

Future Oxfordshire Partnership response to recommendations of the Partnership Scrutiny Panel made on 20 March 2023

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership is requested to provide a response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel for decision at its meeting on 13 March 2023.

Recommendation	Comment
<p><u>Pathways to Zero Carbon Oxfordshire Joint Action Plan (agenda Item: 5)</u></p> <p>The Scrutiny Panel was pleased to consider the Net Zero Route Map and Joint Action Plan, which it felt, represented a significant step forward towards the delivery of a zero carbon Oxfordshire. Members were very appreciative of the considerable amount of complex work undertaken by officers and City Science in developing this important plan. Nevertheless, there were a number of areas where the Panel felt that the Route Map and Joint Action Plan could be strengthened further to address both what it felt were a number of omissions, and areas where clarifications were required within the City Science report.</p> <p>The Panel recommended to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The report and Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan be noted. 2. The proposed joint actions and recommended prioritisations as set out in the report be endorsed to form a programme of work reporting to the Partnership subject to: 	

- a. The addition of a workstream to examine and establish the evidence base for additional measures to reduce private car use. This should include development of an approach to making decisions on capital infrastructure, road building and traffic demand management policies that in addition to the encouragement of behavioural change include potential fiscal measures. (It is suggested that [The Future of Road Investment in Wales](#) report commissioned by the Welsh Government advising it on current road projects and how to consider future projects could provide a possible example for elements of this).
- b. Increased consideration and inclusion of Scope 3 emissions within the route map and action plan to ensure indirect emissions are managed. Given the urgent nature of the climate emergency and need to consider all possible ways to the reduce carbon emissions.

Responding to 2a: The County Council's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) outlines that the council's priority is to deliver schemes to make walking, cycling, public and shared transport the first choice. Many of the policy tools identified in the LTCP have been included following a review of evidence. This includes reviewing evidence about measures to reduce car use. Further development of the proposed interventions for geographic areas will be developed through the area travel plan work. This will include local data collection and engagement exercises. It is therefore considered that an additional workstream in the joint action plan is not required.

Responding to 2.b: The Net Zero route map and action plan has focussed on scope 1 and 2 emissions to enable us to take collective action now in areas within our immediate control, to progress proactively towards net zero carbon. As is highlighted in the Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map & Action Plan, we recognise the importance of scope 3 emissions (emissions from products and services used within Oxfordshire but produced outside the county)

It is important to note that the Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan complements deliverables and work programmes across the organisations which make up the Future Oxfordshire Partnership. A number of workstreams are looking at scope 3 emissions including:

- Supporting community-led repair and sharing economy business models through the Community Action Group network e.g., The Library of Things, repair cafes etc.*
- All councils are supporting the development of actions aligned to the Oxfordshire Food Strategy, a priority for*

- c. Re-examination of the potential contributions of wind and hydro forms of carbon free energy generation. This is so as to not place an over reliance on solar energy generation. The use of previously developed land for solar generation, (for example through solar canopies above car parks) to be encouraged over previously undeveloped land.
- d. There be a re-examination of the benefits of e-cargo bikes in addition to the focus on electric vans in order to support efforts to reduce emissions generated from 'last mile' deliveries.

which is to strengthen short, transparent local food supply chains.

- *Through our collective work on waste management, we have a strong focus on the 'waste hierarchy' – keeping things in use for longer e.g., promoting charity shops through the Waste Wizard toolkit, and promoting reuse in the household waste and recycling centres.*
- *Councils are exploring opportunities to embed climate and carbon considerations in their own procurement activities.*
- *Oxfordshire County Council are exploring embodied carbon in infrastructure projects with several contractors, and are commencing a project with the Future Highways Research Group on quantifying carbon in infrastructure schemes*
- *Oxfordshire County Council will be working with district colleagues and partners to develop a circular economy strategy.*
- *The Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership are currently assessing best practice approaches to scope 3 emissions with partners and other organisations.*

Responding to 2c: The proposed workstream on local area energy planning is likely to include consideration of all forms of zero carbon energy generation.

Responding to point 2d: The County Council's Freight and Logistics Strategy highlights that the priority for last-mile movement is to reduce the number of freight vehicles in our towns and encourage the uptake of zero emission vehicles. We are primarily focusing on freight consolidation and mode shift to cycle freight to achieve this and the strategy includes 2 actions regarding the promotion of e-cargo bikes. It is therefore considered that the value of e-cargo bikes has been recognised in other local work and it is not necessary to include in the report.

