of affordable housing. The programme has continued during the first four years of the Growth Deal following agreement to extend the original three-year programme by a year into 2021/22 in order to deliver against the target.

- 3.2.2 The actual funding claimed is agreed periodically with Homes England based on the number of affordable housing units that are in contract to be delivered. To support the cashflow of the housing authorities, it has been agreed with Homes England to move from an annual claim to a quarterly claim process. This will also support the in-year monitoring by giving greater visibility of progress to date.

- 3.2.3 Funding of £25.6m was claimed in the first three years of the programme and supported 658 units of affordable housing.

- 3.2.4 Following analysis of the current delivery plan, a bespoke approach has been agreed with Homes England and MHCLG to maximise the number of affordable homes deliverable in the remaining period of the deal. This approach will provide flexibility and support to the delivery of schemes this year, and as necessary, into the future. To date a total of £1.4m has been requested for the Year 4 Quarter 1 drawdown and this is expected to be transferred in September 2021.

### **3.3 Growth Deal Capacity Fund**

- 3.3.1 The Growth Deal Capacity Fund totals £5.0m. The grant has been paid to the County Council in three instalments. The first instalment of £0.5m was paid in 2017/18, followed by £2.5m in 2018/19 and £2.0m in 2019/20.

- 3.3.2 The funding is available to be used over the life of the programme which was originally planned to run from 2017/18 to 2022/23. At year end, funding that has not been spent is carried forward through the County Council's Earmarked Reserves. The budget is split into three elements:

- Housing Delivery: Staff costs for the core Housing and Growth Deal team.
- Delivery of the Oxfordshire Joint Statutory Spatial Plan including staff costs.

- Feasibility: costs of feasibility works including Rail Connectivity Study (part funding) and Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) refresh.

3.3.3 Annex 2 sets out the financial position, which includes a carry forward of £2.4m into 2021/22. The future profile of spend remains under review and will be extended into 2023/24. This will be reflected in the next report.

#### **4.0 Risk Management**

4.1 The financial performance of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Grant funding streams is closely monitored by the Growth Deal Programme Board. This will ensure that forecast spend of the Growth Deal period is accurate, based on the knowledge of the programme plans, and actual spend is reported, based on a monthly review of all transactional activity and balanced to the County Council financial systems.

4.2 Any risk identified to the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Funding streams will be reported to the Growth Deal Programme Board for review and appropriate mitigation action will be agreed. Any strategic risk to the overall programme will be reported to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

#### **5.0 Conclusion**

5.1 This report sets out the spend against the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal funding streams for Quarter 1 2021/22.

5.2 The Future Oxfordshire Partnership is asked to note the 2021/22 Quarter 1 financial report.

Report Author: Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance

Contact information: Kathy Wilcox, Head of Financial Strategy Tel: 07788 302163

Growth Deal Schemes	Report	Yr 1 - Yr 2021/22 2022/23 2023/24 2024/25					Total	Capital Allocation	Revenue Allocation
		3	£m	£m	£m	£m			
<b>GROWTH DEAL SCHEMES</b>									
NW Bicester A4095 Howes Lane / Lords Lane u/bridge	MIBAB	4.837	2.943	-	-	-	7.780	7.780	0.020
NW Bicester A4095 Howes Lane / Lords Lane Road Realignment	MIBAB	0.343	1.700	10.000	3.707	-	15.750	15.750	-
M40 J10 Improvements	MIBAB	16.563	-	-	2.317	-	18.880	18.880	0.140
A422 Hennef Way, Banbury	MIBAB	0.170	-	-	-	-	0.170	0.170	0.030
Tramway Road Banbury	MIBAB	0.163	0.600	2.167	-	-	2.930	2.930	0.280
A361 Bloxham Rd to A4260 Oxford Rd Link Rd	MIBAB	0.300	-	-	-	-	0.300	0.300	-
Access to Headington	MIOX	3.500	-	-	-	-	3.500	3.500	-
Botley Road Corridor	MIOX	3.250	-	-	-	-	3.250	3.250	-
Oxpens to Osney Mead Cycling and Pedestrian Bridge	MIOX	5.903	-	0.097	-	-	6.000	6.000	-
Oxford Citywide Cycle and Pedestrian Routes	MIOX	1.479	0.520	1.286	-	-	3.285	3.285	0.470
Banbury Rd Improvements (Banbury Road Corridor)	MIOX	0.108	0.650	1.612	-	-	2.370	2.370	0.030
Woodstock Rd Improvement (Woodstock Road Corridor)	MIOX	0.112	1.250	5.000	6.138	-	12.500	12.500	-
SE Corridors / Connecting Oxford	MIOX	0.210	1.000	0.520	-	-	1.730	1.730	0.440
A4260 and A44 Corridor Improvements	MIOX	0.894	3.000	10.000	0.636	-	14.530	14.530	1.470
North Oxford Corridors - Kidlington	MIOX	0.040	0.600	5.000	0.360	-	6.000	6.000	-
Active Travel P2 - City	MIOX	-	0.479	-	-	-	0.479	0.479	-
Botley Road Bridge	MIOX	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.500
Cowley Branch Line	Reserves	-	-	-	-	0.248	0.248	0.248	-
Watlington Edge Road	MICW	0.255	0.500	4.900	5.445	-	11.100	11.100	0.010
Benson Relief Road	MICW	0.486	0.500	0.814	-	-	1.800	1.800	-
Milton Enterprise Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge	MICW	0.087	0.150	0.250	0.093	-	0.580	0.580	0.420
Witford Junction	MICW	0.077	0.200	0.400	0.400	0.423	1.500	1.500	-
Relief to Rowstock	MICW	0.245	0.750	0.700	-	3.005	4.700	4.700	-
Jubilee Way Roundabout & Didcot Central Corridor	MICW	-	0.150	0.650	0.200	-	1.000	1.000	-
Golden Balls Roundabout Junction (A4074/B4015)	MICW	-	0.400	0.600	-	-	1.000	1.000	-
A40/Minster Lovell West Facing Slips/Access to Carterton	MICW	-	-	-	0.590	-	0.590	0.590	0.120
Oxford Science Transit	MIHIF2	1.476	7.500	-	-	3.024	12.000	12.000	-
Access to Witney at Shores Green	MIHIF2	-	2.000	3.905	-	-	5.905	5.905	0.020
Thame to Haddenham Cycle Route	n/a	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.010
Shrivenham New School	Pupil Places	-	-	0.700	1.800	-	2.500	2.500	-
Ploughley Road / A41 Bicester	MIBAB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.010
Wantage Eastern Link Road	MICW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Featherbed Lane Capacity Improvements	n/a	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Scheme Spend</b>		<b>40.498</b>	<b>24.892</b>	<b>48.601</b>	<b>21.686</b>	<b>6.700</b>	<b>142.377</b>	<b>142.377</b>	<b>3.970</b>
Staffing		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.303
Programme Contingency/earmarked reserves		-	-	-	-	0.350	0.350	0.350	-
<b>Total Other Send</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0.350</b>	<b>0.350</b>	<b>0.350</b>	<b>3.303</b>
<b>TOTAL GROWTH DEAL SCHEMES</b>		<b>40.498</b>	<b>24.892</b>	<b>48.601</b>	<b>21.686</b>	<b>7.050</b>	<b>142.727</b>	<b>142.727</b>	<b>7.273</b>
New Schools and Other Transport Schemes - Capital Switches		41.039	-	-	-	-	41.039	-	-
Revenue		7.273	-	-	-	-	7.273	-	-
Prepayments		-	16.500	0.700	5.800	10.000	-	-	-
<b>Overall Total</b>		<b>72.310</b>	<b>25.592</b>	<b>54.401</b>	<b>31.686</b>	<b>7.050</b>	<b>191.039</b>		

