

## **Oxfordshire Growth Board: Updates on progress with the Oxford to Cambridge (O2C) Corridor workstreams with the National Infrastructure Commission and development of a housing and growth deal for Oxfordshire.**

### **Report Purpose**

- 1) This report is to update the Board with progress on a number of workstreams that the councils are currently working on with the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) on the Oxford to Cambridge corridor (O2C)
- 2) This report also updates the board on early discussions with Government officials on a housing and growth deal for Oxfordshire

### **Recommendation**

That the Growth Board:

- I. Notes the progress with the NIC workstreams.
- II. Notes the progress on the development of an Oxfordshire housing and growth deal proposition to government.

### **Background – National Infrastructure Commission investigation into the Oxford to Cambridge Corridor**

- 3) The Oxfordshire Growth Board constituent councils, the LEP and the University have been supporting a number of workstreams feeding into the NIC's corridor work and the preparation of their next report due in the autumn. Since the Growth Board last met two key areas of NIC led work have been fed into: an investigation of the importance of the transport connectivity of the first/last mile transport in Oxford and the development of an agreed pan-corridor approach to strategic planning. In addition Lord Adonis and NIC commissioners met with Oxfordshire Council Leaders, the University and the LEP last week.

### **Progress to Date**

#### **First/last mile transport in Oxford**

- 4) Submissions to the NIC in late 2016 promoted the importance of the first and last mile connections in the effective operation of the transport system in Oxford. The NIC recognised the importance of the first/last mile issue and invited Oxford, Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Northampton to present further evidence to them of the potential transformative impact that first/last mile projects could have in those cities. In April the City and the County Council Leaders, along with the LEP and the University were asked to present their long-term transport vision for Oxford (as one of the key cities on the O2C corridor). On 18 April the City, County, University and the LEP jointly presented the vision for Oxford to the NIC Commissioners, along with details of key transport infrastructure projects that support the delivery of growth

commitments now and in future. The feedback from the NIC has been positive and the group have now been invited to work up the various first/last mile projects identified, with support from consultants now engaged by the NIC. The timescale for this work is to ensure it can feed into the NIC next stage report to the Treasury this September.

### **Strategic Planning across the O2C Corridor**

- 5) The NIC consulted councils in the O2C corridor on options for new pan-corridor strategic planning and associated governance models. Twenty seven Council Leaders from all counties, tiers and parts of the corridor, along with all of the LEPs agreed to work together to develop this approach. Cross corridor Chief Executives and LEPs, supported by an officer working group met a number of times to prepare the response. After a number of iterations, agreement was reached by Leaders on a model based upon the development of an overarching high-level strategic planning framework for the corridor, with three main strategic planning areas (Oxfordshire, Cambridgeshire and the centre area) and supported by a cross-corridor strategic transport and infrastructure board. Work is about to start on developing the governance to oversee the implementation of that model.
- 6) For Oxfordshire the growth board remains central to the governance and strategic planning approach put forward, with the emerging work on developing an Oxfordshire Joint Strategic plan being at the heart of a western node to the O2C corridor.

### **Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal**

- 7) Oxfordshire Councils have been asked by DCLG/BIES and BIS officials to develop a housing growth deal proposition to support the delivery of the existing homes and jobs growth commitments across the county. Work has started on developing a joint proposition for Oxfordshire to identify the infrastructure and other support that would be needed to deliver or accelerate delivery of the existing growth commitments (100,000 homes and 86,000 jobs to 2031). This work is being undertaken jointly by officers from all six councils.