

Supplementary Papers

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership

held in the The Long Room, Oxford City Council, Town Hall, St Aldate's,
Oxford, OX1 1BX
on Tuesday, 26 September 2023 at 1.30 pm

3. **Public participation** (Pages 150 - 151)

A statement and public questions submitted by Mr George Curtis on behalf of Bioabundance are attached.

4. **Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel update** (Pages 152 - 154)

For action: To receive any recommendations from the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 14 September 2023.

7. **Advisory Group Updates**

(d) **Planning Advisory Group update** (Pages 155 - 158)

For information: To receive an update from the Planning Advisory Group. Summary notes from the meeting held on 21 July 2023 are now attached.

Public speakers

26 September 2023

1. George Curtis on behalf of Bioabundance

The Draft Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), August 2023, fails to prioritise the over-riding need for policies to minimise carbon emissions and to measure properly our progress towards future wellbeing and sustainability. Oxfordshire is one of the most nature-depleted counties in the country. We live in one of the most unequal counties; there is a 15 year difference in male life expectancy and a 30% child poverty rate in Oxford. The LEP economic growth agenda is incompatible with addressing these or the urgent transition to zero carbon.

The SEP Introduction includes '*There is, in particular, heightened awareness of the imperatives surrounding a transition to net zero carbon, and its urgency....there has been increasing recognition that – in and of itself – economic growth (usually measured in terms of gross value added (GVA)) is both unsatisfactory as an indicator of effective local prosperity and flawed as a statement of purpose.*' And yet 'Economic Growth' (presumably GVA measured?) takes precedence over 'Sustainability' in much of the rest of the report.

There is no framework within the SEP to balance the complexities and sometimes competing priorities set out in the 10 Strategies. Zero carbon will only be achieved if the PaZCO predominates over the other nine Oxfordshire Strategies. The economic plan for Oxfordshire in the 2020's must show how the restoration of nature will be managed. Delivery of aspirations based on productivity alone focuses on employment and innovation; and fails on the environmental and societal goals of the Oxfordshire Vision.

The overriding principles of wellbeing and zero carbon disappear in the SEP section on Measuring Progress. There is an opportunity here for Oxfordshire to set a globally relevant example to complement our ambitions as global centre for innovation and energy technology. Our opportunity is to use 21st C economic principles to measure progress towards the twelve 'Social Foundations' identified by the UN; and how we keep within nine Ecological Ceilings. The Introduction to the SEP report states, '*In this context, insights have been drawn from Doughnut Economics and its vision of an ecologically safe and socially just space in which humanity can thrive.*' Here is a readymade methodology for Oxfordshire to lead the way in changing our purpose from growing to thriving, to guide our decision making to balance environmental and social goals, both locally and globally.

It is our view that Oxfordshire's Councils should support a Strategic Economic Partnership for Oxfordshire (Oxon StEP). This partnership should be multisector, for a multi stakeholder community and be place-based. It would connect the existing activity and networks in Oxfordshire for the common purpose of generating an economic strategy that meets everyone's needs within the means of our living planet.

We are concerned that the FOP members are only to 'take note' of the LEP report. Who has the authority to re-direct this very important Strategic plan to encompass 21st C Economics?

We are concerned that those of our local politicians who are directors of the LEP board have a conflict of interest between supporting this LEP as it is, and discharging their duties as our elected representatives to plan for the wellbeing of future generations.

Questions to put to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership:

1. What further evidence of climate change do our decision makers need to justify setting the wellbeing of future generations as the over-riding top priority in the SEP?
2. What legal and material influence does the SEP have on Local Plans?
3. Why is the SEP being rushed through for adoption by OxLEP in advance of the central government changes to LEP funding and devolution of responsibility for Strategic Economic Plans to Local Authorities?
4. How will Local Authorities and the FOP take advantage of the opportunity in April 2024 for local leadership and local residents to determine their own economic strategies rather than defer to the vested interests of business-led OxLEP ?

Future Oxfordshire Partnership response to recommendations of the Partnership Scrutiny Panel made on 14 September 2023

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership is requested to provide a response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel for decision at its meeting on 26 September 2023.

