

## Appendix 1

### Recommendations of the Tourism Management Review Group – April 2024 Update

This document sets out an update on the 21 recommendations of the Tourism Management Review Group in 2019 and the additional 4 recommendations on the same subject made by the Scrutiny Committee in 2021.

59

| <b>Recommendation</b>  | <b>Agreed in<br/>2019 / 21?</b> | <b>Update – April 2024</b>  |
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| <p>1) That the Council convenes with key partners (e.g. the universities and Experience Oxfordshire) to develop a shared vision for tourism in Oxford. This should also recognise the needs and wishes of residents and be made public and promoted through the Council’s media channels. Key principles of the vision should situate Oxford as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A city that welcomes all visitors (local, national and international)</li> <li>b) A city that aspires to have high quality, low carbon, transport facilities</li> <li>c) A destination which is best experienced through an overnight stay</li> <li>d) A gateway to other tourism destinations in the region</li> </ul> | <p>Yes/In Part</p>              | <p>The Council’s “City Centre Action Plan” and “Oxford Economic Strategy” (adopted separately in 2022) both place tourism as an important sector in Oxford, highlighting opportunities for improvement. Both documents contain actions regarding sustainable travel and promoting overnight stays.</p> <p>Much of the Council’s work towards this recommendation is through being part of county-wide initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Experience Oxfordshire received Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) status in 2023 from Visit England, which gives it the remit from Visit Britain to provide strong local leadership and governance in the tourism destination of Oxfordshire.</li> <li>b. Recommendations were put forward by the Council as part of our contributions to the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan to emphasise the need for high quality, low carbon public transport infrastructure especially to improve connectivity across the county.</li> <li>c. The Council contributed to the LEP’s “Tourism</li> </ul> |

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|   |             | vision and Destination Management Plan (DMP)” which was developed in 2023 and endorsed by the Council in early 2024. The DMP’s vision fits with the scrutiny committee’s recommendation.  |
| 2) That the Council, through its membership on the Boards of Experience Oxfordshire and OxLEP, actively supports local efforts to prepare for the Tourism Sector Deal (such as bidding to become an official Tourism Zone), which would lever in investment to extend the tourism season and improve transport access for visitors to the city. | Yes         | Please see response to Recommendation 1. The Council’s involvement in developing the LEP’s DMP in 2023 has superseded previous initiatives on this theme.   |
| 3) That the Cabinet reviews the process and assessment undertaken which led to the proposal to phase out funding to Experience Oxfordshire and undertakes to work with partners to jointly ensure there is a suitable and sustainable funding model for destination management in the future.   | Yes/In Part | The Council contributed to the DMP in 2023 and the follow-up piece of work which outlined funding routes. It is expected to be an agenda item at a Future of Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP) meeting soon, in order to discuss and agree sustainable local authority funding models for tourism management. The Council has significantly constrained resources and is not able to fund tourism management through its current corporate budgets. |
| 4) That the Board member for Culture and City Centre becomes the Council’s representative on the Board of Experience Oxfordshire, and consideration is given to how their portfolio title can better reflect their remit for tourism matters.   | No          | This recommendation was not agreed by Cabinet.  |
| 5) That the Council has a named officer or team to be recognised as the lead on tourism matters.  | Yes         | The relevant senior officer is the Executive Director for Development. Since January 2023, the Economy, City Centre and Green Transport Lead has been the council’s lead on tourism matters.  |

