

Notes

OF A MEETING OF THE



The Future Oxfordshire Partnership Infrastructure Advisory Group

HELD ON MONDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 2.00 PM
VIRTUAL VIA MS TEAMS

Present:

Members: Councillors Liz Leffman (Chair), Pieter-Paul Barker, Ian Corkin, Duncan Enright, Alex Hollingsworth, Judy Roberts and Carl Rylett

Officers: John Disley (Oxfordshire County Council), Babatunde Ogundele (Future Oxfordshire Partnership), Paul Staines (Oxfordshire County Council), Abigail Nichols (England's Economic Heartland) and James Gagg (Oxfordshire County Council)

42 Apologies for absence and notification of substitutions; declaration on interests; Chair's announcements

Apologies for absence were submitted by Phil Southall, Oxfordshire Strategic Bus Forum

There were no Chair's announcements

There were no declaration of interests

43 Notes of the previous meeting

The notes of the meeting held on 25 May 2022 were agreed to be an accurate record of matters discussed.

Councillor Duncan Enright confirmed he is the acting leader of West Oxfordshire District Council, however he confirmed he will still be representing Oxfordshire County Council at the Infrastructure Advisory Group.

44 England's Economic Heartland (EEH) Update

The Advisory Group was provided with a presentation by Abigail Nichols, England Economic Heartland on an update of the England Economic Heartland Connectivity Studies.

Abigail Nichols confirmed England's Economic Heartland (EEH) is a subnational transport body that covers the regions of Cambridgeshire to Swindon, Northamptonshire to Hertfordshire and the entirety of Oxfordshire.

Abigail Nichols confirmed that two connectivity studies have been worked on with officers for 18 months and they are concluding shortly. Members of the IAG had had a briefing at the early stages of the studies, and this update gives an overview of key areas of work undertaken to date. It was also pointed out that 3rd Study had commenced which will cover Swindon, Didcot, and Oxford.

The presentation to the group highlighted a 5-point plan of action which underpins EEH work in line with their transport strategy, including the connectivity studies:

- Decarbonisation of the transport system by harnessing innovation and supporting solutions which create green economic opportunities
- Investment in digital infrastructure as a means of improving connectivity
- Transformation of our strategic public transport network
- Increased Investment in local connectivity
- Ensure that our Freight and Logistics needs continue to be met

The presentation highlighted that the outputs from the connectivity studies will help inform iterations of EEH investment Pipeline.

The presentation to the Advisory Group also highlighted the following packages which would work as one to enhance connectivity within each area:

- Digital and Demand Management (to be tailored to local requirement)
- Making best use of reallocated road space
- Supporting rail to provide fast, reliable strategic connectivity
- Supporting mode shift to active and sustainable modes
- Enabling sustainable planned development and a decarbonised fleet
- Sustainable and efficient freight solutions

Councillors queried what the priorities are in these schemes factoring in the possibility of budget constraints. It was confirmed that in the final report there will be a section on the reality of the situation and funding sources. It was also confirmed that there is some work underway in the EEH Work Programme that will look at financing and funding solutions.

Members confirmed the work currently done in relation to freight solutions is consistent with Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, (LTCP) where it is planned to move freight off non-strategic routes. Members asked whether a similar view was held by other authorities within the EEH region. It was pointed out that EEH will invite Local Authorities to work with them on any commission taken forward relating to freight.

Members queried if any work has been done as to whether these routes link with ones that come from the surrounding areas. It was confirmed that work is currently in progress particularly for the Oxfordshire (Swindon-Didcot-Oxford) study.

Members queried why West Oxfordshire District Council was not included in the Swindon – Didcot study as there are connectivity issues which local residents have issues with. It was confirmed that the connectivity studies geographies were developed via evidence led approach and agreed as part of the Transport Strategy

(published in 2021). Each study geography has been agreed with the study steering groups. A conversation between EEH and North Cotswolds Taskforce has been had which may lead to further discussions on how these connecting services can be included over time.

