Agenda

OXFORDSHIRE
G R O W T H   B O A R D

Oxfordshire Growth Board

Tuesday 2 June 2020 at 2.00 pm to be held as a virtual meeting

From 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2020, the Oxfordshire Growth Board meetings are managed by South Oxfordshire District Council.
Contact: Kevin Jacob
E-mail: democratic.services@oxfordshiregrowthboard.org
Telephone: 01235 422191
Website: www.oxfordshiregrowthboard.org

Members

Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council (which holds the Chair)	Councillor Sue Cooper
Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council (which holds the Vice-Chair)	Councillor Emily Smith
Leader of Cherwell District Council	Councillor Barry Wood
Leader of Oxford City Council	Councillor Susan Brown
Leader of Oxfordshire County Council	Councillor Ian Hudspeth
Leader of West Oxfordshire District Council	Councillor James Mills
Chairman of OxLEP	Jeremy Long
Vice-Chairman and Skills Board representative	Adrian Lockwood
Universities representative	Professor Alistair Fitt
OxLEP business representative - Bicester	Miranda Markham
OxLEP business representative – Oxford City	Peter Nolan
OxLEP business representative – Science Vale	Angus Horner
Homes England representative	Catherine Turner/Kevin Bourner
Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group representative	Dr Kiren Collison
Environment Agency representative	Emma Hill

Notes:

1. The meeting will be web streamed. Please see the note at http://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=330&MId=2477on how to observe the meeting.

2. *One member, one vote for each constituent local authority member only.*

AGENDA

1   Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for the 2020/2021 year

To elect a Chair and Vice-Chair for the meeting and the Growth Board for the 2020/2021 year.

2   Apologies for absence

3   Adoption of Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules (Pages 6 - 10)

In response to the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, the Growth Board is **recommended** to adopt the virtual meeting procedure rules adopted by South Oxfordshire District Council as the current hosting local authority, attached at appendix 1.

4   Declarations of interest

5   Minutes (Pages 11 - 18)

To adopt as a correct record the minutes of the Oxfordshire Growth Board meeting held on 11 March 2020.

6   Chair's announcements

7   Public participation

Asking a question
Questions (in full and in writing) must be received by **5pm** on **Wednesday 27 May 2020** three clear working days before the Growth Board meeting.

Addressing the Board
Notice of a wish to address the Growth Board (in full and in writing) must be received by **12 noon on Monday 1 June 2020**, the working day before the Growth Board meeting.

Questions and addresses should be no longer than one side of A4 paper in Ariel 12 font. The address or question will be circulated to the Growth Board and read out by the democratic services officer or Chair on behalf of those who have submitted them. A response may be given at the meeting or a written answer supplied. The Chair will have discretion to manage the public participation procedure as they see appropriate.

Questions and notice of addresses must be submitted to
democratic.services@oxfordshiregrowthboard.org

8   Growth Board Scrutiny Panel update (To Follow)

To receive any recommendations from the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 28 May 2020. (To follow)

9   Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal (Pages 19 - 29)

To receive an update on the impact the Covid-19 pandemic has, and will have, on the delivery of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. This includes recommended revisions to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 timeline.

10   Updating the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) (Pages 30 - 40)

To consider the scope, timescale, governance and funding for updating the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy, in support of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050

11   Growth Board Forward Plan (Pages 41 - 43)

To note and comment on the Growth Board's Forward Plan.

12   Updates on matters relevant to the Growth Board

Growth Board members and officers may verbally update the Board on progress on matters previously before the Board for consideration, listed in the forward plan, or relevant to the Board's future decisions. This is for the sharing of information and no decisions will be taken.

13   Dates of next meetings

The dates of future Growth Board meetings are below as amended based on a quarterly reporting cycle. These will normally be held on Tuesdays at 2pm in Didcot Civic Hall, but this will be kept under review.

- July, (proposed additional meeting) final date to be confirmed.
- 22 September 2020
- 24 November 2020
- ~~26 January 2021~~ (cancelled)
- 22 February 2021 (added)
- ~~23 March 2021~~ (cancelled)
- 1 June 2021

Councillors' duties on declaring interests

General duty
You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?
Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your* employment; sponsorship (ie payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the council's area; licences for land in the council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's register of interests which is publicly available on the council's website.

Declaring an interest
Where any matter disclosed in your register of interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Member's Code of Conduct and public perception
Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Councillors' Code of Conduct says that a member "must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself" and that "you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned". What this means is that the matter of interests must be viewed within the context of the code as a whole and regard should continue to be paid to the perception of the public.

*Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those of the member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules

The Government has issued The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392. The Regulations have been issued under Section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020. They allow the council to hold virtual meetings between 4 April 2020 and 6 May 2021. These Virtual Meeting Procedure Rules set out the procedure to be followed when the council conducts formal virtual meetings and should be read in conjunction with the procedure rules in the Constitution for the Council, Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees, Joint Audit and Governance Committee, Planning Committee, General Licensing Committee, Licensing Acts Committee, Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee, Area Committees, Community Grants Panel, and licensing and taxi panels. Except as varied by these rules, the procedure rules for meetings set out in the Constitution also apply to virtual meetings.

Annual meeting of Council

1. Council Procedure Rule 1, requiring an annual meeting of Council to be held, shall not apply between the date of adoption of these procedure rules and 6 May 2021. Council may hold an annual meeting if it wishes but is not required to do so during the period specified above. An annual meeting of Council may be called by:
    (a) the Chair of the Council or
    (b) a resolution calling for an Annual Meeting being passed at an ordinary or extraordinary meeting of Council.

Virtual meetings

2. Between the date of adoption of these procedure rules and 6 May 2021, the council may hold meetings:
    (a) at a physical location, with some councillors in attendance in the meeting room and with some councillors attending through remote access, or
    (b) at a virtual location, being a web address or a conference call telephone number or a combination of these.

3. The council will live stream these meetings for the public to listen to or watch.

4. A virtual meeting that is open to the public held between the date of the adoption of these procedure rules and 6 May 2021 includes any meeting specified in paragraph 2 above where business is transacted that is open to the public and press.

Participants in the virtual meeting

5. The following shall be deemed to be participants of the virtual meeting:
    (a) Members of the meeting or their substitutes
    (b) Other district councillors who have indicated a wish to speak at the meeting
    (c) Other invitees to speak to a specific agenda item
    (d) Officers in attendance

6. When participants are speaking, they must be able to be heard by other participants. There is no requirement to be able to see other participants, although this is preferable.

Observers

7. The council must provide a facility so that members of the public who are listening to or watching the virtual meeting, rather than participating, can hear the participants speaking at the meeting.

Notice of meetings

8. The head of legal and democratic will give notice of a meeting by publishing the agenda to the council's website at least five clear days in advance of meeting.

9. The notice will set out the date and time of the meeting, and the business to be transacted. The council will publish details of how the public may listen to or watch the virtual meeting.

10. Participants will be notified by email of how to join the virtual meeting.

11. The agenda will not be available as a paper copy if the meeting is completely virtual.

Attendance at virtual meetings

12. Attendance at virtual meetings can be either:
    (a) by being present in the physical place the meeting is held or
    (b) by joining the virtual meeting.

13. Participants will be asked to join the virtual meeting at least 15 minutes before the advertised start time. Councillors joining the virtual meeting must use their council-supplied device.

14. Any video camera should show a non-descript background or where possible, a virtual background. Participants are asked not to eat or drink while their audio and video link is active and wear appropriate clothing for a public meeting.

15. At the commencement of each meeting, the Chair shall take a register of all councillors and officers joining the meeting to allow their presence to be recorded and explain the protocol for councillor and public participation and the rules of debate.

Quorum

16. The normal quorum rules apply to each meeting.

Public participation

17. Members of the public may submit a statement or question in accordance with the relevant meeting's procedure rules, set out in the Constitution. The public may either:
    (a) address the meeting in person if the meeting is held in a physical location or
    (b) submit their address in writing to democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk in order that it can be circulated at a virtual meeting or
    (c) join and participate in a virtual meeting by invitation.

18. For meetings of the Planning Committee, the public who have already registered an interest in the planning application may submit a concise written statement by 12 noon two working days before the committee meeting. Written statements received by the deadline will be circulated to the committee members in advance of the meeting and will be published to the council's website.

19. The rules on deadlines for registering to address meetings other than the Planning Committee and the time limits on statements and questions at those meetings are set out in the relevant meeting's procedure rules in the Constitution.

Non-committee member's participation

20. If a councillor who is not a committee member, wishes to address the meeting during a particular agenda item, they should inform the Chair and Democratic Services by 12 noon on the working day before the meeting.

