

Joint Scrutiny Committee



Report of Head of Partnership and Insight

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Wards affected: All wards within the Didcot Garden Town "Area of Influence" Cholesey, Didcot North East, Didcot South, Didcot West, Sandford and the Wittenhams wards in South Oxfordshire district.

Blewbury and Harwell, Drayton, Hendreds, Steventon and the Hanneys, Sutton Courtenay, wards in the Vale of White Horse district.

**AGENDA ITEM or
REPORT NO**

Cabinet member responsible: Cllr Judy Roberts

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To: CABINET

DATE: 31 January 2020

Executive member responsible: Cllr Sue Cooper

Tel: 01491 835631

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To: CABINET

DATE: 30 January 2020

Didcot Garden Town

Recommendation

That the Joint Scrutiny Committee considers governance arrangements and project priorities for Didcot Garden Town before further Cabinet Member Decision for both Cabinets. Recommendations to Cabinets are as follows:

- (a) Approve operating guidelines, terms of reference and revised governance for the Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board and sounding boards as shown in Appendix 2.
- (b) Agree to name the nominated Didcot Garden Town Board as "Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board".
- (c) Agree the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan project priorities.
- (d) Delegate authority to apply for future funding opportunities that directly align with the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan as appropriate.

Purpose of Report

1. To ask the Joint Scrutiny Committee to consider and comment on project delivery recommendations for Didcot Garden Town including an updated governance structure and priorities for project delivery.
2. To provide information about recommendations made by the Vale Cabinet and Sutton Courtenay Parish Council on 12 July 2019.
3. To update the committee on recent community engagement activity and a potential time line for Didcot Garden Town work streams.

Strategic Objectives

4. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils approved the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan on 5 and 6 October 2017. The vision for the plan is: *"Oxfordshire's gateway to future science, applied technology and vibrant communities"*. Sustainability lies at the heart of this vision with strategies that include fantastic green space, connected and cultural communities and visionary science and advanced technologies.

Background

5. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils approved various actions related to Didcot Garden Town on 5 and 6 October 2017. One of the actions was to approve the Delivery Plan and its vision for sustainable growth to deliver 15,000 homes and 20,000 jobs by 2031. The Delivery Plan lists over 60 projects that will contribute to implementation of the strategic plan and provides high-level estimates of their cost.
6. The vision statement of the Delivery Plan is: *"Oxfordshire's gateway to future science, applied technology and vibrant communities"*. This vision acknowledges the importance of Science Vale, home to a high concentration of enterprise and innovation in the advanced engineering and manufacturing, energy, life sciences and space sectors. The emerging Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy leverages the Science Vale and Didcot Garden Town to promote innovation and economic prosperity in the region in partnership with South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.
7. To achieve the Didcot Garden Town vision, a project delivery team is working to implement key concepts put forward in the Delivery Plan. These include connected green space, cultural communities, inspired green living and a network of public transportation, cycling and walking links to key employers at Culham Science Centre, Harwell Campus and Milton Park.
8. Project delivery staff includes the following full-time positions: Didcot Garden Town (DGT) Project Manager, Project Officer and Oxfordshire County Council Principal Transportation Planner. In addition, part time positions include: Sr. Communications Officer, Administrative Officer and Public Art Officer. Additional needs are for urban design, events and graphics support.
9. In October 2017, cabinet approved forming a Didcot Garden Town Board ("Board") to guide implementation of the Delivery Plan. As part of the approval, it was

envisioned that working sub-groups would report to the Board. It was agreed that sub-groups would be governed by a set of operating guidelines similar to a model set out in appendix 2 of the October 2017 cabinet papers.

10. Since the October 2017 approval, a nominated Board has met to further discuss governance. The nominated Board recommended a simplified version of operating guidelines that more closely reflects their advisory role and typical of other garden communities. For example, Bicester Garden Town and the North Essex garden settlements have extremely simple, somewhat informal governance structures. Appendix 1 shows the previously approved governance structure.
11. The nominated Board suggested that “sounding boards” replace sub-groups. At least three sounding boards are proposed: residents, parish councils and business. The purpose of the sounding boards is to provide comments, insight and advice about ongoing work to implement the Delivery Plan. Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff would facilitate at least two sounding board meetings per year and report meeting content to the Board.
12. In addition to operating guidelines, the revised name: ‘Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board’ (DGTAB) has been proposed by the nominated Board as being more reflective of their role.
13. The Vale of White Horse District Council Cabinet (“Cabinet”) considered approval of the governance model recommended by the nominated Board on 12 July 2019. The Cabinet expressed concern at the lack of community engagement on new governance proposals. Cabinet deferred consideration of the actions to allow the Joint Scrutiny Committee to consider them and comment back to Cabinet.
14. A representative of Sutton Courtenay Parish Council gave public comment at the 12 July 2019 Cabinet meeting stating that they were fully supportive of the project. Sutton Courtenay recommended an amendment to the governance model to include a representative from Sutton Courtenay Parish Council on the new DGTAB.
15. Sutton Courtenay Parish Council first wrote to the Didcot Garden Town staff with the request for a seat on the DGTAB in January 2019. The nominated Board considered the letter and staff responded that the best way for Parish Councils to participate is through the Sounding Boards. Correspondence was received from Sutton Courtenay on 20 March 2019 with the same request for a seat on the Advisory Board. On 12 September 2019 Sutton Courtenay Parish Council wrote to ask that their statement to Cabinet be included in the report to the Joint Scrutiny Committee.
16. A total of five parish councils are located partially within the Didcot Garden Town boundary. They are: Appleford-on-Thames, East Hagbourne, Harwell, Milton and Sutton Courtenay. Didcot is located entirely within the DGT boundary. The public statement by Sutton Courtenay and a map of all parish councils located within the DGT boundary are shown in Appendix 2.
17. One additional seat has been added to the proposed DGTAB structure in consideration of the request to provide a seat to enhance parish council participation. A revised set of operations guidelines and terms of reference have been updated accordingly. The representative would be elected by the Parish

Council Sounding Board annually. The parish council representative on the DGTAB would not consider Didcot Town Council as a candidate for this seat because Didcot Town Council already has a seat on the Board. Updated terms of reference proposed for the DGTAB and the sounding boards are shown in Appendix 2.

18. On 5 December 2019 all 18 town and parish councils were notified that Didcot Garden Town matters would be discussed at the 16 January 2020 Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting.
19. On 12 July, the Vale Cabinet requested additional community engagement that would include outreach to a wide variety of people, businesses and local parish councils. Ongoing and inclusive community engagement is a key strategy put forward by the DGT delivery plan. Staff will prepare a community engagement plan following approval of governance. The plan will consider the sounding boards for residents, parish councils and businesses as an ongoing engagement strategy along with other avenues for reaching more vulnerable populations.
20. From August 2019, a community survey was offered as part of a process to sign up to receive information about Didcot Garden Town. Survey results show that roads, transport, cycling and walking, open space, community space and housing are the top six priorities of the 261 respondents. Community engagement activities since the Vale Cabinet meeting are shown in Appendix 4.
21. The Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan recommends 64 projects for implementation, with six projects completed to date. Completed projects include preparation of the Delivery Plan, public consultation, re-construction of the Backhill Lane pedestrian tunnel to Milton Park, Orchard Centre Phase 2, public art projects, a district heating feasibility study and various administrative actions.
22. The 64 projects defined in the delivery plan are segregated into near, medium and long- term projects. Nine early priority projects include both town-wide and place-based strategies. Town-wide strategies include a cycling network, a public spaces and culture strategy, conference festival and wayfinding to help people find key destinations. Site-specific early priority projects are: gateway spine, cultural spine, community hub, connectivity hub, and the garden line.
23. Projects may move forward for delivery as there are opportunities for funding, project partners, development activity and other strategic factors. Staff considers which projects best meet the criteria for funding applications when applying for grants. Therefore, project priorities are sometimes influenced by a range of factors.
24. The nominated Board has agreed project priorities with emphasis on finalising the governance structure, transportation projects, a parking strategy, development of the Gateway project and near term and meanwhile projects. The nominated Board specifically requested that priority be given to a community engagement event which could be used to “launch” the sounding boards once governance is approved.
25. In August 2019 staff responded to an invitation to bid for 2019-20 Homes England garden communities funding with a request of up to £959,500. The bid included the following project priorities: studies related to public transport and the cycling

network, housing delivery including elderly housing, innovative construction methods, capacity studies and third-party delivery tools.

