

Strategic Economic Plan – revised following public consultation

South Oxfordshire DC – responses to the points raised in the report to Cabinet 6 October 2016

LA	Comments and decision	Response
South Oxfordshire DC Cabinet – 6 October 2016	<p>It was RECOMMENDED to Council to endorse the decision of Cabinet to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome some of the changes made to the SEP which seek to make it ‘shorter and clearer’ and acknowledges that this has largely been achieved; • Support the broad thrust of the SEP in terms of the stated vision, identified SWOTs and proposed actions, and; • Believe the SEP would be more robust if it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More fully addressed the issues highlighted in the report (see below). - More clearly linked actions to identified issues, and confirmed where responsibility lies for implementing these various actions • Note that the Leader will take account of points raised at Council in responding to the consultation. <p>SODC Cabinet agreed that the revised draft of the SEP be subject to Council debate before the Leader submitted his formal response to the consultation.</p> <p>Report excerpts:</p> <p><i>SODC consider that the SEP would have been stronger if:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>More detail had been provided to indicate how the strategy intends to build</i> 	<p>We thank South Oxfordshire District Council for their considered response to the Strategic Economic Plan – Draft revised following public consultation.</p> <p>We have responded in turn to each of the points made by SODC.</p> <p>Overall the responses received indicate that we need to more clearly articulate what the SEP is for and how it should be used by businesses, communities and organisations to help meet their social, economic and environmental objectives.</p> <p>We will revisit each of the programme sections to</p>

