

To: Oxfordshire Growth Board

Title of Report: Update on Healthy Place Shaping

Date: 26 January 2021

Report of: Rosie Rowe, Lead Officer for Healthy Place Shaping

Status: Open

Executive Summary and Purpose:

This report provides members of the Growth Board with an update on activities that have been undertaken to embed healthy place shaping into its workstreams and the strategies that underpin them. As part of this work a Health Impact Assessment Toolkit has been developed for use in Oxfordshire and the Growth Board is asked to endorse its use across the county.

Recommendations:

The Growth Board is asked to:

1. confirm its continued support of healthy place shaping as a strategic priority and the approach that is being taken to deliver it.
2. endorse the use of the Health Impact Assessment Toolkit and to support its use across the county.

Appendices:

A: Oxfordshire Health Impact Assessment Toolkit

Background

1. Healthy Place Shaping (HPS) was adopted as a strategic priority for Oxfordshire's Growth Board on 27 November 2018 with the recommendation to insert the healthy place-shaping approach into the governance structure and workstreams of the Growth Deal and Growth Board and the strategies which underpin them. This decision was taken in light of growing evidence that significant benefits for local people can be achieved through bringing together planning for housing, infrastructure and the economy with planning for residents' health and wellbeing. The growth anticipated in Oxfordshire over the next 30+ years presents an exceptional opportunity to shape healthy and thriving places where the right policies, environment and partnership working are adopted to empower individuals, communities and organisations to make healthier choices and reduce the burden of long term illness and disability. Our ambition is to plan for and shape communities to actively promote health and wellbeing and make it easier for people to enjoy healthy and sustainable lives, of benefit to existing and new residents alike.

This report provides members of the Board with an update on activities that have been undertaken to scale and embed healthy place shaping. As part of this work a Health Impact Assessment Toolkit has been developed for use in Oxfordshire and the Growth Board is asked to endorse its use across the county.

Engagement and Governance

2. In December 2018 a Healthy Place Shaping Working Group was set up to enable a network of officers from across the organisations represented on the Growth Board to take this work forward. Each of the District planning authorities are represented on this group together with representatives from Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, the Public Health, Cultural services and Communities teams at Oxfordshire County Council, and the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan team. This group has met on a bimonthly basis and the results of its activity are reported in section 8.
3. Rosie Rowe was appointed as lead officer to coordinate this approach and reports to the Growth Board Director; the lead officer is a member of the Executive Officer Group of the Growth Board to enable healthy place shaping principles to inform discussions at the strategic level.
4. A countywide workshop was organised for 86 senior Councillors and officers from the Growth Deal Core Team, County and District Councils on 4 June 2019. The purpose of the workshop was to achieve a common understanding of the key principles of healthy place shaping across all Growth Deal work streams and to consider what healthy place shaping requirements mean for the Growth Deal outputs and how they could be reflected in each of the work stream's deliverables.
5. Following this introductory workshop it was agreed that more technical workshops were required to enable officers at the District level to learn from experience of when we have delivered healthy place shaping and when we have not, and to identify the operational changes required to consistently deliver healthy place shaping principles in practice. The first of these was held on 29 November 2019 for Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council and was attended by 80 officers. A similar event was planned for West Oxfordshire District Council for 26 March 2020 but was cancelled due to the pandemic. We plan to resume organisation of these District workshops in 2021 when restrictions on meeting have eased.
6. Given that healthy place shaping is a cross cutting issue for the work of both Oxfordshire's Growth Board and the Health & Wellbeing Board, it was agreed to hold a networking event between members of the two Boards on 5 February 2020. The purpose of this event was to provide an informal opportunity for system leaders to discuss areas of common interest and to

consider how they might work together to address such issues. At the event, partners from across Oxfordshire agreed that they shared the aspiration to create healthy communities and there was considerable discussion as to the factors that enable and act as obstacles to delivering this ambition.

7. At the close of the event, it was agreed that there was benefit in members of the two Boards continuing to work together and that future discussions should focus on a few key areas where there would be added value from input from this wider set of stakeholders. To this end a second meeting of the Growth Board and the Health & Wellbeing Board is scheduled for 22 February 2021 with the focus of the discussion on what we have learned from Covid-19, how it has changed how health and care will be delivered in the future, and how our recovery can support delivery of the Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire.

Growth Board Deliverables

8. Oxfordshire Plan 2050

Since 2019 the HPS Working Group has worked closely with Oxfordshire Plan colleagues to ensure that it reflects the ambition that future growth should result in the development of healthy communities. This has been taken forward by:

- Development of a Topic Paper on Healthy Place Shaping which was included in the Reg 18 Part 1 consultation January – March 2019.
- Development of a Healthy Place Shaping Policy which will be included in future public consultation on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. Although the policy has not been formally adopted, district planning leads are able to use it as a template for inclusion in local planning guidance.
- Input into the *Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development for Oxfordshire* which has enhanced well-being at the heart of its ambition.
- Engagement with health and care system leaders to secure their feedback as part of the public consultation on the Strategic Vision; a paper regarding the Vision was presented at the Health & Wellbeing Board on 17 December 2020.

