

# Notes

OF A MEETING OF THE



## **The Future Oxfordshire Partnership Infrastructure Advisory Group**

**HELD ON MONDAY 3 JULY 2023 AT 2.00 PM  
VIRTUAL VIA MS TEAMS**

### **Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Liz Leffman (Chair), Donna Ford, Duncan Enright, Louise Upton, Pieter-Paul Barker, and Sue Caul

**Officers:** John Disley, Tim Oruye, Carolyn Ploszynski, Paul Staines, Suzanne Winkels, John McLauchlan, Kim Hudson, Beth Wilks, and Babatunde Ogundele

### **76 Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes; declaration of interests; Chair's announcements**

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor Carl Rylett, West Oxfordshire District Council, (substituted by Councillor Alaric Smith).

The Chair suggested there should be a round of introductions for the benefit of the new Councillors.

There were no declaration of interests.

### **77 Notes of the previous meeting**

The notes of the meeting held on 17 April 2023 was agreed to be an accurate record of matters discussed.

### **78 Introduction to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership & Infrastructure Advisory Group**

The Advisory Group was provided with a presentation by Beth Wilks, Future Oxfordshire Partnership Manager to investigate the role and purpose of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP), and more specifically the Infrastructure Advisory Group (IAG), for the benefit of new Councillors within the Advisory Group.

Beth Wilks highlighted that the FOP (formerly Oxfordshire Growth Board) was established in 2014, however the name Future Oxfordshire Partnership was adopted in July 2021.

Beth Wilks highlighted that the FOP is a joint committee of the six councils in Oxfordshire together with key partners working together to deliver the bold and ambitious outcome of the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision for long term sustainable development.

The Oxfordshire Strategic Vision for long term sustainable development were highlighted as follows:

- Our natural environment will be in a better state than that in which we found it.
- We will be carbon neutral and accelerating towards a carbon negative future.
- Our residents will be healthier and happier, and overall wellbeing will have improved.
- Our local economy will be globally competitive, sustainable, diverse, and inclusive.
- Our county will be a more equal, fair, and inclusive place for everyone.
- Our vibrant historic and cultural offer will be rich, diverse, and enhanced.
- We will have energy efficient and affordable homes in the right number, location, and tenure.
- Our county's connectivity will be transformed in ways that enhance wellbeing.
- Our diverse and vibrant communities will thrive with a strong sense of identity.

The presentation to the Advisory Group highlighted significant programmes of work on how the FOP is supporting delivery of the Strategic Vision:

- Oxfordshire Affordable Housing Programme
- Homes from Infrastructure Programme
- Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan
- Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OXIS)
- Oxfordshire Rail Corridor Study

The presentation to the Advisory Group highlighted the following points key to delivering the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision:

- Local authority corporate plan
- Stakeholder engagement

Members applauded the presentation, pointed out that it was a very useful and detailed description of the FOP and suggested the presentation should be shared widely with Council Members across the Councils.

**Action: Beth Wilks to circulate the presentation to Council Members across the Councils.**

At the conclusion of the discussion the Chair thanked Beth Wilks for her presentation to the Advisory Group.

## **79 Local Transport & Connectivity Plan - Area Travel Plans**

The Advisory Group was provided with a presentation by John Disley, Head of Transport Policy, Oxfordshire County Council on an update of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plans - Area Travel Plan.

The presentation highlighted the following:

- An update on Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) Area Travel Plan (ATP) priorities and timescale.
- Importance of linking LTCP Area Travel Plans with emerging Local Plans, so they are consistent and support each other.

The ATP programme, outcomes and priorities include:

- Net zero carbon
- Transport user hierarchy
- Walking and cycling
- Vision zero
- Public and shared transport (transport hubs)
- Air quality
- EV charging and other slow carbon technologies.
- Freight movement
- Promote travel charge.

The Area Travel Plans – Project Plan phase were highlighted as follows:

- Phase 1 – Establish requirements and stakeholder planning.
- Phase 2 – Engagement and assessment of options
- Phase 3 – Scenario testing
- Phase 4 – Consultation
- Phase 5 – Approvals

John Disley confirmed that discussions would be held at an individual authority level, and he would update the Advisory Group on progress made.

**Action: John Disley to circulate the updated slide for the project plan.**

Members queried when the Area Travel Plans would be finalised. It was pointed out that, based on the current project plan, it is expected that the initial tranche of plans would be considered for approval by the Oxfordshire County Cabinet in Spring 2024, however that would not cover everything as there are a few plan areas that are not as well developed because this is a programme of work, and all plans can't be implemented at the same time.

Members queried the relationship between Area Travel Plans and Local Plans. It was confirmed that they should ideally be coordinated to inform and complement each other, but as a minimum must refer to each other.

Members highlighted the need for plans to include soft skills i.e., teaching residents how to cycle, providing bikes, and trying out electric bikes.

Carolyn Ploszynski pointed out that the slides that highlight corridor studies should have a diagram that pieces everything together.

**Action: John Disley confirmed this item will be revisited at a future meeting.**

At the conclusion of the discussion the Chair thanked John Disley for his presentation to the Advisory Group.

## **80 England's Economic Heartland**

The Advisory Group was provided with a presentation by Suzanne Winkels, Technical Programme Manager England's Economic Heartland on an update on Connectivity Studies being carried out by England's Economic Heartland (EEH).

Suzanne Winkels highlighted EEH cover from Swindon to Cambridgeshire with 13 transport authorities in the board.

