

Future Oxfordshire Partnership (formerly the Oxfordshire Growth Board) response to recommendations of the Partnership Scrutiny Panel made on 17 January 2022

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership is requested to provide a response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel for decision at its meeting on 25 January.

Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
<p>1. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership ensures that the development of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 include provision for contingency planning for extreme weather events linked to Climate Change, considering the principles of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage.</p>	<p>In part</p>	<p>Climate change is the most significant challenge facing our future, with the threat of increased flood risk, severe drought and more extreme weather patterns resulting from greenhouse gas emissions and global warming. It is essential that climate change considerations run through the Oxfordshire Plan strategy, to support the integrity and resilience of the natural environment and Oxfordshire’s communities. Climate change is expected to be central to each of the Oxfordshire Plan themes and policies. To properly address climate change, a coherent, joined-up approach encompassing development standards, transport and infrastructure and healthy ecosystems is required. However, we would comment that Civil Contingency planning for emergency events extends beyond the scope of the Oxfordshire Plan, and these are managed through other routes.</p>
<p>2. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership ensure that the Oxfordshire Plan has local net zero carbon ambitions factored firmly and prominently into the next draft of the Plan.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Whilst we understand that consultation responses are still being considered, we would anticipate that net zero will continue to be a key area of focus within the Plan, as expressed in the Regulation 18 Part 2 consultation materials, and guided by the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision for Long Term Sustainable Development.</p>

<p>3. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership provide any further information that may now be available concerning two previous recommendations from this panel:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Whether a review of the OGNA can be initiated b. When and how the decision concerning the next steps for the Oxfordshire Plan will be taken. 	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Officers are currently reviewing the work programme and timeline for the Oxfordshire Plan in the context of the recent consultation and the responses made. That detail must be worked through to help inform the next stages of the process including our timetable. Decisions on whether to commission further evidence, such as the requested review of OGNA, will be based on the technical requirements of ensuring that the Plan is found sound at the examination. Decisions on any such review or timetable change would need to be made by the individual local authorities.</p>
<p>4. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership encourage its constituent councils to engage closely with the East West Mainline Partnership (formerly the East West Rail Consortium).</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Where it would be helpful to local councils to engage with the East West Mainline Partnership, the FOP would support councils in doing so. We note that East-West Rail is now launching a series of “Local Representatives’ Groups” and that a number of our councillors have been invited to attend.</p>
<p>5. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership continue to lobby HM Government for the electrification of the East West Rail line.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>In March 2021, the Future Oxfordshire Partnership wrote to HM Government advocating for the electrification of the East West Rail line, and their response indicated that the case was being considered. The Partnership can request an update from HM Government on progress. The East West Main Line Partnership (formerly the East West Rail Consortium) has electrification as one of its key priorities, and we will support that through the membership that our local authorities hold.</p>
<p>6. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership ensure that the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy safeguards against the development of any new gas network infrastructure</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The Future Oxfordshire Partnership supports a reduction in dependence on fossil fuels and has previously expressed agreement with the government plans to cease the future installation of gas boilers in domestic premises. However, the gas network falls outside the remit of the local councils, and the FOP therefore has no powers to prevent the development of new infrastructure.</p> <p>We hope that the Scrutiny Panel is reassured that OxIS clearly states that ‘Oxfordshire’s reliance on petroleum products and gas must reduce at a fast rate to meet national 2030 targets and clean energy goals’, and that the three schemes put forward by the gas network providers have all been scored appropriately against the OxIS criteria, with negative scores for their impact on the environment.</p>

<p>7. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership ensure that the framing and terminology of growth within the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy clarifies that economic growth should not be at the expense of environmental quality and improvement. The scoring criteria may need to be adjusted to reflect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A holistic consideration of the consequences of growth which prioritises green growth b. The crossing cutting nature of green infrastructure themes and priorities 	<p>In part</p>	<p>The Partnership agrees that economic growth should not come at the expense of environmental quality and improvement. The scoring mechanism offers a useful guide at a moment in time, but OxIS will not itself determine future decisions on funding and investment. The OxIS multi-criteria assessment is in two parts. The first is a needs-based assessment that scores schemes against the agreed 5 themes of OxIS. The second separate score assesses how well any proposed infrastructure scheme aligns with planned housing and/or employment from existing local plans. These scores are set out separately so it is possible to understand which particular schemes score well against each of the themes, as well as alignment with growth. This therefore means that we can see, for any one scheme how it affects or enhances the environment and understand its impact.</p> <p>Going forward, it is intended that the OxIS multi-criteria assessment will be able to be used in a flexible way with weighting enhanced for any one theme, recognising it may need to be used to support a specific policy or a specific funding opportunity. Should there be a wish to focus on how particular schemes perform against one of the core themes- such as environment -this can easily be adjusted.</p>
<p>8. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership support the approach outlined in paragraph seven of the Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Route Map report, ensuring that Oxfordshire is well positioned to make any 'asks' of HM Government to enable local delivery against the route map.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Future Oxfordshire Partnership would be happy to consider any potential asks that could be made of HM Government arising from this important work.</p>
<p>9. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership note the Scrutiny Panel's support for local authorities in funding the next steps of the PAZCO work.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes this support while recognising that funding decisions are the preserve of individual councils, and that budgets are constrained.</p>