Technical failure during a virtual meeting

21. If the Chair becomes aware that the virtual meeting is not accessible to the public through remote means, due to technical failure or other means, the Chair may adjourn the meeting.

22. If the Chair becomes aware that the meeting is not accessible by one or more members of the meeting through remote means, due to technical failure or other means, the Chair may adjourn the meeting immediately but is not required to, unless the meeting is inquorate.

23. If a councillor temporarily disconnects and re-connects to the meeting due to technological issues, they are still considered to be present throughout the meeting as long as any matters discussed during their absence are repeated.

24. If a technical connection to a councillor or participant is lost during a Planning Committee or licensing panel hearing for a prolonged period, the Chair will announce that the relevant councillor is absent. The meeting may proceed as long as a quorum can be established, but the councillor who was disconnected will not be able to vote on the matter under discussion as they would not have heard all the evidence.

25. If the provision of access through remote means cannot be restored within a reasonable period, the Chair may adjourn the meeting or close the meeting and defer the remaining business to the next appropriate meeting.

26. If the Chair has technical issues and cannot take part in the meeting, the Vice-Chair or another councillor may take over the chair to allow the virtual meeting to proceed.

Consideration of agenda items, the debate and decision-making

27. During the meeting, each participant must specify their name to introduce themselves at the start of every contribution, unless they have been introduced by the Chair. This is particularly important for audio-only meetings or when video cameras are switched off.

28. The Chair will ask councillors if they have any interests to declare. Any councillor who declares a disclosable pecuniary interest in an item of business must not participate in the debate or voting and must leave the virtual meeting for that item.

29. With the exception of the Planning Committee to which this paragraph does not apply, the Chair will in turn invite each member of the public who has been invited to speak to address the meeting. The meeting may ask the members of the public questions of clarification only. The Chair or officer will refer the meeting to any written statements submitted.

30. The Chair will ask the relevant officer/Cabinet member to present their agenda item/report. Councillors may raise questions of clarification to the officer/Cabinet member.

31. Councillors or officers will indicate their wish to speak by the method agreed by the Chair, such as by raising their hand when video is available or by using the Chat facility.

32. Participants may unmute their audio and turn on their video when invited by the Chair to speak or to indicate their wish to speak. Participants shall address the Chair at all times, and not one another. Participants are not required to stand when speaking. Only one person may speak at a time.

33. Participants should turn off their video and mute their sound when not talking to the meeting.

34. The virtual meeting Chat facility must not be used for private or political conversations and does not constitute any part of the meeting's debate.

35. The Chair will determine the order of those speaking and may limit the length and content of speeches.

36. The Chair may ask councillors or officers to specify the relevant agenda page number and paragraph number when raising a particular point covered in the agenda. This allows others to follow the debate.

37. The Chair may ask the meeting as a whole or each councillor in turn for any further comments before completing the debate on that agenda item. If the meeting is in general agreement with a proposal, a vote need not be taken. Normal rules in the Constitution on proposing motions and amendments apply to allow votes to be taken where necessary.

38. If a vote is required, the Chair or the democratic services officer will ask each councillor in turn, alphabetically, to verbally announce whether they are voting in favour or against a motion or abstaining. The voting results will be declared by the democratic services officer and the decision will be confirmed by the Chair. A recorded or named vote will not be kept unless such a request was made prior to the vote.

39. In the case of virtual meetings considering planning applications and licensing panel hearings, councillors may be required to confirm that they have heard all of the discussion and indicate their vote.

Exclusion of the public and press

40. In the case of confidential/exempt business, councillors and relevant officers will be sent a separate link to a virtual, confidential meeting session that will follow the public meeting (after a short break). This virtual, confidential meeting session will not be accessible to the public.

41. If during a public debate, a meeting needs to move into confidential discussion to receive some confidential or exempt information before making a decision in public, the public debate will be deferred until the item can be discussed in confidential session. The final decision will either be taken in public at the next appropriate meeting, in confidential session and published after the meeting, or by individual Cabinet member decision or officer key decision as appropriate.

42. In confidential/exempt session, each councillor and officer present must ensure that no other person can hear or see the virtual meeting.

43. Councillors must ensure they do not share confidential or exempt content in the video feed.

Closing the meeting

44. The Chair will close the meeting. All participants must leave the virtual meeting quickly and quietly. Any subsequent discussion will not form part of the meeting, nor be recorded in the minutes.

Chair's discretion

45. The Chair shall exercise discretion on how the virtual meeting is conducted and may waive any of these virtual meeting procedure rules. The Chair's ruling on any procedure shall be final.

Agenda Item 5

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Oxfordshire Growth Board

OXFORDSHIRE

GROWTH BOARD

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH 2020 AT 2.00 PM
FOUNTAIN CONFERENCE CENTRE, HOWBERY PARK, WALLINGFORD, OXFORDSHIRE OX10 8BA

Present:

Councillor Sue Cooper, (Chair), (South Oxfordshire District Council),
Councillor Susan Brown, (Oxford City Council), Councillor Ian Hudspeth, (Oxfordshire County Council), Councillor James Mills, (West Oxfordshire District Council),
Councillor Barry Wood, (Cherwell District Council), Professor Alistair Fitt, (Universities' representative), Adrian Lockwood, (OxLEP Vice-Chairman), Catherine Turner, (Homes England), Councillor Emily Smith, (Vale of White Horse District Council),
Peter Nolan, (OxLEP business representative - Oxford City), Emma Hill (Environment Agency) and Dr Kiren Collison, (Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group).

Officers: Kevin Jacob (Oxfordshire Growth Board), Caroline Green (Oxford City Council), Bev Hindle (Oxfordshire Growth Board), Giles Hughes (West Oxfordshire District Council), Gordon Mitchell (Oxford City Council Chief Executive), Yvonne Rees (Cherwell District Council and Oxfordshire County Council CEX), Mark Stone (South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils CEX), Susan Harbour (South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Councils) and Stefan Robinson (Oxfordshire Growth Board)

Other councillors: Councillor Andrew Gant, (Oxford City Council and Chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board Scrutiny Panel.

51   Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Angus Horner, (OxLEP Business Rep – Science Vale), Jeremey Long, (OxLEP Chair), Miranda Markham, (OxLEP Business Rep – Bicester), and Louise Pattern, (Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group) who was substituted by Dr Kiren Collison).

The Chair informed the Board that Louise Patten, Chief Executive of Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, was to leave her role at the end of that week. She expressed the Board's gratitude for her contribution to their work and wished her well for the future. The Chair welcomed the new representative of the Clinical Commissioning Group, Dr Kiren Collison (Clinical Chair of the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group), to the meeting.

52   Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

53 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2020 be signed as a correct record.

54 Chairman's announcements

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. She explained that the Growth Board met as a collaboration of local council leaders, along with key stakeholders across Oxfordshire, to plan for and manage growth (and its impacts) to the maximum benefit of current and future residents.

The Chair explained that the meeting would focus upon two major issues:

1. the Board's role overseeing the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal; and
2. a report on how new and existing homes might be developed and adapted to take account of zero carbon ambitions.

Following the previous meeting, the Chair had written to the Secretary of State for Transport seeking clarification on the future of the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. Subsequently, she had received a reply from the Minister of Roads, Buses and Places which indicated that an update on the future of the project would be provided in due course. Copies of both letters were available on the agenda webpage.

55 Public participation

The Growth Board received one public question and one public address.

1.   Julia Benning on behalf of Need Not Greed Oxfordshire, submitted a question to be asked in her absence. It welcomed the papers on Zero Carbon Housing and drew the Board's attention West Midlands Combined Authority's setting of a localised definition of affordable housing. The question went on to refer to the Housing and Growth Deal Progress report and the establishment of a series of informal steering and working groups to oversee specialist workstreams associated with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

The Growth Board was asked to provide answers to the following questions:

a)   Which steering/working groups had been established?

b)   Who the members were and how they have been selected?

c)   What are the Terms of Reference for these groups and in turn what brief have they given to consultants?

d)   How this work was being reported to local authority members and/or the public?

e)   How the environment was being taken into account?

f)   What consideration, if any, was being given to a localised definition of affordable housing?

The Chair indicated that, given the technical nature of the questions, officers would be asked to provide a written response – this would also be published online.

2.   Professor Richard Harding on behalf of Oxfordshire Friends of the Earth, addressed the Board on the Zero Carbon Housing Report and wider zero carbon issues. Oxfordshire Friends of the Earth had established a working party on the provision of zero carbon housing which was now liaising with a range of public and private sector providers.

