

To: City Executive Board

Date: 22nd October 2008

Item No:

Report of: Executive Director of City Regeneration

Title of Report: Oxfordshire 2030 Strategy

Summary and Recommendations

To respond to the Public Consultation on the Oxfordshire 2030 Strategy.

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Cllr Bob Price, Leader of the Council

Report Approved by:

Finance: Sarah Fogden, Business Manager, Finance and Asset Management

Legal:

Policy Framework: The Corporate Plan 2008-2011 and Oxford Community Strategy.

Recommendation(s):

1. To delegate authority for agreeing the final content of the consultation draft of the Strategy to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Group Leaders.

2. To delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Group Leaders and Executive Board Members, to discuss with the other Oxfordshire districts the role of District Councils and Local Strategic Partnerships in delivering the pledges and actions in the draft documents.

Introduction

1.1 Oxfordshire 2030, the Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy will set out a strategic vision for Oxfordshire, and by implication, Oxford City. The themes, priorities, pledges and actions that it contains should all be

agreeable to Oxford City Council as it will be responsible for delivering, and contributing to the delivery, of the Strategy.

1.2 Oxfordshire 2030 will provide a future vision for the county and as such will be used to determine future Local Area Agreements, it does, therefore, have potential significant financial implications.

1.3 The latest version of the Draft Strategy is available on:

www.oxfordshirepartnerships.org.uk

Background

2.1 Members have previously received a number of reports to Scrutiny Committees and Executive Board on developing an Oxfordshire Community Strategy and Local Area Agreements Round 2. These reports have set out in detail the background to the Oxfordshire Community Strategy. Including:

- the Governance arrangements for the Oxfordshire Strategy and the Local Area Agreement 2.
- The role of theme partnerships in delivering the Oxfordshire Strategy and Local Area Agreements
- The content of the Themed Papers and statistical analysis – developing a needs based approach
- The issues and options from the Workshops
- The draft priorities identified that are important to Oxford.
- The alignment between the Oxfordshire Strategy and LAA 2 and the Oxford City Corporate Plan and Oxford Community Strategy

The key themes of the draft Oxfordshire 2030 Strategy

3.1. The following 3 key themes emerged:

a) The world class economy: including infrastructure, housing, transport, educational attainment, workforce skills and opportunities for disadvantaged communities and individuals.

b) The environment and climate change: including carbon reduction, renewable energy opportunities, household and business waste reduction, water management / alleviating flooding and drought, protecting the natural and built heritage and cleaner and greener communities.

c) Healthy and thriving communities: including supporting our young people, reducing crime and fear of crime, cultural activity, a strong and active community sector, involving communities in decision making, a range of housing options.

d) In addition the cross cutting theme **Tackling inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation:**

The Consultation Process

- 4.1. The reports stated that the redrafting of the Oxfordshire Community Strategy would take place throughout November 2007. However, there were delays due to the need to negotiate the Local Area Agreement 2.
- 4.2. During April 2008 a revised Strategy was circulated within Oxford City Council to officers and members for comment. A response was sent to the Oxfordshire Partnership Team on 2nd May 2008.
- 4.3. On 23rd June 2008 the revised draft Strategy was approved by the Oxfordshire Partnership Board to go out for public consultation. The deadline for consultation responses was 22nd September 2008.
- 4.4. The revised draft Strategy was circulated to officers and members of Oxford City Council requesting comments by 8th September 2008.
- 4.5. A copy was circulated to members of the Oxford Strategic Partnership for comment.
- 4.6. A copy was placed upon the intranet and web site for public consultation.

Consultation response

- 5.1. It was agreed by the Oxfordshire Leaders Group that a joint Oxfordshire district response would be appropriate but that individual responses, setting out the specific concerns relating to each district, would also be submitted. A copy of the agreed joint response is set out in Annex 1.
- 5.2. In order to develop a City Council response the revised draft Strategy was considered by the Partnerships and Communities Scrutiny Committee on 29th July. Annex 3 provides a copy of the minute.
- 5.3. A draft response was circulated to all members of the Cross Party Working Group and Scrutiny Committee for final comment prior to the submission of the City Council response on 22nd September.

Agreement by the Executive Board

- 6.1 The district councils are required to endorse the Strategy prior to its final adoption at the Oxfordshire Partnership on 26th November.
- 6.2 Officers had hoped that a revised version would be available in time for this Executive Board meeting. However, given the large number of

responses received it will not be possible to rewrite it in time to meet our publication deadlines. A revised draft should be available on 13th October. However, it is also likely that there will need to be other amendments made following the discussion at the Oxfordshire Partnership Board.

- 6.3 It is not possible to take the draft Strategy to the next City Executive Board as this takes place on 26th November, the same day as the Oxfordshire Partnership meeting.