26. The Cabinet papers for 12 July 2019 included various financial recommendations, which are not being made in this paper. Finance actions for Didcot Garden Town will be included in a future recommendation for South and Vale Council approval following notice from Homes England as to the outcome of the funding request for Didcot Garden Town.
27. A proposed timeline for approval of DGT recommendations is shown in Appendix 5.

Financial Implications

28. There are no financial implications for this report. Didcot Garden Town is funded with grant revenue received from government including the Department of Communities and Local Government (now the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Governments) and Homes England. The funding cannot be used for any other purpose.

Legal Implications

29. The governance model approved along with the delivery plan in October 2017 is considered unviable. The model must either be replaced with a viable model or a decision should be taken that a governance model is not needed to oversee the implementation of Didcot Garden Town.
30. The nominated Board is considered temporary until approved by the Cabinets of South and Vale.
31. The DGTAB and sounding boards need approved operating guidelines and terms of reference to meet over the long term.
32. The DGTAB will serve in an advisory role with no legal status. Each member may make recommendations to their representative organisation to take action on a matter that is under the jurisdiction of that organisation.
33. Any changes to the legal status of the DGTAB will need to be agreed by all key stakeholders and their representative organisations.
34. The sounding boards will provide a forum for residents, parish councils and businesses with an interest in Didcot Garden Town. Sounding board participants may submit comments, provide insight and advise the project delivery staff. The sounding boards will be organised and facilitated by the project delivery staff.
35. Terms of reference have been reviewed by the legal team and advice has been incorporated into the final documents.

Risks

36. The nominated Board meetings are not currently open to the public which may cause a public perception of lack of transparency. Approving a governance model

to replace the unviable model set forth in the delivery plan would increase the flow of public information.

37. Homes England awarded Didcot Garden Town revenue funding grants in past years to support the programme and a portion of the money has not been brought forward into the budget for expenditure. Homes England may not award additional grant funding without clear progress in spending past grant funds.
38. Didcot Garden Town operates using external revenue funding, largely from Homes England. Funding has been awarded based on project priorities put forward by DGT staff at the time of the grant bid. If project priorities shift without clear rationale Didcot Garden Town may suffer a reputational loss with Homes England.
39. There is a risk that community engagement on governance and project priorities will be overshadowed by community concerns related to South Oxfordshire's Local Plan and the status of the £218m award from the Housing Infrastructure Fund. Ongoing community engagement through the sounding boards will allow for open discussion of a variety of topics as a matter of routine and replace one-time public consultations as a method of engagement.
40. Capacity funding available to support Didcot Garden Town governance administration and project work is limited. Additional revenue will be needed within approximately two years to continue work to advance these activities. It is recommended that cabinet approve delegated authority to apply for funding to support the Delivery Plan to the chief executive, in consultation with lead cabinet members as funding opportunities arise. This will mitigate the risk of a funding shortfall by giving the councils the autonomy to make decisions to pursue new funding opportunities that align with garden town principles in a flexible and responsive way.

Other Implications

41. The nominated Board is an advisory board made up of agency partners with oversight of projects and budgets that contribute to Didcot Garden Town's development. They include Homes England, Oxfordshire County Council, the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Didcot Town Council. Following the 2019 elections in South and Vale, the nominated Board has been reviewed to confirm it is a good working model.
42. Sutton Courtenay Parish Council has requested a seat on the DGTAB because they are partially located inside the boundary for Didcot Garden Town. Five parish councils are located partially within the boundary. If a seat is offered to Sutton Courtenay, it follows that a seat should also be offered to Appleford, East Hagbourne, Harwell and Milton to be consistent with decision making. Didcot Town Council is located entirely within the Didcot Garden Town boundary and has a seat on the nominated DGTAB.
43. The proposed structure of the DGTAB has been updated to add one seat for a parish council representative who is elected by the Parish Council Sounding Board. The representative would be selected from the 17 parish councils that are located within either the Didcot Garden Town or Area of Influence boundaries.

Conclusion

44. The simplified governance structure and project priorities are considered the best way to support the delivery of projects for Didcot Garden Town. The proposals reflect that housing and infrastructure projects are being largely implemented by outside partners and private land developers rather than by a Didcot Garden Town development corporation as originally envisioned.
45. Didcot Garden Town is a long-term strategy. A flexible approach will ensure success over time. Some ideas in the delivery plan may not be workable as envisioned, such as the governance model. Recommended actions in the Cabinet papers are intended to progress near term and early priority projects such as governance, community engagement, meanwhile uses and social infrastructure. Recommendations consider the current context and can be updated as the situation changes.

Background Papers

- Vale Cabinet paper and minutes 12 July 2019:
<http://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=507&MId=2654&Ver=4>
- Appendix 1 - Original and new governance structures compared
- Appendix 2 - Proposed operations guidelines and terms of reference for Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board and sounding boards
- Appendix 3 – Statement by Sutton Courtenay Parish Council read at 12 July 2019 Vale cabinet meeting
- Appendix 4 – Community Engagement Summary
- Appendix 5 – Proposed timeline for approvals

APPENDIX 1

ORIGINAL AND NEW GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES COMPARED

**FIGURE 1: ORIGINAL (APPROVED) GOVERNANCE
STRUCTURE**

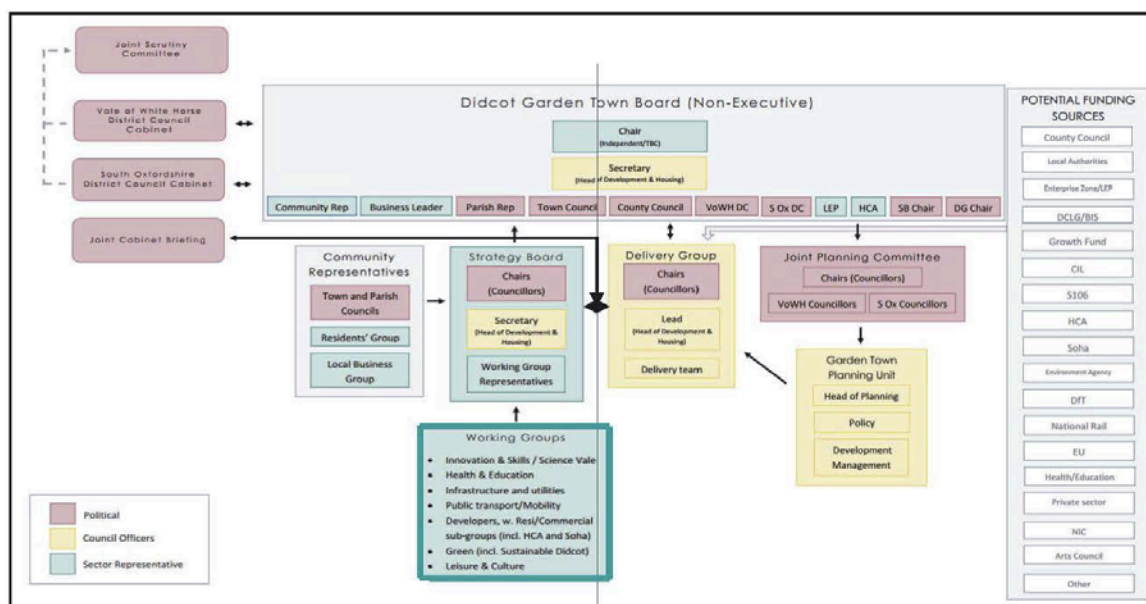
**FIGURES 2 AND 3: REVISED (PROPOSED) GOVERNANCE
STRUCTURE**

The logo for Didcot Garden Town features the name in a white, bold, sans-serif font. Below the text is a horizontal bar composed of five segments in shades of blue and green.

