

**Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (Joint Statutory Spatial Plan) Advisory Sub Group  
Terms of Reference June 2022**

**1. Purpose and Objectives**

- 1.1 The purpose of the Oxfordshire Plan Advisory Sub Group is to act in an advisory and consultative capacity to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership on matters concerning the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.
- 1.2 The Advisory Sub Group will provide strategic oversight of the delivery of the Plan, as well as any other matters of county wide work relating to the work of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, as required by the Board.
- 1.3 The work of the Advisory Sub Group will fall under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) which provides the means for more than one Local Planning Authority to jointly produce a Local Development Document (the Oxfordshire Plan 2050).
- 1.4 The Advisory Sub Group will work on the principle of consensus in advising Local Planning Authorities and the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, whilst at the same time each member will act as the individual lead and conduit for the authority they represent.
- 1.5 The Advisory Sub Group will operate within the remit set by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. Their role is to:
  - 1.5.1 Broaden engagement and involvement of the constituent councils in the Oxfordshire Plan work programme and ownership of each constituent council's part in the delivery of the Plan's work programme.
  - 1.5.2 Provide strategic oversight in the development and delivery of the Oxfordshire Plan programme and related areas of work.
  - 1.5.3 Provide a councillor forum in which to examine and discuss relevant issues in more detail.
  - 1.5.4 Inform development of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership's work and of opportunities for new areas of work to progress the Future Oxfordshire Partnership objectives.
  - 1.5.5 To develop areas for joint work across the Future Oxfordshire Partnership to address key planning challenges and inform policy development.
- 1.6 As an advisory body, the Sub Group does not have decision making powers but will advise and make recommendations to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership on the areas outlined above.

**2. Membership and appointments**

- 2.1 The Advisory Sub Group will comprise of at least one executive member from each of the partner authorities which has relevant responsibilities, plus a chair appointed by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. The partner authorities are as follows:
- Cherwell District Council
  - Oxford City Council
  - South Oxfordshire District Council
  - Vale of White Horse District Council
  - West Oxfordshire District Council
- 2.2 Oxfordshire County Council is a central partner in the work of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership and has a specific role on the Advisory Sub Group. An elected councillor of Oxfordshire County Council will sit on the Advisory Sub Group as an observer. This reflects the importance of county functions in developing the Oxfordshire Plan but acknowledges that the County Council will not have a formal decision-making role in developing the Oxfordshire Plan.
- 2.3 The Chair of the Advisory Sub Group will be drawn from the voting membership of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.
- 2.4 Each partner authority shall appoint one executive substitute member for each Advisory Sub-Group, who can substitute for their member as required. The substitute member shall have the same rights as the member for whom the substitution is made. In the event of the appointed executive member and executive substitute member both not being available, the advisory group Chair shall have discretion to agree to another executive substitute member for that meeting only.
- 2.5 Representatives of the Statutory Agencies and other relevant bodies will be invited to participate in meetings as the agenda requires.
- 2.6 Co-opted non-voting members may be appointed for specific items or a period of up to a year by the Advisory Sub Groups with the agreement of the voting membership of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.
- 2.7 Where the Chair is unable to attend a meeting, but still wishes for it to progress, the Sub Group may elect a Chair for that meeting only.

### **3. Role of the Chair**

- 3.1 The Chair must act in an independent and facilitative capacity to organise the sub group's activities in support of the objectives of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. At all times, the Chair must use their discretion to act in the interests of Oxfordshire and the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, and not of their own political group or local authority area.
- 3.2 The Chair will manage meetings in accordance with the Sub Group's terms of reference, and provide leadership and direction to the Sub Group in an open and transparent manner.

- 3.3 The Chair will report directly into the Future Oxfordshire Partnership on the work of their Sub Group as agreed. In reporting to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, the Chair will present the views of their Sub Group, and not necessarily their own views.
- 3.4 Advisory Sub Groups are not decision making body, and the Chair should aim to reach a consensus agreement on matters under discussion. Where a consensus cannot be reached, the Chair shall present the split views of the sub group to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.
- 3.5 The Advisory Sub Group should be mindful of the work of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel and any other Advisory Sub Groups to avoid any duplication of work. The Sub Group should also be mindful of any work it may require of officers, and the impact this may have on existing priorities.

