

Future Oxfordshire Partnership response to recommendations of the Partnership Scrutiny Panel made on 25 July 2023

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership is requested to provide a response to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel for decision at its meeting on 18 July 2023.

Recommendation	Comment
<p><u>Item 4: Update from Cllr Leffman on the work of the Infrastructure Advisory Group (IAG)</u></p> <p>The Panel welcomed the comprehensive verbal update from Cllr Leffman on the background and future orientation of the IAG. Specifically, the panel had requested information on the relationship between the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS), to the Strategic Action Travel Network (SATN), Vision Zero, and the county’s Local Connectivity and Transport Plan (LCTP). The Panel welcomed the acknowledgement of the interlinkage between these items, and the indication of the imminent refresh of the OxIS bringing together these different strands of policy within an updated version including indicative timelines.</p> <p>Arising from the discussion between the Panel and Councillor Leffman and the Panel, the FOP is asked to:</p> <p>Recommendation 1:</p>	

a. Request that Oxfordshire County Council produce a map or visually based infographic to summarise the relationships between key Oxfordshire wide strategies, plans and policies which relate to infrastructure, (both directly and indirectly), including, but not limited to, the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS), the Strategic Active Travel Network, (SATN), the County's Local Connectivity and Transport Plan (LCTP) including its supporting Active Travel Strategy, Oxfordshire's Vision Zero commitments, the Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan and Oxfordshire County Council's policy for future generations.

b. Request that Oxfordshire County Council apply the traffic user hierarchy within the LCTP, a future generations lens, Net Zero Carbon and Vision Zero considerations within any future prioritisation of infrastructure within the OxIS update.

c. That following the conclusion of the current District and City Local Plan review process and building on the refresh of OxIS, Oxfordshire County Council consider the development of an Active Travel 'Toolkit' which District and City councils could use if they wished to assist in considering the active travel implications of major developments. It is suggested that the [Cambridgeshire](#)

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes it is for Oxfordshire County Council to consider the specific recommendations. However, the Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes that the Panel's recommendations under 1.a and 1.d have similarities to a number of ideas generated earlier this year as part of the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision engagement process including:

- Collation of Partnership Infrastructure Plans & Connectivity Studies
- Exploration of Innovative Funding Options
- Strategic Infrastructure Project Delivery Map
- Infrastructure Strategy Map

These ideas are currently with officers from across the county for their consideration and assessment as part of the process of filtering down the longlist of 50 ideas suggested for opportunities for future collaborative working prior to the planned Focus and Delivery Workshop on 26 September. The Panel's recommendations could be considered as part of this existing work.

<p>Active Travel Design Guide is one example of such a document.</p> <p>d. To bring forward a paper setting out potential options for the use of alternative and innovative sources of infrastructure funding to expediate the delivery of the prioritises within the updated OxIS outside of HM Government, Community Infrastructure Levy or Section 106 sources.</p> <p>e. To encourage the use by all the District and City councils of the current OxIS multi-criteria assessment tool as well as supporting the OxIS refresh.</p>	<p>Please see the response to 1a above</p> <p>The Future Oxfordshire Partnership encourages use the use of the current OxIS multi-criteria assessment toolkit across Oxfordshire, as a jointly agreed method of prioritising infrastructure spend</p>
<p><u>Item 6: Refreshing the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP)</u></p> <p>The Panel recognised and was cognisant that the slides presented to it regarding the SEP presented a narrative update on the progress of the development of the SEP and not the final formalised Plan. Nevertheless, the majority of members expressed significant concerns regarding the SEP's current direction based on the information available to them, related to the theoretical framing which currently excludes a broader focus on wellbeing and the environment despite the panel's view that they are of critical importance for a sustainable economy. It was asserted that there is no hierarchy of outcome areas and to achieve sustainable development. Moreover, that the economy is dependent on ecosystem services and that nature is an asset to be accounted for. Additionally, concerns were raised regarding development process including democratic oversight by districts of the SEP, and the evidence base used to inform the SEP content. Finally, it was noted that the economy is dependent on natural capital and ecosystem services and that nature restoration is needed to support the economy.</p> <p>Recommendation 2:</p>	

a) Request that that OxLEP ensure that: the policy framework underpinning the SEP include all of the outcomes of the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision for Long Term Sustainable Development; and equal focus is applied to them including wellbeing and the environment.

b) That the SEP acknowledge and take account of the foundational economy, food security, infrastructure and architecture, small and medium businesses and the concepts of equitable redistribution of the economic growth across the country through the principles of 'levelling up.'