	Yr 1 - Yr 2021/22 2022/23 2023/24 2024/25					Total
Funding	3					
Capital	75.000	30.000	30.000	-	-	135.000
Revenue	15.000	-	-	-	-	15.000
Funding Switches	41.039	-	-	-	-	41.039
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>131.039</b>	<b>30.000</b>	<b>30.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>191.039</b>
<b>Revenue C/Fwd</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Capital C/Fwd</b>	<b>58.729</b>	<b>4.408</b>	<b>-24.401</b>	<b>-31.686</b>	<b>-7.050</b>	<b>0.000</b>

## Capacity Fund

## Annex 2

	2017/18 Actual Spend £'m	2018/19 Actual Spend £'m	2019/20 Actual Spend £'m	2020/21 Actual Spend £'m	2021/22 Forecast Spend £'m	2022/23 Forecast Spend £'m	2023/24 Forecast Spend £'m	TOTAL £'m
Housing Delivery (Programme Team)	0.044	0.340	0.480	0.390				1.254
Joint Statutory Spatial Plan costs		0.207	1.347	(0.253)				1.301
Feasibility		0.000	0.042	0.000				0.042
Provisional forecast submitted					1.229	1.033	0.141	2.403
<b>Total Spend</b>	<b>0.044</b>	<b>0.547</b>	<b>1.869</b>	<b>0.137</b>	<b>1.229</b>	<b>1.033</b>	<b>0.141</b>	<b>5.000</b>
Grant Received	(0.500)	(2.500)	(2.000)					(5.000)
Grant Carried Forward (-) / Drawn down (+)	(0.456)	(1.953)	(0.131)	0.137	1.229	1.033	0.141	(0.141)
<b>Year End Reserve Balance</b>	<b>0.456</b>	<b>2.409</b>	<b>2.540</b>	<b>2.403</b>	<b>1.174</b>	<b>0.141</b>	<b>0.000</b>	



## Notes

OF A MEETING OF THE



# Future Oxfordshire Partnership Housing Advisory Group

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 6.30 PM  
VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

### Present:

Councillors: Susan Brown (Chair), Robin Bennett, Diko Blackings, Jeff Haine, Judy Roberts and Lucinda Wing

**Officers:** Kevin Jacob, (Future Oxfordshire Partnership), Yi Li, (Future Oxfordshire Partnership), Megan McFarlane (Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Team) and Paul Staines (Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal)

### **8 Apologies for absence and notifications of substitutions; declarations of interests; Chair's announcements**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Pete Sudbury, (Oxfordshire County Council).

There were no declarations of interest or Chair's announcements.

### **9 Notes of the previous meeting**

The notes of the meeting held on 6 July 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

### **10 First Homes Update**

It was noted that this update would be deferred to the next meeting due to officer unavailability. The Chair suggested that in the meantime, if officers or members of the group had any new information available regarding the First Home initiative, it should be shared directly outside of the meeting.

### **11 Quarter 1 Year 4 Housing and Growth Deal Progress Presentation**

The advisory group received a presentation setting out key points on progress as of Quarter 1, Year 4 of the Affordable Housing and Homes from Infrastructure Programmes.

Paul Staines, Interim Head of Programme, emphasised the significant emerging risk of national shortages in labour and materials, which was impacting on the delivery of sites and projects across the Homes from Infrastructure programme. Discussions with Homes England regarding this were underway as appropriate.

The advisory group was informed that a number of schemes within the Affordable Housing Programme, (AHP) had been recategorised as having an amber risk rating which was in large part linked to the planning permission status of the individual scheme and the need for this to be in place by March 2022. It was also highlighted that within the context of the Housing and Growth Deal and the AHP, delivery of units was considered to have taken place once contractual start on site was achieved which typically comprised the granting of planning permission and in some instances contracts in place with developers to build the units, not the physical delivery or completion of those units on site.

It was noted that if the revised programme was delivered in full then projected spend for the AHP would be approximately £57m against the budget target of £60m. Progress would continue to be carefully monitored as it was recognised that it was a key priority to achieve full spend against the budget and deliver as many AHP units as possible given the shortage of affordable housing in Oxfordshire. Members of the group explored potential ideas for ways to ensure full spend, noting that Ministry for Communities, Housing and Local Government permission would need to be granted for the addition of any new schemes to the programme and that it was unlikely that any further extension to the AHP would be granted. It was agreed that a list of schemes, broken down by area and type would be supplied to members of the advisory group so that they could be followed up locally once this final list was agreed with Homes England and HM Government.

The Advisory group noted that, within the OAHP, the largest category of tenure of units was shared ownership with delivery expected of 500 units against a target of 228. It was expected that 488 social rent units would be delivered against a target of 704. In discussion, it was noted that the Halo Shared Ownership model had been popular in the Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire with the possibility of extending such schemes into Cherwell District being explored. However, it was felt that there was scope for improvement in the marketing of shared ownership schemes. If this could be achieved, shared ownership schemes could offer a good way for key workers to enter the housing market.

The Advisory group noted the update.

## **12 Presentation on reflections from the Oxfordshire Affordable Housing Programme to date**

The advisory group received a presentation from Paul Staines, Interim Head of Programme setting out key observations around lessons learned from the Oxfordshire Affordable Housing Programme, (AHP) to date including key successes and challenges.

Members of the advisory group discussed the observations made in detail and particularly focussing on whether any lessons could be learned, or adjustments made, if the programme were to be repeated which would increase the likelihood of involvement by Registered Providers of social housing in areas of Oxfordshire where there had been low or no delivery of units under the current programme. It was noted that a number of Registered Providers in different areas of the county already had long-term Strategic Partnership relationships with Homes England which made it more challenging to secure

their participation with the OAHF. More generally it had been challenging to match the levels of Homes England national grant rates through the OAHF, although the commitment of S106 contributions by partner councils to top up the level of grant funding available had assisted with this challenge.

Members commented that there was an ongoing, high level of need for affordable housing within Oxfordshire and the Chair suggested that it was important to continue to work to develop innovative future new proposals to HM Government that would work for all the districts of the county and to seek ways to work differently in order to increase the numbers of affordable housing. Given the county's track record of good delivery through the AHP it was felt that Oxfordshire was in a relatively strong position to negotiate with HM Government.

Members of the group also discussed the potential for self-build through Community Led Housing scheme to deliver more affordable housing, (with appropriate safeguards to ensure ongoing public social good) but acknowledged that self-build units currently fell outside the technical definition of affordable housing within the National Planning Policy Framework for which grant funding could be used.

### **13 Update on Community Led Housing following local Community Led Housing seminar**

It was noted that the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, (formerly the Oxfordshire Growth Board) had in July 2020 considered a report written by the Collaborative Housing Hub on current barriers and opportunities for growing the delivery of Community Led Housing (CLH) in Oxfordshire and had agreed to the establishment of action plans to deliver the report's recommendations. Megan McFarlane, Growth Deal Programme and Projects Officer provided an update on progress in the implementation of the regulations. Since the previous meeting, work had been undertaken to promote the implementation of the report's recommendations in relation to planning policy amongst professional groups across the councils.

In discussion, members discussed the advantages of Community Led Housing and how to better secure funding for these schemes given that HM Government's funding matrix did not include CLH. It was felt that Community Led Housing Associations, who were not Registered Providers, were keener to build CLH in the urban areas but not so much in more rural communities. The concept of cooperative schemes was also considered.