To achieve the target of a 1.5° reduction in global temperature, Professor Harding stated that emissions needed to be cut by 50% within the next ten years and to zero by 2050. A quarter of Oxfordshire's emissions currently come from housing and this, alongside emissions from the construction process, would need to be drastically reduced.

In order to achieve the ambition of cutting emissions to zero by 2050, every new and existing home would need to be retrofitted with zero carbon technologies – an expensive process. It would, therefore, be far easier and cheaper to build zero carbon homes (as indicated by the UK Committee on Climate Change). The technologies already exist to make this change and would result in better quality housing. Further, as more homes were built, economies of scale would help to reduce costs – potentially making zero carbon housing cheaper than more traditional methods of construction.

Professor Harding suggested to the Board that each district should advance and promote at least one development in their respective areas that was zero carbon (in both construction and running). Moreover, each local authority should commit to making all new housing zero carbon by 2025. To help achieve this, the Growth Board and the councils needed to further engage with OxLEP to improve skills. There also needed to be a significant improvement in the enforcement of existing building standards requirements.

56   Growth Board Scrutiny Panel update

The Growth Board welcomed Councillor Gant Chair of the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel, to the meeting.

Councillor Gant reported on the outcomes of the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 4 March 2020. He thanked Councillor Wood for appearing and expressed his gratitude to the officers who had attended and supported the meeting. The Panel had received a representation from CPRE reiterating their concerns regarding engagement in the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 process and the role and scrutiny of influencers. They also received a question from Need Not Greed Oxfordshire raising similar queries to that submitted to the Growth Board.

The main themes arising from the Panel (as set out in its written report) included:

- Oxford to Cambridge Arc – the Panel highlighted the importance of environmental principles in the Oxford to Cambridge Arc and its emerging governance structure. The Panel recommended that the Board champion the natural environment in planning for expected growth (as set out in the Arc's Joint Declaration) and that any governance arrangements should only include elected councillor representation.
- Zero Carbon Housing - the Panel recommended that the Growth Board champion the introduction of incremental zero carbon targets by HM Government. The Panel had discussed the need to be clear what was meant by zero carbon housing – in their view, it also included construction omissions and issues around the setting of building

standards. Further recommendations around zero carbon housing related to the need for more accessible mortgage products for homes built with modern methods of construction.

- Housing and Growth Deal Progress – the Panel had been concerned around the deliverability of the programme by its end date. They felt that a reflective paper on performance to date, risks and mitigations would be helpful.
- Oxfordshire Plan 2050 – the Panel recommended that formal confirmation be sought of HM Government's agreement to the requested extension of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 timeline.

The Chair thanked Councillor Gant for this report and the Panel's recommendations. She indicated that the Board's full written response would be sent in due course – it would also be made available online.

57   Quarter 3 Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal Progress Report and Financial Summary

The Growth Board considered a report setting out progress on the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal as of Quarter Three of Year 2 (2019/20). It also laid out details of the Quarter Three financial position.

Bev Hindle, Growth Board Director, commented that improvements had been made to the report. He highlighted that while good progress was being made, delivery of the Deal remained difficult.

Across the Deal's programmes, there was a level of variation in delivery. Therefore, work was now being undertaken with HM Government in order to further improve performance.

As part of the annual review process, talks would be held with HM Government around the reality of the current timelines – these discussions would include the possibility of extending Deal timelines for the programmes within it. It was felt that this could be consistent with HM Government's overall thinking around devolution and finance. Further information would be provided on possible mitigations and changes in due course.

RESOLVED: That the Growth Board notes the progress at Quarter 3, 2019/2020 towards the Housing and Growth Deal and notes the interim financial report at Annex 1.

58   Oxfordshire Plan 2050 sub-group update

The Growth Board received the notes of the Oxford Plan 2050 Sub-Group held on 13 February 2020.

Councillor Mills drew attention to the discussion by the Sub-Group regarding the challenge posed by applying the same planning tests for both joint spatial and local plans. Feedback, from the examination of the West of England Joint Spatial Plan, indicated that the inspection requirements for local plans were not suited to the purpose of a joint spatial plan.

In addition, joint working around cycling infrastructure (including the Greenways initiative) had been debated. This tied into consideration of:

- The first and last mile of journeys.

- Connectivity to transport networks
- The Local Transport and Connectivity Plan currently being drafted by the County Council.

The work regarding clean growth, currently being undertaken by OxLEP, should also assume increasing importance. The technical/scientific skills and experience to meet the challenges of clean growth already existed within Oxfordshire.

In discussion, members of the Board welcomed the focus on cycling across the whole of the county. This potentially provided an additional opportunity to link with the work being undertaken by the Health and Wellbeing Board around healthy place and spatial planning. It was felt that it was part of the role of the Growth Board to oversee the different points of works.

In respect of the evidence base requirements for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, Giles Hughes, West Oxfordshire District Council Chief Executive suggested engaging with HM Government to obtain greater guidance. Currently, planning inspectors had to apply the same procedures for both spatial and local plans despite the differences between them.

RESOLVED: That officers be requested to contact relevant officials within HM Government to seek to influence its position on strategic planning – including the process for examination of the evidence base for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

59 Zero Carbon Housing

The Growth Board considered a report summarising the emerging best practice and challenges around both the provision of zero carbon housing and the retrofitting of the existing housing stock. It set out a series of draft recommendations detailing how the Board could support this agenda. In presenting the report, Caroline Green (Assistant Chief Executive, Oxford City Council) highlighted the following key points:

- The Growth Board's Housing Advisory Sub-Group had contributed to the identification of areas of best practice in relation to the zero-carbon agenda – in addition to the challenges it poses for local authorities.
- The decarbonisation of housing was a significant challenge – bold and decisive action would be required at both a local and national level. As HM Government was expected to provide additional policy direction on this matter, it was considered timely for the Board to be discussing what actions it could take to support the decarbonisation of housing.
- The focus of the report was on the challenges and opportunities presented by moving to zero carbon housing. While the retrofitting of existing stock would be a huge undertaking, ensuring that all new homes were zero carbon could significantly reduce the cost of future remedial work.
- Oxfordshire had the opportunity to make a significant contribution to zero carbon housing (including as part of the wider Oxford to Cambridge Arc). Within the county, there were already numerous examples that could provide invaluable lessons going forwards.
- An appreciable shift in current policy and practice would be required to address some of the existing system-wide challenges and barriers to zero carbon housing. Local authorities would also have to consider how to balance the move towards zero carbon alongside their other obligations.

- While zero carbon housing currently had higher upfront costs, these were offset by lower running expenses. The challenge was, therefore, to provide an incentive for landlords (private and public sector) to decarbonise.
- The supply of energy, and the relationship between housing and the overall energy strategy, needed to be reviewed.
- Public awareness around zero carbon housing needed to be significantly improved.

Members of the Growth Board welcomed the report and in discussion raised the following points:

- It was important to act in a timely manner - every new house that was not zero carbon was undesirable.
- Public awareness would be crucially important
- Developer contributions were an area that might be explored in the context of reducing the barrier of higher upfront costs e.g. a potential zero Community Infrastructure Levy rating for zero carbon homes.
- Greater consideration needed to be given to OxLEP's work around clean growth.
- There was a lack of incentives for mass markets conventional builders to switch to zero carbon housing provision. HM Government should be lobbied to address this e.g. through reform of building regulations. While it was expected that the proposed Future Homes Standard would address some of these issues, there were concerns that this would not go far enough. Further, the creation of a national standard might also remove local authorities' ability to set more stringent targets.
- There needed to be a genuine choice for consumers between conventionally built houses and zero carbon. It had to be recognised that, given the higher upfront costs of zero carbon, there was currently no market incentive to buyers.
- The financial crash had led to the withdrawal of previous proposals to introduce higher standard building regulations. It was, therefore, important to note that HM Government's focus for the foreseeable future would be on the Covid-19 emergency – this would affect their capacity in responding to lobbying.
- It would be necessary to address skills shortages and capacity issues in the construction industry.
- Homes England did not set policy. Its role was to advise HM Government and deliver upon priorities with partners (including those in Oxfordshire). Homes England was currently working to promote and develop modern methods of construction as a requirement for land disposals.

RESOLVED: That Growth Board partners:
1. Make the case to Government for clear and ambitious national standards that set a long-term trajectory for minimum standards to 2050 accompanied by investment and incentives for local authorities and developers to move more quickly to higher standards.

2. Champion the exchange of good practice and guidance on sustainable and zero-carbon construction, to promote uptake and set local expectations.