Didcot Garden Town

Figure 1. Original (approved) governance structure

The governance structure for Didcot Garden Town shown below was published in Chapter 10 of the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan and approved by South and Vale Cabinets in October 2017. Figures 2 and 3 on the following page show the revised governance structure that was agreed by the nominated Didcot Garden Town Board on 11 March 2019.

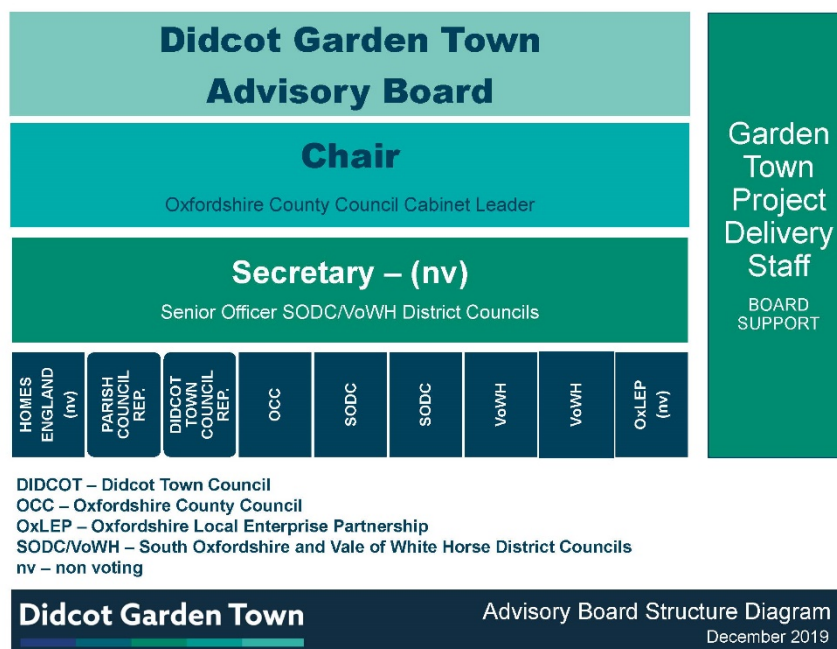
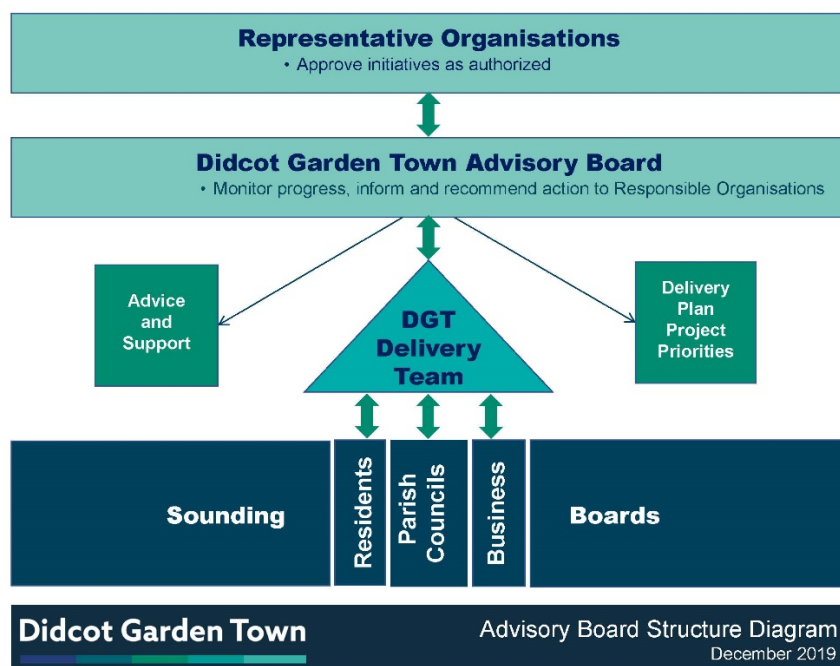


It has always been assumed that the operational effectiveness of this structure would be dependent upon putting in place the following:

1. A scheme of delegation that;
 - a. Gives delegated powers to Senior District Council Employees seconded to work in the Delivery Team and the Garden Town Planning Unit. The nature and level of delegated authority will be the same as the delegation given to these Senior Officers under the current (and future) constitutions of South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council.

Figures 2 and 3. Revised (proposed) governance structure

The proposed governance structure has been updated since 12 July 2019 to include a parish council representative. The structure reflects the advisory role of the Board and is recommended for approval.



APPENDIX 2

PROPOSED OPERATIONS GUIDELINES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR DIDCOT GARDEN TOWN ADVISORY BOARD AND SOUNDING BOARDS

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Didcot Garden Town

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- 1.1. The objective of the Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board ("Board") will be to make recommendations about development of Didcot Garden Town to the organisations each member represents.
- 1.2. The Board will have an advisory role. Board members will liaise with their representative organisations (Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils, Didcot Town Council, Homes England and Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership **or parish council**). Board members shall act in accordance with their representative organisations when providing advice to the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff.
- 1.3. Any ratification of specific actions recommended by the Board will need to follow the process for approval set out in the constitution of the appropriate representative organisation that oversees the budget, funding or work plan governing that action.

2. BOARD STRUCTURE

- 2.1. The Board will be made up of representatives from: Didcot Town Council, Homes England, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, **the Representative of the Parish Councils Sounding Board and** South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.
- 2.2. Three Sounding Boards will be made up of members of each of these groups: residents, parish councils and business. The Sounding Boards will meet at least twice a year with South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council's Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff to discuss project updates and comment on issues and agenda items of interest. Sounding Boards will follow terms of reference incorporated herein.
- 2.3. Staff from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils will provide logistical support for meetings.
- 2.4. Staff from Didcot Town Council, Homes England, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, **the Representative of the Parish Councils Sounding Board and** South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils may attend meetings to provide information, updates and recommendations as appropriate.
- 2.5. Members of the public may attend the portion of a Board meeting during which the public agenda is considered by the Board. The public will be required to leave when a matter of confidential or commercially sensitive nature is considered or discussed by the Board. Members of the public may address the Board at the beginning of the public portion of a Board meeting on matters that are on the public agenda or on a general matter related to Didcot Garden Town.
- 2.6. The diagram in Figure 1 shows the relationship between the Board, their representative organisations, the sounding boards and the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff.

3. DURATION OF BOARD

- 3.1. The Board is expected to continue for the duration of the delivery of the Didcot Garden Town Plan, until the completion date of the final development project.

3.2. Notwithstanding paragraph 3, the Board may be voluntarily wound up, provided:

3.2.1. there is a majority vote of its existing Members; and

3.2.2. at least 50% of the original Representative Organisations have ceased to re-nominate a representative to the Board or to participate in the activities of the Board.