Recommendation	Comment
<p><u>Housing and Growth Deal: Update at the end of Quarter 1 2023/2024</u></p> <p>The Panel noted that as of Quarter 1, the Housing from Infrastructure programme was over profiled by £2.650m compared to available funding. Whilst acknowledging that a bid for additional funding to Homes England had been in respect of the Lodge Hill scheme, the Panel was concerned about the possible negative effect to the overall programme if this bid was not successful. Schemes at Lodge Hill, Banbury Road roundabout in Bicester, and Former RAF Upper Heyford M40 Junction 10 improvements were specifically raised as potentially at risk in this eventuality.</p> <p>The Panel felt that it was important that there be constant communication and discussion between Oxfordshire County Council as the authority responsible for the delivery of the Housing from Infrastructure Programme and the districts, about the status of the programme and any potential changes to individual schemes, noting that the County Council had agreed to undertake this as part of the revisions to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Terms of Reference.</p>	

<p>It was also felt that a 'lessons learnt' exercise should be completed at the conclusion of the programme.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership reiterate the continued importance of on-going discussions and communications between Oxfordshire County Council (the responsible authority for the Housing from Infrastructure Programme) and the districts about the status of the programme and any potential amendments as agreed in the Partnership's Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding. 2. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership commit to undertake a full 'lessons learnt' review of the Homes from Infrastructure Programme on its conclusion. 	
<p><u>Refreshing the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic plan</u> The Panel welcomed the opportunity to comment on the Strategic Economic Plan, (SEP) draft v2. However, whilst acknowledging the timetabling constraints faced by OxLEP, the panel was disappointed to have received the draft only approximately two days before the meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership be recommended to not endorse or note the Strategic Economic Plan document, recognising that it is an OxLEP document not one with local authority ownership. 4. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership include the following feedback to OxLEP if it is minded to note the draft Strategic Economic Plan: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Measurements metrics and key performance indicators, (KPIs) within the document need to be linked to and be 	

consistent with the delivery of the nine Oxfordshire Strategic Vision objectives and defined within a range of possible outcomes to achieve truly system wide effects. There is also the need for the collection of disaggregated data where relevant based on gender, ethnicity, age and disability status, to ensure inclusion of different groups of people.

- b. That the Strategic Economic Plan should prioritise sustainable growth, the environment and the health and wellbeing of residents. The metrics and measures the SEP uses to determine its own success should broadly reflect these areas. In practice, this lends itself to a wider set of measurements than are represented in the current draft.
- c. That the document needs to strike a balance between job creation and provision of homes in a way that is environmentally sustainable.
- d. That communication about the plan needs to be framed in the context of economic growth that is sustainable. This could be linked to an approach based on the principles of Doughnut Economics.
- e. That the language within the document be double checked to ensure that it is consistent, (use of 'we' defined etc) and to ensure it does not give the impression that the Plan was encroaching on matters within the purview of the democratically determined Local Plan process or matters within the scope of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

Notes

OF A MEETING OF THE



The Future Oxfordshire Partnership Planning Advisory Group

HELD ON FRIDAY 21 JULY 2023 AT 10.00 AM
HR TRAINING ROOM, WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL, WOOD
GREEN, WITNEY, OX28 1NB

Present:

Members: Councillor Andy Graham (Chair), Councillor Duncan Enright, Councillor Neil Fawcett, Councillor Dan Levy, Peter Redman, Councillor Dan Sames, Councillor Anne-Marie Simpson and Councillor Louise Upton

Officers: David Butler, (Oxford City Council), Chris Cherry, (Cherwell District Council), Becky Chesshyre, (Oxfordshire Partnerships), Susan Harbour, (South and Vale Councils), Chris Hargrave, (West Oxfordshire District Council), Kevin Jacob, (Future Oxfordshire Partnership), Giles Hughes, (West Oxfordshire District Council), Lucy Murfett, (South and Vale Councils), Nick Perrins (Oxfordshire County Council), Rachel Wileman, (Oxfordshire County Council), and Beth Wilks, (Future Oxfordshire Partnership).

1 Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes; declaration of interests; Chair's announcements

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Carl Rylett, (West Oxfordshire District Council) who was substituted by Councillor Dan Levy. There were no declarations of interest.

The Chair welcomed members and supporting officers to the first meeting of the advisory group and introductions were made. He commented that he was committed to the building of a positive collaborative relationship focussing on areas where there were areas of common ground amongst the councils and stakeholders.

Councillors Upton and Enright indicated that would need to leave to leave the meeting early to attend other important commitments.

2 Planning Advisory Group Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the advisory group as approved by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership were noted.

With regard to the advisory group's forward work programme, it was felt there was some ambiguity around how this would be set. It was noted and agreed that although potential topics might be suggested by officers, the work programme in future would be set and agreed by the members of the advisory group.

3 The Role of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership & the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision

Beth Wilks, Future Oxfordshire Partnership Manager, gave an introductory presentation which set out the background of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, (FOP), an outline of the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision for Long Term Sustainable Development and how FOP supported its delivery, suggested roles for the Planning Advisory Group and a summary of work streams in progress within the other advisory groups.