Although minded because of the significance of its concerns to recommend to the FOP that the Plan be referred back to OxLEP and to individual council scrutiny committees, the Panel acknowledged that it was not within the remit and powers of the FOP to do so. However, it was noted that a number of individual council scrutiny committees were due to or had already considered the Plan and it was felt that the addition of the consideration of the SEP was a matter individual members of the Panel might wish to raise with their respective scrutiny chairs as a potential addition to their work programmes.

The presentation has been revised since the Scrutiny Panel meeting reflecting work that has been undertaken since the papers were prepared. The revised presentation picks up many of the themes and challenges identified but specifically:

a) The SEP does recognise the importance of all nine of the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision outcomes and OxLEP will ensure that the SEP when drafted reflects appropriately the role it can play in supporting each, recognising the interdependence with other "sister" strategies which together comprehensively respond to the Strategic Vision: outcomes and guiding principles. These include, *inter alia*, local plans, OxIS, PaZCO: Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan, the Local Nature Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership commitments.

b) OxLEP recognises the importance of having a strong foundational economy (SME's, food production & farming, good public services, visitor economy etc) indeed that is why it has developed a specific focus for this work in the SEP. It also recognises the need for diffusion of Innovation in a way that positively impacts local communities, businesses and wider society more generally. OxLEP notes the importance of "levelling up" in a local (Oxfordshire) as well as national context and we will explore opportunities to support that ambition.

Item 5: Developing a Place Narrative for Oxfordshire

There was a lack of unanimity within the panel on whether or not to recommend the FOP endorse a place narrative for Oxfordshire, but a significant number of concerns and questions were raised regarding the plan to develop a narrative, including the cost and resourcing of its development. Conversely, others noted that it could be a positive opportunity as a communications tool for the county to attract external investment. Content-related remarks were made on the purpose and the process of its development.

Recommendation 3:

That the FOP requests further clarification on the following matters below to satisfy the concerns raised by the Panel:

- a) That further information is needed of the purpose and added value of the narrative and that it will not duplicate, replace, or contradict the Oxfordshire Vision for Long Term Sustainable Development.
- b) That the FOP note that each local planning authority may wish to seek its own advice to verify the statement in the report that there are no legal implications arising from it.
- c) That further information on the resource implications for the Districts and City Council of participation in the development of the narrative is required.
- d) That in the future, if any narrative is developed then it considers drawing on the doughnut economic framework to support framing communications about sustainable economic development.

Recommendation 4:

The Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes the comments and concerns expressed by the Panel and asks that these are considered in the development of the Place Narrative. There are amendments proposed to the recommendations which went to the Scrutiny Panel being brought to the FOP.

<p>That FOP request that Oxfordshire County Council sets out the different types and source of investments that the place narrative is intended to be used to attract, and the pros and cons of these different types of finance.</p>	
<p><u>Item 8.c: Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership Update – Annual Report and Nature Finance Strategy</u></p> <p>The panel welcomed the Nature Finance Strategy and acknowledged the important work of the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership.</p> <p>Recommendation 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Panel strongly supported the recommendations to the FOP as set out in the report including the endorsement by the FOP of the Nature Finance Strategy. b. That the detailed comments and suggestions made by the Panel relating to matters within the remit of the vision of the Nature Finance strategy and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy be fed back and taken into account in its development. 	<p>The Future Oxfordshire Partnership notes and welcomes the Panel’s recognition of the importance of the OLNP’s work and its recommendation that the Nature Finance Strategy be endorsed.</p> <p>The Future Oxfordshire Partnership asks that these matters be taken into account by the relevant officers.</p>