4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1. The following organisations will be represented on the Board and one designated representative from each organisation will have a vote:

4.1.1. Didcot Town Council.

4.1.2. Oxfordshire County Council.

4.1.3. Leader of the Council for South Oxfordshire District Council and one other designee.

4.1.4. Leader of the Council for Vale of White Horse District Council and one other designee.

4.1.5. **Representative of the Parish Councils Sounding Board**

4.2. The following organisations will be represented on the Board by one representative each without a vote:

4.2.1. Homes England.

4.2.2. Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

4.3. The following staff will attend meetings and support the Board:

4.3.1. One or more lead staff members from Didcot Town Council, Homes England, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.

4.3.2. Support staff including a senior communications officer and the Didcot Garden Town Project Manager from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils will advise the Board.

4.3.3. An administrative officer from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils will perform the following secretarial duties as a minimum:

4.3.3.1. Circulate relevant board papers in advance of Board meetings and provide details of time, date and location of meetings to Members;

4.3.3.2. Prepare minutes of Board meetings and making a note of agreed actions. Circulate the same following meetings.

4.4. Members will be appointed for the duration of their tenure in their relevant role with their organisations.

4.5. Representative organisations will name any proposed replacement member in the event that a member resigns or is removed by the Board.

4.6. The Chair of the Board will be the member that represents the Oxfordshire County Council.

4.7. The Vice-Chair will rotate on an annual basis between a representative from South Oxfordshire District Council and a representative from Vale of White Horse District Council.

4.8. Membership may be modified by the Board as needed with the approval of voting members.

- 4.9. Voting members will consult with their representative organisations prior to voting on a specific action and cast their vote according to a decision that follows the constitutional process of their representative organisation.

5. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

- 5.1. Meetings will be held at least quarterly or at a frequency determined by the Board.
- 5.2. Meetings will take place at District Council offices or a location in or near Didcot Town centre unless decided otherwise by the Board.
- 5.3. A **recommendation**-making quorum will be considered as attendance by at least four Board members, each of whom will be from each of the four governmental agencies: Didcot Town Council, Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council.
- 5.4. Agenda and supporting materials will be distributed five calendar days prior to the meeting date.
- 5.5. Meeting minutes will be prepared following each meeting and distributed for review and approval with the agenda for the next regular business meeting.

6. FUNDING AND EXPENSES

- 6.1. The Board secretary and other support staff will be provided by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.
- 6.2. Any expenses, funding or budgets used by Board members will be approved by their own organisations.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

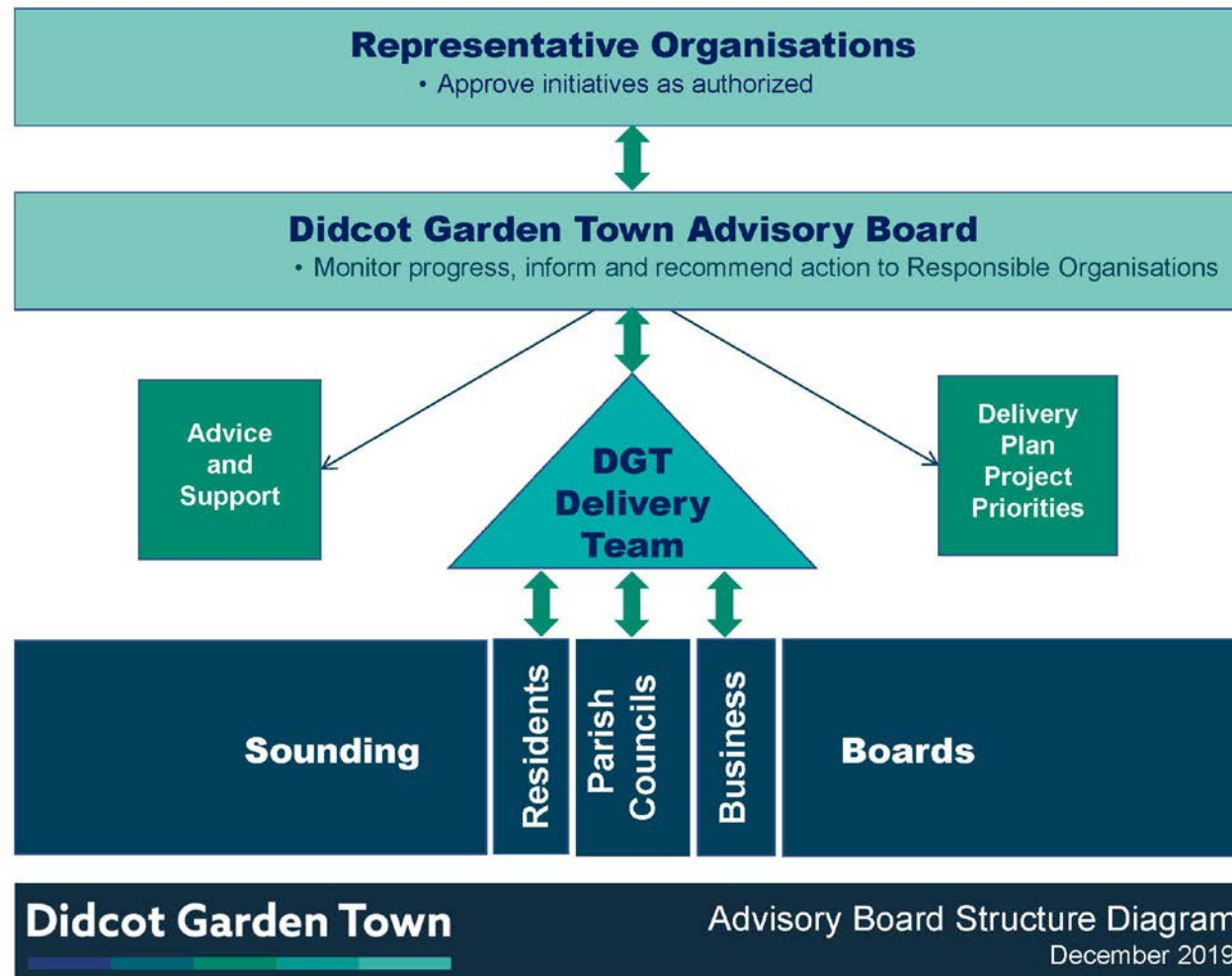
- 7.1. An experienced Communications Officer from South and Vale will be available to support the Board.
- 7.2. The Didcot Garden Town shall have a website set up as part of the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council website framework. The Project Delivery Staff will ensure that the website is kept updated so members of the public are kept informed of progress relating to the implementation of the Delivery Plan.
- 7.3. The Project Delivery Staff will post meeting minutes and relevant reports to the website when they are to be made available to the public.

8. TRANSPARENCY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

- 8.1. Commercially sensitive information will be discussed when members of the public are not present.
- 8.2. Personal information associated with Board activity is subject to the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 8.3. Data will be stored with South Oxfordshire District Council and the privacy policy will be that of South Oxfordshire District Council.
- 8.4. The privacy policy can be found on their website and may be amended from time to time.