It was highlighted that the overall purpose of the connectivity studies is to:

- Identify opportunities and solutions to maximise current and future connectivity in defined corridor areas.
- Build on the policy framework in the EEH transport strategy and will in effect provide a strategy for the area/corridor to help achieve transport strategy vision.
- The studies are multi-modal including digital.

The overview of the connectivity plan include:

- Package 1 – Making best use of road.
- Package 2 – Supporting rail to provide reliable strategic connectivity.
- Package 3 – Supporting mode shift to active and sustainable modes.
- Package 4 – Enabling sustainable, planned development and decarbonised fleet.
- Package 5 – Sustainable and efficient freight solution

Suzanne Winkels confirmed the connectivity studies would be taken to the board for approval.

Members highlighted that the two connectivity diagrams for the study areas "Oxford – Milton Keynes" and "Swindon – Oxford" look different and there is more inter-connectivity with the "Oxford – Milton Keynes" study area. It was highlighted that the main corridors between them are defined as Strategic Road Network (SRN) and the "Swindon – Oxford" study area is the smallest study done. It was confirmed the reason why this has been looked upon is due to the challenges with freight on the A420 and because of the connectivity between Swindon and Oxford.

Members queried who funds the EEH and what the status of the plans developed with the transport authorities was. It was confirmed that funding is partly from the Government and local authorities in the EEH region. It was also confirmed that EEH are non-statutory and EEH take schemes that local authorities are doing and encompass them in their own studies.

Members queried if there were plans to make more of the A420 dual carriageway, how freight journeys would be cut down and how the packages highlighted in the presentation would be implemented. It was confirmed that there are currently no plans to make more of the A420 dual carriageway. It was also confirmed that the priority for freight is the A34 and M4 and there is work in progress with the freight industry to adopt that they stay on the Strategic Road Network (SRN).

Members highlighted that there is a freight strategy in progress at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) which will be shared with the Advisory Group in due course.

Members highlighted the need for the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) and Advisory Group to work collaboratively with EEH.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Chair thanked Suzanne Winkels for her presentation to the Advisory Group.

## **81 Home from Infrastructure Programme**

The Advisory Group was provided with a report by John McLauchlan and Graham Clare, Oxfordshire County Council on an update on the Homes from Infrastructure (HFI) Programme

John McLauchlan highlighted that Oxfordshire County Council had assumed more of a responsibility for providing housing data to Homes England which was part of the criteria to receive the final £30M tranche of funding.

John McLauchlan pointed out that a report would go to the public Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Cabinet.

John McLauchlan highlighted the previously agreed reduction of funding for the Woodstock Road project and confirmed there would be a clear programme for the scheme by end of September 2023.

John McLauchlan highlighted that a consideration when assessing schemes is the deliverability of the project taking account of the requirement to spend funding by March 2025.

Members queried why the Milton Enterprise pedestrian and cycle bridge states it has been completed, yet the funding has been removed.

**Action: John McLauchlan to update the report.**

Members queried the practical feasibility of completing schemes by the March 2025 deadline.

**Action: John McLauchlan and Carolyn Ploszynski to provide a more detailed update on the Osney Bridge at next Advisory Group meeting.**

Members queried the role of the Advisory Group with regards to work done on schemes. It was confirmed the Advisory Group would be informed on work done and there will be comments from the Advisory Group, however the responsibility is with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to deliver on projects as directed by DLUHC and Homes England.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Chair thanked John McLauchlan for his report to the Advisory Group.

## **82 Horizon Scanning**

John Disley confirmed Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) submitted its response to the Government's infrastructure levy consultation in June 2023.

### **Action: John Disley to circulate response**

Beth Wilks confirmed that the Horizon Scanning will be a reoccurring agenda item based on feedback from the stakeholder engagement sessions with Councillors and Officers.

Beth Wilks highlighted the Environment Audit Committee released a consultation in May 2023 which investigates sustainable electrification of the UK economy.

Beth Wilks confirmed the Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) collectively responded to this.

The Chair thanked John Disley and Beth Wilks for their update to the Advisory Group.

## **83 Appointments of co-opted external representatives**

John Disley highlighted that the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group stipulates that the Chair of the Oxfordshire Strategic Transport Forum (OSTF) should be a co-opted member of the Advisory Group.

John Disley suggested the need to amend the Terms of Reference OSTF arrangement and have a public transport and active transport representative.

### **Action: Members of Advisory Group to make proposal at the next IAG meeting**

## **84 Chairs' update from Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP)**

Councillor Liz Leffman confirmed that there was a lengthy discussion about developing a place narrative for the County and the purpose of the narrative is to look at putting together a prospectus for the County to support any possible application for future funding.

Councillor Liz Leffman confirmed there was an update from England's Economic Heartland (EEH) on the connectivity studies and an update on East West Rail.

Councillor Liz Leffman highlighted that there was a commitment from East West Rail to look at ways they can introduce the line between Oxford and Cambridge without having to use diesel trains.

## **85 Future Oxfordshire Partnership Advisory Group Meeting Notes**

Members and Officers in the Advisory Group reviewed notes provided.

## **86 Forward work programme**

Members applauded work currently done with populating the forward programme and confirmed any suggested agenda items will be sent to Democratic Services Officer.

## **87 Dates of future meetings**

Meeting at 14:00 unless otherwise stated.

- 04/09/2023 (10:00)
- 06/11/2023
- 15/01/2024 (10:00 and a week later to allow for Christmas)
- 04/03/2024
- 01/07/2024

The meeting closed at 3.55 pm