Action: Abigail Nichols to circulate copy of freight report, which can be found at the link below. EEH to work with local authorities on any freight commissioned work moving forward.

[Strategic connectivity: freight - England's Economic Heartland \(englandseconomicheartland.com\)](https://englandseconomicheartland.com)

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair thanked Abigail Nichols for her presentation and confirmed that the connectivity studies will be going to the EEH Board for review/ agreement in due course.

45 Oxford-Cambridge Arc

The Advisory Group was provided with a presentation by James Gagg, Principal Infrastructure Planner, Oxfordshire County Council on the Oxford-Cambridge Arc Infrastructure Principle. It was pointed out that the update was based on work that was developed from the Arc Infrastructure group. This was a collection of representatives from organisation across the Arc area (Oxford-Cambridge) including Infrastructure representatives.

The following principles were highlighted in the presentation:

- Principle 1: Put sustainability at the forefront of infrastructure considerations
- Principle 2: Plan infrastructure collaboratively, flexibly, and efficiently
- Principle 3: Plan infrastructure in community facing and inclusive manner
- Principle 4: Use strong infrastructure R&D capability of the Arc to support both local and national growth

Councillors suggested that Principle 4 should be Principle 1 due to the need to give the relevant government department a reason why the infrastructure is needed, the R&D capability and the growth this might bring.

Members queried how the Arc with a slightly reduced membership and EEH can be presented as being separate as they shared a similar geography and are doing very similar things. It was also pointed out that there needs to be a strong alignment between EEH and the Arc which is something currently being work on.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair thanked James Gagg for his presentation and suggested an update on this at the next meeting.

46 Oxford Infrastructure Strategy (OxiS) Next Steps

The Advisory Group was provided with a presentation by James Gagg, Principal Infrastructure Planner, Oxfordshire County Council on the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy, (OxiS) next steps

It was highlighted that in terms of OxIS Stage 1, Oxfordshire County Council are now using OxIS Multi Criteria Assessment (MCA) framework to help develop a pipeline assessment tool for potential transport schemes. This tool may also be able to be developed for use in other areas. It was also pointed out that OxIS Stage 2 is currently under review given the recent decision not to progress with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050

Members of the Advisory Group expressed their desire for the work currently done on OxIS to be retained and built on going forward and suggested the need for a countywide framework for matters like Social and Affordable Housing and praised the fact that OxIS is currently being used as a basis for this.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair thanked James Gagg for his presentation.

47 Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) Update

The Advisory Group was provided with a presentation by John Disley, Head of Transport Policy Environment and Place, Oxfordshire County Council on the Bus Service Improvement Plan.

The presentation highlighted:

- Government has confirmed funding of £12.70m (£8.74m capital, 3.96m revenue) over period 2022-2025
- An 'Enhanced Partnership' Board being set up with bus operators and district partners to provide strategic oversight of the BSIP and related projects/commitments
- Finalisation and approval of the EP Document needed to release funds (expected in next 2-3 months)
- Infrastructure funded from the BSIP allocation would include Oxford traffic filters and Banbury Cherwell St bus lane

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Chair thanked John Disley for his presentation.

48 Reappointment of a co-opted representative from the Oxford Strategic Transport Forum

Members of the Advisory Group agreed to reconfirm Phil Southall as a member of the Infrastructure Advisory Group.

Action: John Disley confirmed he would follow up on this with Phil Southall

49 Dates of Future Meetings and Forward Programme

Meetings at 14:00 unless otherwise stated.

- 31/10/2022
- 09/01/2023
- 27/02/2023
- 17/04/2023 (10.00)
- 03/07/2023

The Chair pointed out the need to have a special Infrastructure Advisory Group Meeting on 15/09/2022 to discuss pressures on the Capital Programme.

The meeting closed at 3.50 pm