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| <p>6) That the Council continues to encourage employers within the hospitality and tourism sectors in Oxford to pay the Oxford Living Wage, including the universities and colleges. Further, that the Council's promotional activity around the Oxford Living Wage incorporates customer facing marketing, which encourages conscience driven spending with Oxford Living Wage accredited shops and services.</p>   | <p>Yes</p>         | <p>Regarding the Oxford Living Wage, there are currently 125 businesses accredited in Oxford, of which 25 are from the hospitality and tourism sectors.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership is engaging employers to become OLW accredited in the city and Real Living Wage accredited in the county. This will boost OLW employers overall, though not targeted to hospitality/tourism specifically.</p>   |
| <p>7) That the Council, having secured support from the County Council, develops an action plan to become a 'Coach Friendly' city, with key performance indicators and milestones, in accordance with the seven criteria set out by the Confederation of Passenger Transport. This should incorporate short, medium and long term strategic infrastructure plans for improving drop off and layover facilities in the City, linking with key wayfinding routes and providing sufficient facilities for passengers and coach drivers. Key stakeholders including the bus companies and the DMO should be engaged with through this process.</p> | <p>Yes/In Part</p> | <p>The Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework (COMPF), a joint City and County project, will include a coach study. This will include conducting a survey of visitor and tourist coaches including numbers, times and pick up and drop off locations, followed by a strategy for management of coaches and proposals for new pickup and drop off locations.</p> <p>The coach study will engage with key stakeholders such as the Confederation of Passenger Transport and the Coach Tourism Association.</p> <p>Proposals will consider the arrival experience of tourists, safe and convenient drop off and pickups, and will likely explore a time slot system for coaches.</p> <p>The advice and information currently on the Council's website will be reviewed and updated.</p> |
| <p>8) That the Council makes representations to Oxfordshire County Council concerning the need to distinguish standalone transport and infrastructure plans for tourist coach access in future strategies and policy documents. Further, the Council takes an active role in raising the</p>   | <p>Yes</p>         | <p>Please see answer to Recommendation 7.</p>  |

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| profile of the tourism sector within key strategic documents, such as the emerging Economic Growth Strategy and Local Transport Plan 5.   |             |  |
| 9) That the Council reviews and updates the current drop-off and layover advice for coach operators, as set out on the Council's website, and commits to more frequent engagement with the Confederation of Passenger Transport and the Coach Tourism Association.  | Yes         | Please see answer to Recommendation 7. The details on the City Council website are all correct as at Jan 2024.   |
| 10) That the Council issues and resources a survey to tourist coach companies, in partnership with Experience Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire County Council, to better understand; the number of coaches that enter the City, their movements, and barriers to making best use of existing facilities. This should broadly reflect the research approach taken in Cambridge.   | Yes/In Part | Please see answer to Recommendation 7.   |
| 11) That the Council remains involved in discussions with similar cities about the introduction of an overnight tourism levy and supports national efforts to lobby for the ability to introduce such a levy. Any plan must capture all providers of commercial paid accommodation, not just hotels, and assurances are needed that the revenue generated will go towards improving the visitor experience. Consideration should be given to the Local Government Association's role in supporting this effort. | In Part     | Manchester was the first UK city to introduce an Accommodation Business Improvement District in 2023. Very recently, Cambridge has announced an intention to do the same, subject to a ballot. The City Council is considering the implications, benefits and costs for a similar scheme in Oxford, which could be a new funding stream for schemes related to tourism management. |
| 12) That the Council takes an active role in promoting and supporting digital innovations and tourism products that benefit the city and its residents. For example, the Oxford Pass, Wayfinding apps, the Sociability App and Refill Oxford. Official partner status should be sought if   | In Part     | The Council has explored digital tourism products, especially around wayfinding. See Answer 17 for more information. A digital wayfinding app would also be used to promote any other schemes e.g. Refill.   |