The Chair concluded that ways to provide different and interesting CLH schemes should be explored and that potentially there might be opportunity to involve smaller Registered Providers in CLH schemes as such schemes would not be in direct competition with Homes England based funding.

The Advisory group noted the update.

## **14 Dates of future meetings**

Tuesday 2 November 2021.

Members of the Advisory group confirmed that they were happy to continue to meet virtually.

The meeting closed at 7.40 pm

# Notes

OF A MEETING OF THE



## **Future Oxfordshire Partnership Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Group**

**HELD ON THURSDAY 15 JULY 2021 AT 10.00 AM  
VIRTUAL VIA MS TEAMS**

### **Present:**

Councillors Emily Smith (Chair), Colin Clarke, Duncan Enright, Jeff Haine, Debby Hallett, Alex Hollingsworth and Anne-Marie Simpson

**Officers:** Adrian Colwell (Oxfordshire Plan 2050), Giles Hughes (West Oxfordshire District Council), Kevin Jacob (Future Oxfordshire Partnership), Paul Staines (Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal) and Peter Truman, (Oxfordshire Plan 2050)

### **13 Apologies for absence and notifications of substitutions; declarations of interest; Chair's announcements**

There were no apologies for absence, but Councillor Clarke indicated that he had an additional commitment and would need to leave the meeting at 11:00.

There were no declarations of interest or Chair's announcements.

### **14 Notes of the previous meeting**

The notes of the meeting held on 17 June 2021 were agreed as a correct summary.

### **15 Review of the chronology of sign off for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation**

#### Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation

Paul Staines, Interim Head of Programme and Adrian Colwell, Oxfordshire Plan 2050 outlined the planned timeline for the approval by partner council Cabinets of the Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation phase on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The advisory group received a draft events programme setting out dates for planned public engagement events up to the close of the consultation period on 8 October 2021.

It was noted that the draft consultation document and supporting evidence base had already been considered by a number of council overview scrutiny committees with

various comments made which various members of the advisory group referred to. Officers advised that every effort would be made to update the consultation document with any minor technical updates required prior to the beginning of the public consultation but stressed that detailed responses on the content of the consultation document could be made during the consultation period.

In discussion, members felt that that it was very important to make clear in any consultation explanatory information that the Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation was not on a consultation of a proposed 'final version' of the Plan. At Regulation 18 Part 2 stage, views were to be sought on the range of options and issues presented and that after the conclusion of the consultation period, the responses would be considered carefully and then inform the drafting of the final formal Regulation 19 consultation document, which itself would be subject of a statutory public consultation.

The Chair and advisory group members paid tribute to Oxfordshire Plan 2050 team and all those who had supported what had been a major piece of work and achievement to bring the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to this point.

### Chronology and timeline to Regulation 19 consultation

Officers introduced an initial high level draft workplan of activity and key milestones required at the conclusion of the Regulation 18 Part 2 public consultation leading into the planned approval to commence public consultation on the Regulation 19 version of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 in May 2022.

It was highlighted that to date no spatial plan such as the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 had been taken to Regulation 19 stage under current planning regulations and legislation. Therefore, there were some uncertainties around how the Planning Inspectorate would consider the Plan and its supporting evidence base as a long term spatial strategy as it differed materially from Local Plans. There could also be impacts on the adoption of the Plan arising from the Planning Bill.

It was noted that a further iteration of the workplan would be presented for discussion at the August meeting of the advisory group.

## **16 Consultation update**

The advisory group considered an update from Peter Truman, Communications and Engagement Advisor, on the Communications Strategy for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation which also included details of the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy, (OxIS) consultation.

The advisory group was informed that:

- The consultation would open on 30 July and conclude on the 8 October.
- The primary mechanism for the public to learn about and respond to the consultation would be online, via the [Oxfordshire Open Thought website](#) but copies of the consultation documents would also be available at public libraries.
- It was intended to run a number of free public webinars during August and September where members of the public could learn more about the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 through presentations by principal members of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 team and

district and county council partner officers. There would be opportunities for members of the public to raise queries and ask questions.

- It was also intended that relevant officers attend webinars organised by third parties if at all possible.
- Information and publicity material regarding the consultation would be sent to town and parish councils who would be asked for their assistance in raising awareness within their localities of the consultation as well as seeking formal responses from them.
- Officers recognised that the OxIS public consultation was already in progress and would run concurrently to a degree with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. HM Government was also due to start its consultation on the Oxford to Cambridge Arc Vision. The need for clear messaging and information around the separate, but linked consultations was therefore recognised in order to mitigate the risk of any misunderstanding.
- As part of the wider engagement and liaison piece of work for the consultation, members of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 team would also be working with the communications teams in each of the partner councils to coordinate information and promote the consultation.
- Responses received to the consultation would be analysed to provide demographic data around the groups responding.

In discussion, members again discussed how levels of awareness of and engagement with the consultation might be increased amongst hard to reach groups, particularly young people, and school age children, whilst acknowledging it was important to focus time and resources where they would add the most value. Officers acknowledged that this was important but advised that although considerable efforts had been made, achieving engagement with schools had been very challenging to secure, not least because of the challenges schools had faced during the pandemic. Members offered to do what they could to facilitate contact with school contacts in their localities.

Members raised the importance of using and selecting social media channels selectively in order to best target consultation information most effectively. It was suggested that short video clips might be most effective in generating exposure and interest. It was also important for content to be accessible.

It was noted that Peter Truman was moving to a new role and members of the advisory group thanked him for all his hard working in supporting the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the wider Oxfordshire Growth Board and wished him well for the future.

## **17 Update on the relationship between the Oxfordshire Plan and the OxCam Arc consultations and the messaging around them**

Giles Hughes, Chief Executive, West Oxfordshire District Council, introduced a paper setting an update and explanation of the relationship between the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 consultation and HM Government's anticipated public consultation on the Oxford to Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework. Whilst separate, there were considerable synergies between the different consultations.

At that time, the nature and content of the Spatial Framework consultation was not known, but it was expected that it would be pitched at a relatively high level and that in addition to the local consultations on the Plan 2050 and OxIS, individuals and groups should be encouraged to make responses. It was felt that the HM Government consultation offered a genuine opportunity to contribute and influence the development of the spatial framework as a strategic document.

## **18 Future meetings and work programme**

The advisory group noted the dates of its future meetings as set out in the Agenda. It was agreed that there would be sufficient business to warrant a meeting in August as scheduled to receive an update on the opening of the Regulation 18 Part 2 public consultation and future planning.

The meeting closed at 11.55 am



# Notes

OF A MEETING OF THE



## **Future Oxfordshire Partnership Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Group**

**HELD ON THURSDAY 12 AUGUST 2021 AT 10.00 AM  
VIRTUAL VIA MS TEAMS**

### **Present:**

**Councillors:** Emily Smith (Chair), Colin Clarke, Duncan Enright, Jeff Haine, Debby Hallett, Alex Hollingsworth and Anne-Marie Simpson

**Officers:** Giles Hughes (West Oxfordshire District Council) and Yi Li (Future Oxfordshire Partnership)

### **19 Apologies for absence and notifications of substitutions; declarations of interest; Chair's announcements**

Apologies received from Paul Staines, Interim Head of Programme, and Adrian Colwell, Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

### **20 Brief update on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation so far**

Michele Smith, Communications and Engagement Advisor for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and Andrew Thompson, Principal Planner, updated that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation website was launched on time and responses from the public were starting to come through.