3. Explore opportunities to scale up low carbon technologies through Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and work with Homes England and developers to develop a pipeline of sites for MMC.

4. Include higher energy efficiency and design standards as an objective of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 as the earliest opportunity to achieve weight in the planning

system and consider what can be done in advance of the Plan to set higher expectations of standards (for example through shared evidence base for local plans and guidance).

5. Make the case to Government for sustained incentives, investment guidance and support for local retrofit programmes for existing homes, including sustained employment and skills development incentives to boost capacity in the sector.

6. Support public facing campaigns that raise awareness of what households can do to reduce energy consumption in their own homes, the benefits of energy efficient homes and lifestyle adaptations to make them most effective.

60   Feedback from the Growth Board and Health & Wellbeing Board Networking Event

The Growth Board considered a statement from the Chair and Councillor Ian Hudspeth on the networking event held between members of the Growth Board and the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board.

It was felt that the event had been useful and had highlighted the importance of both organisations working together on issues such as the promotion of waling and cycling. It had also helped to highlight the impact of housing upon health as a key issue.

RESOLVED: That
1. Officers be requested to consider and propose a few specific priorities that should be the focus of joint working between members of both Boards for agreement at a future meeting of the Growth Board and of the Health & Wellbeing Board.

2. A second networking event be held in the autumn of 2020 between members of the Growth Board and members of the Health & Wellbeing Board to progress action in these identified areas.

61   Oxford to Cambridge Arc Update

Councillor Barry Wood, as Chair of the Arc Leaders' Group, and Bev Hindle, Growth Board Director, provided a verbal update. Key points included:

-   HM Government regards the Arc as a priority and, therefore, it was likely that the development of the programme would accelerate in the near future.
-   Two areas of activity for the Arc included, 1) future Arc governance arrangements with an expected allocation of power and responsibility by HM Government to Growth Boards and 2), that future Growth Board strategic planning frameworks should take account of other Growth Boards in a collaborative manner.
-   The Oxfordshire Growth Board was at the forefront of these arrangements and, therefore, provided an exemplar for others to follow.
-   While timescales had not yet been determined, including for future potential capital projects, it was important that Oxfordshire was ready to respond to any developments.
-   The Budget had identified the Arc as a key economic priority. A framework, setting out both a vision and context for the Arc, was to be developed and tested.
-   The Arc provided a conduit for Oxfordshire to have influence with HM Government.

- Public engagement was important to ensure that the role of the Arc was understood.

RESOLVED: That the update on the Oxford to Cambridge Arc be noted.

62   Growth Board Forward Plan

Stefan Robinson, Growth Board Manager, commented that the programme was updated and published on a monthly basis on the Board's website. He highlighted the expectation that reports would be brought forward to the next meeting on the Board's draft revised Terms of Reference and on the progression of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. He also stated that the Oxford to Cambridge Arc update would now become a regular item.

The Growth Board noted its forward programme as set out in the Agenda.

63   Updates on matters relevant to the Growth Board

No matters in addition to those set out in the Agenda were raised.

64   Dates of next meetings

The Growth Board noted the dates of future Board meetings as set out below. Meetings to be held in Didcot Civic Hall at 14:00.

- 2 June 2020 – subject to review in light of the Covid-19 emergency
- 22 September 2020
- 24 November 2020
- 26 January 2021
- 23 March 2021
- 8 June 2021

The meeting closed at 3.37 pm

Chairman   Date

OXFORDSHIRE
GROWTH BOARD

To:	**Oxfordshire Growth Board**
Title of Report:	**Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal**
Date:	**2 June 2020**
Report of:	**Bev Hindle, Growth Board Director**
Status:	**Open**

Executive Summary and Purpose:
The purpose of this report is to update the Growth Board on the early impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the delivery of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, including a recommendation to revise the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Timeline. Officers will continue to monitor impact, reporting to future Growth Board meetings any actions necessary to mitigate impact over time. This report will be considered by a virtual online meeting of the Growth Board as a result of the recommended social distancing measures.

Recommendations:
That the Growth Board:

1. Notes the early impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the delivery of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal, and in considering this;

2. Endorses a revised timeline for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, as set out in this report, for officers to take forward in discussion with MHCLG.

Introduction

1. As the first deal of its kind, the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal ('the Deal') was successful in securing £215m of Central Government investment to advance housing delivery and boost economic productivity in the area. Within the deal are four distinct workstreams.

2. The Homes from Infrastructure Programme (HfI) within the Deal is a £150m investment in infrastructure to support the acceleration of already planned housing in Oxfordshire over a five-year period from 2018/19 to 2022/23. The Infrastructure projects include road, rail, cycle routes and footpaths, as well as social infrastructure such as schools. Similarly, The Affordable Housing Programme is a £60 Million investment over three years to support the delivery of at least 1322 additional affordable homes, using a range of tenures including social rent, affordable rent, shared ownership by March 2021.

3. Through the Deal, the Oxfordshire authorities agreed to develop a county wide Strategic Development Plan, known as the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, to support a more coordinated approach to long term spatial planning across the County. This is supported by additional time limited planning freedoms and flexibilities for local authorities to protect against unplanned development.

4. The fourth workstream within the Deal is Productivity which sits alongside the other work streams, led by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP). At the centre of this work is an ambitious Local Industrial Strategy for Oxfordshire. It is the role of the Oxfordshire Growth Board to oversee and monitor delivery of the Deal and its workstreams.

5. The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on populations globally, nationally and locally. Each of the Oxfordshire Councils are investing significant resources into managing local response efforts. This report however focusses on the impact that the pandemic is having on local delivery against the Deal programme; specifically, the Housing delivery, Infrastructure, Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and Productivity workstreams.

6. It is critical to note that this report provides an update on the <u>early</u> impacts of the pandemic only, and secondly that the fast-changing nature of the situation may render many comments in this paper out of date soon after publication. Forthcoming quarterly progress reports will reflect on the impact of COVID-19 and the actions taken in response on an ongoing basis as necessary.

Impact of COVID-19 on the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and the Housing Market

7. Prior to the COVID crisis, a picture was emerging in Oxfordshire of a housing market delivery trajectory that was slipping due to issues such as local plan delays and the beginnings of weakening developer confidence in certain areas of the Oxfordshire housing market. Within that overall picture however those sites that were supported by the Housing and Growth Deal through infrastructure investment were generally maintaining their delivery trajectory, partly because the infrastructure investment supported developer confidence and because these sites are the ones with the most robust demand profile and could withstand market movements more robustly.

8. Nationally, it is estimated that around 75% of housing sites closed due to the COVID crisis.[1] In Oxfordshire, all the major sites halted production because of COVID-19 and are now returning to work (May 2020). However, there will be on-site working practice restrictions in place that are likely to mean full productivity will not be possible whilst staff and contractors adapt to this new working environment. Some of the smaller development sites in Oxfordshire did not close, but capacity was limited as contractors were isolating or ill.

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[1] Building.co.uk. 2019: Available at: https://www.building.co.uk/news/coronavirus-stops-work-at-75-of-uk-housing-schemes/5105579.article

9.   There is also an issue of supply chains drying up and putting workers onto the Furlough Scheme, affecting the ability to develop.[2] However, there is evidence that these firms are also returning to work. In April for example, a major brickmaker Mickelmersh announced they would be returning to work.

10.   Costs of construction will also be an issue affected by COVID-19. The market was already experiencing an increase in labour costs due to the effects of Brexit and this may well be compounded by the crisis. Coupled with the point made above that developers will not be able to run sites at full capacity due to the need for physical distancing, this will therefore impact upon the efficiency of sites and therefore costs.

11.   Because of the slowdown, councils can expect housing delivery trajectories, both Deal related and more generally to be impacted. At the time of writing this report however officers have yet to complete the revised delivery trajectories for either Housing from Infrastructure or the Affordable Housing Programme. The former is being completed by partners and is expected to be available from late June, whilst the latter is being completed to an agreed deadline of the end of May.

12.   Outside of the market slowdown, an added delay reported is the interruption to the planning process. Developers advise that where schemes are in feasibility stages work is progressing, but where either a consultation or decision point has been reached delays are inevitably occurring, although this is now reducing as an issue.

13.   Looking to the longer-term impact on the housing market outside of the Deal timeframe market intelligence from Savills suggests that the housing market could see a 50% dip in activity in this financial year with the sharpest dip being in the second quarter. This is important because of the strong link between market activity (demand) and house prices. Accordingly, Savills suggest that house prices could fall as much as 10%, although they conclude it is too early to say whether the market will then re-adjust, or this will be a longer-term reduction.