- e. The development of a transport hierarchy that gives greater priority to delivery of EV infrastructure that can be used to support the expansion of shared EV use, for example through a network of car clubs, over private EV infrastructure, and that public EV charging infrastructure also includes provision for e-bikes.

- f. Greater recognition that:

Responding to point 2e: Oxfordshire County Council is coordinating a one-year pilot of 14 EV car club vehicles across Oxfordshire to start April 2023. The vehicles will be based at existing Park and Charge hubs where there are EV chargers in a central public space. The trial will also assess the demand in urban/suburban/rural areas for EV car clubs, which largely only operate in Oxford City currently.

Further roll out of 'Park and Charge style' large EV charging hubs in Council owned car parks is a key part of our Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) Capital funded project proposals and included in this is that at least 1 bay/charger that can be allocated to EV car clubs from the outset. The Oxfordshire County Council Zero Emission Vehicle Team who are leading this work are liaising with the team working on the Transport Hubs Strategy for Oxfordshire County Council, to ensure that we are aligned putting EV charging hubs into strategic/sensible places that have the potential to become multi-modal transport hubs in the future.

The power needed to recharge an e-bike is significantly less than that required by an EV car or van – generally an e-bike simply uses a 13A socket and there is no 'special' plug required. This should mean that at appropriate locations where EV chargers are installed, providing an additional feed for e-bike specific facilities should be able to be done quite easily. There are now e-bike parking stations commercially available to support this. However, to date none of the grants/funding that has been available supported the installation of these. LEVI is similarly only focussed on EV car charging.

Responding to point 2f: The Local Transport and Connectivity Plan recognises that motorcycles produce a small proportion of the total UK greenhouse gas emissions from transport and are considered

- i. trips undertaken by motorcycle tend to be lower total mileage with a proportionally smaller level of emissions. Motorcycles are part of the solution, not the problem.
- ii. emissions from motorcycles should be regarded as a separate heading from cars. Motorcycles are not two wheeled cars.

g. That as part of the development of a Strategic Active Travel Network, specific KPIs around the total length of new cycleways and other measures to encourage Active Travel be introduced in addition to a KPI relating to the total length of footpaths delivered.

h. That City Science be asked to recheck and clarify the wording of paragraphs and tables relating to the alignment of Transport Route Map targets with the most recent version of the Local Transport and the Connectivity Plan, (para 3.3.2) in light of concerns by the Panel that there were inconsistencies in the figures given.

i. That the report acknowledges the opportunity of removing HGV traffic by encouraging more rail freight, and passenger rail transportation (e.g. East / West Rail).

before 'shared vehicles' and 'other motorised modes' in the LTCP transport hierarchy.

At present the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero statistics which provide the baseline emissions shown in the Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan provide data on 'private vehicles' without a further breakdown by vehicle type, so we are currently unable to provide separate categories in the report. However, it is recommended that the Net Zero report is updated to acknowledge the small contribution made by motorcycles relative to the overall emissions from transport. .

Responding to point 2g: Development of the Strategic Active Travel Network (SATN) is an ongoing project being led by Oxfordshire County Council. The project is one action to promote walking and cycling as identified in the LTCP and supporting Active Travel Strategy. Therefore, it does not propose specific KPIs and the feasibility of any additional KPIs will be considered as part of the overall LTCP monitoring work.

Responding to point 2h: The Panel's concerns are noted and the report will be rechecked against the adopted LTCP before publication of a final draft.

Responding to point 2i: The Panel's recommendation is noted and it is recommended the report acknowledges opportunities for rail freight to reduce HGV traffic. This will align with the Freight and Logistics Strategy within LTCP which outlines that the county council's priority for long distance goods movement is to support the mode shift from road to rail.

3. The governance and reporting proposals set out in the report be endorsed subject to the implementation of a quarterly reporting cycle, rather than a six monthly reporting cycle.

4. The Partnership endorse the development of a briefing open to members of the Partnership, members of the Scrutiny Panel, members of the advisory group and supporting officers around the potential contribution of Doughnut Economics to the delivery of reduced emissions and a sustainable economy in support of the objectives of PaZCO and the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision.

Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Financial Report: Update at the end of Quarter 3 2022/23 (agenda Item 7)

The Panel noted the advice of officers that sufficient contingency provision had been made for inflation within the Housing from Infrastructure Programme as endorsed by the Partnership in September 2022 but requested that officers confirm the date of inflation indexes used so as to provide reassurance to the Partnership that the level of contingency remained sufficient in light of current circumstances and rising capital costs.

5. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership in noting the financial update as of quarter three satisfy itself on the level of contingency within the Hfl programme.