Members commented that the consultation website had areas to be improved upon and said there was the potential for confusion for the public in some areas. Officers agreed to meet with the web designer to discuss some improvements to the website's functionality in due course.

Officers also explained that there was a plan to reschedule the consultation webinars to the end of August and beginning of September, with a mixture of lunch time and evening meetings set on different dates to encourage more attendance. Additionally, the presentation used in the consultation webinars would be amended to be more accessible. For example, it could be a short email with links to be sent to various councils, members, communities and the public.

Members discussed the impact that may be caused by rescheduling the consultation webinars and suggested that for a 10-week consultation period, most meetings should ideally not be scheduled closely together towards the end. Councillor Emily Smith (Chair of the advisory group) emphasised that Officers should ensure that any plans for the webinar's dates should comply with the decisions made by Local Authority Cabinets when the consultation documents were approved in July 2021.

Officers concluded that they would revisit the current consultation webinar dates, and if they were set in stone, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 team would have to work with them.

Officers confirmed that there was a Communication Plan which was approved in the week commencing 9 August 2021, and it would be circulated after the meeting.

Officers provided an update on social media and the attempt to boost followers, commenting that:

- News on climate change was posted by Officers on all the social media platforms (LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook) in the week commencing 9 August 2021, building on relevant national and international news headlines.
- Members were encouraged to share, retweet and like posts where possible to boost awareness and engagement on social media.

Officers introduced the plan to engage with young people as much as possible and suggested that Members and Officers could visit schools (Primary, Secondary, Sixth Form Centres, and Universities) to talk to young people about the future, as young people had a huge influence on their parents.

An Instagram account was created for the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (formerly the Growth Board) in the week commencing 9 August 2021 in the hope to reach more young people.

Some members suggested that an engagement toolkit could be useful for engaging with schools, though others suggested that resource implications needed to be understood

## **21 Work programme beyond the Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation**

Giles Hughes, Chief Executive, West Oxfordshire District Council, provided an update on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 work programme and explained that there were still tasks to be done to get to Regulation 19.

The tasks included:

- To assess consultation responses which could reflect on the work programme planning process.
- To consider the implications that the Planning Bill could have on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. This meant that if the Planning Bill was produced in the autumn, it is assumed that it was likely to come with a "Transition Provision" which would allow local plans to continue. Therefore, it was not expected to cause difficulties for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

- To hold meetings with the Environment Advisory Group and the Infrastructure Advisory Group for strategic discussion, which would feedback into the work on Oxfordshire Plan 2050.
- To ensure the objectives of both the Local Transport Connectivity Plan and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 were aligned to progress to the next stage of the work programme.
- For the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to go through the Local Authority Scrutiny and Cabinet meetings during April 2022.
- For the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to be signed off by councils, then to start public consultation by the end of May 2022.

Members commented on the potential difficulty of the timing in this work programme:

- It did not sound like there was adequate time for the Scrutiny meetings, which could make it difficult to make changes if required by the Scrutiny process.
- Some councils would have local elections in May 2022. If the Scrutiny process was not allowed sufficient time in the work programme, it could risk complications at the end.

Councillor Emily Smith (Chair of the advisory group) agreed with the concerns and explained the importance of ensuring that this document was supported by every council. Therefore, adequate time for the Scrutiny meetings was crucial as well as enough time for changes to be made after.

Officers and Members concluded that the work programme would be amended as set out below:

- To call for members' ideas and suggestions as early as possible rather than all at the end of the work programme through the Scrutiny meetings.
- To consider ideas and suggestions from the consultation and assess whether they were appropriate in achieving the objectives of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Then to firm up policies and the levels of future growth with consideration of sustainability.
- To allow adequate time for the Scrutiny process, ensuring all Members' inputs were considered and assessed, and allow adequate time for making changes, ahead of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 final iteration going to Local Authority Cabinet meetings.

The Chair requested that Members notify her regarding the potential for any disagreement within their Councils about policies being proposed for inclusion in the Regulation 19 Consultation Document. Early communication was required between each of the Councils to ensure that the final version was agreed collectively before Councils adopting it as policy.

## **22 The Arc Vision and Options implications**

Giles Hughes, Chief Executive, West Oxfordshire District Council, reflected on the Oxford-Cambridge Arc vision consultation and explained that everyone (members, individuals, and organisations) was encouraged to respond to the consultation ahead of the development of the Arc Spatial Framework (ASF). As there had never been any ASF before, the more feedback the better because it would help in building the ASF.

The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 had been positively supported through discussions with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and Officers would continue to actively engage with MHCLG as the ASF was developed.

Members requested updates in the next meeting (16 September 2021) on the ASF and the approach to viability and spatial options of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

Giles Hughes highlighted that it was too soon to give an update at the next meeting on 16 September 2021. However, an update would be provided for Members in upcoming future meetings.

## **23 Update on team resources and progress with recruitment**

Giles Hughes, Chief Executive, West Oxfordshire District Council, confirmed that the role of Oxfordshire Plan Programme Lead had been filled and that this person would be joining the team in November 2021.

There were vacancies for a Principal Planning Officer and a Senior Planning Officer. Work was ongoing to ensure adequate programme support.

In response to questions, Giles Hughes explained that posts were funded through a mixture of funding from the Growth Deal and Councils. Going forward, how posts were funded would be under consideration as part of a broader piece of work across the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

## **24 Future meetings**

The dates of future meetings for 2021/2022 were noted by Members:

- 16/09/2021 at 10:00
- 14/10/2021 at 10:00
- 18/11/2021 at 10:00
- 16/12/2021 (15:00 to 17:00)
- 20/01/2022 at 10:00
- 17/02/2022 at 10:00
- 17/03/2022 at 10:00
- 14/04/2022 at 10:00
- 16/06/2022 at 10:00
- 14/07/2022 at 10:00

Updates of the following items were requested for future meetings:

- The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation
- The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Group work programme
- How viability of spatial options will be approached

The meeting closed at 11.30 am

# Notes

## OF A MEETING OF THE



# Future Oxfordshire Partnership Environment Advisory Group

HELD ON TUESDAY 3 AUGUST 2021 AT 1.30 PM  
VIRTUAL VIA MS TEAMS

### Present:

**Councillors:** Sue Cooper (Chair), David Harvey, Tom Hayes, Andrea Powell, Pete Sudbury and Catherine Webber

**Officers:** Kevin Jacob (Future Oxfordshire Partnership) and Suzanne Malcolm (Deputy Chief Executive - Place, South and Vale Councils)

### **6 Apologies for absence and notification of substitutions; declarations of interests and Chair's announcements**

No apologies for absence were received.

There were no declarations of interest or Chair's announcements.

### **7 Notes of the previous meeting**

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

### **8 Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire**

The advisory group considered the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire report which had been recently published by the Environmental Change Institute, (ECI) of the University of Oxford. It was noted that the study had been commissioned and funded through a cross section of Oxfordshire public and private sector partners.

The Chair commented that the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, (formerly the Oxfordshire Growth Board), had asked the advisory group to consider the report and also referred to the recommendations made by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel which the advisory group had been asked to consider. As requested at the previous meeting, Sam Hampton, and Nick Eyre from the ECI had kindly agreed to attend the meeting to assist the advisory group in discussing what the priorities should be for local authorities in seeking to progress the outcomes of the report, mindful of the constrained resources available to local authorities.