Conclusions

- 7.1. Generally Oxfordshire 2030 incorporates most of the priorities identified by Oxford City Council and the Oxford Community Plan. In particular the cross cutting theme of social inclusion and breaking the cycle of deprivation is welcomed.
- 7.2. The main criticism is that further work needs to be done about reflecting local distinctiveness and strengthening links with the District Strategic Partnerships.
- 7.3. Further work is also needed on the delivery plan to make more explicit links to District Local Strategic Partnerships and to ensure that the pledges are backed up by targets. Officers will work with the other Oxfordshire District Councils and the County Councils Partnerships Team to take this work forward.

Recommendations

- 8.1. It is recommended to:

1. Delegate authority for agreeing the final content of the consultation draft of the Strategy to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Group Leaders.
2. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Group Leaders and Executive Board Members, to discuss with the other Oxfordshire districts the role of District Councils and Local Strategic Partnerships in delivering the pledges in the draft documents.

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Background Papers:

Executive Board 'Working for a Better Oxfordshire –LAA 2006-09, 17th July 2006

Finance Scrutiny Committee 'Developing an Oxfordshire Community Strategy and LAA Round 2', November 2007

Executive Board 'Oxfordshire LAA (Round 2)', March 17th 2008

Annex 1

Final Draft

Joint Response from Oxfordshire District Councils to the Oxfordshire 2030 – A partnership plan for improving the quality of life in Oxfordshire.

All Oxfordshire District Council Leaders have agreed to provide a joint response on the draft strategy document 'Oxfordshire 2030 - A partnership plan for improving the quality of life in Oxfordshire'.

The Oxfordshire District Leaders have also provided separate, individual responses, on more specific issues relating to their districts that are equally valuable.

In general there is a broad agreement on key objectives and overall priorities between the District Councils, the County Council and other partners on the overall Strategy.

The key area of concern for Oxfordshire District Councils is that the draft Strategy and Delivery Plan neither fully represent the parts and places of the county, particularly the market towns, nor reflect the role of District Councils and Local Strategic Partnerships in delivering the long-term benefits for the county outlined identified as needed in the Strategy. This is an issue common amongst all Districts.

There is also a need for the Strategy to recognise the important role of the District Councils in spatial planning, through their Core Strategies, Local Development Frameworks, and their powers and duties in regard to housing development, economic development and regeneration.

There is a need to strengthen the links between the strategy, the pledges and measurable targets for delivering the strategy, particularly at a local level.

There is a need to give greater recognition to local variances. For example issues and solutions relating to educational attainment, transport, health, community safety, access to services and the importance of tourism in the local economy will be very different across the county. The Strategy and Delivery Plan don't currently contain enough examples of some of these issues from across the county. The delivery of targets and measures of success will therefore vary across the county. The Strategy should recognise this.

The Local Strategic Partnerships will play an important role in supporting agencies to identify these local needs and to address them accordingly. Currently there are close working relationships with the Primary Care Trust and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in developing local plans and joint work plans. It would be helpful if similar relationships could be developed with other lead partnerships and with county - wide bodies at a local level.

It would be helpful for this approach to be embedded within the Strategy and Delivery Plan and that there is assurance provided that lead partnerships will work closely with the Local Strategic Partnerships where this currently does not happen.

District Councils and Local Strategic Partnerships also understand and have close relationships with voluntary and communities groups in their areas. All District Councils have regular Voluntary Sector Forums.

District Councils have a good understanding of their local communities and are close to them. Thus providing the best focal point for community engagement and in helping people to shape their neighbourhoods. This will be essential in delivering the aspirations of having thriving communities.

Although this is an Oxfordshire document it is important to remember and reflect that some parts of some Districts naturally look outside the county to other counties and even regions. So there are relationships to be managed and issues to be resolved across borders.

There needs to be a greater focus on parish councils as partners in delivery as this is the framework in 4 out of 5 Districts.

The Draft Delivery Plan includes medium targets for the next 3 years and some longer term objectives (2030). It is the District Councils' view that some of these targets should be achievable in a shorter length of time and that the medium term objectives should be more clearly linked to the long term objectives.

In order to demonstrate more clearly the important role of district councils and Local Strategic Partnerships in delivering the key objectives and priorities contained within the Strategy some further detailed comments have been provided on Draft Delivery Plan. This has been done to demonstrate how district councils see that they are able to contribute to the delivery of the pledges, medium term targets, longer term objectives contained within it.

Annex 2

Oxford City Council

Response to the Draft Oxfordshire 2030 Strategy and Delivery Plan September 2008

Further to the Oxfordshire District Councils joint response I am making an additional submission on behalf of the City Council on the more specific issues relating to Oxford City.