Responding to point 3: We recommend that reporting remains at six monthly intervals to provide sufficient time to develop the work and to meaningfully measure progress against the actions, with progress against the countywide emission reduction targets reported annually (aligning with the publication of the national statistics used to monitor this measure). This reporting cycle mirrors that in place for the Zero Carbon Oxford Partnership Steering Group.

Response

Officers supporting the FOP are beginning to investigate the practicalities of arranging a series of lectures for later in the autumn. It is intended that these lectures would be open to members of the Partnership, supporting advisory groups and members of the Scrutiny Panel. This would hopefully include doughnut economics, but officers will need to work with incoming leaders and senior politicians to agree priorities in the post-election period.

Response:

Oxfordshire County Council update the overall inflation calculator used for Major Infrastructure each time a new index is published.

This refresh happened 7 times in 2022 and latest cost estimates - when received - are reviewed against the latest available indices.

Importantly, the cost estimates and contingency amounts held for every project are formally reviewed and assessed as that project moves through the Capital Governance process and, therefore, at multiple Business Case approval stages for each project - feasibility, detailed design and again before entering the construction phase.

This ensures that we have the most accurate cost estimates (at each stage of project development) and also that we are holding the appropriate levels of contingency funding and so reflecting the increasing certainty of costs and awareness of associated risks as a project matures.

The contingency held typically comprises inflation, quantified risk, uncertainty and optimism bias.

OXLEP – Oxfordshire’s Visitor Economy (agenda Item 8)

The panel noted the update on progress related to the Visitor Economy Renaissance Programme (VERP) and the future landscape of the Visitor Economy.

6. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership in noting the forthcoming VERP Vision and Destination Management Plan for Oxfordshire request that the vision and plan includes a focus on:
 - a. approaches to managing the flow of tourist coaches into and out of key tourist destinations, and the provision of appropriate layover parking for coaches.

Response:

6a. Agreed, the purpose of the Destination Management Plan which has the active engagement of local authority colleagues and Destination Management Organisations is to manage as well as promote. The distribution and management of tourism flow will be a key aspect of the plan. It must however align with OXIS and LTCP proposals in respect of vehicle movement, layover and distribution.

b. approaches to communicate to tourists about transportation options to and from destinations including the use of park and rides; and

c. an explicit focus to facilitate an active travel-based visitor economy through the promotion and creation of a network of bike repair stations, e-bike charging points, and bike parking at key tourist destinations for leisure cyclists.

On Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan (agenda item 9)

The panel noted the update on the emerging Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire and acknowledged calls for public consultation by the public speakers.

7. That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership in noting the update, recommend that in its development, there is acknowledgment of the cross-cutting contribution of ecosystems services and biodiversity to the economy within Oxfordshire. The economic plan needs to be driven by climate change considerations and the loss of biodiversity.

6.b Agreed, this relates to the point above, the plan can highlight approach but must be backed up with clear transport policy and capital investment through LTCP etc... This is a whole system issue

6.c The DMP will look to shape/agree the strategy to promote/market and manage the Visitor Economy (not just tourism) impacts/opportunities. However, transport policy (LTCP) interventions are the responsibility of LA partners. We must and will align where we can the two over short, medium, and long term.

Response:

The brief and commission is already live, supported by SQW. Whilst it does not include a "Full Public consultation Exercise" this is outside the scope and budget, it is a joint commission with all LA's and Universities in Oxfordshire, consists of:

- an open call for Evidence support the Independent Economic Assessment,*
- focuses on 4 deep dive areas including: Inclusive Economy/progression, Net Zero & Sustainability, Foundational Economy and Innovation acceleration and diffusion.*

OxLEP are engaging a wide range of stakeholders including the LNP, Earth Trust, BBOWT and other sector groups to actively contribute and shape the plan more engagement would be welcome.

On the Infrastructure Advisory Group (IAG) Update (agenda item 10a)

The panel supported the recommendations from the IAG to the FOP. In addition, the group noted a recent development related to the FOP Scrutiny panel's earlier recommendation to co-opt an active travel representative on the group, that is Active Travel England has just published its capability rating for active travel and Oxfordshire ranked of 2 out of a total of 4.

8. That the FOP recommends that the IAG take up the offer of support by Active Travel England to help Oxfordshire to improve this rating.

The programme assumes 6 open workshops over the next 3 months bookable via Eventbrite/website covering the stages of the plan.

Response:

In relation to the Active Travel rating there is a requirement/opportunity to resubmit this summer. The County Council will be looking at that and could potentially cover in the proposed "Transport" agenda item with IAG in July.