In summary, Sam Hampton and Nick Eyre informed the advisory group that:

- Oxfordshire had made good progress so far and was currently on track to meet the 2030 target for carbon reduction, with a significant amount of PV electricity generation already. However, most of the factors contributing to the expected fall in emissions had been led by factors outside of Oxfordshire, e.g. national targets for the decarbonisation of electricity generation, EU regulations on appliance energy consumption etc. Doing more would require more local action.
- Key priorities for Oxfordshire local authorities to further lower emissions included: - increased PV electricity generation capacity in the county via ground mounted solar parks and retrofitting of domestic and non-domestic properties, particularly the move from fossil fuel heating to more sustainable sources of heating such as air or ground source heating; transition to fossil free transport.
- There should not be a fixation on particular dates, but the overall target of 2050 should be adhered to.
- Local authorities should try to use their existing powers and power of influence around initiatives such as the promotion of Active Travel, public transport, planning requirements and air quality as a means to drive electrification. Where they do not currently have explicit powers, local authorities can use their influence to seek to persuade decision makers, e.g. work with partners to manage the increase in electricity generation capacity needed from phasing out fossil fuels.
- Access to centrally held funds to support net zero projects was likely to be via competition/bid processes.
- The options around future land use planning to achieve net zero all had implications and trade-offs and presented difficult decisions for local policy makers.

In discussion, members again focussed upon how the advisory group might add the most value in response to the report and the delivery of its suggested actions. The following points were made in summary:

- Internationally, there were potential opportunities to learn from best practice in innovative use of land for PV provision, (California) and energy efficient land use, (Holland)
- In tackling emissions generated directly within Oxfordshire it was important not to lose sight of the challenge presented by emissions generated from the import and transportation of goods produced internationally.
- Whilst best practice pilots were useful, it was crucially important to upscale and mainstream the clean technologies used within the next decade.
- The best value for money and carbon reduction impacts might come from investment in schemes outside of Oxfordshire such as offshore wind power.
- Continuous communications and engagement with residents including through schools was of crucial importance and would be central to influencing positive changes in behaviours, for example around changing patterns of electricity consumption to periods of peak zero emission electricity generation. It was felt that this was an area in which the advisory group and the Future Oxfordshire Partnership more widely could potentially play a leadership role in tackling misunderstandings around Net Zero.
- That as the UK emerged from Covid-19 restrictions there a decreasing window of opportunity in which to embed positive carbon reduction behavioural changes as part of building back to a new normal on issues such as home working and it was felt that home working should continue to be encouraged.

- Innovative models of financing zero carbon projects should be investigated, for instance the issuing of 'Green Bonds'.
- That in considering how green infrastructure projects such as PV solar electricity generation capacity and Low Carbon Hub projects might be upscaled in Oxfordshire, there were potential opportunities for local authorities to support such schemes as part of their own investment portfolios and local authority finance and property officers should be encouraged to share best practice in this area.
- Local decarbonisation strategies needed to be brought forward and implemented by local authorities within their areas which would include the identification of key employers on the basis of emissions.
- [The Net Zero Carbon Toolkit](#) produced by West Oxfordshire District Council, Cotswold District Council and Forest of Dean District Council was felt to be a best practice example which should be circulated to all members of the advisory group.
- It was felt that building on the excellent work of the Pathways report, there was a need for ongoing engagement with the ECI in providing expert advice to the advisory group and wider Future Oxfordshire Partnership and that this should be explored further through appropriate channels.
- There should be a joint and collaborative approach amongst the Oxfordshire local authorities in bidding for HM Government and other funding to achieve appropriate scale and maximise the attractiveness of any bid.

During the discussion, the advisory group took into the consideration the recommendations of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel regarding the report. Members supported the aspiration to prohibit the provision of fossil fuel boilers on new developments and noted that the Future Oxfordshire Partnership had agreed to write to HM Government about this. In the group's view it was felt that Partnership's lobbying of the HM Government on the issue should be extended to include the prohibition of gas mains on new residential and commercial developments. It was felt that sustainable alternatives would not be seriously prioritised and considered by developers at scale if gas heating remained as a cheaper alternative. Whilst the potential for non-fossil fuel gas heating was acknowledged, this was not considered to be a viable option in the immediate and medium term.

#### **RESOLVED:**

1. That the advisory group note Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire report.
2. That the advisory group note the recommendations of the Future Oxfordshire Scrutiny Panel.
3. That the advisory group recommend to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership that in its letter to HM Government advocating the discontinuation of fossil fuel gas boilers it includes a request that this be extended to the prohibition of the connection of new residential and commercial developments to the gas grid.

## **9 Baseline Emissions Data held by Oxfordshire's Councils**

The advisory group considered a report which provided a summary of feedback provided by each local authority following the request by the group at the previous meeting to better understand baseline data held by each organisation with respect to carbon emissions.

The advisory group also received a presentation from Inga Doherty, Energy Insights Lead, Oxfordshire County Council on the work that the council was doing to develop a publicly

available interactive data story map to illustrate headlines from the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire report across the county related to how and where energy was used.

Members of the advisory group noted the baseline data within the report as a useful contribution, commenting that it was important for officers to continue to share information and approaches to the collection and mapping of data with colleagues across the county. It was felt that the interactive data story map had the potential to be a very powerful tool in understanding energy use and in developing strategies to reduce emissions created. It was agreed that when available, the link to access the tool should be made available to members of the group.

## **10 Future work programme**

The advisory group noted the work programme as set out in the agenda, noting that the work programme was still developing.

Councillor Sudbury referred to work Oxfordshire County Council was considering to map the effects of severe weather on Oxfordshire in order to mitigate them. He suggested that this might be of interest to the advisory group once completed.

## **11 Dates of future meetings**

The dates for future meetings as set out in Agenda was noted.

The meeting closed at 3.15 pm





**To:** Future Oxfordshire Partnership (formerly the Oxfordshire Growth Board)

**Title of Report:** The Oxford to Cambridge Arc Vision Consultation

**Date:** 20 September 2021

**Report of:** Stefan Robinson, Future Oxfordshire Partnership Manager (on behalf of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Executive Officer Group)

**Status:** Open

**Executive Summary and Purpose:**

HM Government is currently consulting on a draft Vision for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, which will help inform their ambitions for an Arc wide Spatial Framework. The Spatial Framework will form national planning and transport policy for the area. The consultation closes on 12 October 2021, and the Partnership is asked to consider a draft response as set out at Appendix 1.

**How this report contributes to the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision Outcomes:**

The draft response provided at Appendix 1 draws on the key themes and principles identified within the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision, advocating for an Arc wide vision that is compatible with, and supportive of, local ambitions.

**Recommendations:**

That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership:

1. approve the submission of the draft response at Appendix 1, and;
2. delegate responsibility to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Director, in consultation with the Chair, to make any amendments as agreed at this meeting, prior to submission.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Draft consultation response

**Introduction**

1. HM Government is currently undertaking a consultation exercise to gather views on a draft Vision for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, which will help inform their plans for an Arc Spatial Framework to 2050. This consultation is being undertaken to inform their approach to the future of the Arc, which has been identified by the government as a key economic priority. The Spatial Framework will form national planning policy and transport policy for the Arc and local planning and local transport authorities must have regard to it when preparing

local transport and local development plans and policies, and it will be capable of being a material consideration in relevant planning decisions in the area.<sup>1</sup> HM Government are also seeking views on the initial work that has been done to set the scope of an accompanying Sustainability Appraisal.

