

Minutes

OF A MEETING OF THE

Oxfordshire Growth Board Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Advisory Sub-Group

HELD ON THURSDAY 18 APRIL 2019 AT 10.00 AM
COMMITTEE ROOM 1, WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL,
WOODGREEN, WITNEY, OX28 1NB

Present:

Voting members: Councillors James Mills (Chair), Jeff Haine, Anthony Hayward, Alex Hollingsworth, Jeannette Matelot, Ian Snowdon and Barry Wood

Officers: Kevin Jacob, Peter Truman and Rachel Williams

1 Notes of meeting held on 21 March 2019

The sub-group **AGREED** the notes of the previous meeting subject to the correction reference to the A4020 to the A420.

2 Apologies for absence

Councillor Colin Clarke (CC), Cherwell District Council substituted by Councillor Barry Wood.

Councillor Mike Fox-Davis (MF-D), Oxfordshire County Council

3 Feedback from the Regulation 18, part 1 consultation

Peter Truman, (PT) Communications and Engagement Advisor for Oxfordshire Plan 2050 presented initial feedback from the Regulation 18, part 1 consultation which focussed on:

- A recap of the consultation
- Analysis of those who signed-up/responded
- Headline of issues raised
- Feedback from Members

There were the following key messages:

- More than 100 delegates had attended the launch event for the consultation and the session had produced positive feedback and important early input into the initial consultation document.

- Bus Roadshow had worked well and had also presented an opportunity to distribute flyers about the consultation to boost awareness.
- Drop in events had also worked well, but although sessions had been timetabled to take place between 3 pm and 8 pm to enable people to visit after work attendance had dropped after working hours.
- A short video explaining the Oxfordshire 2050 Plan process on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 website had been viewed over 500 times to date.
- Between the 1 January 2019 and 25 March 2019, the website had been visited nearly 10,000 times. Most users were 45-54 (24%) or 35-44 (22%)
- A shortened version of the video had been displayed on 82 screens on 41 Oxford Bus Company buses for a four-week period starting February 11. It was estimated that 1 million passengers would have had opportunity to view the advert.
- Five second animated advert displayed for a four-week period at Oxford, Didcot Parkway, Bicester, Banbury and Oxford Parkway stations on electronic display board with an estimated 945,000 impressions over that period
- 1,115 individuals and organisations had registered on the consultation data base. 540 individuals and organisations had participated in the part 1 consultation leading to 1,222 comments being made. The majority of consultation responses were from people aged 45-64 and 65 years plus.
- A summary of the issues by respondents included procedural issues around the plan and need for transparency in decision making, scale of growth, built and natural environment, transport and movement and various other issues.

A summary issues raised in discussion by Members included:

It was felt that in general attendance at the various events needed to be taken in the context of the pressures on people's time and that many people were more motivated to take part and become actively involved in consultations if they were concerned about something rather than those who had no strong view or were content. It was a continuing challenge for any consultation to reflect this.

A discussion took place regarding the effectiveness and value for money of the various communication channels used and how engagement could be further increased particularly amongst people aged under 35, noting that although there had been an encouraging level of website visits from under 35's these had not necessarily converted into formal consultation responses. However, an increase in on-line responses for those aged 65 appeared to indicate this age group was becoming more active on-line.

Several suggestions made for new methods and channels in the future including screens located in Post Office and use of other bus companies. PT and RW explained the rationale for each of the channels used commenting that it was a challenge to balance potential impact against the finite resources available and hard choices had been made. They were open to new suggestions and would consider the learnings from the consultation so far. Radio in particular had been considered but had not been felt to represent value for money at the time but could be considered suitable in the future.

RW set out the requirements of the formal consultation stages and the importance of complying with that process in terms of mitigating the risk of challenge later.

With regard to the locations of those who had responded by postcode it was noted that the majority were in or close to Oxford, but also appeared to reflect areas where there had been or were controversial planning issues.

A discussion followed on how the issues raised from the consultation could be responded to appropriately and it was noted that there would not be further publicity until the next stage of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 consultation.

4 Outline future engagement plans for discussion

Discussion took place around the headings of engagement with young people, business, stakeholders and online channels.

Young People

PT provided an update on planned engagement with universities including Oxford Brookes and the University of Oxford and which included forums for university students to discuss the plan and inclusion as part of lectures. The potential of involving Oxford Brookes University students and staff in the development of the plan was also being explored given the university's specialisms in areas such as augmented reality and planning.

It was accepted that to date there had been a disappointing level of success in engaging schools, but alternative means were being explored and the help of members sub-group was sought in terms of local knowledge and contact with head teachers. It was intended to make contact with a number of schools 6th forms including schools in Oxford, Abingdon and Witney to seek engagement with student forums within these bodies.

Business

Discussions had been undertaken with the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, (OxLEP) and feedback on the most effective engagement techniques with business taken on board. The idea of a network event was being explored.

The Plan team was also contacting the economic development teams within each of the district and town councils and local Rotary organisation on the most effective way to seek engagement with business and to exploit existing networks given the resources available.

Stakeholders

The idea of engaging with business colleges, local chambers of commerce, district council parish liaison meetings and of holding a new event modelled on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 launch event was discussed.

On-line Channels

An online quiz was shortly to be launched which was intended to be an informal myth buster regarding the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and as a mechanism to raise the profile of the plan whilst encouraging people to get involved. Members of the sub-group who had trialled the quiz provided positive feedback.

Discussion took place on the use of social media platforms and the potential to use social media influencers and paid for social media to boost the profile of the plan and raise engagement considering the need that any form of engagement needed to reflect value for money.

5 Update on evidence base progress

RW provided an updated table which set out the work required to develop the emerging evidence/evidence needed in support of the Plan.

It was queried whether there ought to be recognition in the streams of work around the Oxford to Cambridge Arc to which RW advised that there had not yet been any contact on the issue. However, now the Growth Board Director was in place, part of whose role covered the Arc, his input could be sought.

Also discussed was timing of any consultation arising from the development of the LTP5 and relationship with the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 consultation process. RW responded that initial discussions had taken place with colleagues at Oxfordshire County Council and a project plan developed. However, it was important to understand that the LTP consultation process did not have the same scale of statutory requirements as required for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050. It was also necessary to commission a transport assessment of the spatial options that will be tested at the next stage of consultation and to submit some transport modelling work as part of the evidence base for the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

With regard to Housing Needs Assessment workstream a discussion took place on the need to avoid any conflict between that workstream and existing Local Plans which covered the period up to the mid-2030s. RW advised that potential risks had been taken into consideration. It was requested that this be a discussion item on the next agenda.

6 Future meetings

Agreed that the next scheduled meeting would be 30th May and that the list of current dates for 2019 would be recirculated.

KJ reported that unfortunately, several of the scheduled sub-group dates for 2019 also fell on dates of the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel. A discussion took place on the possibility of rescheduling these dates, but unfortunately this could not be agreed at the present time because of conflicts with other contributory meetings and it was agreed that the dates would remain as scheduled for the current calendar year.