14.   Council partners will be aware of the government advice to councils to consider allowing SME developers to delay S106 commitments in a bid to support them through the crisis. For affordable housing this could take the form of either re-phasing or perhaps pressure to reduce the obligations, perhaps by remodelling or grant funding from government. This government advice has the potential to materially impact both the Deal and councils own affordable housing delivery trajectories as S106 accounted for 49% of all affordable housing delivered in 2018/19.

15.   Developers will be concerned about any trend of slowing market housing activity and in particular shared ownership sales, which is seen as a softer market and more prone to economic cycles. This is because often the shared ownership client is usually on a lower quartile income for home ownership and the concern is that some of the potential purchasers may have had to use their

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[2] Inside Housing, 2020. Available at: https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/news/housing-associations-warn-supply-chain-failures-caused-by-covid-19-could-hurt-development-plans-66156

deposit savings for other needs, whilst others may not be able to access mortgages now due to a change of employment situation.

16.   Developers have advised that the attitudes of banks will be central to their future performance as they rely upon loan funding for their development activities, funded from sale receipts. This is especially true if the sales market does not pick up as loan finance is often secured against built stock. There is for example already some evidence that finance against shared ownership is being temporarily stopped by some lenders

17.   In terms of the role of the Housing and Growth Deal, the Board will be aware that current Deal finance restricts expenditure to either infrastructure that accelerates planned housing or grant for additional affordable housing. Post COVID however there is perhaps a wider role for the Deal in enabling sites that have stalled to progress, thus accelerating housing that would otherwise have stalled. A discussion about this wider role for the Deal will be an ask of Government as we discuss how the Deal can aid recovery in the housing market.

18.   Within this overall housing development picture, the Housing and Growth Deal Affordable Housing Programme (OAHP) has inevitably slowed. The Board will be aware that the programme was experiencing challenges in the second year and these challenges have been exacerbated by the COVID crisis. The immediate impact was that a proportion of the schemes that were programmed to reach the relevant milestone to qualify for grant at the end of year two failed at the last minute as staff were off sick or contractors were not available. There were also several schemes where the COVID crisis led the Registered Provider of social housing (RP)concerned to reflect upon whether their development contract and the penalties it contained for exceeding costs or timescales is one they could sign up to.

19.   These last minute delays could have reduced the grant payment from government; fortunately it was agreed with MHCLG that all the schemes that had been programmed for year two would have the grant paid over to OCC as the accountable body and that grant then passed on to the relevant district council for payment to the RP when the payment milestone was achieved.

20.   Looking at the impact of the COVID crisis on the OAHP moving forward, feedback from RPs on the Oxfordshire affordable housing market is that they are typically building a 6-9-month delay into their initial revisions of development business plans (as of April 2020) but sense these could be optimistic assessments. RPs also expect pressure for contracts to be renegotiated to reflect expected increased costs, force majeure claims and a perceived inability to accept compensation clauses for delay.

21.   Whilst also being developers, and therefore subject to the pressures other developers face, RPs have a strong financial position due to their asset base and rental income to support that. They recognise that this position and their ability to access government grant means they can play a crucial role in housing market recovery. For example, by land purchase from developers as a recovery tool to ease developer cash flow. This could be just holding an option

on the land for developer buyback or it could be a tool for a greater intervention in the housing market with subsequent development by the RP.

22. There is also a potential role for the OAHP in driving recovery in the final years of the programme, for example by working with RPs and local authority development companies to:

- Assist with developer cash flow issues caused by slow market sales through the bulk purchase of units. These units would then be converted to affordable rented housing using OAHP grant. This is a proven method of assisting the market that was successful in the last housing market slump in 2009;

- Converting shared ownership properties to affordable or social rented housing using OAHP grant funding. At present this is not permitted by the OAHP but will be an ask of government as we discuss how the Deal can assist in the housing market recovery.

23. It is important that the potential of the OAHP to assist with housing recovery is maximised in the final year of the programme and officers are discussing with Homes England revised terms for the OAHP to enable that to happen. The OAHP will need to reflect the new Oxfordshire housing market in these discussions, for example by the potential to grant fund social rented housing at lower rents to address issues of affordability for local people that will be brought into sharper focus by any economic downturn.

The impact of COVID 19 on Infrastructure delivery in Oxfordshire

24. The unprecedented circumstances present a challenge at the time of writing to say with any certainty what the overall impact of COVID-19 will be on infrastructure delivery related to the Housing and Growth Deal. This programme is delivered through Oxfordshire County Council's Capital Delivery Programme and much of its infrastructure programme will be impacted in the same way. There is no precedent to help understand what the potential future impacts are, coupled with limited information available on when restrictions may end and the details of future working arrangements (as of May 2020). There are also major questions being asked of the need and demand for particular infrastructure projects planned before COVID-19 e.g. national push for more cycle infrastructure.

25. A more granular understanding of the impacts will be developed over the coming months. However, what is clear now is that staff are continuing to work but in a very different way. Where schemes are in design, work has continued where possible and the impact is not thought to be significant. Site visits are expected to have been impacted, and where surveys are required, it is expected that there will have been an impact on the programme, and some surveys being seasonal this could have a significant impact. Schemes in construction are also expected to be impacted by the pandemic owing to changes to methods of working and travel limitations.

26. Contractors and consultants have measures in place to deal with change, such as project continuity plans, and these are being adapted to tackle COVID-19.

The supply chain has been impacted, and their operational situation is under constant review as it is changing regularly. This is a similar challenge across other workstreams within the Housing and Growth Deal. There is a risk of supply shortages, interruptions and delays due to closed factories, logistics challenges, and some smaller suppliers may even be closed and no longer in business. There may also be an impact on the cost of materials, but this is still unclear. The need to mitigate health risks for onsite staff may further impact delivery programmes.

27. Officers will continue to review projects to determine what measures can be in place in preparation for a shift in our ways of working. Each scheme will require an updated risk analysis for active projects and ongoing monitoring of the situation. A further impact analysis will need to be undertaken, together with a project resourcing plan to be best placed for future working arrangements. This will also need to factor in compliance with new and changing government guidance on construction work safety standards.

28. The Housing & Growth Deal Infrastructure Programme will play a vital role in Oxfordshire's post COVID recovery, and officers are working with our HM Government partners to explore flexibilities to the terms of the Deal. This also provides an opportunity to reflect on what our priorities are.

The impact of COVID on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050

29. The partner councils are working collectively on a strategic, long term statutory Plan for Oxfordshire. The intention is that the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 will be a strategy-led Plan and an opportunity to be transformative, adding real value to the typical Local Plan approach. The Plan will look beyond current and emerging Local Plans and will identify the number of new homes, the level of economic growth, and related infrastructure that is needed across Oxfordshire to 2050. This will set the scene for a future round of Local Plans where the Local Planning Authorities will subsequently establish detailed planning policies and site allocations at a local level.

30. The recent focus of work by the Oxfordshire Plan team has been on:

   - building up the evidence base
   - stepping up member briefing
   - developing the spatial strategy and options for the Plan
   - planning for the launch of the Oxfordshire Open Thought exercise

31. Since the start of the Covid-19 restrictions, the Team has been working hard to assess the impact on the overall programme. Many of the consultants involved in developing the evidence base have reassured us that much of their work can continue as planned. We are working with them to ensure that work on the evidence base incorporates where appropriate consideration of the changing economic and social circumstances of the Covid-19 situation and any possible longer-term impacts of those.

32. There are some significant challenges with other aspects of the programme. In particular, the required officer and member meetings to approve emerging work

during the Summer, and a series of special Council meetings that were planned for September, will now likely be dominated by the Covid-19 response and recovery, limiting consideration of the Plan.

33.   There are also technical limitations when attempting to brief all district and county councillors and answer their questions on the project remotely; these would likely have less success than face-to-face briefings. In some areas, additional duties have been reprioritised in the short term to enable the Oxfordshire Plan and Growth Board Teams to support the Covid-19 response effort.

34.   Considering the unprecedented circumstances, it is recommended that the Growth Board requests from MHCLG a minimum seven-month extension to the current timeline we are working towards. This must be considered as a minimum extension as the full effects of COVID-19 are yet to be known. Two key changes in the revised programme for the next year would be to:

- Move the Regulation 18 (Part 2) consultation approval process through each council back from September 2020 to December 2020, adding 3 months and consequentially:

- Moving the Regulation 19 (Draft Plan consultation) back to September 2021.

