

Agenda Item 6

Replacement for Page 27-28 of the agenda pack – press release issued and on website

PRESS RELEASE – OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD

EMBARGOED TO: 00:01 Thursday 20 July 2017

Oxfordshire councils need £9bn for infrastructure to support growth

An independent report commissioned by Oxfordshire's six councils who make up the Oxfordshire Growth Board sets out the investment in transport, schools, hospitals and other infrastructure needed to support the predicted growth in population, jobs and homes to 2040 and beyond.

The report by AECOM, a professional and technical services firm highlights the need for long-term investment that will be required to plan for and manage growth in a way that supports the local economy and protects quality of life across the county.

For the first time Oxfordshire councils are working together to develop a joint infrastructure strategy, detailing the county's key infrastructure requirements. Some of these have been outlined already in individual Local Plans and the Local Transport Plan, but the Oxfordshire Growth Board has looked more comprehensively at what is going to be required further into the future across all areas.

Major investment projects include:

- Improvements to the A34
- Rapid bus routes linking key locations
- East-West Rail connecting Oxford to Cambridge
- A long term strategy to address congestion on the A40
- Redevelopment of Oxford Station
- A new Garden Town for Didcot
- Incentives to encourage businesses to locate and expand within the Science Vale.

Once complete, the Oxfordshire Growth Board will have a new infrastructure strategy that will identify, map and support the county's strategic infrastructure requirements. It will include evidence of the infrastructure required for strategic transport, energy and the utilities, waste management, flooding and water management, green infrastructure, education, adult social care and broadband. It will be clear on what is needed to keep Oxfordshire thriving to support anticipated growth to 2040 and beyond and what it will cost to deliver it, currently estimated at £9 billion. This will help infrastructure providers to plan for the future.

Outgoing chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board, Councillor Ian Hudspeth, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, said: "Across the county, people need places to live, with a great environment, transport and other vital infrastructure to support them. We remain committed to attracting the necessary investment to the

Agenda Item 6

Replacement for Page 27-28 of the agenda pack – press release issued and on website

region so that we can have the right infrastructure in place through to 2040 so that residents, businesses and visitors continue to thrive.”

Incoming chair of the Oxfordshire Growth Board, Councillor Bob Price, Leader of Oxford City Council, said: “It is really important that we plan the infrastructure needed to support Oxfordshire and its growth. By having an integrated strategy that clearly shows the infrastructure needed to support future growth such as new housing developments and new businesses, we stand a greater chance of securing the necessary funding to deliver what is required.”

Nigel Tipple, Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP), said: “The need to ensure Oxfordshire benefits from an infrastructure that is fit for purpose and one that doesn’t hold back economic growth – whilst being sensitive to the environment – is a key priority. This draft strategy is aligned with the priorities set out in our own strategic economic plan for Oxfordshire and – as a Local Enterprise Partnership – we will continue to champion our economy with the aim of securing future funds for key projects.

“Oxfordshire has seen 45,000 new jobs created over the past five years, representing over half of a 2031 target of 85,600 new jobs. As a county, we need to maintain this growth but – similarly – ensure that our future infrastructure fully-supports our desire to grow.”

Bringing together all this evidence will allow Oxfordshire to engage in strategic discussions with Government and other infrastructure funding partners to understand how it will cohesively address the challenges that providing the scale of infrastructure required presents.

The AECOM report is published on the Oxfordshire Growth Board website at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/growthboard and there is an opportunity to submit comments online.

Funding will be sought from various sources including the Government’s Housing Infrastructure Fund which is designed to deliver more homes and help support significant new growth initiatives, which includes funding for unlocking sites for new homes in areas of high demand.

The Oxfordshire Growth Board is a joint committee of the six councils, formed to provide strategic planning for all the challenges that the growth agenda for Oxfordshire brings.

ENDS

Notes to editors

Agenda Item 6

Replacement for Page 27-28 of the agenda pack – press release issued and on website

The six councils represented on the Oxfordshire Growth Board are Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.

Quotes from all six leaders and the CEO of OxLEP are available.

Cllr Bob Price and Cllr Ian Hudspeth are available for interview.

- To arrange an interview with Cllr Price, contact Oxford City Council's press office: E: pressoffice@oxford.gov.uk T: 01865 252096
- To arrange an interview with Cllr Hudspeth, contact Oxfordshire County Council's press office: E: press.office@oxfordshire.gov.uk T: 01865 323 870