

Notes

OF A MEETING OF THE



The Future Oxfordshire Partnership Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Group

**HELD ON FRIDAY 29 APRIL 2022 AT 2.00 PM
VIRTUAL VIA MS TEAMS**

Present:

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

Officers: Giles Hughes (West Oxfordshire District Council), Kevin Jacob, (Future Oxfordshire Partnership) and Philip Wadsworth (Oxfordshire Plan Team)

65 Apologies for absence and notifications of substitutions; declarations of interest; Chair's announcements

Apologies were submitted by Councillor Duncan Enright, Oxfordshire County Council. Councillor Colin Clarke indicated that he would need to leave the meeting at around 15:00.

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

66 Notes of the previous meetings

The notes of the meetings held on 17 February 2022 and 17 March 2022 were agreed as a correct summary.

67 Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Update

Giles Hughes, Chief Executive, West Oxfordshire District Council and Phil Wadsworth, Strategic Plan Lead, Oxfordshire Plan 2050 provided an update on the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 following the joint workshop between members of the advisory group and local authority leaders held on 6 April, preparations for the next joint workshop in June and discussions with the HM Government regarding the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 timeline.

The advisory group was informed in that in light of the six stage, step by step process to securing consensus supported at the April joint workshop, it was intended to follow this up with further professional officer and councillor level meetings, including further joint

workshops between the members of the advisory group and local authority leaders so that there could be through discussion of the options.

Drafts dates and the content of each step were outlined in detail and it was explained that the central Oxfordshire Plan 2050 team would be working closely with officer planning policy leads in each authority to co-ordinate activity and the preparation of plan related evidential documents.

The advisory group was provided with an update on discussions with civil servants at the Department for Levelling Up and Communities around a formal extension to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 timeline. Discussions had been positive and receipt of a formal written approval of an extension was awaited. In light of this, a revised timetable for the Plan was being worked up taking account of the step, by step process and consideration of the potential options around further consultation. Officers stated that this would be provide to the advisory group at its next meeting.

In discussion of these points, a number of members of the advisory group stressed the importance of there being continuing to be adequate opportunities for members of the advisory group to liaise with the professional planning officers within their individual councils so that there continued to be a member input and steer into the various officer discussions taking place. Officers stressed that no decisions would be taken by officers and the joint professional planning collaboration taking place between the central Oxfordshire Plan Team and local planning policy leads was only intended to improve and assist the technical preparation of the draft Plan and its evidence base, much of which would be a 'shared' between the councils and therefore both the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and Local Plans. This was intended to do everything possible to ensure the robustness of the Plan at the examination in public stage.

Members also highlighted the potential impact on Local Plan work within several of the partner councils of an extension of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 timeline and stressed the need for this to be taken into account which offices indicated it would be.

It was noted that external legal advice in connection to the Plans preparation would be on procured jointly via the Monitoring Officers of each council on the basis of a shared and common approach.

Phil Wadsworth provided a detailed update on the approach being taken to the development of the scope of the Plan and to the research of its evidence base, including its methodologies, plan options and high level viability. As a spatial plan, the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 had to be pitched at a strategic level, distinct from, but informing Local Plans and taking account of the National Planning Policy Framework and other statutory planning guidance. It was stressed in response to questions from members of the advisory group that the Plan had been, and would continue to be, strongly informed by the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision which all the councils had agreed. The delivery of the Strategic Vision also depended upon the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and therefore they were major parts of each other.

The advisory group was informed that as a general principle, if there was a desire to go over and above national HM Government standards in a particular area, this was permissible, but a strong evidence base would be required and this needed to be planned for within the overall scheme.

In discussion of the information needed for the next meeting of the advisory group members suggested that it would be helpful to be presented with the current emerging structure and scope of the Plan at a high level, mapping information on the various spatial options and a revised Plan timetable including where appropriate, Local Plan key dates.

Officers agreed to produce papers on the following matters for the next meeting of the advisory group on 26 May 2022:

1. Revised timetable for adoption of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 including reference to pertinent Local Plan dates.
2. Mapping information on each of the spatial plan options.
3. Revised Oxfordshire Plan 2050 skeleton (high level) framework document setting out the planned scope of the Oxfordshire Plan, (including key headings and descriptors)

68 Dates of future meetings

The dates for future meetings were noted as set out in the Agenda and it was agreed that an additional meeting should be scheduled for 26 May 2022. If the date of the next joint workshop between members of the advisory group and Leaders was set for mid-June, it was agreed that it would not be necessary to hold the advisory group meeting planned for 16 June 2022.

The meeting closed at 3.33 pm