9. Infrastructure

Officers are actively engaged in ensuring that healthy place shaping principles are reflected in two key initiatives that will shape future infrastructure in Oxfordshire: the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP5) and the refresh of the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OXIS). Officers from the HPS Task Group are represented on the project teams directing this work,

they have contributed to the scope of both of these projects, to ensure that future infrastructure will promote sustainable, active travel and digital connectivity, and have participated in the selection of consultants that understand this agenda and can contribute expert advice. In this way healthy place shaping principles are being embedded into the strategic development and prioritisation of major infrastructure projects across the county.

In addition, national funding in response to the pandemic has created an opportunity for promotion of active travel, one of the key principles of healthy place shaping as it creates an enabling environment to build physical activity into daily routines. Members of the healthy place shaping working group have worked closely with infrastructure colleagues to inform bids for Traffic Demand Management funds and Emergency Active Travel Funding from the Department for Transport and are part of the teams responsible for their delivery. Public health evidence has been used to build the case of need and to prioritise active travel schemes in areas of deprivation or poor air quality, and the healthy place shaping lead officer is now leading a Cycling and Walking Activation Programme which has been set up to coordinate community activation so that when new cycling and walking infrastructure schemes are delivered they have the maximum impact. This programme includes: launch of StreetTag, a digital app that turns walking and cycling into a game, now adopted by 95 schools across Oxfordshire; a countywide communications campaign with parents and schools to promote active travel, provide travel planning resources, and to promote the use of face coverings on school transport; targeted support for schools which have identified congestion issues; and piloting of School Street/Safer Routes to School schemes.

10. Local Industrial Strategy

Healthy Place Shaping principles were identified as an important approach for shaping economic growth in Oxfordshire's Local Industrial Strategy launched in September 2019. In 2020 work has focused on contributing to discussions relating to the importance of creating an inclusive economy in Oxfordshire in which economic growth has the potential to benefit all residents, including those from more deprived communities. With the negative impact of coronavirus on local employment levels, the importance of addressing these income inequalities, upskilling and reskilling people affected by the economic downturn, and working with anchor institutions to increase access to secure, local work is all the more important.

11. Affordable Homes

The healthy place shaping steering group has had limited input into this workstream but its members have actively promoted the Building for Healthy Life Design Code for neighbourhoods, streets and homes published in July 2020 which updates Homes England's most widely known and used design tool (Building for Life 12) for creating places that are better for people and nature.

Health Impact Assessment

12. In order to ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, Local Plans and major developments will result in the creation of healthy, resilient and sustainable communities, it was agreed to complete a Health Impact Assessment of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and in addition to produce an Oxfordshire Health Impact Assessment toolkit comprising:

- an agreed HIA proforma and methodology to be applied to Local Plans
- an agreed HIA proforma and methodology to be applied to major developments
- a checklist for planners to review HIAs produced by developers

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a tool used to identify the health impacts of a plan or project and to develop recommendations to maximise the positive impacts and minimise the negative impacts, while maintaining a focus on addressing health inequalities. By bringing such health considerations to the fore, HIAs add value to the planning process.

Following a competitive procurement process undertaken by the Healthy Place Shaping Working Group, consultants WSP were appointed in January 2020 to support delivery of these outputs. A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Steering Group was set up comprising the HPS Working Group with wider representation from Regional Public Health and the Environment Agency to provide critical input into and oversight of the HIA outputs as they have been developed.

Development of the HIA toolkit has involved a review of existing methodologies in use in other parts of the UK, both of Local Plans and of major developments, and development of a methodology and series of proformas for Oxfordshire which reflect current best practice. Initial drafts of the toolkit were commented on by the HIA Steering Group and comments were sought from the Development Management and Policy Teams in each District Council and from several developers. The final version of the HIA Toolkit has also been reviewed to check that it aligns with national guidance on the use of Health Impact Assessments released by Public Health England on 12 November 2020.

13. It is recognised that the HIA process may be new to many planning officers and that there is a need to increase their capacity to use the toolkit. A webinar is planned to provide training in its use and will be made available for officers from local planning authorities to access online to offer ongoing support. In addition, the public health team are working to provide easy access to health and wellbeing data which need to be used in the HIA process.

14. Monitoring HIA Use and Impact. It is important to monitor the extent to which the HIA toolkit has been used, both on Local Plans and on major developments, and to assess its impact on proposed development. Within the

toolkit it is recommended that local planning authorities make this part of their Annual Monitoring Requirements.

15. The Oxfordshire HIA Toolkit is attached in Appendix A and the Growth Board is asked to endorse its use across the County.

16. Financial Implications
None

17. Legal Implications
None

18. Other Implications
The risk of the Growth Board not endorsing the use of the Health Impact Assessment Toolkit is that planning officers across the county will not have access to a tool that will enable them to bring health considerations to the fore when considering applications for significant development.

Conclusions

19. This report has outlined the considerable progress achieved in embedding healthy place shaping into the work of the Growth Board in the two years since it was identified as a strategic priority. This progress would not have been achieved without the time, enthusiasm, and expertise that local authority officers, health and social care clinicians, public health and local partners have contributed, because of their ambition to create healthy, resilient and sustainable communities and to reduce the health inequalities that persist in Oxfordshire.

20. The Growth Board is asked to:

- confirm its continued support of healthy place shaping as a strategic priority and the approach that is being taken to deliver it.
- endorse the use of the Health Impact Assessment Toolkit and to support its use across the county.

Report Author:	Rosie Rowe, Lead Officer for Healthy Place Shaping
Contact information:	Rosie.rowe@cherwell-dc.gov.uk