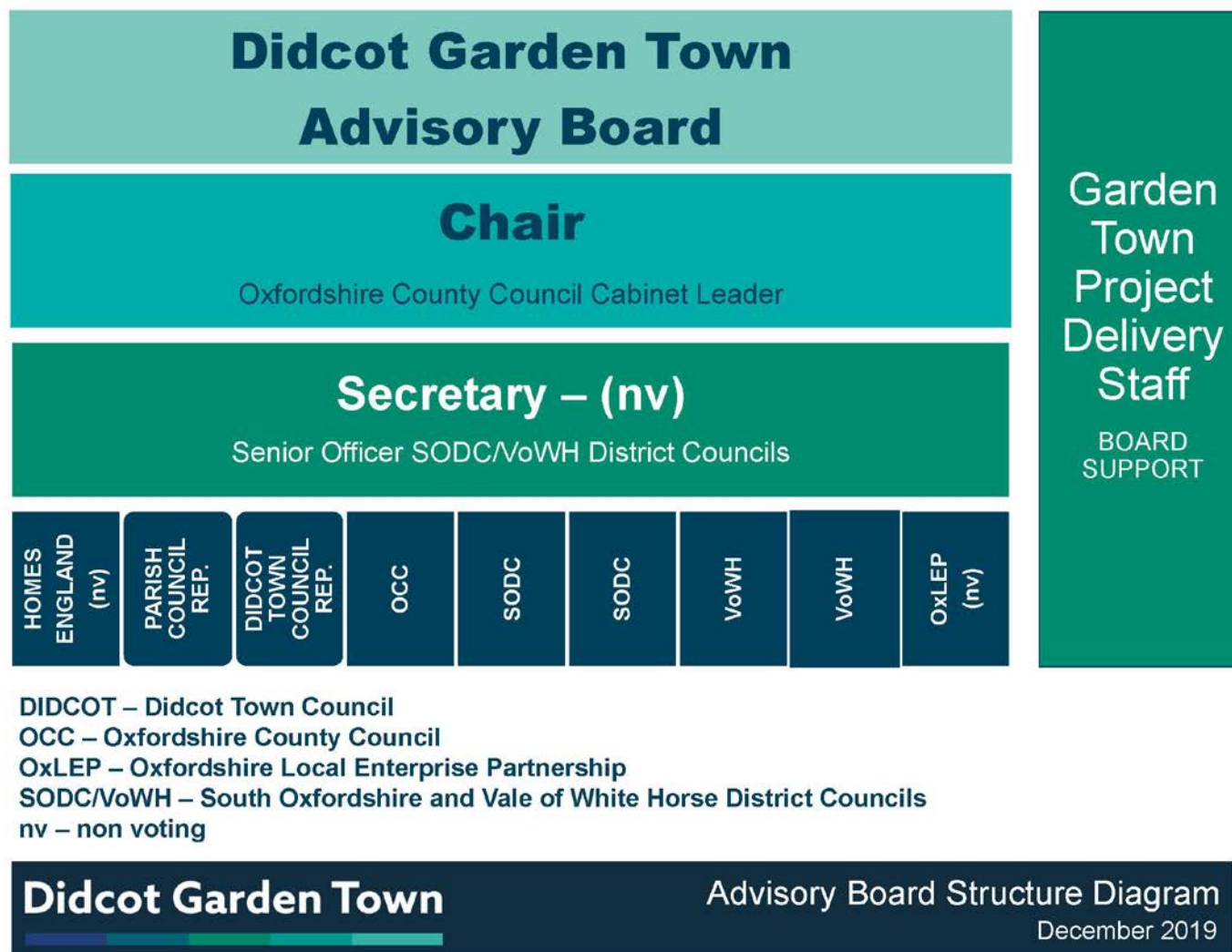
Didcot Garden Town

Operational Guidelines for Didcot Garden Town Board
FIGURE 1



Didcot Garden Town

Operational Guidelines for Didcot Garden Town Board
FIGURE 1



TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR RESIDENTS SOUNDING BOARD

1. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- 1.1. The objective of the Residents Sounding Board will be to review project updates and provide comments about the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan to the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff.
- 1.2. The Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff will compile comments and provide them to the Board at their next regular meeting.

2. DURATION OF BOARD

- 2.1. The terms of reference for the Sounding Board will be reviewed by the Board biannually following approval and updated as needed.
- 2.2. The Sounding Board is expected to continue for as long as the Board operates.

3. BOARD STRUCTURE

- 3.1. The Sounding Board will be managed by the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.
- 3.2. The Sounding Board will be made up of representatives of resident associations and community-based organisations (“Organisations”) whose operating address is located within Didcot Garden Town.
 - 3.2.1. A public call for interested Organisations will be made to seek representatives to form the initial Sounding Board and annually thereafter.
 - 3.2.2. Any Organisation may contact the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff at any time to request that a representative join the Sounding Board.
 - 3.2.3. Representatives will be designated as the single point of contact for their Organisations and serve for a time period determined by their Organisations.
 - 3.2.4. Organisations must notify the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff of any changes to their designated representative or to their contact details by email to: info@didcotgardentown.co.uk at least 10 days prior to the next Sounding Board meeting.
 - 3.2.5. There will be no maximum number of Organisations represented on the Sounding Board.
- 3.3. Individual residents may attend meetings as a member of the public. Members of the public may address the Sounding Board at the beginning of the meeting on matters that are on the agenda or on a general matter related to Didcot Garden Town.
- 3.4. Meetings will be facilitated by the Didcot Garden Town Project Manager and supported by Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff.

Didcot Garden Town

Operating Guidelines for Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board
Residents Sounding Board

July 2019

4. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

- 4.1. The terms of reference for the Sounding Board will be reviewed by the Board biannually following approval and updated as needed.
- 4.2. The Sounding Board will meet at least twice a year to provide input to the Didcot Garden Town Project delivery staff. All input will be compiled and provided to the Board at its next regular meeting.
- 4.3. Meetings will be up to 90 minutes in duration.
- 4.4. Sounding Board members will be invited to one open public forum annually.
- 4.5. Meetings will take place at District Council offices or a location in or near Didcot Town centre.
- 4.6. Sounding Board meetings will be held if at least five people, including Organisations and members of the public are in attendance.

5. FUNDING AND EXPENSE

- 5.1. Meeting agendas, notices, room rental and support staff will be provided by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.
- 5.2. Any travel costs or other expenses generated by Sounding Board members will be paid by their own Organisations and not by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White District Councils.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- 6.1. Any Organisation represented on the Sounding Board must have an email address. Notifications, agendas, minutes and other materials will be provided electronically only.
- 6.2. The Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff will post meeting agendas, presentation materials and reports to the website as appropriate.
- 6.3. Formal minutes will not be kept, but comments will be summarised for presentation to the Board.
- 6.4. An agenda will be provided before the meeting and other documents may be distributed electronically in advance of the meeting as needed.
- 6.5. Sounding Board participants may not speak on behalf of Didcot Garden Town.

7. TRANSPARENCY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

- 7.1. Personal information associated with Board activity is subject to the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 7.2. Data will be stored with South Oxfordshire District Council and the privacy policy will be that of South Oxfordshire District Council.
- 7.3. The privacy policy can be found on their website and may be amended from time to time.

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR PARISH COUNCILS SOUNDING BOARD

1. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- 1.1. The objective of the Parish Councils Sounding Board ("Sounding Board") will be to review project updates and provide comments about the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan to the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff.
- 1.2. The Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff will compile comments and provide them to the Board.

2. DURATION OF BOARD

- 2.1. The terms of reference for the Sounding Board will be reviewed by the Board biannually following approval and updated as needed.
- 2.2. The Sounding Board is expected to continue for as long as the Board operates.

3. BOARD STRUCTURE

- 3.1. The Sounding Board will be managed by the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.
- 3.2. The Sounding Board will be made up of representatives of the parish and town councils located within the Didcot Garden Town area of influence which is shown in the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan.
 - 3.2.1. Clifton Hampden, Culham, Didcot, East Hagbourne, North Moreton, Little Wittenham (parish meeting), Long Wittenham, South Moreton and West Hagbourne in South Oxfordshire District Council.
 - 3.2.2. Appleford-on-Thames, Blewbury, Chilton, East Hendred, Harwell, Milton, Steventon, Sutton Courtenay, and Upton in Vale of White Horse District Council.
 - 3.2.3. The parish clerk will be designated as the single point of contact for each parish council.
 - 3.2.4. Each parish council will appoint the parish clerk or one councillor to represent them as a member of the Sounding Board for a duration agreed by the parish council.
 - 3.2.5. Parish councils must notify the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff of any changes to their designated representative or to their contact details by email to: info@didcotgardentown.co.uk at least 10 days prior to the next Sounding Board meeting.
- 3.3. **The** Parish Councils Sounding Board meetings will not be open to the public.
- 3.4. Meetings will be facilitated by the Didcot Garden Town Project Manager and supported by Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff.
- 3.5. The Didcot Garden Town Project Manager and project delivery staff will attend the Sounding Board, make presentations and support the Sounding Board as appropriate.