#### **4 Role of Members**

- 4.1 In addition to contributing to the overall role of the Advisory Sub Group, members will be a proactive conduit between the work of the Sub Group and their respective council. This might include, for example, providing regular updates to their own council on the work of the Sub Group.

#### **5. Links with the Officer Project Board – Section 28 role**

- 5.1 The Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal commits to the establishment of a Oxfordshire Plan Project Board (formerly JSSP Project Board) to take forward the project under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). The Officer Project Board will act as the Joint Oxfordshire Plan Project Board as agreed in the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. In carrying out this role, the Project Board will take into account the advice and guidance provided by the Advisory Sub Group.
- 5.2 The Project Board is constituted of the relevant Heads of Service of the District Councils, including the Oxfordshire Plan Project Sponsor, the Growth Deal Work Stream Lead, and representatives of; Oxfordshire County Council, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Homes England and other relevant bodies.

#### **6. Meeting Arrangements**

- 6.1 The Advisory Sub Group will meet in accordance with a schedule of meetings that satisfies the requirements of the Oxfordshire Plan work programme. The notes of meetings will be drafted and included in the agenda for the next available Future Oxfordshire Partnership meeting.
- 6.2 Meetings may be rearranged, cancelled or additional meetings scheduled with the agreement of the Chair.
- 6.3 The quorum for a meeting shall be three members. Non-attendance of partner authorities shall not affect the legitimacy of the Advisory Sub Group's conclusions. However, where the effect of a particular consideration would give

rise to contractual or financial implications for a partner authority that is not in attendance, then the Advisory Sub Group's deliberations must consider the views of that authority before they are considered by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

## **7. Access to information**

- 7.1 It is expected that the Advisory Sub Group will have the right to see the same information as that of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership when advising on any given issue, in order that an informed view can be made.
- 7.2 The Advisory Sub Group will meet in private. However, the conclusions of the Advisory Sub Group shall be conveyed in public to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership at each of its meetings, except in circumstances where the matter under consideration contains exempt or confidential information, as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).
- 7.3 The Advisory Sub Group agendas and associated reports will be circulated to the members of the Advisory Sub Group, and the designated officer of the respective partner authorities, at least three clear working days before the meeting. Nonadherence to this principal however will not invalidate a meeting.
- 7.4 The work of the Advisory Sub Group will not be subject to scrutiny by the Joint Scrutiny Panel, although its reports to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership will be available to Scrutiny to comment on as published reports to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

## **8. Work Plan**

- 8.1 The Advisory Sub Group will establish a forward Work Plan of matters to consider, which will be reviewed at each meeting. The development and management of the Work Plan will be led by the Chair, having regard to the requirements of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, the advice of the Programme Lead, and the wishes of the Advisory Sub Group.
- 8.2 The Work Plan will set out the matters to be considered, and the date at which they are to be considered. The Advisory Sub Group will have a specific responsibility to:
  - a) Monitor the progress of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 project
  - b) Provide input into the production of the Oxfordshire Plan including the documents produced for any statutory consultations undertaken.
  - c) Act as a sounding board in the development of Programme Lead proposals for the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.
  - d) Provide a link between the Oxfordshire Plan Project Team and the wider membership of the partner authorities.
  - e) Consider any additional matters that the Future Oxfordshire Partnership requires of them.
  - f) Providing sound advice to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership concerning forthcoming decisions, and acting in support of the objectives of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership.

## **9. General principles**

- 8.1 Each partner authority agrees to support the purposes of the Advisory Sub Group by ensuring that in their decision making, they collaborate and cooperate with one another in an open and accountable manner in the interests of the whole of Oxfordshire, whilst acting in good faith and adhering to the relevant statutory requirements.
- 8.2 The joint management of the Advisory Sub Group will be conducted in such a way that no authority's capacity to deliver day to day services is disadvantaged more so than another through their commitment to the Advisory Sub Group.
- 8.3 The normal rules as to declarations of interest will be applied to local authority members in accordance with the respective Council's Code of Conduct.
- 8.4 The Future Oxfordshire Partnership may amend these Terms of Reference or discontinue the work of the Advisory Sub Group at any time.