## The Consultation

2. This consultation follows the standard format for HM Government engagements. The online consultation platform asks a significant number of questions which provide a mix of free text entry and multiple-choice answers across the seven themes listed below. Each section also provides the opportunity to submit wider thoughts and comments about these themes, and there is also the option to submit written responses.
  - Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc
  - The Environment
  - The Economy
  - Connectivity and Infrastructure
  - Place-making
  - Delivering the Arc Spatial Framework
  - Sustainability Appraisal
3. The consultation presents an opportunity for the Future Oxfordshire Partnership to be clear with HM Government about what we want to achieve here in Oxfordshire, and to support and challenge elements of the Arc Vision that complement or misalign with our Strategic Vision respectively.

## The Draft Response

4. The draft response at Appendix 1 has been developed by the Partnership's Executive Officer Group based on the narrative contained within the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision, which was agreed by each of the six Oxfordshire Councils in April 2021. The response has been structured to align with the chronology and themes of the consultation document. Many of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership's member organisations will be writing separately in their own capacity and nothing within this submission is intended to over-ride those comments. This has been reiterated in the draft response itself.
5. The response focuses on the importance of the Strategic Vision in providing a solid foundation for what we want to achieve here in Oxfordshire, being a cross-cutting statement of intent that will inform a range of local strategies and programmes. Drawing on the Vision's guiding principles and 2050 outcomes, the response highlights that we are striving to enhance environmental, social, and economic wellbeing across the county, and that the Arc Vision should be complementary to that ambition.

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<sup>1</sup> HM Government 2021. Creating a Vision for the Arc. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/creating-a-vision-for-the-oxford-cambridge-arc/creating-a-vision-for-the-oxford-cambridge-arc>

6. The response pushes for environmental considerations to be a priority across the Arc's policy pillars, referencing the Arc Environment Principles,<sup>2</sup> and asking that these be given due weight in the Arc Vision and Spatial Framework. Challenges around affordable housing and the inclusive economy are also highlighted as needing to be given priority focus within the Vision, as is the electrification of East West Rail and the decarbonisation of local transport options.
7. The latter stages of the response ask for widespread engagement from HM Government with the public and other stakeholders to inform the development of the Spatial Framework and to ensure a diverse mix of views are heard and understood. The document concludes by highlighting concerns regarding the potential negative environmental impacts that may occur through the process, as outlined in the Sustainability Appraisal, if appropriate mitigations are not put in place.

### **Financial Implications**

8. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

### **Legal Implications**

9. There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

### **Conclusion**

10. The Arc Vision consultation presents an opportunity to inform HM Government thinking and preparations for an Arc Wide Spatial Framework. The Future Oxfordshire Partnership is asked to consider the draft response at Appendix 1 and approve it for submission, subject to any amendments. The Partnership has the option to delegate responsibility to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Director, in consultation with the Chair, to make any amendments to the draft following this meeting. Alternatively, the Partnership could choose not to submit a response.

Report Author:	Stefan Robinson, Future Oxfordshire Partnership Manager
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<sup>2</sup> Produced by the Arc Leadership Group and endorsed by all of Oxfordshire's councils. Available at: [https://www.semlep.com/modules/downloads/download.php?file\\_name=2306](https://www.semlep.com/modules/downloads/download.php?file_name=2306)



### **CREATING A VISION FOR THE OXFORD-CAMBRIDGE ARC JULY – OCTOBER 2021 CONSULTATION FUTURE OXFORDSHIRE PARTNERSHIP (FORMERLY THE OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD)**

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Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on the Arc Vision Consultation Document and Sustainability Appraisal. This submission is on behalf of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (formerly known as the Oxfordshire Growth Board). The Future Oxfordshire Partnership is a collaboration between the 6 local authorities in Oxfordshire:

- Cherwell District Council
- Oxford City Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Vale of the White Horse District Council
- West Oxfordshire District Council

It sits as a joint committee of the councils and brings key stakeholders together including the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Oxford and Oxford Brookes Universities, the NHS, Homes England and the Environment Agency. We are pleased to be delivering the Oxfordshire Housing & Growth Deal and as part of that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 remains one of the few statutory strategic plans in the country and it is this strategic planning relationship managed through our partnership, together with our [Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire](#),<sup>1</sup> that forms the basis for most of our comments. Many of our partnership's members, such as individual councils, will be writing separately in their own capacity and nothing within this submission will over-ride those comments.

The pattern of consultation from Government is now standard and in the form of a comprehensive series of questions. We set out below responses to each of the question themes, reflecting the structure of the consultation document.

#### **1. Creating a Vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc**

This year, each of Oxfordshire's councils adopted a highly ambitious pathway for long-term change towards a more sustainable future, as set out in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision. Prepared by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, our Vision is designed to be overarching and cross-cutting to inform a range of local and regional plans, strategies and programmes, including the Arc Vision. Enhanced wellbeing sits at the heart of our ambition. We want Oxfordshire's people, places and environment to thrive so that we can secure the best possible future for our residents. Our ambition is bold, collaborative and inclusive, striving to deliver real and lasting change in ways that build resilience and enhance environmental, social, and

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<sup>1</sup> Oxfordshire Strategic Vision, 2021. Available at: <https://www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Strategic-Vision-full-document.pdf>

economic wellbeing. As asked by the consultation document, we would expect the broad themes and ambitions of our vision to be reflected in the Arc vision.

The strongest theme to emerge from our own public engagement process for our Strategic Vision concerned the importance of planning for a sustainable future in which Oxfordshire reaches carbon neutrality as soon as possible, while simultaneously making changes to how we live and work in order to protect and enhance the natural environment, reduce waste and increase biodiversity. Secondary to that was the need to tackle economic, health and social inequalities, which despite misconceptions, are significant and persistent across Oxfordshire and the Arc.

Collaboration to date through the Arc Leadership Group has provided a strong voice for the region, and there is good alignment between local leaders about the kind of place we want the Arc to be. We believe our Vision for Oxfordshire is broadly compatible with wider aspirations held by other local leaders across the Arc, and that HM Government should continue to make use of our collaboration to inform thinking.

We recognise HM Government's ambition to plan for growth in a way that improves the area for all residents, and protects and enhances the natural environment, whilst combatting and building resilience to climate change. This broadly reflects how we intend to manage good growth in Oxfordshire, as set out in our Strategic Vision. However, we would challenge HM Government to go further to define what it means by growth and to adopt a set of principles and standards to guide growth. We have defined what good growth means for Oxfordshire to ensure that our residents and the natural environment continue to take priority. Good growth in Oxfordshire will:

- Enhance the historic and natural environment
- Support a diverse high-value economy
- Be high-quality and resilient to change
- Embrace innovation and technology
- Be sustainable, clean and green
- Be healthy and inclusive

The Arc Vision Consultation Document is clear that the Vision will be central to shaping the proposed Spatial Framework. We would expect the Arc Spatial Framework, guided by the vision, to be fully compliant with, and complementary to, the local and national policy direction with respect to carbon reduction and environmental enhancement. Specifically, the Vision and Spatial Framework should include a commitment to empower local leaders to act decisively and deliver on their commitments in this area. As recommended by the Committee on Climate change, UK pathfinder areas such as the Arc should be supported to go faster, innovate, and develop solutions, and where local authorities are putting in place ambitious and well-evidenced plans (see the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the Pathways to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Report from Oxford University), we should be allowed to go ahead of national standards.

## **2. The Environment**

In Oxfordshire, we want to have achieved carbon neutral status by 2040, and be accelerating towards a carbon negative future, removing more carbon than we emit each year. We want to be the first generation to leave the natural environment in a

better state than that in which it was found, with a natural environment that is more biodiverse, resilient, and adaptable to change.