Didcot Garden Town

4. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

- 4.1. The terms of reference for the Sounding Board will be reviewed by the Board biannually following approval and updated as needed.
- 4.2. The Sounding Board will meet at least twice a year to provide input to the Didcot Garden Town Project delivery staff. All input will be compiled and provided to the Board at its next regular meeting.
- 4.3. Meetings will be up to 90 minutes in duration.
- 4.4. Sounding Board members will be invited to one open public forum annually.
- 4.5. Meetings will take place at District Council offices or a location in or near Didcot Town centre.
- 4.6. Sounding Board meetings will be held if at least three Parish Council representatives have confirmed attendance within 24 hours of the meeting date.
- 4.7. **The Sounding Board will elect one member annually to serve as the designated Representative of the Parish Councils Sounding Board ("Representative") on the Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board ("DGTAB").**
 - 4.7.1. **The Sounding Board will elect one member annually to substitute for the designated Representative on the DGTAB.**
 - 4.7.2. **The representative and substitute representative of the Parish Councils Sounding Board will follow the Terms of Reference for the DGTAB as a member of that board.**
- 4.8. The Sounding Board may elect to provide advice and recommendations to the Board by providing written statements, **recommendations** or advice ("Advice") to the Didcot Garden Town Project Manager. The Project Manager will forward the Advice to the Board at their next regular meeting.

5. FUNDING AND EXPENSE

- 5.1. Meeting agendas, notices, room rental and support staff will be provided by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.
- 5.2. Any travel costs or other expenses generated by Sounding Board members will be paid by their own Organisations and not by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White District Councils.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- 6.1. Any parish council represented on the Sounding Board must provide up to two email addresses which will be the primary method of communication with the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff.
- 6.2. Notifications, agendas, minutes and other materials will be provided electronically only.
- 6.3. The Didcot Garden Town Project delivery staff will post meeting agendas, presentation materials and reports to the Didcot Garden Town website as appropriate.
- 6.4. Formal minutes will not be kept, but comments will be summarised for presentation to the Board.

Didcot Garden Town

Operating Guidelines for Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board
Parish Councils Sounding Board

December 2019

- 6.5. An agenda will be provided before the meeting and other documents may be distributed electronically in advance of the meeting as needed.
- 6.6. Sounding Board participants may not speak on behalf of Didcot Garden Town.

7. TRANSPARENCY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

- 7.1. Personal information associated with Board activity is subject to the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 7.2. Data will be stored with South Oxfordshire District Council and the privacy policy will be that of South Oxfordshire District Council.
- 7.3. The privacy policy can be found on their website and may be amended from time to time.

Didcot Garden Town

Operating Guidelines for Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board
Business Sounding Board

July 2019

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR BUSINESS SOUNDING BOARD

1. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- 1.1. The objective of the Business Sounding Board ("Sounding Board") will be to review project updates and provide comments about the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan to the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff.
- 1.2. The Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff will compile comments and provide them to the Board.

2. DURATION OF BOARD

- 2.1. The Sounding Board is expected to continue for as long as the Board operates.

3. BOARD STRUCTURE

- 3.1. The Sounding Board will be managed by the Delivery Team for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.
- 3.2. The Sounding Board will be made up of representatives of businesses located within the Didcot Garden Town area of influence, which is shown in the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Plan.
 - 3.2.1. Each business should provide a single point of contact.
 - 3.2.1.1. Businesses must notify the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff of any changes to their designated representative or to their contact details by email to: info@didcotgardentown.co.uk at least 10 days prior to the next Sounding Board meeting.
- 3.3. Business Sounding Board meetings will be open to the public.
- 3.4. Meetings will be facilitated by the Didcot Garden Town Project Manager and supported by Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff.

4. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

- 4.1. The terms of reference for the Sounding Board will be reviewed by the Board biannually following approval and updated as needed.
- 4.2. The Sounding Board will meet at least twice a year to provide input to the Didcot Garden Town Project delivery staff. All input will be compiled and provided to the Board at its next regular meeting.
- 4.3. Meetings will be up to 90 minutes in duration.
- 4.4. Sounding Board members will be invited to one open public forum annually.
- 4.5. Meetings will take place at District Council offices or a location in or near Didcot Town centre.
- 4.6. Sounding Board meetings will be held if at least five business representatives have confirmed attendance within 24 hours of the meeting date.
- 4.7. The Sounding Board may elect to provide advice and recommendations to the Board by providing written statements, **recommendations** or advice ("Advice") to the Didcot Garden Town Project Manager. The Project Manager will forward the Advice to the Board at their next regular meeting.

Didcot Garden Town

Operating Guidelines for Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board
Business Sounding Board

July 2019

5. FUNDING AND EXPENSE

- 5.1. Meeting agendas, notices, room rental and support staff will be provided by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.
- 5.2. Any travel costs or other expenses generated by Sounding Board members will be paid by their own organisations and not by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White District Councils.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

- 6.1. Any business represented on the Sounding Board must provide an email addresses which will be the primary method of communication with the Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff.
- 6.2. Notifications, agendas, minutes and other materials will be provided electronically only.
- 6.3. The Didcot Garden Town project delivery staff will post meeting agendas, presentation materials and reports to the Didcot Garden Town website as appropriate.
- 6.4. An agenda will be provided before the meeting and other documents may be distributed electronically in advance of the meeting as needed.
- 6.5. Sounding Board participants may not speak on behalf of Didcot Garden Town.

7. TRANSPARENCY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

- 7.1. Personal information associated with Board activity is subject to the Data Protection Act 2018.
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APPENDIX 3

**STATEMENT READ BY SUTTON COURTENAY PARISH COUNCIL
AT 12 JULY 2019 VALE CABINET MEETING**

Didcot Garden Town



Appendix 3: Statement by Sutton Courtenay Parish Council read at 12 July 2019
Vale cabinet meeting

Madam Chair, councillors, thank you for giving me the opportunity to make a statement on behalf of Sutton Courtenay Parish Council. The statement is in relation to agenda item 6 in which you will be considering officer recommendations on Didcot Garden Town governance.

The Parish Council is fully supportive of the project. It has the potential to be one of the most important influences in the way our area in the county develops. So, why am I here?

If you look at the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan you will note that approximately a third of Sutton Courtenay Parish is contained within this Masterplan. I quote from Chapter 10.4 of the Didcot Garden Town delivery plan: *'The Didcot Garden Town masterplan area is intended to cover the current and future extent of Didcot: the area where you might reasonably describe yourself as being 'in Didcot' if you lived or worked there.'* I repeat a third of our parish is within this garden town area which is being described as 'reasonably living in Didcot' – where is our identity? Now imagine you live next to a very important neighbor whom you love dearly, and you do appreciate all the benefits of living next to him. One day he says to you that he is going to incorporate a substantial section of your house and garden in his plans to deliver exciting opportunities for 21st century garden town living. Hmm he says there is just one snag you will not be able to make any decisions about what is planned though we might find a way for you to feel you have had a say. Imagine how you would feel and that is how Sutton Courtenay feels today.

You are about to discuss some fresh proposals for Governance arrangements, despite there having been little public consultation on the new arrangements and the considerable concern Sutton Courtenay and its residents, as well as many other parishes, have been expressing for three years, over how the project is to be governed.