In response to a question regarding the role of the advisory group in monitoring the delivery of the strategic vision outcomes, members were informed that in light of the significant amount of work to be delivered, activity programme trackers had been developed for each advisory group. These could be used to spotlight discussions, key changes and risks to programme delivery.

Officers acknowledged that there was a degree of cross-over between the group in terms of ownership of areas of work and strategic vision outcomes. This was felt to be inevitable to an extent as it was not possible for all the areas to be discretely managed although each advisory group did have areas of key focus. The risk of overlap and duplication could be mitigated by the sharing of information amongst officers and the members of the group themselves. In addition, the notes of an advisory group were copied to agenda of the other groups to support information sharing. Both members and officers were encouraged to contact their colleagues within the other groups.

It was also possible to arrange joint meetings of advisory groups were there would be value in doing so.

4 Identifying Areas for Collaborative Working

Beth Wilks, Future Oxfordshire Partnership Manager, gave a presentation on the process for identifying opportunities for joint working aligned to the outcomes of the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision. It was explained that the process had identified some 50 potential opportunities so far, but these would be filtered down with the aim of a refined list being considered by the FOP at an offline workshop on 26 September. Potential ideas for opportunities for joint working aligned to Planning Advisory Group were identified, but it was stressed they were made as an aide to prompt discussions only and were not recommended or agreed.

The Chair and members queried how they as a newly established advisory group could contribute to the process in terms of suggestion for additional ideas and in influencing the workshop selection process. It was explained that the members of all working groups would be invited to attend the workshop and there was still an opportunity for the Planning Advisory Group to add its input, potentially by using the next meeting on 15 September for a planning related discussion on ideas that could feed into the workshop.

A wide ranging discussion took place on potential areas for joint working within the planning space including the potential ideas summarised within the presentation. Matters discussed at a high level included the following, but no decisions were made:

- Energy planning systems, (including local energy plans, infrastructure and renewables)
- Land use principles
- NHS planning for future needs to support identification of the location of primary and secondary care facilities to support Local Plan processes.
- Housing need and affordability

The point was made by several members that it remained important for the advisory group not to stray into areas which in their view were matters for determination by the city and district Local Plans as the Future Oxfordshire Partnership did not have a remit to make decisions in this area. Resourcing and funding to support the group's work also needed to be considered carefully.

The Chair suggested that the approach would not be to duplicate or encroach on Local Plan matters, but there was an opportunity for the group to discuss and share valuable learning and best practice which in part might help inform and support individual council decision making mechanisms. With regard to resources, Beth Wilks responded that there was the potential to seek funding to support the advisory group's work from the Housing and Growth Deal Capacity Fund.

The update was noted.

Councillors Upton and Enright left at the conclusion of this item.

5 Update on Local Plan Progress

The Chair commented that this item was a useful opportunity for the members of the group to update one another on the progress of their Local Plan to support existing channels of communications. Members present with the support of officers provided a summary of the status of their Local Plans.

Themes emerging from the updates and discussion included:

- Each council's Local Plan development were at different points in the statutory process although some were closer than others.
- Although there were areas of common ground, individual councils would come to different policy positions on issues within their local plans and were at different stages of the Local Plan process which needed to be recognised in the context of opportunities for joint working in the planning space.
- Status and availability of Oxfordshire County Council policies such as the Minerals and Waste Plan and Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and evidential documents such as traffic modelling data such as the Oxfordshire Mobility Model and the relationship of these policies to Local Plan production.

It was suggested by Rachel Wileman that transport including the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan could be a future work programme item.

The updates were noted.

6 Chair's update from the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Meeting

Beth Wilks referred to the meeting of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership held on 13 June 2023 and the reference to a meeting with the three electricity Distribution Network Operators covering Oxfordshire regarding the challenges in planning for future energy needs. In addition, reference was made to work undertaken by officers supporting the Environment Advisory Group in developing suggested pointers for best practice with regard to considering solar farm applications.

7 Future Oxfordshire Partnership Advisory Group Meeting Notes - for information

The notes of meetings of the meetings of the Environment, Infrastructure and Housing Advisory Group were noted.

8 Dates of future meetings

The dates of future meetings of the advisory group were noted.

The Chair referred to future meeting arrangements and commented that his preference was for face to face meetings as on balance he felt they worked better, but that he understood that this would not always be possible for everyone all the time and therefore it was intended to proceed on the basis of hybrid capability, potentially moving the physical venue around the county.

A number of members commented on the advantages of on-line meetings with regards to reduced travel, environmental impact and that they could make attendance for members easier given diary pressure.

The Chair commented that he understood and noted these points and that he was seeking to arrive at a balance. Members were encouraged to feedback on how they felt the meeting had gone from a logistical basis.

The meeting closed at 12.00 pm