

**To:** Oxfordshire Growth Board  
**Date:** 26 January 2021  
**Report of:** Growth Board Scrutiny Panel  
**Title of Report:** Recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel meeting of 19 January 2021

<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To present recommendations from the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 19 January 2021 to the Growth Board.
<b>Scrutiny Lead:</b>	Councillor Sean Woodcock, Vice-Chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel.
<b>Recommendation:</b>	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 Andrew Down (Growth Board Executive Officer Group Chair), Rosie Rowe (Lead Officer for Healthy Place Shaping, Cherwell District Council), Paul Staines (Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, Interim Head of Programme), and Martin Tugwell, (Programme Director, England's Economic Heartland) for presenting and attending the meeting to answer questions.
2. The Panel received a presentation by Martin Tugwell on the work done on England's Economic Heartland Draft Transport Strategy. The Panel discussed at length the need for improved accessibility to rural areas and not just major roads and highways connecting cities. The Panel also noted the need for more emphasis on autonomous electric vehicles and electric charging infrastructure in future plans.
3. The Panel also reviewed the Growth Board's response to its recommendations made on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Concerning recommendation 3 where the panel recommended the Growth Board in its letter to Secretary of State that there be a national standard for Zero-Carbon Housing as per the UK Green Building Council's Net Zero-Carbon Buildings framework. The Panel wished to reiterate to

the Growth Board the Scrutiny Panel's support for the definition of Zero Carbon homes as prescribed by the UK Green Building Council.

4. On recommendation 1, with regards to more information on rural flood prevention plans of the Environment Agency in Oxfordshire, The Panel discussed at length the socio-economic impact in rural areas such as Chalgrove airfield, Cropredy, Watlington and parts of West Oxfordshire where flooding is prevalent and that local planning authorities have not taken this into account during planning considerations. The Panel emphasised on the urgent need for greater focus and investment in flood prevention measures especially in rural areas of Oxfordshire. The Panel concluded that representations needed to be made to HM Government in this regard.

**Recommendation 1: That the Growth Board write to the Department for Food and Rural Affairs requesting greater focus and investment in preventative measures to address flooding in Oxfordshire.**

5. The Panel received a report from Rosie Rowe (Lead Officer for Healthy Place Shaping) setting out an update on activities that had been undertaken to embed healthy place shaping into the workstreams of the Growth Board and the strategies that underpinned them. The Panel also discussed the need to amend the proposed Health Impact Assessment Toolkit and supporting text to clarify that it could also be applied to existing developments as well as new and upcoming developments with regards to healthy place shaping initiatives.

**Recommendation 2: That the Health Impact Assessment Toolkit and supporting text be amended to greater emphasise that it can also apply to existing developments as part of ongoing and new place shaping initiatives.**

6. The Panel also received a report from Paul Staines (Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, Interim Head of Programme) which asked the Growth Board to endorse a draft letter to the Secretary of State asking for the continuation of the Community Housing Fund. The Panel also received the summary notes of the Infrastructure Subgroup from its meeting on 14 December 2020 and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Subgroup from 18 December 2020.

## **Future Work**

4. As well as reviewing the Growth Board's response to these recommendations at its next meeting on 16 March 2021, the Panel will also be considering in detail:
  - Feedback received through Oxfordshire Strategic Vision engagement exercise.
  - Regional development updates within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.
  - Oxfordshire Rail Connectivity Study: Stage 2 Outcome.
  - Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Update (Provisional).

- Joint Statement of Intent on Climate Change.
- Q3 (2020/2021) Housing and Growth Deal Progress and Financial Report.

**Report authors**

Councillor Sean Woodcock  
Vice-Chair of the Growth Board Scrutiny  
Panel  
[Sean.Woodcock@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk](mailto:Sean.Woodcock@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk)

**Officer contact**

Amit Alva  
Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Officer  
[amit.alva@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:amit.alva@southandvale.gov.uk)