It is noted that the non-executive Board is now to be an Advisory Board and that instead of having Parish Council and Community representatives on that Board, these have been relegated to Sounding Boards. This means that the views of those

Appendix 3: Statement by Sutton Courtenay Parish Council read at 12 July 2019
Vale cabinet meeting

bodies will merely be reflected by officers to the main board, without necessarily the full implications and import being expressed. In this there is a clear need for the outlying communities to be able to argue their case where it matters – at the decision-making level.

I cannot speak for other villages, but Sutton Courtenay is in a unique position, trapped between the river and Didcot and now with such a large area of its parish included in the Masterplan. This comes hot on the heels of the Vale's decision to exclude the Didcot Power station area, adjoining employment areas and Milton Park from our Neighbourhood Plan designated area despite our strong objections and the huge financial implications for the village. Please note on the eastern edge of our parish boundary, the DGT Masterplan and the NP designated areas have some overlap. The new Sounding Boards (PCs, Businesses, etc) are due to meet only twice a year for 90 minutes at a time, yet there are planned projects to be delivered within or bordering our parish (Didcot A, Moor ditch, River Crossing, gravel workings site to name just a few) with woefully inadequate opportunities for us to influence project delivery.

I would therefore ask that you seek an amendment so that the Advisory Board includes a representative from Sutton Courtenay. It is no use just relegating us to a Sounding Board, where any concerns will be muffled in general concerns. It is noted that Didcot Town Council is to be a voting member of the Board. It naturally has different interests to those of other local communities and it would be important that any representative from those communities is also accorded voting rights.

In conclusion, we urge you strongly that you do not adopt the Terms of Reference for the DGT Advisory Board and Sounding Boards as recommended, but please consider our request for a full seat on the Advisory Board with voting rights. A vote for Sutton Courtenay would balance the Board between the Vale and SODC/Didcot TC.

Appendix 3: Statement by Sutton Courtenay Parish Council read at 12 July 2019
Vale cabinet meeting

We do wish to be constructive in our request and request that if you are minded not to agree to that request, then an invitation to attend with voting rights for agenda items relating to discussions and decisions on plans for land within SC and the immediate vicinity where SC could be affected or even just an invitation to attend and contribute to the discussions.

And in any case, we ask that when the relevant officers are developing strategies and plans for projects on land which fall within Sutton Courtenay and its immediate vicinity where Sutton Courtenay could be affected, full consultation with Sutton Courtenay Parish Council should take place.

Finally, it is noticeable that OxLEP has a place on the Board as does Homes England. Both of these have considerable impact on the Growth Agenda you are now querying and do not necessarily represent the views of local communities and the requirement to protect the villages from undue and inferior quality development and the green spaces between them. It is recommended that CPRE might also be asked to join the Board, as well as a Parish Council representative, to balance out the influence of those intent on driving the growth agenda.

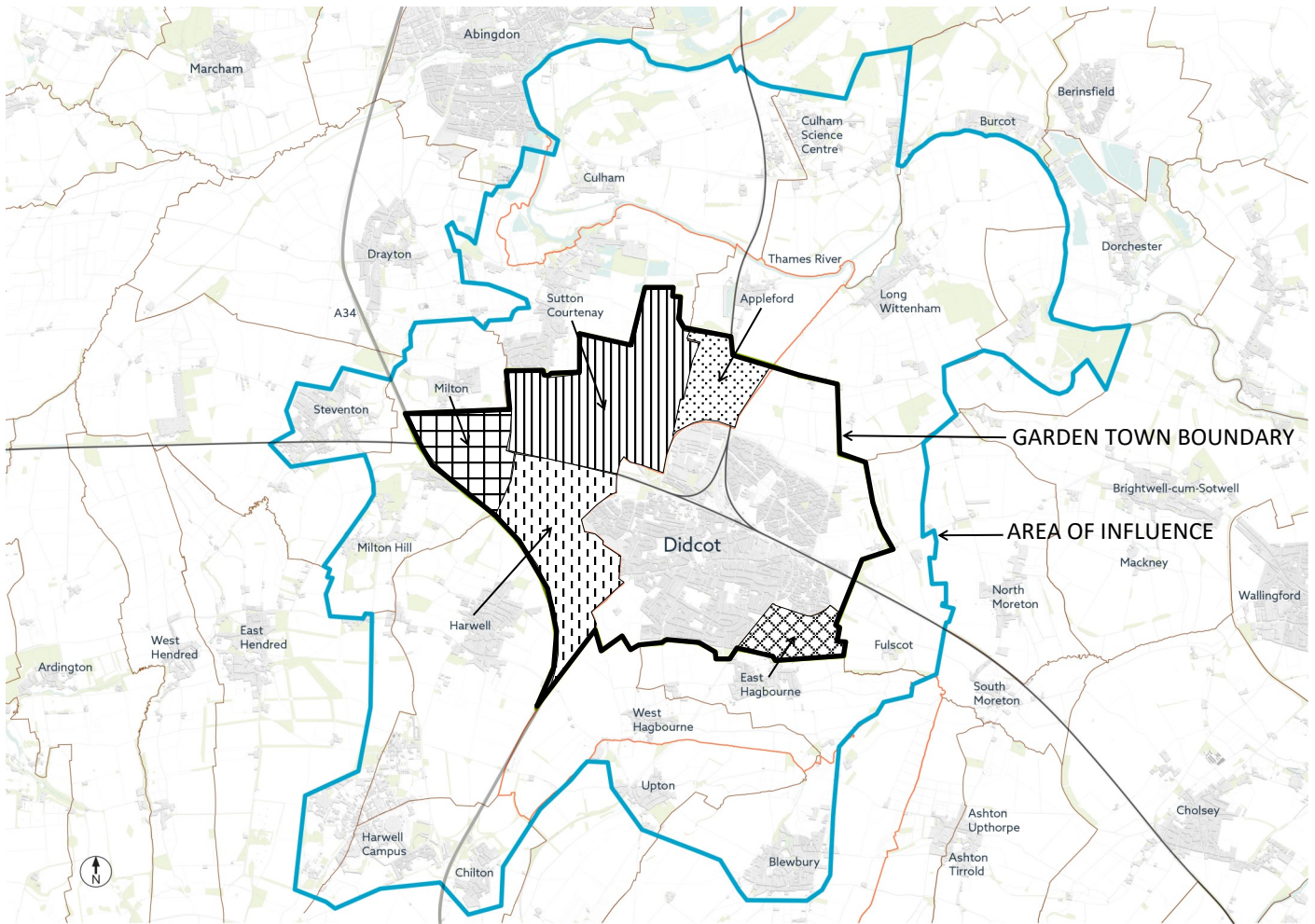
Thank you and please could I have a reassurance that our request will be considered and if not accepted the rationale is clearly documented for us to see.

Rita Atkinson on behalf of Sutton Courtenay Parish Council

12 July 2019

Didcot Garden Town

APPENDIX 3: Parish councils located partially inside DGT boundary



PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS LOCATED INSIDE DIDCOT GARDEN TOWN BOUNDARY

APPENDIX 4
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Didcot Garden Town



Community Engagement Summary – Appendix 4

Throughout 2019, the Didcot Garden Town Delivery Team have actively promoted community engagement through a variety of different platforms. The use of different methodologies has ensured inclusivity. This follows a two-year public engagement process in 2016-17 during preparation of the delivery plan.

The summary below demonstrates the Delivery Team's engagement throughout 2019, before and after recommendations by the Vale of White Horse Cabinet on Friday 12 July.

Note: The mission of each organisation is summarised at the end of this document.