35.   As was previously planned, a series of special Council meetings will need to be held in a co-ordinated way (preferably during the same week) which would now be held in December to approve the Regulation 18 (Part 2) consultation plans. This means the 6-week consultation would be launched in January 2021. This would have a knock-on impact on the subsequent Regulation 19 consultation, which would naturally move to after the May 2021 elections.

36.   By extending our timeline by the recommended seven months (measured by adoption date), this should ensure that there is still a window for early (through the Summer if restrictions allow, or the Autumn) face-to-face engagement opportunities with councillors. This timeframe would also allow more time for the non-statutory engagement work through the "Oxfordshire Open Thought" concept to gather public feedback to help inform discussions.

37.   Oxfordshire Open Thought will be an open online platform for people to have their say on the future of their county as part of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. It will tap into the wealth of knowledge and expertise within our communities to help find ideas and solutions to some of the big issues that affect our lives and the environment over the coming decades. This is a new initiative that won't replace previous consultations and responses.

38.   The extension would allow more time to shape the strategy and consultation document with the Oxfordshire Plan Advisory Sub-group. This group continues to meet virtually every month. A recommended revised timeline for the development of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 is set out below which incorporates the impact of the circumstances set out in this report.

Oxfordshire Plan Stage	Growth Board Sep 2019 Milestones	Proposed Milestones
Further engagement (Oxfordshire Thought)	Nov/Dec 19	May 20 & Sept 20
Consultation on spatial options (scale and broad locations) (Reg18 part2)	June/July 20	Jan 21
Consultation on Draft Plan (Reg 19)	Nov/Dec 20	Sept 21
Submission	March 21	Jan 22
Examination	June-Sept 21	Apr 22
Inspector's Report	December 21	July 22
Adoption	March 22	Oct 22

39. The extra time granted through the recommended timeline would allow us to take greater account of the long-term spatial framework that is being developed to support strategic planning across the Arc. This is a real opportunity to better align our work with wider sub-regional ambitions and feed into that process, and we will have more time to develop that conversation with Government. Some flexibility in the programme to allow for a greater level of engagement and opportunity for consensus building and briefing will result in a better plan, shaped by a wide variety of voices; and a stronger case to made to the Planning Inspector who will examine it.

40. Production of the Oxfordshire Plan will mean the development of a sound long-term strategy for the future of the county. This will be even more important post Covid-19; a clear strategy with consensus across the partnership can provide clarity and leadership for the community, and greater certainty for the market and service providers which will help with business planning.

Productivity

41. Productivity is an integral component of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and sits alongside the other work streams, led by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP). The headline commitment under the Productivity workstream invited Oxfordshire to be one of three 'Trailblazer' areas to take forward the ambitions set out by Government in its Industrial Strategy White Paper. This is in the form of an ambitious and transformational, long term *Local Industrial Strategy (LIS),* and involved close working with Whitehall departments in the development of the Strategy. Following a review meeting during Year One of the Deal with the Government's Cities and Local Growth Unit, officials proposed that the focus for all elements of the productivity stream moving forward needed to be built around the LIS. The productivity workstream does not have a specific funding allocation within the Deal.

42. Between November 2019 and March 2020, work has progressed in translating the ambitions set out in the LIS and across the 25 policy areas detailed in the Strategy, into a coherent programme of delivery which can attract the necessary investment from Government and the public and private sectors to realise the vision for Oxfordshire to be a top three global innovation ecosystem. The Investment Plan is over a medium-term horizon and anticipates a mixture of proposals which can be developed and ready for investment in the first 1-3

years of the LIS strategy. This also includes a mixture of medium to longer term projects which will have a 10-year runway to be fully developed out but will require critical work being undertaken in the first 12-24 months of the Strategy in order to be moved forward at pace. A wider range of engagement activities are being deployed to shape the plan and assess areas of common interest across the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.

43. In light of the pandemic, the LIS Steering Group has considered the potential economic impact of the virus on the emerging investment programme. The past months (up to May 2020) have shown the remarkable world leading capability of the region's innovation ecosystem with Oxfordshire academics, research organisations and businesses consistently being at the vanguard of national and international efforts to respond to the emergency. It is important to recognise that this leadership role in the UK economy will become even more clear as we move from the respond and recover stages, and into rebuild and renew.

44. The guiding principles of the LIS are an important reference point for this process and continue to be highly relevant in a post-COVID environment:

   a) **Invest in Oxfordshire, deliver for the UK:** As one of three net contributors to the exchequer, Oxfordshire will deliver economic growth and manufacturing and supply chain opportunities for the rest of the UK.

   b) **Oxfordshire – The UK's Innovation Engine:** Oxfordshire has a world-class innovation ecosystem with a concentration of global assets and strengths unrivalled by anywhere else in the UK. This, along with our strengths in research and talented workforce, make Oxfordshire a great place to invest and drive R&D and innovation in new technologies, markets, products and services.

   c) **Global Oxfordshire, Global Britain:** Many of Oxfordshire's industries already compete on a global level, and in new emerging markets. Investing in Oxfordshire will support us in our international potential and winning new market share in technologies of the future.

45. Each project sponsor under the Investment Plan is reviewing the current status of their respective business case to consider and adjust their proposals in light of COVID-19 and identify both the economic risks but also the market opportunities which could be harnessed. This is particularly illustrated by projects which are focused around the health and life sciences sectors and energy and zero carbon. OxLEP are also looking at those projects which would be accelerated in their development considering the impact it can have for areas of the economy which have been impacted disproportionately by the pandemic such as the creative and cultural industries.

46. The LIS Investment Plan will sit alongside an expected Oxfordshire Economic Recovery Plan (ERP), whose focus will likely be about short-term measures to stabilise the economy and interventions to stimulate economic activity. These will be necessarily complementing the detailed programme coming through the LIS investment Plan and be prepared through the Joint Oxfordshire Business

Support Group (JOBS), which is a bronze level cell feeding into the established Silver and Gold structures already in place for the County.

47. Based on the market intelligence that has been gathered since the pandemic started, there are reasonably three broad areas of ERP interventions that can be progressed: financial capital support; business support, restructuring and market development; and labour market support to help people back into work. These measures will need to be aligned to, and avoid duplicating, interventions already put in place by Government.

Conclusion

48. This report provides a high-level overview of the early impacts that the Covid-19 pandemic is having on the Housing and Growth Deal. It is expected that the impacts will continue and expand as we start to see what the pace of recovery will look like. We will continue to monitor our programme closely as well as develop actions and strategies to help address the impacts as they emerge and become better understood. We expect to bring forward to the next Growth Board a further assessment of impact and a detailed update on the mitigation strategies we have or would wish to employ. Some of these measures would have been needed pre-COVID-19 to address some of the market and deal issues we were already facing.

49. Notwithstanding the relative short-term shut down of local development sites, and the wider economic restrictions, the impact will be considerable across all workstreams within the Deal. Learning from this pandemic, and adapting our ways of working, will be critical to ensuring that Oxfordshire partners are best positioned to support an effective recovery. Officers supporting the Housing and Growth Deal across the various programmes have adapted their ways of working from the start of this crisis to ensure that where possible, business continues as normal, notwithstanding the market impacts that the pandemic has had on site delivery.

50. Discussions with Homes England over the possibility of adjusting the parameters of the Housing and Growth Deal to use it as a tool for recovery have commenced and officers are working closely with OxLEP to ensure that there is a consistent and robust Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire, of which the Housing and Growth Deal programme can play a major part. An initial contact has also been made with MHCLG to alert them to the potential impacts on the various workstreams of the Deal.

51. It will be important going forward for the Deal to take account of the new policy landscape and economic context. Delays caused across the various programmes provide an opportunity to re-evaluate priorities and milestones within the Deal, informed by the local and national recovery response. Flexibility to adapt delivery ambitions and working arrangements to match shifts in policy will be crucial in ensuring the Deal can continue to deliver for local people.

52. The Growth Board is asked to note the current impact the pandemic has had on the Housing and Growth Deal workstreams, and to endorse the revised timeline for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, as set out in this report, for officers to take forward in discussion with MHCLG.

Background Papers

53. None

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OXFORDSHIRE

GROWTH BOARD

To:	**Oxfordshire Growth Board**
Title of Report:	**Updating the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS)**
Date:	**02 June 2020**
Report of:	**James Gagg, Infrastructure Strategy Team Leader, on behalf of Sue Halliwell, Director of Planning and Place**
Status:	**Open**

Executive Summary and Purpose:

To update the Growth Board on the planning for the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) Update and outline next steps for delivery to align with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 timescales.

Recommendation(s):

1. That the Oxfordshire Growth Board endorse the attached outline project brief and scope of work for the OxIS update, in line with the current commitment to update OxIS in the Oxfordshire Growth Deal.

