

## **Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) Update to Vale of White Horse District Council 18 December 2024**

The Councils' Joint Scrutiny Committee (18 November 2024) and Joint Audit and Governance Committee (25 November 2024) have both considered recent papers in respect of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership Reset to ensure that as many members could input to this review and to inform the Leaders' discussions in the proposed changes and new terms of reference (which will be subject to Council approval).

Since the last Council meeting, the FOP Scrutiny Panel and the FOP Board have both met.

### **Future Oxfordshire Partnership Scrutiny Panel – 19 November 2024**

The FOP Scrutiny Panel met on 19 November 2024 and considered the following items:

- Future Oxfordshire Partnership Reset -The Scrutiny Panel recommended that in the event the Partnership supports the officer recommendation that plans for the Partnership reset be developed in more detail, the following matters be agreed and/or clarified:
  - That if a joint statutory committee of the Leaders is reconstituted as a successor to the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, consideration of an overview and scrutiny function be central to its design and that this be affirmed by the Partnership. The Panel noted that the report already says that a formal O&S is required in the relevant legislation.
  - The Panel recognises the complicated and evolving nature of HM Government's proposals around devolution and potential local government reorganisation and that this makes current future planning difficult. It recommends that there be opportunity for scrutiny of any devolution proposals at an Oxfordshire wide level in addition to scrutiny at individual council level.
  - That in advance of any final decision about the Partnership's successor a full financial breakdown of all costs, covering the current and proposed support arrangements including meeting arrangements may be beneficial.
  - That the Partnership agree and affirm that in seeking to maximise opportunities for investment and funding in Oxfordshire, any successor joint committee to the Partnership should act in accordance with the agreed principles of sustainable growth set out in the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision.
  - That there be clarity around the governance arrangements of any successor to the Partnership in respect of voting arrangements, quorum and safeguards for individual constituent authorities who do not support a proposition adopted by the joint committee.
  
- Enabling Community Led Housing, approval of Business Case - The Panel welcomed the proposals:
  - That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership be recommended to approve the Community Led Housing business case and use of £38,000 of Housing and Growth Deal Capacity Fund budget.

- That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership be requested to ask officers to consider increasing the scope of the business case to help foster community-led trusts/organisations in new (or possibly existing as well) developer-built estates where there is local interest, to look after e.g. green spaces instead of residents having to pay a management fee to a private company, too often for a poor service for which they have little control.
- Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan Update -
  - That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership suggest to its constituent councils that they individually consider the report as appropriate within their own governance arrangements.
  - That the Future Oxfordshire Partnership note the request of the Panel that officers consider the detailed points made in its discussion of the report as appropriate related, but not limited to:
    - a) Transport emissions and the relationship between transport emissions linked to residence and employment locations.
    - b) Consideration of Net Zero implications as part of the capital budgetary approval process for infrastructure.
    - c) Emissions from construction.
    - d) Ability to track 'Scope Three' emissions.
    - e) Advantages and disadvantages of an approach based on consumption vs geographical emissions.

#### **Future Oxfordshire Partnership Board – 26 November 2024**

Since the last Council meeting, the FOP Board has met formally on **26 November 2024**, where the following items were considered:

- Future Oxfordshire Partnership Reset – the Board endorsed the proposed powers, purposes, priorities and steps set out in the report, and requested officers to develop the plans in more detail along with revised terms of reference.
- Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal: update at the end of Quarter 2 2024/25. Confirmation that Wantage Link Road opening will take place 5 December 2024. It was stated that construction contracts have been agreed and entered into for Abingdon, Lodge Hill and Steventon Lights with work on site to commence imminently.
- Enabling Community Led Housing: approval of Business case – the FOP Board approved the Community Led Housing Business Case and to implement the business case to the value of £38,000 from the Housing and Growth Deal Capacity Fund.
- Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan (NZRMAP) Annual Report – the FOP Board noted the report and activity presented in the update.
- Future Oxfordshire Partnership Annual Report 2023/24 – the report provided an annual update (August 2023 – August 2024) on the FOP's work to deliver the nine outcomes of the Strategic Vision for Sustainable Development which was formally endorsed by the FOP in March 2021 and subsequently approved by each of the Oxfordshire councils.

- Planning Advisory Group Update – a discussion was had regarding primary healthcare delivery and working with BOB ICB.

A copy of the FOP Forward Plan presented to the 26 November 2024 meeting is attached.

The next meeting is scheduled for 28 January 2024 when the Board will discuss proposed Terms of Reference for the new Oxfordshire Leaders' Board before taking the draft Terms of Reference to each individual council for consideration.

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Deputy Chief Executive - Place