	Pre July 2019	Post July 2019
Presentations and Meetings	Didcot First Earth Trust Homes England Didcot Access Planning Department CPRE Director General of MHCLG Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board	Harwell Space Cluster Baptist Church Planning Officers Society BOBMK – Urban Design Network Josh Fedder of MHCLG Didcot Town Council Oxfordshire Garden Communities Network Earth Trust SOFEA MEPC Culham Science Centre Harwell Campus Churches of GWP and All Saints MultiCAV
Community Events		Didcot Summer Fayre HarBUG Cycle Day
Online Activity	Facebook Posts Twitter Posts Council Websites	Sign Up Survey Facebook Posts Twitter Posts Council Websites DGT Campaign Website Page
Marketing Materials		Sign Up Leaflet Programme Overview Package Large Display Unit Pop Up Display Units

Community Engagement Summary – Appendix 4

'Get involved with Didcot Garden Town' Sign Up – Engagement Data

Are you registering as a:			
Answer Choice		Response Percent	Response Total
1	resident	88%	230
2	business	5%	13
3	town or parish council	6%	15
4	community organisation	1%	3
		Total	261

Community Engagement Summary – Appendix 4

‘Get involved with Didcot Garden Town’ Sign Up – Engagement Data

Please select the type of theme(s) you are interested in (tick all that apply)		
Answer Choice	Response Percent	Response Total
Roads	80.9%	199
Transport	80.5%	198
Cycling and walking	79.7%	196
Open Space	78.0%	192
Community Space	74.8%	184
Housing	72.4%	178
Health and wellbeing	68.7%	169
Public Space	68.3%	168
Planning	63.8%	157
Environmental sustainability	63.0%	155
Culture	61.0%	150
Health centres	61.0%	150
Retail	60.6%	149
Sustainability	56.9%	140
Climate change	55.7%	137
Design	54.1%	133
Science Vale	51.2%	126
Economy	50.0%	123
Business	49.6%	122
Innovation	49.6%	122
Governance	41.5%	102
Public Art	41.1%	101
Commercial	40.2%	99
Placemaking	37.4%	92

Community Engagement Summary – Appendix 4

Social Media – Engagement

	South Twitter	South Facebook	Vale Twitter	Vale Facebook
Total of engagements	3,616 viewed post 99 clicked the link 2.7% engagement	7,117 viewed post 1,051 read whole post 74 clicked the link 1% engagement	3,041 viewed post 56 clicked the link 1.8% engagement	4,780 viewed post 290 read whole post 23 clicked the link 0.4% engagement

This may appear to be very low in engagement, however, social media tends to have a low interaction rate.

- Low rates are between 0-1 per cent
- Good rates are 1 per cent and above
- Total clicks to the link during the campaign were **252**
- Total signups for the newsletter as of now are **261**

Social media posts messages were:

Monday 19 August 2019 – Boundary Map

Live or work in the Didcot Garden Town or surrounding area? Sign up on to keep up to date and get involved with the exciting projects planned for the town via <https://survey.southandvale.gov.uk/s/registerDGT>

Thursday 22 August 2019 – Great Western Park boundary pavilion

If you'd like to hear first-hand about what's happening in Didcot Garden Town, you can now sign up to our newsletter via <https://survey.southandvale.gov.uk/s/registerDGT>

Tuesday 27 August 2019 – Broadway Baptist square

Keep yourself posted on how you can get involved in the Didcot Garden Town plans. Just enter your email address to get the latest news <https://survey.southandvale.gov.uk/s/registerDGT>

Friday 7 September 2019 – Greenline view

We want you to be involved and kept up to date on all the interesting projects in Didcot Garden Town and surrounding villages – get yourself signed up to our regular updates <https://survey.southandvale.gov.uk/s/registerDGT>

Community Engagement Summary – Appendix 4

Proposed Engagement Activities - 2020

1. Project Priorities Online Survey
2. Newsletter
3. Sounding Boards (pending approval)

ORGANISATION PURPOSE SUMMARY

ORGANISATION	PURPOSE
BOBMK – Urban Design	<i>Achieving good urban design in changing times (there are 14 subscribing local authorities)</i>
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)	<i>We are CPRE, the countryside charity. We want a thriving, beautiful countryside for everyone.</i>
Culham Science Centre	<i>The hottest place on the planet and home to some of the planet's coolest science. Owned and managed by the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Agency...</i>
Didcot Access	<i>Didcot Access Group (DAG) is a local group run to ensure that everything that Didcot has to offer is available to as many people as possible, particularly allowing freedom of access to all who have physical or sensory difficulties.</i>
Didcot First	<i>Didcot First is an Independent organisation, committed to connecting business and community so that Didcot is a positive place to live, work, invest and grow.</i>
Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board	<i>Advise on matters related to implementation of Didcot Garden Town.</i>
Didcot Town Council	<i>We strive to make Didcot a better place to live, work and play.</i>
Earth Trust	<i>Our Mission is to give people access to and experience of the environment through the natural green spaces we manage and together understand what we can do to care for the planet.</i>
Harwell Campus	<i>The UK home for innovation. A thriving campus that fires and inspires technological and scientific excellence</i>
Harwell Space Cluster Network	<i>Harwell Space Cluster is the gateway to the UK space sector with 92 Space organisations employing 1040 people.</i>
Homes England	<i>We're the government's housing accelerator.</i>
Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)	<i>The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (formerly the Department for Communities and Local Government) job is to create great places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area.</i>
Milton Park (MEPC)	<i>MEPC develops and manages some of the UK's best commercial real estate and provides consistently strong, long term, financial performance for our investors.</i>

Community Engagement Summary – Appendix 4

MultiCAV (connected and autonomous vehicles) consortium	<i>MultiCAV is an integrated Mobility as A Service (MAAS) trial that brings together autonomous vehicles including shuttles, taxis, 12 metre buses and electric bikes, all accessible via a single journey planning platform. The trial of the vehicles is to be done in Didcot Garden Town with a focus on journeys between Milton Park and Didcot Railway Station.</i>
Planning Officers Society	<i>The credible voice of public sector planners in England</i>
Oxfordshire Garden Communities Network	Resource sharing network comprised of the five Oxfordshire based garden communities
Reverends of Great Western Park and All Saints Wards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>At Great Western Park Church we are a growing community of believers, drawn from the newest housing estate in Didcot and the surrounding areas.</i> • <i>All Saints' Church is part of the Church of England and our services range from traditional to informal.</i>
SOFEA	<i>Access to quality food and education are basic human rights. The mission of our charitable organization is to see that these rights are met for vulnerable individuals and communities.</i>
Welcome Break Group at the Baptist Church	<i>Welcome Break provides a meeting place for the older people of the Didcot area each Thursday afternoon from 2:30 pm during school term time.</i>

APPENDIX 5

PROPOSED TIMELINE FOR APPROVALS

Didcot Garden Town



APPENDIX 5: Proposed timeline for approval of governance, finance plan and project priorities**JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Activity	Proposed Milestone
Senior Management Team (SMT)	2 Weeks before Joint Scrutiny Committee date
Joint Scrutiny Committee Meeting	16 January 2020

DIDCOT GARDEN TOWN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Activity	Proposed Milestone
Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board – discuss governance, project priorities and community engagement activity	Meeting to be held following Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Activity	Proposed Milestone
Send out newsletter	Following DGT AB board meeting
Prepare community engagement plan	Begin work following approval of governance model
Launch event for sounding boards	Hold event following approval of governance model and with consideration of resolution of HIF and South Oxfordshire Local Plan activity

***CABINET DATE**

(work to begin following Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting date)

Activity	Proposed Milestone
Vale Cabinet briefing	10 January 2020
Vale Cabinet	31 January 2020
South Cabinet briefing	7 January 2020
South Cabinet	30 January 2020

FINANCE APPROVAL

Activity	Proposed Milestone
Vale Council meeting	TBC following news from Homes England on outcome of funding bid for 2019-20
South Council meeting	TBC following news from Homes England on outcome of funding bid for 2019-20

*Cabinet approval needed for governance and project priorities