General Observations

The City Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the consultation draft. There has been much preparation and previous consultation with partners in the development and agreement on the vision and key objectives. It is recognised that there is broad agreement on the vision and priorities between all of the Oxfordshire Districts, the County Council and other partners.

However a few concerns have been raised.

- There should be greater consistency in relation to the lay out of each section.
- The document needs to have clear links between the statistical evidence, the pledges and actions.
- There has clearly been a lot of thinking on the key themes with the development of LAA 2 and although this strategy should be broader than this it should still adequately reflect these priorities. For example, the need to improve the quality of the public realm (cleaner and greener) needs to be strengthened throughout the document.

Understanding Oxfordshire

Paragraph 3 – could we add: ‘however there are also pockets of deprivation’.

It might be useful to include an overview of the economy (main industrial sectors).

Delivering results

This section could be strengthened to include the issue of local diversity and the role of the District LSP's and Local Development Frameworks. The links between spatial planning and community planning will be essential to the delivery of the LAA targets and the Ppledges.

Perhaps a delivery model would be useful to demonstrate how the District and Oxfordshire LSPs will link and contribute to the delivery of the LAA targets and pledges?

Planning for better places to live, learn and work

Para 4 (SE Plan): Suggest this paragraph deleted and a factual statement made, stating that 'An Inspection Panel recommended a review of the green belt south of the City.'

Paragraph 6: (LDFs): The LDFs are described as 'a collection of policies and plans to guide building development'. LDFs are more broadly focussed and will be an essential tool to deliver the needs of local communities, as set out in the Strategy.

Paragraph 9 (Employment): It is stated that Oxford development for employment will take place mainly on previously developed land. This should state 'will take place in the West End Development, the Northern Gateway and potentially the Science Park to the South of the City.'

A world class economy

The key issues should include 'local regeneration initiatives in areas of opportunity and in areas of deprivation'.

The current position should explain that the RES central Oxfordshire is one of 8 Diamonds for Investment and Growth.

Healthy and Thriving Communities

Do we need a reference in this section as to where the key areas of deprivation are and explain that we will be targeting those areas in particular in relation to training and skills, community safety and health?

The environment and climate change

The heading 'Limiting our carbon omissions' should read 'Climate Change mitigation and adaptation'

This section should include a reference to improving the quality of the public realm, given that we have a 2 LAA targets on cleanliness this should be given a much stronger profile in the text given the link between clean and green environments and improving the quality of life or people.

Reducing Inequalities and breaking the cycles of deprivation

Oxford City Council welcomes the cross cutting objective of reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of deprivation. This is an area in which it is critical to have a joined up and where a partnership approach can provide substantial added value.

District Profiles

Revised City Version to follow.

The Delivery Plan

The City Council recognise that the Oxfordshire 2030 Strategy is an aspirational document and that the Delivery Plan will require further development to include SMART targets for the 2008-11.

Members particularly welcome the reference in the Delivery Plan as to how Oxford City will be contributing to the delivery of the Strategy at a local level.

However there were some concerns raised:

- There is a need for it to be made clearer throughout the Delivery Plan who is taking responsibility for what actions.
- 2030 is a long way off and that more interim targets are needed so progress can be effectively monitored.
- Some of the aims are expressed comparatively rather than as absolutes.
- The Delivery Plan for Social Inclusion and Breaking the Cycle of Deprivation only include extracts of pledges and actions included under the other key objectives. This is just duplication and not very useful.
- Rather than having District Annexes for the Delivery Plan perhaps these should be integrated through the general text?

I hope that these comments have been helpful.

Please do contact me if you require any clarification or additional information.

Val Johnson
Partnership Development, Corporate Manager

Annex 3

Minute of the Partnership and Communities Scrutiny Committee

Minute13. OXFORDSHIRE 2030 – CONSULTATION ON OXFORDSHIRE’S SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Corporate Manager, Partnership Development, submitted a report (previously circulated, now appended). Val Johnson (Corporate Manager, Partnership Development) and Paul James (Oxfordshire County Council)

The following issues were raised: -

- the Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy (OSCS) and Local Area Agreement (LAA) were closely linked but they were not bound by the same indicators
- there was broad agreement on priorities between all of the Oxfordshire districts and the County Council
- it was recognised that the OSCS was an aspirational document and that the delivery plan would include SMART targets for the 2008-11, but 2030 was a long way off and more interim targets were needed so progress could be monitored
- there was concern that aims were expressed comparatively rather than as absolutes
- the OSCS would be submitted to the Cross Party Working Group and City Executive Board in October 2008.

Resolved to ask Val Johnson to take account of the issues raised by members of the Committee.