

To: Oxfordshire Growth Board
Date: 30 October 2020
Report of: Growth Board Scrutiny Panel
Title of Report: Recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel meeting of 21 Oct 2020

Purpose of report:	To present recommendations from the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 21 October 2020 to the Growth Board.
Scrutiny Lead:	Councillor Andrew Gant, Chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel.
Recommendation:	That the Oxfordshire Growth Board states whether it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations in the body of this report.

Introduction and overview

1. The Scrutiny Panel would like to thank Bev Hindle (Growth Board Director) for attending the meeting to answer questions.
2. The Panel received a document from Bev Hindle (Growth Board Director) on the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision specifically the approach for setting a strategic vision for Oxfordshire. The Panel discussed at length the need for clarification on the correlation between existing forward-looking policies; plans of individual councils and partner organisation and the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision with regards to content and timescales. The Panel also expressed its views on the approach in this document which referenced outdated past plans whilst preparing a future vision. The Panel also expressed the need for the Vision to be concise.

Recommendation 1: That the Growth Board acknowledges that the timescales in the final version of the Strategic Vision running from the year 2021 and its content may not necessarily align with existing forward-looking policies, plans of individual councils and partner organisations running up to the year 2030 and with this in mind the Growth Board ensure that continuity between this Vision and other policies & plans is carefully considered.

The Panel welcomed the idea of a public consultation on the Strategic Vision but expressed concerns that in the past locally elected members of the respective councils were not able to read and comment on the text of such plans.

Recommendation 2: That the Growth Board asks Council Leaders to ensure there is clear visibility of the Strategic Vision public engagement exercise to the elected members of their respective councils and guarantee that they would be given the opportunity to read and comment on the text.

3. The Panel also discussed that previous consultations within the remit of the Growth Board had very low numbers in responses and limited coverage throughout Oxfordshire especially in rural areas. The Panel also observed that there was a clear need for better public engagement by ensuring greater coverage and visibility.

Recommendation 3: That the Growth Board asks Council Leaders encourage their wider networks and the public to engage with the Strategic Vision engagement exercise.

4. The Panel observed that given the timeline of the Strategic Vision goes up to the year 2050 the key demographic for the consultation should be younger people in the 20-40 age group who are most likely affected by this vision and also that they are traditionally underrepresented in local government consultations.

Recommendation 4: That the Growth Board ensures that the public engagement exercise actively targets engagement with younger people (who are traditionally underrepresented in local government consultations) as part of a wider effort to ensure that views are sought across Oxfordshire's demographic.

5. The Panel also received the Oxford - Cambridge Arc Economic Prospectus from Bev Hindle (Growth Board Director). The Panel discuss the contents of the prospectus covering a lot of the same areas as the Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire but in greater detail. The Panel expressed concern that an endorsement of the prospectus by the Growth Board without careful comparison to the vision could possibly undermine the principles laid out in the Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire.

Recommendation 5: That the Growth Board ensures the policies and plans within the final version of the Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire are not undermined by the endorsement of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Economic Prospectus.

Future Work

6. As well as reviewing the Growth Board's response to these recommendations at its next meeting on 17th November 2020, the Panel will also be considering in detail:
 - Q2 Housing and Growth Deal Progress Report and Financial summary

- Oxford-Cambridge Arc Update
- Oxfordshire Plan 2050 update (provisional)
- Devolution White Paper (provisional)

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