

Notes

OF A MEETING OF THE



The Future Oxfordshire Partnership Environment Advisory Group

HELD ON THURSDAY 20 APRIL 2023 AT 10.00 AM

Present:

Councillors: David Rouane (Chair), Andrea Powell, Andrew Prosser, Anna Railton and Pete Sudbury.

Officers: Ian Boll (Cherwell District Council), Becky Chesshyre (Oxfordshire Partnerships), Inga Doherty (Oxfordshire County Council), Jessie Fieth (South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils), Sarah Gilbert (Oxfordshire County Council), Susan Harbour (Future Oxfordshire Partnership), Kevin Jacob (Future Oxfordshire Partnership), Alex Jeffery (Future Oxfordshire Partnership), Hannah Kenyon (West Oxfordshire District Council), Dominic Lamb (South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils), Suzanne Malcolm (Senior Responsible Officer), Tina Mould (Oxford City Council), Phil Wadsworth (Oxfordshire County Council), and Beth Wilks (Future Oxfordshire Partnership).

74 Apologies for absence and notification of substitutes; declaration of interests; Chair's announcements

Apologies were received from Rose Dickinson and Mish Tullar (Oxford City Council officers).

75 Notes of the previous meeting

The notes from the previous meeting held on 2 March 2023 were agreed to be an accurate record of matters discussed.

Suzanne Malcolm, Senior Responsible Officer, advised members that the outstanding action to provide a response to Councillor Prosser's query on the absence of the food strategy from the Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan was on the agenda for the next officer group meeting.

76 Environment Advisory Group forward work programme

Members noted the forward work programme.

77 Project LEO

Inga Doherty, Oxfordshire County Council officer, gave the presentation.

Members noted the importance of linking this work with local plan updates. Inga suggested that planning officers across the County already have access to the data however the utilisation was not clear. As the Local Area Energy Planning (LAEP) work progresses Inga suggested that planning officers will also be involved in this and therefore the utilisation and understanding of the data will grow.

Councillor Prosser also asked whether there has been any mapping done of heat sources such as industrial? Inga confirmed this had not been included in the project to date but is expected to be part of the next phase and advanced infrastructure work that is continuing.

Councillor Sudbury asked how can we accelerate the decarbonisation of the grid? Inga responded that the LEO energy mapping platform allows officers to identify where those projects we need to invest in are located. Inga suggested that through the LAEP work officers hope to have a clear picture of where investment is needed in order to be to build a clear business case. Investment is imperative, and a scalable approach will take projects from a strategic level right down to street-by-street to understand what the best and most cost-effective option is to deliver the net zero energy system.

Members were interested in how this process would be rolled out across the country. Inga advised members that from the beginning the work had to be replicable and available to other local authorities. The platform is being marketed to other local authorities and Inga expects that the platform will be embedded into the Energy Systems Catapult Net Zero Go toolkit for local authorities. The Chair followed up by asking how this work gets to scale? Inga advised members that a number of workstreams are already underway, but the LAEP piece would be key to scaling the work. The next step in this workstream was to set up a steering group (to include local authorities, distribution network organisations and big business energy users) to take this forward. Inga summarised by noting that a wide range of stakeholders was important to enable the roll-out of work to take place.

Councillor Powell noted the importance of predictive analysis capabilities and queried therefore whether the housebuilding industry had been involved in the work. Inga confirmed that the construction industry had not yet been engaged but noted the suggestion and recommended that the uses for the mapping platform and the data will continue to grow.

Regarding off-gas communities which are predominantly rural, Councillor Powell asked whether these communities will be involved in any future workstream planning? Inga responded that knowing where those communities are is the key element of the work but agreed that the initial thermal imaging area was limited by cost.

The Chair thanked Inga for the presentation.

78 Verbal update on Solar Farm Best Practice

Beth Wilks, Future Oxfordshire Partnership Manager, gave the update to members with the primary question being whether the proposed scope of the work covers what members were expecting.

The Chair agreed that the proposal was in line with his expectations and those of EAG members, noting that this work should be about identifying the criteria that should be applied when considering where to locate a solar farm.

Members noted that a consistent approach to solar farms across Oxfordshire through inclusion in local plans would be to the benefit of all. The cumulative impact of solar farm developments and flood mitigation on larger sites were recommended as topics which could also be explored within the scope of the work.

Members agreed to the proposed scope of the work.

79 Environment Advisory Group Terms of Reference Review

Beth Wilks, Future Oxfordshire Partnership Manager, highlighted the main updates to the Environment Advisory Group Terms of Reference including references to the Strategic Vision and the Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan. Beth advised members that the Terms of Reference were being taken as a collective pack in order to standardise them across the Advisory Groups.

Beth added that a FOP highlights reports published every two months would update members to key discussions that have taken place across the different Advisory Groups as well as being a good means by which to share information across the groups.

Members agreed the Terms of Reference.

80 Chairs update from FOP

The Chair updated members on changes to the Homes from Infrastructure reporting requirements and advised members that the Future Oxfordshire Partnership endorsed the recommendations within the report 'Arrangements for Managing the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. The Chair noted that the Future Oxfordshire Partnership also endorsed the Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan and there was discussion on Visitor Economy (VE) and the Government review of the structure and their support of the VE.

81 Dates of future meetings

Members noted the proposed meeting dates for 2023/2024.

Future meeting arrangements:

- 7 July 2023 (10:00-12:00)
- 8 September 2023 (10:00-12:00)
- 9 November 2023 (15:00-17:00)
- 18 January 2024 (14:00-16:00)
- 7 March 2024 (14:00-16:00)
- 4 July 2024 (14:00-16:00)

The meeting closed at 11:14.