



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of an **INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION** will be held in First Floor 14 - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **FRIDAY 5 APRIL 2019 AT 12.00 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Parsonage', written in a cursive style.

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 28 March 2019

This meeting may be filmed for inclusion on the Council's website.

Please note that other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting. The use of these images or recordings is not under the Council's control.



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Our Vision

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

Our Priorities

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

The Underpinning Principles

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

For consideration by

Stuart Munro, Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning

Officers Present

Luciane Bowker, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist

James McCabe, Senior Planning Officer

IMD NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	
IMD 2019/11	None Specific	OXFORDSHIRE PLAN 2050 – ISSUES CONSULTATION	5 - 8

Callum Wernham

Tel

Email

Postal Address

CONTACT OFFICER

Democratic & Electoral Services Specialist

0118 974 6059

callum.wernham@wokingham.gov.uk

Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item IMD11

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

REFERENCE IMD: IMD 2019/11

TITLE	Oxfordshire Plan 2050 – Issues consultation
DECISION TO BE MADE BY	Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning - Stuart Munro
DATE, MEETING ROOM and TIME	5 April 2019 FF14 at 12:00pm
WARD	None Specific;
DIRECTOR / KEY OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers, Director of Locality and Customer Services - Sarah Hollamby

PURPOSE OF REPORT

That Oxfordshire 2050 Plan has minimal negative impacts upon Wokingham Borough and that any positive benefits are maximised.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning agree that Wokingham Borough Council:

- 1) highlights the lack of consideration in the consultation documents of potential cross boundary implications of the Oxfordshire 2050 plan on Wokingham Borough and the wider Thames Valley;
- 2) sets out its wish to engage with Oxfordshire on such matters as the plan progresses.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

As part of the Housing and Growth Deal agreed with the government in 2018, the Oxfordshire authorities are producing an Oxfordshire Plan which will guide development across the whole county up to 2050.

The first stage in the plan preparation is a consultation on the 'Issues' that the plan will cover. This consultation runs to 25 March 2019.

This report considers Wokingham Borough Council's (WBC) response to this consultation. It sets out that WBC expects the Oxfordshire authorities to work with WBC and related areas outside the county on common cross boundary issues when producing the Plan. Such issues includes economic links and traffic movements including the potential for a new Thames Crossing into Oxfordshire.

Background

Oxfordshire Growth Deal

The Oxfordshire authorities¹ signed up to a Housing and Growth Deal with the government in 2018, which secures guaranteed funding for affordable housing, infrastructure and economic growth in exchange for housing delivery.²

As part of this deal, there is a commitment for the Oxfordshire authorities to produce a plan for the whole of the county, which will guide development up to the year 2050. The Oxfordshire 2050 plan (hereafter referred to as the Plan) will co-ordinate and supplement the adopted or emerging local plans of the individual authorities, which variously cover the period 2011 – 2031, 2034 or 2036. The committed development contained within these plans offers a degree of certainty for the earlier period and it will be the role of this Plan to allow the authorities to work together to accommodate longer-term strategic growth up to 2050.

The current consultation is the beginning of the plan making process. It is a Regulation 18 'Issues' consultation running to 25 March 2019. The following 'Options' consultation, is programmed for June – August 2019.

Analysis of Issues

The current 'Issues' stage of consultation is the first step in the plan making process. The consultation document contains a draft vision and draft objectives for the Plan, and sets out the context of the county in terms of the following themes: quality of life, economy, natural and built environment, housing, health and wellbeing, and transport. It also highlights a range of possible spatial scenarios for meeting growth, such as intensifying city, town and district centres; and dispersing development across the county.

The consultation seeks views on these issues through five questions / discussion points, which are primarily aimed at residents of the county. However, it is important that the Oxfordshire authorities at the outset recognise and take into account the important links Oxfordshire has with the wider region.

Cross boundary issues

Whilst acknowledging this is a high-level consultation document, Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) is disappointed to note that there are no references to the important strategic links and relationships between Oxfordshire and the Berkshire/Thames Valley areas (including Wokingham Borough). Instead, the document focusses almost uniquely on Oxfordshire. This is an oversight in the consultation document and it is important that all technical analysis and future engagement fully recognises the cross-boundary impacts and relationships with surrounding areas. WBC welcomes opportunities to engage on such issues through the duty to cooperate as the Plan progresses.

¹ Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, with Oxfordshire County Council

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/oxfordshire-housing-deal>

Wokingham Borough, and Berkshire, has strong economic and transport links with Oxfordshire, with significant road and rail movements as part of commuting and economic links. Surprisingly, these have not been drawn out in the narrative of the consultation document.

Of particular interest to WBC is the issue of a potential Third Thames Crossing between Oxfordshire and the Wokingham / Reading area. WBC notes that there are historic and ongoing discussions between South Oxfordshire, Oxfordshire County Council, Reading Borough Council, and WBC around the potential for an additional crossing over the River Thames. In February 2019 WBC responded to the publication of South Oxfordshire’s Regulation 19 local plan requesting that such a route is safeguarded to help secure its future delivery. No reference is made in the consultation material to this strategic transport scheme or indeed any other transport links between Oxfordshire and Berkshire. WBC request that this potential link is acknowledged through the Plan.

Potential spatial scenarios

Discussion point 4 of the consultation document seeks views on the spatial scenarios presented. It is important that all potential scenarios consider the impacts on settlements close to but beyond the Oxfordshire county boundary, e.g. Caversham. It is vital that, whatever spatial strategy is taken forward, appropriate co-operation is undertaken with the relevant authorities beyond Oxfordshire to understand impacts and opportunities.

Conclusion

It is imperative that issues adjacent to the Oxfordshire county boundary are taken into account in the preparation of the Plan. WBC encourages the Oxfordshire authorities to work with WBC and other councils outside the county on common areas such as economic links, transport movements and the Third Thames Crossing, and looks forward to further engagement as the Plan as progress is made towards the ‘Options’ consultation.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	No additional cost	Yes	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	No additional cost	Yes	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	No additional cost	Yes	N/A

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
None anticipated

Cross-Council Implications
None

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES	
Director – Corporate Services	No comments received
Monitoring Officer	No comment
Leader of the Council	No comments received

List of Background Papers
None

Contact James McCabe	Service Place Commissioning
Telephone No Tel: 0118 908 8333	Email james.mccabe@wokingham.gov.uk