

## Growth Board response to recommendations of the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel Recommendations made on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020

The Growth Board is requested to provide a draft response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel, to be published as a supplement collectively with the Scrutiny Panel's report, for decision at its meeting on 2 June 2020.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Agree ?</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Recommendation 1. That the Growth Board confirms that the emerging governance structures within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc concept will ensure that matters retained for local authority decision-making will remain reserved and within the responsibility of locally elected council leaders; accepting that there is value in engaging with wider non-local authority members such as local enterprise partnerships, health and environmental groups, but in a non-voting capacity.	In part	The Growth Board appointed at its meeting on 2 June three local authority leaders to represent Oxfordshire within the Arc Leadership Group Executive, in line with Terms of Reference recently agreed by the Arc Leadership Group. Similar arrangements are being made by the other three Arc Growth Boards. Officers will provide a more comprehensive briefing on the Arc and its emerging governance arrangements at the next meeting.
Recommendation 2. That the Growth Board agrees to endorse a seven-month extension to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 timetable as proposed in the Covid-19 Impact Report, whilst also urging Central Government to respond to its previous request for an extension to make clear a definitive timeline.	Yes	The Board will consider at its meeting on 2 June supporting an extension to the development timeline of the Oxfordshire Plan. Officers have advised that civil servants within MHCLG have been deeply involved in coordinating elements of the Government's response to the Covid-19 Pandemic in recent months. The seven-month extension in the officer report represents a more detailed assessment of the impact that Covid-19 will have on the Plan's timeline. With the endorsement of this new timeline, Officers can approach MHCLG once more to seek agreement to the revised programme as a whole, and we recognise the need for clarity as soon as is possible.

## Appendix 1

<p>Recommendation 3. That the Growth Board commission officers to produce a Gantt chart or table showing progress against delivery of investment in infrastructure to support homes (as part of the Homes from Infrastructure workstream within the Housing and Growth Deal), including any available information on the likely impact of Covid-19 on these projects.</p>	Yes	<p>The Board has asked officers to liaise with the Scrutiny Officer to make this information available to the Scrutiny Panel as soon as is practical. Members of the Board commented at their meeting on 2 June that whilst there are areas that are experiencing challenges in delivery, other areas of the Housing and Growth Deal programme have been very successful, such as the development of the Local Industrial Strategy. It was also agreed however that it was important to take a more detailed look at some of the more challenging areas for the programme – supporting the request of the Panel.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4. That the Growth Board clarify the channels of democratic accountability and oversight to ensure there is openness and transparency in the process undertaken to revise the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS).</p>	Yes	<p>As a document commissioned by the Growth Board, the process of revising the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy, and the draft strategy itself, will go through several stages of review. The Board is minded to ask that the Infrastructure Advisory Sub-Group, made up of executive councillors from each of the local councils, becomes the member steering group for the Strategy's development, to ensure there is regular councillor engagement. Any outputs from that group will be reported in the usual way through the published notes of those meetings, which the Scrutiny Panel also receive. As part of the Growth Board's review, the Advisory Sub-Group's Terms of Reference are currently being revised to emphasis the responsibilities of those members to act as a conduit between their council; keeping councillors informed of the work.</p> <p>The Strategy's development will engage a wide range of external infrastructure stakeholders, and there will be an opportunity to undertake wider engagement activities alongside the Oxfordshire Plan Regulation 18 consultation in January 2021. Interested parties will have an opportunity to comment on draft elements at this stage. A second stage of formal engagement will take place later in 2021 to align with the Oxfordshire Plan Regulation 19 consultation.</p> <p>The Growth Board expects to receive updates at its public meetings when key milestones are reached, and these can be reviewed by the Scrutiny Panel in the normal way. The ultimate accountability for the Strategy rests with the Growth Board, which is made up of elected council leaders.</p>

## Appendix 1

<p>Recommendation 5. That the Growth Board ensure the projects in the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy are based on locally identified need as opposed to being funding led, and commission officers to provide project schedules and progress reports.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Growth Board shares the view of the Panel. The outline project brief for OxIS sets out that a refreshed scoring matrix will be aligned to key themes of the Environment (including addressing the climate emergency), Health, Placemaking, Productivity and Connectivity to help create healthy and environmentally sustainable communities, through the provision of infrastructure. This is about ensuring that strategic infrastructure investment is prioritised based on what is needed to support a sustainable, clean and inclusive future for Oxfordshire. Though we are still in the early stages of this work, it is expected that these needs will guide its development.</p> <p>The Board has asked officers to liaise with the Scrutiny Panel Officer and Chair to assess what information can be provided with regards to progress reports and project schedules.</p>
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