We note that the HM Government consultation document identifies that “*environmental sustainability is a priority for all groups we have spoken to so far*” and we would want to see that reflected in the Vision. Each of Oxfordshire’s councils has declared or acknowledged the climate emergency, and we have set very ambitious targets to reduce our organisational and district area emissions. Whilst we are encouraged to see that the environment has been given due prominence within the consultation materials, we would emphasise that ambitions for the natural environment must be an integral consideration that permeates all other ‘policy pillars’ identified in the document. It cannot be a standalone stream of work or thematic consideration, but an underlaying and fundamental part of economic, placemaking and connectivity workstreams.

We believe the Arc Environment Principles, produced by the Arc Leadership Group and endorsed by all of Oxfordshire’s councils, provide a strong framework for our collective environmental ambitions, and we would strongly encourage HM Government to give these principles due weight in the Vision and Spatial Framework.

We note with regret that environmental quality across the region has been in significant decline for many decades, and the Arc Vision should seek to address this head on, aiming for a wholesale restoration and enhancement of the natural environment for the benefit of local people and wildlife. Where possible, the Spatial Framework should require this to be built into planning considerations, with greater strength than existing and emerging powers. HM Government’s ambitions for growth must be balanced with a strict consideration for environmental impact and quality. Ground-breaking work recently undertaken by the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxfordshire has provided us with evidence-based pathways to reach net zero,<sup>2</sup> and we would encourage HM Government to similarly assess the pathways required across the Arc to reach shared carbon reduction targets.

Access to, along with, the means and ability to engage with green places, particularly natural green spaces and places, has been identified as being a key determinant of physical health and mental wellbeing. Lack of access to green and blue spaces has shown to have contributed to inequalities throughout the pandemic and continues to be so. The Arc spatial framework provides an opportunity to shape future communities and address these inequalities. In order to do so, green spaces, places and nature need to be designed and built into housing, living spaces and towns so that everyone has access; and this is facilitated and encouraged through projects that address barriers to access and connectivity. HM Government’s environmental ambition for the Arc speaks of doubling nature and if this nature is close, accessible and safe for communities, both the vision for nature and that for health and wellbeing can be achieved.

The Arc provides opportunity to demonstrate a green future, one where the crises of climate, biodiversity and health are addressed directly, and an integrated plan of action reaps multiple benefits. The spatial framework has the opportunity to design and deliver communities and economies that demonstrate the achievement of net

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<sup>2</sup> Environmental Change Institute. *Pathways to a Zero carbon Oxfordshire*, 2021. Available at: <https://www.eci.ox.ac.uk/publications/downloads/PazCo-final.pdf>

zero carbon through both new build and retrofit and can lead the way in thinking future economies at scale. All policies must provide sufficient protections for our environment, such as rapidly driving up building standards and creating low/zero carbon links between housing and employment. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will have a pivotal role in driving this policy agenda locally, and we would wish that the Spatial Framework does not seek to limit our ability to raise standards even higher.

### **3. The Economy**

In Oxfordshire, we aspire to continue to be a globally competitive economy which is sustainable, diverse, and inclusive, generating high quality, productive and knowledge-based employment for our communities. Our Local Industrial Strategy, produced in partnership with HM Government, sets high ambitions for our internationally significant local economy, and the same has been done across the Arc.

Our Local Industrial Strategy and Oxfordshire Investment Plan identifies innovation as the key driver for economic growth. Continued investment in our world class science and technology innovation infrastructure will be essential if we are to capitalise on our assets and strengths locally and across the Arc. This has been reinforced by HM Government's recently published Innovation Strategy which recognises the unique capability of the Oxfordshire economy to lead on the global stage and attract international investment into the UK and generate high quality jobs both in Oxfordshire and the Arc, as well as across the UK. Plans for the Spatial Framework must take account of how these assets and networks can be protected and supported to thrive on the international stage through targeted investment.

Despite the rapid economic growth cited in the consultation document, and the density of world leading assets which we can be proud of, Oxfordshire and the Arc is still home to substantial economic (and wider) inequalities that must be addressed head on. We must take our communities with us in this journey. The lack of affordable housing is of particular concern to our residents. We are establishing an Inclusive Economy Partnership to mobilise action to address this locally, and the Arc vision and Economic Strategy should suitably address how economic imbalances can be tackled through a holistic approach to spatial planning and place shaping.

We would encourage HM Government's Vision to seek improvements in educational attainment across the region, and to support the development of a skills system aligned to the needs of business and communities, helping to provide the conditions in which all people can benefit and thrive. We agree that we need to be more creative in how we make use of business and employment space, as demands and needs have changed through the pandemic.

### **4. Connectivity and Infrastructure**

In Oxfordshire, we want to transform movement and connectivity within the County and beyond. There needs to be greater digital connectivity and physical mobility in and between places in ways that enhance environmental, social, and economic wellbeing, with an emphasis on sustainable travel, including walking and cycling. We are pleased to see that these principles are broadly upheld through the Arc consultation document.

However, we hope for the necessary financial commitment for the remainder of the East West Rail route, together with its integration with the north-south routes that it crosses. As reflected in the Arc Economic Prospectus, the collective leadership of the area is clear that East West Rail should be electrified to meet our shared decarbonisation objectives as soon as possible.

As an area with higher than average emissions, we must push to decarbonise our transport network at pace and rapidly advance our ambitions for walking and cycling infrastructure. Our emerging Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and Infrastructure Strategy will provide ambitious detail on how we intend to prioritise healthy and environmentally conscious travel. The planning system has a critical role to play in allowing new communities to be designed in ways that encourage zero carbon travel, healthy and digitally connected living, and the Arc Vision should be bold to ensure that the Spatial Framework can tackle this.

## **5. Place-making**

The Oxfordshire Vision is very clear in its ambition to create healthy, resilient communities where people can live healthier, happier lives and enjoy better physical and mental health. However, the Arc Vision currently does not identify the importance of creating healthy communities which support health and wellbeing, and which seek to reduce the existing health inequalities present across the area. As recent resident feedback has indicated, it is very important that the Spatial Framework addresses health and wellbeing, in terms of how we plan, design, and connect our communities so that people can spend more of their life in good health. The experience of COVID-19 has emphasised how housing, access to green spaces, and the ability to connect with our community affect our public health and subsequent demand for health services. The pandemic has also exacerbated the deep health inequalities that persist across the region; these inequalities need to be addressed to ensure that all communities benefit and have a stake in the future of the region.

The Arc spatial framework is an opportunity to be more ambitious in its approach to place making, to embrace social as well as economic and environmental wellbeing to achieve a healthier, happier as well as greener future. For this reason we recommend that one of the key objectives for the Arc is that it should plan for growth in a way that creates healthier, happier, sustainable communities and that its Place Making theme should be renamed Healthy Place Making to reflect this.

We know from public consultations and stakeholder engagement that within Oxfordshire there is an appetite to see a different approach to place-shaping: one that is more ambitious, radical, innovative and creative, embracing social, economic and environmental wellbeing to achieve a happier, healthier, greener future. We have bold and dynamic economic ambitions brought to life in an investment plan<sup>3</sup>, and innovative work on inclusive growth has highlighted a need to actively recognise and address the inequalities of our success and ensure all communities have a stake in the future prosperity of Oxfordshire. The Arc consultation document briefly mentions the risk associated with increasing inequalities linked to growth, but we must be very clear that we aim to reduce existing inequalities, which are such a pervasive determinant to individual wellbeing.