Annex:

1) Outline Project Brief and Scope of Work for OxIS Update.

Background and update on scoping of the OxIS update

1. The original Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) was approved by the Oxfordshire Growth Board in Autumn 2017. The strategy built on an extensive evidence base review to set out the core projects and investment seen as required to support the sustainable growth of Oxfordshire. It identified and prioritised infrastructure across a range of sectors to support known local plan housing and employment development and outlined where funding was required to help deliver this growth. OxIS has been an important piece of work to support development of subsequent funding bids and agreements, helping to secure funding for schemes through the Housing & Infrastructure Fund (HIF) and the Growth Deal.

2. As part of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal agreed in 2018, there is a commitment to update the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS), recognising that this would give an opportunity to review and update the scope of required strategic infrastructure needed to support planned growth. In particular, updating OxIS aligns to the requirements of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 by providing an up to date infrastructure picture that complements the agreed growth trajectory and direction of the Plan, taking into account the latest policy and funding picture.

3. An outline project brief and scope of work for the OxIS update is attached as **Annex 1**. This outlines the proposed objectives, purpose, governance and outputs for the OxIS update.

4. As part of the brief it is proposed that the OxIS update is carried out in two stages with Stage 1 delivered by December 2020 to support the Reg 18 Oxfordshire Plan consultation, and Stage 2 delivered in Spring/Summer 2021 to support the Reg 19 Oxfordshire Plan consultation. This will allow for OxIS and the Oxfordshire Plan to develop iteratively with increased transparency and integration.

Next Steps

5. Following the endorsement of the outline project brief, the next key planned milestones for the project are given in the table below.

Milestone	Deadline
Consultancy brief drafted and agreed	**June 2020**
Procurement of consultants	**July 2020**
Commencement of Stage 1	**August 2020**
Draft Stage 1 completion	**December 2020**
Draft Stage 1 engagement	**January 2021**
Stage 1 endorsement	**Spring 2021**
Stage 2	**Spring/ Summer 2021** to align with the Reg 19 consultation.

6. Progress of OxIS will have the oversight of the Executive Officer Group of the Growth Board, supported and monitored by a cross-authority steering group.

Financial Implications

7. To complete the OxIS update there will be a need for engagement of consultants to undertake the technical work. This will be funded via the Growth Deal Capacity Fund. The cost of the original OXIS was approximately £130k, however it is expected that the cost is likely to be slightly less this time.

Legal Implications

8. Any consultancy work can be procured by Oxfordshire County Council on behalf of the Growth Board partners, and therefore relevant contract procedure rules would be followed.

Other Implications

9. Development of OxIS will need to be undertaken in consideration of wider policy and strategy developed or in the process of development by Growth Board partners. This includes the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy, the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, Local Plans and their associated evidence base including Infrastructure Delivery Plans, and Plans for Climate Action.

Conclusion

10. There is a commitment to update OXIS, but this needs to be done in a way that matches Growth Board partner expectations, and fits with other Growth Deal priorities and timescales, particularly the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. The Growth Board's endorsement of OxIS's outline project brief and scope will demonstrate its continued commitment to the Housing and Growth Deal.

Report Author:	James Gagg, Infrastructure Strategy Team Leader, on behalf of **Sue Halliwell, Director of Planning and Place**
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**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

Annex 1:

Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) Update: Outline Project Brief & Scope of Work

May 2020

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OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

1 Background

1.1 The original Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy (OxIS) was approved by Oxfordshire Growth Board in Autumn 2017 and examined required infrastructure across a number of sectors to support known local plan development. It included many of the schemes which have subsequently been promoted through the Housing & Infrastructure Fund (HIF) and those which now have Growth Deal funding which are predominately transport schemes.

1.2 Oxfordshire has strong transport links along the Bristol-Birmingham-London corridors and enjoys close proximity to Heathrow and Birmingham airports. The county is committed to improving links across the Oxford-Cambridge Arc with the development of the East-West Rail scheme. However, a growing economy and population is putting strain on rail and road infrastructure, as well as the energy sector. Housing also faces rising demand and affordability pressures. In order for Oxfordshire to deliver on the vision to be a world-leading innovation ecosystem, it must continue to work with government to develop resilient infrastructure that can respond to future demands and is sustainable for the environment. The current COVID-19 Pandemic has also underlined the importance of having sufficient capacity and resilient infrastructure for Digital Connectivity and the Energy sector.

1.3 As part of the Housing and Growth Deal there is a commitment to update OxIS, and it is intended that this is carried out alongside development of the Oxfordshire Plan, another key commitment of the Oxfordshire Growth Deal.

1.4 It is intended for the OxIS update to be a Growth Board led commission that all Oxfordshire Local Authorities will collaborate on. Oxfordshire County Council have committed project management resource to take forward development and delivery of the OXIS update, but it is important that all partners jointly inform the desired objectives and process.

2 Objectives

2.1 The objectives for the OXIS update have been defined as:-

1) To set out the priority strategic infrastructure investment needed to support sustainable, clean and inclusive growth in Oxfordshire, aligning to the emerging Growth Board themes of: -

- **Environment** | To maximise opportunities to build long lasting resilience to climate change, creating sustainable communities by providing good access to employment, housing, open space, transport, education, services and facilities to meet community needs and that address the climate emergency and support our zero-carbon ambition.
- **Health** | To improve health and wellbeing by enabling independence, encouraging active and healthy lifestyles, facilitating social interaction and creating inclusive and safe communities.
- **Placemaking** | Provide a quality environment and choice of homes needed to support growth and capitalise upon the exceptional quality of life, vibrant economy and the dynamic urban and rural communities of our county.
- **Productivity** | Deliver and attract specialist and flexible skills at all levels, across all sectors, as required by our businesses, with full, inclusive employment and

fulfilling jobs. To encourage innovation led growth, underpinned by Oxfordshire's strengths in University research and development, business collaboration and supply chain potential.

- **Connectivity** | Enable greater connectivity and accessibility especially across key growth locations, ensuring communities are digitally connected and innovative technologies are supported.

2) To continue to shape & influence investment strategies at a national, sub-regional and local level, maximising the efficiency and effectiveness of existing infrastructure reducing the demand for new infrastructure.

3) To plan for infrastructure over a longer time horizon to complement and provide an evidence base that supports the emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

3   Purpose

3.1   The purpose of OXIS is to: -

1) Provide a strategic framework and mechanism for Oxfordshire Local Authorities to identify and prioritise infrastructure investment priorities.

2) Capture the quantum of strategic infrastructure required across Oxfordshire to 2050.

3) Identify delivery mechanisms from both the public and private sectors, including collaborative opportunities.

4   Benefits

4.1   The expected benefits of the OxIS update are similar to the original OxIS and are set out as follows:-

- Prioritise the delivery of different types of strategic infrastructure;
- Maximise the use of available infrastructure capacity;
- Make better informed choices about the location of future growth;
- Aligning infrastructure delivery with the timetable of growth and the strategic planning work across Oxfordshire;
- Better position Oxfordshire in funding and investment discussions with government;
- Clear and compelling evidence to improve the quality and content of bids for external funding;
- Inform and enhance strategic developer funding negotiations;
- Facilitate dialogue with communities, developers and key stakeholders on the needs, benefits and opportunities arising from growth.
- Demonstrate the attractiveness of Oxfordshire as a business investment location;
- Sell the Oxfordshire 'brand' within the wider sub-national, national and international contexts, including supporting development of the OxCam Arc ambitions;

5 Governance and Project Management

5.1 The Project will be commissioned and owned by the Oxfordshire Growth Board, which meets quarterly and facilitates cross-authority buy-in and engagement from key partners – including the LEP, Environment Agency, and Homes England.

5.2 The Growth Board are currently refreshing their Terms of Reference with the final revised version planned to be considered at the Growth Board meeting in September 2020. The OxIS update will need to reflect the Growth Board's updated Terms of Reference.

5.3 It is proposed that Oxfordshire County Council will project manage the update of OxIS, on behalf of the Oxfordshire Growth Board, with consultants engaged to undertake the technical work required.

5.4 Progress of the OxIS update will have Executive Officer Group (EOG) oversight, supported and monitored by a cross-authority steering group. Regular updates would also be given to members of the Growth Board Infrastructure sub-group.

5.5 Oxfordshire County Council is proposed to act as lead authority in terms of consultant procurement and contract / project management. Consultants would work closely with the Project Group, client Project Manager and lead officers, via a single point of contact.

