

To: Oxfordshire Growth Board
Date: 24 November 2020
Report of: Growth Board Scrutiny Panel
Title of Report: Recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel meeting of 17 November 2020

Purpose of report:	To present recommendations from the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 17 November 2020 to the Growth Board.
Scrutiny Lead:	Councillor Andrew Gant, Chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel.
Recommendation:	That the Oxfordshire Growth Board states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report.

Introduction and overview

1. The Scrutiny Panel would like to thank Ahmed Goga (OxLEP, Director of Strategy and Programmes), Caroline Green (Oxford City Council, Assistant Chief Executive), Andrew Down (South Oxfordshire and Vale Of White Horse District Councils, Acting Deputy Chief Executive), Paul Staines (Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, Interim Head of Programme), Gordon Mitchell (Oxford City Council, Chief Executive) and Hannah Doney (Oxfordshire County Council, Head of Corporate Finance) for presenting reports and attending the meeting to answer questions.
2. The Panel reviewed the Growth Boards response to Scrutiny Panel Recommendations made on 15th September 2020 and 21st October 2020 at its meetings. Within the 15th September 2020 recommendations, recommendation 2, VIII, the Panel discussed the need for further clarification from the Growth Board on plans made with Environment Agency with regards to flood risk assessment in rural areas of Oxfordshire under Local Natural Capital Plan

Recommendation 1: That the Growth Board clarify what plans have been made with the Environment Agency to assess the flood risk in rural areas such as Chalgrove, as a part of the Local Natural Capital Plan.

3. The Panel received a presentation by Ahmed Goga (OxLEP, Director of Strategy and Programmes) on the Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan. The panel discussed at length the need to have a new and inclusive approach to building back the economy whilst being cautious not to go back to more traditional methods in the areas of manufacturing, international tourism and matters affecting climate change.

Recommendation 2: That the Growth Board ensure the Economic Recovery Plan does not seek to build back in the same way and instead looks to build back in a way that is inclusive of all areas such as climate change, manufacturing and international tourism.

4. The Panel also received a presentation from Paul Staines (Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, Interim Head of Programme) on the promotion of Low/Zero Carbon Housing in Oxfordshire. The Panel discussed that it is unclear on what is the exact definition of Low/Zero Carbon housing. The Panel concluded that there is a need to establish a national standard for Zero Carbon housing.

Recommendation 3: That the Growth Board in the letter to the Secretary of State recommend that there be a national standard for Zero-Carbon housing which reflects the Net Zero-Carbon Buildings Framework Definition as outlined by the UK Green Building Council

5. The Panel also received a report from Caroline Green (Oxford City Council, Assistant Chief Executive) on the findings from the Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Seminars. The Panel supports the recommendations in this report and discussed the need to clarify what are the Early Years Education initiatives? mentioned on page 5, paragraph 3 of the report. The Panel also discussed the need for initiatives to be taken in the matters of eliminating child poverty in all the districts of Oxfordshire. The Panel also discussed world famous industries located in Oxfordshire such as motorsport that have been overlooked and underutilised in the past and the need for such industries to be a part of Oxfordshire Inclusive Economies.

Recommendation 4: That the Growth Board endorse and support Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy summary report findings but also

- i. clarifies what are the Early Years Education initiatives (pg.5, para 3 of summary report) in order to boost education in Oxfordshire?
 - ii. recommend it looks into matters of eliminating child poverty in Oxfordshire.
 - iii. recommend it looks into building local industries in certain economies around Oxfordshire that have been overlooked and underutilised such as Motorsport.
6. The Panel also received a report from Gordon Mitchell (Oxford City Council, Chief Executive) on investment in improved rail connectivity for Oxfordshire and supports the plans mentioned in the report. The Panel also received a verbal update from Andrew Down (South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils, Acting Deputy Chief Executive) on the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.

7. Scrutiny Panel Task & Finish Group – Private investment in infrastructure

The Panel received a Task and Finish Group Suggestion Form from Councillor Alex Postan (West Oxfordshire District Council, Growth Board Scrutiny Panel Member) on Private Investment in Public Infrastructure Projects. After discussion on this topic the panel voted in favour of endorsing this Task and Finish Group with Councillor Alex Postan as lead member joined by Councillor John Tanner (Oxford City Council), Councillor Craig Simmons (Oxford City Council) and Councillor Peter Dragonetti (South Oxfordshire District Council) on this review group with meetings to be convened by Amit Alva (Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Officer) with recommendation coming back to the Panel at its 22 March 2021 meeting.

Future Work

8. As well as reviewing the Growth Board's response to these recommendations at its next meeting on 19 January 2021, the Panel will also be considering in detail:

- Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy update
- Oxford-Cambridge Arc Update
- Growth Board and Health and Wellbeing Board joint work

Report authors

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

Officer contact

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