	<p><i>on strengths, address weaknesses, exploit opportunities and responds to threats,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The proposed actions were more directly linked to the identified SWOTs</i> <i>A clear indication was provided of where the main responsibility lies for implementing those proposed actions, and</i> <i>The spatial dimension was articulated in more detail to provide a more county-wide perspective, rather than the current Oxford-centric perspective</i> <p><i>During the course of the SEP consultation process, South and Vale officers raised a number of issues relating to the draft version of the SEP document. Some of these have been addressed completely, some partially and some have been ignored. Additionally a number of further issues were highlighted during the discussion at Joint Scrutiny Committee. As a result, the proposed final version of the SEP does not address the following issues:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The need to produce a less Oxford-centric document and to see greater recognition of, and detail concerning, the R&D hubs of Culham, Harwell, Howbery</i> 	<p>ensure that the Priorities and Actions flow from the SWOT. The SEP is however a Strategic Document not a delivery plan and therefore does not focus on detail resulting in a 'shorter and clearer' document which SODC have clearly welcomed. Detail is included in the subordinate delivery plans/strategies.</p> <p>See above</p> <p>This information will be included in the SEP Monitoring and Impact Plan. As above, the SEP remains a strategic document shaping and positioning intervention.</p> <p>We will include other strategic spatial dimensions where it is appropriate to do so, i.e. the work on regenerating Berinsfield (with SODC input) and WODCs work on the regeneration of Carterton.</p> <p>All comments received during the consultation were considered carefully. None were 'ignored'. As with any consultation on a complex document, not all comments received can be accommodated or are appropriate to the exercise.</p> <p>We do not agree that the SEP is Oxford-centric. Harwell is mentioned 16 times throughout the document, Milton Park 6 times, Culham 13 times. Detailed delivery or implementation strategies sit</p>
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. <i>There are three identified hubs in Oxfordshire, Bicester, Oxford and Science Vale, however equal weight has not been given to these and the SEP fails to recognise that if employment growth were to be spread more around the county then the pressures on the roads, on Oxford itself and the green belt, would be greatly reduced</i> 3. <i>More emphasis should be placed on the potential contribution Oxfordshire's Enterprise Zones and Garden Towns can make to future economic growth</i> 4. <i>There is still little reference to how the LEP is going to improve the conversion of R&D into private sector business growth</i> 5. <i>In considering Oxfordshire's strengths the document should also look at sectors that are doing less well and indicate which companies are leaving the county and why</i> 	<p>below the SEP and contain project and programme specific reference. These include the CCHTIP, EEIP, ESIF, Innovation Strategy and Skills Strategy. We will make sure to mention Howbery Park in the Economic Assets section.</p> <p>This is a local planning matter addressed by the Growth Board and individual Local Plans. The SEP is not a land use planning tool, nor does it shape planning allocation/decisions.</p> <p>EZs are mentioned 4 times and Garden Towns 2. We will look at consolidating the text and perhaps include an EZ as a case study.</p> <p>The detail is in the Innovation Strategy already consulted upon and will be launched prior to Christmas. Again, we have the innovation "hooks" in the plan and the specific strategies will support project delivery. It is also worth reflecting on the Business/Innovation support available through OBS already.</p> <p>Again this is work being undertaken at an operational level by LA/University and LEP staff as part of our joint business support work. That is one of reasons for the CCHTIP and SEEIP work streams.</p>
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	<p><i>6. The Oxfordshire economy is dominated by companies of under 20 employees. This is more pronounced than other high tech economies. However, there is no aspiration to try and redress the balance by nurturing the growth of high potential companies and high value sectors</i></p> <p><i>7. There is only passing reference to self-employment, which is one of Oxfordshire's fastest growing employment forms. Trends towards self-employment and home working needs to be analysed and an assessment made of the types of support required</i></p> <p><i>8. There is little reference to the high proportion of public sector jobs in Oxfordshire or any consideration of how this imbalance can be redressed</i></p> <p><i>9. It would be useful if more detail were provided on forecast jobs growth in the core economic growth areas of the districts, such as in Science Vale for example, and the issues and constraints faced by businesses in these particular areas</i></p>	<p>We do not agree – Cambridge is similar in its business make-up. Oxfordshire Business Support targets high growth businesses for support and along with the skills strategy supports business growth, cross sector and high growth /Scale-up support. We have embryonic discussions with the Scale up Institute and Said Business school about support for Growth.</p> <p>We already support a wide range of business and start up activity. Self-employment is an important aspect of the economy and the support available through OBS, Regional and National Offers is available to all.</p> <p>This point is not valid. Oxfordshire has a large public sector due to its role as an international centre for excellence in higher education and health – an essential element of our local economy. However, jobs growth in the economy, currently tracking at over 7000 jobs per annum predominantly private and cross sector. Again OBS and the national programmes are available to support this activity.</p> <p>The SEP responds to the forecast growth, the SHMA, associated economic assessment and local plan allocation process. As before we are working through the Growth Board and Executive Officer group to better understand predicted</p>
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	<p>12. <i>The SEP is too narrowly focussed, failing to take into account the impact of major developments close to but outside Oxfordshire, i.e. Haddenham and Princes Risborough</i></p> <p>13. <i>The map detailing Oxfordshire’s growth corridors (Fig. 10) was unhelpful since it covered most of the county apart from Thame and Chinnor</i></p> <p>14. <i>The continuing problems of broadband connectivity in districts has not been addressed, and this is a potentially severe impediment to small business growth and an increased level of homeworking</i></p> <p>15. <i>The response rate from the business sector to the document has been extremely disappointing and, although separate additional consultation events were held involving businesses, the overall level of business participation is disappointing</i></p> <p>16. <i>A risk register should be included as an appendix to the SEP</i></p>	<p>The SEP focuses upon Oxfordshire and supports the local plan ambitions. As such it has not identified locations specifically outside the county. However, we do work through partnerships with other LEPs to address cross boundary issues such as infrastructure including England’s Economic Heartland Alliance, Greater Thames Valley or Motorsport Valley.</p> <p>This is a county council map. We will revisit all maps and illustrations in the SEP to ensure they are all up to date.</p> <p>See response to point 11</p> <p>It is worth reflecting on the reach and engagement with business representative organisations (over 4000 businesses consulted) including stakeholder engagement as distinct from the number of written submissions received. We continue to work with representative groups and engagement through Board sub-groups – see page 45. We will articulate this in the Delivery section of the SEP.</p> <p>We agree and we will include a Risk Register.</p>
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	<p>17. <i>Future educational infrastructure requirement should have been addressed in more detail; especially in connection with how this infrastructure can support the job market and future skills agenda</i></p> <p>18. <i>The Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy is not due to be produced until the spring of 20-17, whereas members of our scrutiny committee questioned whether a robust SEP could be produced without a critical underpinning strategy</i></p> <p>19. <i>The SEP should include proposals for:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Converting R&D to technology readiness and manufacturing</i> - <i>Altering the balance between micro-businesses and medium/large enterprises</i> - <i>Undertaking a review of funds and support for high growth businesses, in order to harness scarce resources as effectively as possible</i> - <i>Developing an Oxfordshire-wide strategy for schools and further education to better support the local economy</i> - <i>Integrating skills and business development programmes to improve the coherence of the Oxfordshire offer to business</i> 	<p>Whilst the SEP makes clear the need for and approach needed to support growth, it is not the document within which we develop the specific response. This is addressed both in the Skills Strategy refresh and also the emerging Infrastructure Strategy being led through the growth board and feeds into the LGF challenge fund bids both capital and revenue.</p> <p>The SEP sets the strategic direction and supports the SHMA and Local Plan ambitions, the strategy will inform future iterations of the plan and will along with the suite of other implementation/strategy plans feed into the SEP going forward.</p> <p>These are valid points but not for the SEP to address in any detail, we have a strong suite of supporting plans which address some of the issues raised and others such as the alignment of skills and business support very much part of the work we are currently undertaking across the LEP family. The Innovation Strategy and work we are doing on Business Growth/Scale-up through OBS will support many of the issues raised here. The SEP again is not an implementation plan it is a strategy within which we develop delivery/implementation plans responding to Oxfordshire need.</p>
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