6 Scope of work

6.1 Oxfordshire have identified specific resource to project manage the project on a day to day basis. However, consultants will need to be engaged to undertake the required technical work as they were for the original OxIS project.

6.2 OxIS should be prepared in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework and Guidance, helping to identify and co-ordinate planning of strategic infrastructure requirements.   However, it is recognised that the strategy should add value in relation to strategic priorities rather than duplicate District Council Infrastructure Delivery Plans (which are typically focused on more local infrastructure). It should consider best practice from elsewhere, including any similar strategic infrastructure plans which have been developed by other authorities in line with that proposed.

6.3 The project is proposed to be undertaken in two phases;

Stage 1 (to align with the reg18 Oxfordshire Plan consultation)

6.4 Refreshing and re-prioritising the existing infrastructure schemes to **2040** (including supporting data), in the light of successful HIF bids, new infrastructure requirements emerging through developing local plans and any change in scheme proposals emerging from updated policies and strategies e.g. Local Industrial Strategy, Water Resource Management Plans.

6.5 Alongside this we would re-examine and where relevant update the Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) used to inform the scheme prioritisation process and re-rank the revised infrastructure schemes. This would also allow us to refresh the methodology for agreeing the ranking of infrastructure and, involve partners on the steering group to ensure strategic infrastructure projects in each locality are included.

Stage 2 (to align with the reg19 Oxfordshire Plan consultation)

6.6   Concentrating on using the ranking methodology developed in the first stage, this will focus on identification and ranking of new strategic infrastructure requirements emerging from the growth options being progressed in the 2050 Plan, allowing for us to form a more comprehensive list of infrastructure requirements to 2050.

7   Stakeholder Engagement

7.1   We will engage with technical leads from a wide variety of stakeholders e.g. CCG, Utilities, Education, to ensure that we have the most up-to-date data set for OxIS, and that relevant policy and strategy is understood and reflected in the work.

7.2   Once the draft Stage 1 is produced, there will be an opportunity to undertake a wider engagement activity on outputs alongside the Regulation 18 consultation in January 2021. This will give an opportunity for interested parties to comment on draft outputs and these can be reviewed and taken into account prior to finalisation of the report in Spring 2021. Comments received can also be used to inform development of the Stage 2 work.

8   Outputs

8.1   It is expected that the refreshed OXIS will deliver the following outputs, which will become evidence base to support the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 at the next 2 stages of formal consultation: -

Stage 1 | 2020 – 2040

A Stage 1 report which will incorporate the following:

1) An updated strategy context, which will reflect wider new and emerging strategies such as the Local Industrial Strategy, Digital Strategy, Climate Action Plans.

2) An updated prioritised delivery plan, which takes account of committed and proposed development and sets out the existing/proposed/potential strategic infrastructure required to support it.

3) A clear, interactive map-based approach with supporting narrative – extending the map-based approach from the original OxIS and aligned to the emerging Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

4) A refreshed scoring matrix that is aligned to the emerging Growth Board themes of Environment, Health, Placemaking, Connectivity & Productivity, that supports the commitment to housing delivery outlined in the Growth Deal, and that reflects the relative importance of local and regional schemes and seeks to allow comparative ranking of a wider range of infrastructure requirements such as utilities, green infrastructure etc.

Stage 2 | 2040 - 2050

1) A Stage 2 report which takes into account feedback received through the Stage 1 engagement to provide a structured and prioritised long-term infrastructure investment approach, which also acts as meaningful evidence base to support the Reg 19 Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and directly supports and enables projected growth outcomes up to 2050.

9   Interdependencies

9.1   Stage 1 of OxIS will support the next phase of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 reg 18 consultation (strategic development options). This is currently scheduled for January 2021. On this basis it is assumed that the Stage 1 OxIS update would need to take place over a 6 month period for delivery by December 2020. It will also help in supporting co-ordination of infrastructure planning for development identified in current and emerging local plans across Oxfordshire. It is intended that Stage 2 of OxIS will support the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 reg 19 consultation planned for later in 2021.

9.2   OxIS does not necessarily need to coincide with the consultation on the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) currently expected in early 2021, but the two projects would need to be consistent and inform each other.

10   Budget and Resources

10.1   A project budget ceiling of £130,000 has been set to fund the consultants to undertake the technical work. This will be funded via the Growth Deal Capacity Fund.

11   Milestones

11.1   A detailed project plan will be agreed once the outline project brief has been agreed. On the assumption that a consultant would be appointed, an indicative project timetable is outlined below, with Stage 1 completed by December 2020 and Stage 2 to be carried out to align with the reg 19 Oxfordshire Plan 2050 consultation.

Milestone	Deadline
Consultancy brief drafted and agreed	**June 2020**
Procurement of consultants	**July 2020**
Commencement of Stage 1	**August 2020**
Draft Stage 1 completion	**December 2020**
Stage 1 endorsement	**Spring 2021**
Stage 2	**Spring/Summer 2021** to align with the Reg 19 consultation.

12   Risks

12.1   Covid-19 presents a unique situation for Oxfordshire, but we are not yet at a stage where we understand the wider impact of this across Oxfordshire the UK and globally. We will need to carefully monitor the situation as it unfolds and be alert to reflect any changes in OxIS as needed.

OXFORDSHIRE

G R O W T H B O A R D

Oxfordshire Growth Board Forward Plan
May 2020

The Forward Plan sets out all forthcoming issues scheduled for meetings of the Growth Board. The Plan will be updated and published on the Growth Board's website every month. Where matters for consideration are likely to require the disclosure of exempt information, and the exclusion of the press and public (pursuant to Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972) this will be made clear in the Forward Plan. Unless otherwise stated, all meetings will be held at Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot, OX17JN.

2 June 2020 (Virtual meeting – details can be found on the Growth Board website)			
Item	**Decision**	**Description**	**Contact**
Covid-19 Impact on Housing and Growth Deal Delivery	No	To receive an update on the impact the Covid-19 pandemic has, and will have, on the delivery of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. This includes recommended revisions to the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 timeline.	Bev Hindle, Growth Board Director
Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy Scope	No	To consider the scope and governance for updating the Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy in support of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.	John Disley, Oxfordshire County Council Infrastructure Strategy Manager

22 September 2020			
Item	**Decision**	**Description**	**Contact**
Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Update (TBC)	No	To update the Growth Board on emerging work being carried out to identify the policy options for the Plan.	Bev Hindle, Growth Board Director

Growth Board Review	No	To review and endorse revised draft terms of reference for the Growth Board, for subsequent approval by each constituent local authority. This builds on the work of the Growth Board Review which reported its findings on 28 January 2020.	Bev Hindle, Growth Board Director
Supporting Oxfordshire's Tourism and Visitor Economy	No	Oxfordshire's tourism and visitor economy is a critical component of the County's economy accounting for over 12% of all employment and contributing over £2.3billion per annum to the economy and attracts over 30million visitors per year across our county. The sector has been severely impacted by a combination of factors including flooding, BREXIT and now, most recently, the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency which is putting thousands of jobs and businesses at risk. The Growth Board will be invited to explore what measures Oxfordshire partners can introduce, with the support of the Government and industry, to sustain jobs and services in local communities and ensure effective recovery planning for this vital sector of our economy.	Ahmed Goga, OxLEP
Q4 Housing and Growth Deal Progress Report and Financial Summary	No	To receive the 2019/20 Quarter 4 progress report for the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and endorse any amendments to the programmes of work as necessary. Also, to receive the Quarter 4 financial summary for the Housing and Growth Deal. This report will include an update on the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the delivery of the Deal.	Bev Hindle, Growth Board Director
The Oxford to Cambridge Arc Update (TBC)	No	To receive any updates from the Growth Board Director in respect of regional developments within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.	Bev Hindle, Growth Board Director

24 November 2020			
Item	**Decision**	**Description**	**Contact**
Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Update (TBC)	No	To update the Growth Board on the options consultation document for public and stakeholder engagement and details of the planned consultation.	Bev Hindle, Growth Board Director
Growth Board and Health and Wellbeing Board joint work	No	The consider recommendations concerning joint working between the Growth Board and the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board.	Rosie Rowe, Health Place Shaping Lead

Oxfordshire Rail Connectivity Study: Stage 2 Outcome (TBC)	No	To consider progress and any outcomes from Stage 2 of the rail connectivity study.	John Disley, Oxfordshire County Council Infrastructure Strategy Manager
The Oxford to Cambridge Arc Update (TBC)	No	To receive any updates from the Growth Board Director in respect of regional developments within the Oxford to Cambridge Arc.	Bev Hindle, Growth Board Director