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<sup>3</sup> Oxfordshire's Local Industrial Strategy Investment Plan, 2020



We want to have energy efficient, well-designed homes, sufficient in numbers, location, type, size, tenure and affordability to meet the needs of our growing economy, young people, residents and future generations. Affordability in particular remains a huge challenge to overcome, and this should be explicit in the Arc vision. We welcome the ambition for the Arc to be a world-leader in sustainable place-making and community living, but the area will need to benefit from bespoke support through the Arc collaboration to allow us to act in a world leading way. We believe in the particular importance of making sure the environment and sustainability is at the heart of new developments and retrofitting initiatives, enabling people to live healthy and connected lifestyles.

## **6. Delivering the Spatial Framework**

### **6a) Engaging Communities**

We welcome the commitment from HM Government to ensure the Spatial Framework is built on a vision shared with local communities. For Oxfordshire, our Strategic Vision provides the best reflection of what we want to achieve locally, and we would strongly encourage HM Government to take account of that. Whilst we note the intent to engage key institutions in future rounds of engagement and consultation, there must also be well publicised opportunities for members of the public to have their say, sufficient in number to represent the diversity of communities across the Arc. The engagement strategy should provide a forward view of opportunities to input into the process, and the “engagement roadmap” should be updated to be more specific about key dates in the process. We know that most residents across the Arc do not know about HM Government’s plans for the Arc, and that needs to change. We will continue to play our role through the Future Oxfordshire Partnership and the Arc Leaders Group to keep communities informed of the work taking place at an Arc level.

Through our own vision making process, we have actively targeted groups that are traditionally underrepresented in public consultations, such as younger people. We would like to see multiple forms of engagement taking place, across digital and physical platforms (subject to Covid-19 restrictions), to engage a wide range of people and places in the process. We would welcome the opportunity to support HM Government in connecting them to local groups.

### **6b) Data, Evidence and Digital Tools**

Local communities will expect the Spatial Framework, as with any spatial planning, to be robustly and transparently evidence based. Public access and confidence in this regard will be key to success. It is likely that evidence gathered across the Arc (environmental, economy, social etc) will illustrate the substantially different and distinctive nature of individual communities and places. Whilst we recognise the broad strengths and challenges for the Arc as a whole, the data needs to reflect the uniqueness of each of our communities. Extrapolating data across such a large area might risk producing sweeping conclusions about the area, informing subsequent policy directions, without respecting the distinctive and bespoke needs of individual areas. Accordingly, we would welcome engagement from HM Government to share data between organisations to ensure we can provide the most up to date local insights and evidence.

## **6c) Monitoring and Delivering the Spatial Framework**

The section entitled “*our approach to delivery and funding*” is devoid of any reference to collaboration and engagement with local authorities, which we would expect to have a key role in prioritising local infrastructure schemes and investments. Our Infrastructure Strategy and Local industrial Strategy Investment Plan are excellent sources of information which articulate local priorities and unfunded schemes that could benefit from investment. We note the potential to establish an Arc Growth Body (which could be better named) and we would welcome further clarity on how this would operate, and which organisations and individuals would be involved. Any delivery mechanism such as this would need to be accountable back to residents through a clear operating structure.

Monitoring and evaluation of the Spatial Framework will need to be innovative and holistic in its approach. Housing numbers and economic outputs will not tell us whether we are delivering on the environmental and wellbeing commitments within the Arc Vision. Indeed, progress in one area often has the potential to create adverse inequalities elsewhere, and this will need to be carefully considered. Delivery must be monitored with respect to improving environmental quality, reducing inequalities and the health and happiness of our communities. Housing and infrastructure schemes must be assessed for their quality and environmental impacts. For example, we must recognise the wider environmental and health benefits of cycle and walking infrastructure, and not just assess their value in simple economic terms, as recommended by the Committee on Climate Change. Any methodologies used to assess delivery must put the environment and people’s wellbeing at the heart of considerations, as we are doing through our Infrastructure Strategy refresh.

## **7. Sustainability Appraisal**

The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report emphasises that, without significant mitigations and planning, there is the potential for the Spatial Framework and associated ambitions to have a negative impact on the environment. Habitat loss, climate change, pollution, and increased flooding are all areas of serious concern, as is the unsustainable trajectory of local housing markets, which remain wholly unaffordable for many residents.

Notwithstanding the substantial adverse human and environmental impacts of flooding, the National Audit Office recently highlighted that maintenance and repair costs of flood defences could increase by between 20% and 70% a year up to 2050, as a direct result of climate change. Therefore, we would strongly encourage HM Government to establish a long-term resource and budget arrangement to support local councils in effectively planning for and maintaining local flood defences. We welcome the commitment to integrate the sustainability appraisal process into the planning process, but urge HM Government to heed the warnings expressed that “*without mitigation, all of these risks can significantly affect the health and wellbeing of the population, biodiversity and the natural environment, and the economy.*”

In closing, we would reiterate that many of our Partnership’s members will be writing separately in their own capacity and nothing within this submission will over-ride those comments.

## Future Oxfordshire Partnership Forward Plan (Formerly the Oxfordshire Growth Board)<sup>1</sup>

The Forward Plan sets out all forthcoming issues scheduled for meetings of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. The Plan will be updated and published on the Partnership’s website each month. Where matters for consideration are likely to require the disclosure of exempt information, and the exclusion of the press and public (pursuant to Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972) this will be made clear in the Forward Plan.

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<b>20 September 2021 – Council Chamber, Cherwell District Council, Bodicote House, Banbury OX15 4AA</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Contact</b>
The Oxford to Cambridge Arc	To receive any updates in respect of regional developments within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.	Andrew Down, Future Oxfordshire Partnership Director
Q1 Housing and Growth Deal Progress Report	To receive the 2021/22 Quarter 1 Year 4 (2021/2022) progress report for the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and endorse any amendments to the programmes of work as necessary.	Paul Staines, Interim Head of Programme
Q1 Housing and Growth Deal Financial Report	To receive the financial summary for Quarter 1 Year 4 (2021/22) for the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.	Lorna Baxter, Oxfordshire County Council
Economic Recovery Plan	To receive an update on work being led by OxLEP together with partners to develop an Economic Recovery Plan for Oxfordshire, which responds to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.	Ahmed Goga, OxLEP

Agenda Item 9

<sup>1</sup> The Oxfordshire Growth Board was renamed the Future Oxfordshire Partnership on 19 July 2021.

Oxford to Cambridge Arc Vision Consultation	To consider submitting a response from the Future Oxfordshire Partnership to HM Government's Arc Vision Consultation.	Future Oxfordshire Partnership Executive Officer Group
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**23 November 2021 – West Oxfordshire DC, Council Offices, Witney, OX28 1NB**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Community Led Housing	To consider an update on community led housing in Oxfordshire.	Paul Staines, Interim Head of Programme
The Oxford to Cambridge Arc	To receive any updates in respect of regional developments within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.	Andrew Down, Future Oxfordshire Partnership Director
Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy: Stage 1 Final Report	To consider the outcomes of the Stage 1 report for the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy and confirm scope of Stage 2.	John Disley, Oxfordshire County Council Infrastructure Manager

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**25 January 2022 – West Oxfordshire DC, Council Offices, Witney, OX28 1NB**

The Oxford to Cambridge Arc	To receive any updates in respect of regional developments within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.	Andrew Down, Future Oxfordshire Partnership Director
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**Items to be scheduled**

Oxfordshire's Visitor Economy (provisional)	To consider a report from the Future Oxfordshire Partnership's Executive Officer Group concerning Oxfordshire's Visitor Economy. Note, the specific scope of this work is in development and provisional at this time.	<i>To be confirmed</i>
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