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| considered appropriate.   |         |   |
| 13) That the Council writes to local Members of Parliament, inviting the support of Experience Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire County Council, to make the case for the Discover England Fund to continue beyond 2019. Consideration should be given to whether this action is time appropriate in light of any parallel bid to become an official Tourism Zone as part of the UK Tourism Sector Deal (see recommendation 2). | Yes     | Completed. In 2022 Experience Oxfordshire received national DMO status.   |
| 14) That the Council reviews its current role in the administration and development of an annual events calendar and seeks opportunities to be proactive and strategic in shaping a calendar that will increase the City's appeal to regional domestic visitors.  | No      | A Marketing Events Group has now been established to look at how all events in the City could be marketed collectively and in a more coherent way for visitors. The City Council website event page now lists all events within the city as does the Experience Oxfordshire website.  |
| 15) That the Council undertakes to revive the Community Toilet Scheme with local businesses, and that it is explicitly within the remit of the Council's new City Centre Management function.   | In Part | <p>As acknowledged in the CCAP, the provision of toilets in Oxford city centre is, lacking both in numbers and quality. Those toilets that were open, were not widely or cohesively advertised and this has been remedied. To increase provision is challenging due to the historic nature of the city and land ownership.</p> <p>The Community Toilet Scheme is in wide evidence in London, as endorsed by the Mayor, but is sporadic across the rest of the UK. Successful schemes rely on the Council providing funding to the businesses and a monitoring system. The City Council is considering the potential for CTS in Oxford, as well as options for increasing the quantity or quality of existing public</p> |

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|   |             | toilets.   |
| 16) That the Cabinet commissions an options report concerning the long-term future provision of adequate public conveniences in the City Centre. This should be produced in consultation with Oxford Direct Services.   | In Part     | Please see answer to Recommendation 15.  |
| 17) That provision is made in the Cabinet's draft budget proposals for 2020/21 to include an allocation for updating and/or upgrading the current static maps and signage in the city centre. This should specifically include creative signage between the Westgate Centre, the Covered Market and Cornmarket Street. An ongoing revenue allocation should be provided for their maintenance and review. | Yes/In Part | <p>The City Centre Action Plan identifies wayfinding as a key priority. There are two elements to wayfinding, incorporating both physical infrastructure and digital. The physical infrastructure has been audited and an interim solution to cover up out of date information is being implemented, in advance of any consideration of longer-term options to upgrade and replace the current infrastructure, which will be a significant cost, not included in any budgets.</p> <p>An app has been sourced that would help the city and could be funded by sponsorship. This is being considered by the Council.</p> |
| 18) That the Council considers the potential of the City's waterways as a visitor attraction and leisure asset in future policy making (e.g. planning and licensing) and investment decisions and works to support the Oxford Waterways Project to create new tourism opportunities through regenerating and improving facilities (e.g. in particular, boating facilities).                               | Yes         | <p>Central Oxfordshire Movement and Place Framework (COMPF) includes proposals to improve access to and quality of waterside spaces in Oxford through seating, planting and public realm upgrades along the rivers and canal, as well as wayfinding.</p> <p>More opportunities for visitor mooring spots and electric mooring spots are being explored.</p>  |
| 19) That the Council reviews to what extent codes of conduct exist for managing the behaviour of students at language schools (including the management of large groups in public spaces) and seeks to ensure they are  | In Part     | This action has now been absorbed into the City Centre Action Plan (CCAP) under Street Scene management action 4.2:  |

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| being used to safeguard visitors and satisfy the behaviour expectations of residents.   |     | <p>“Work with local partners to create and embed a guide protocol into language school operations.”</p> <p>This is a medium-term action and will be reported on through the CCAP.</p>  |
| 20) That the Council makes representations to Oxford University, welcoming greater publicity concerning public opening hours for the colleges, and other practical steps to improve resident and visitor awareness of, and access to, the colleges. | Yes | Closed. Experience Oxfordshire provides details of the Opening Hours of Oxford’s Colleges as does the University of Oxford.  |
| 21) That where business led opportunities arise; the Council should take a full and active role in leveraging in the influence of the business sector to improve the public realm and wider visitor offer.  | Yes | <p>Please see answer to Recommendation 11 re: steps to explore new funding streams.</p> <p>In advance of third-party funding, the Council and the County Council have instigated public realm improvements using public funds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad Street – two trial schemes, the latter of which has been made permanent</li> <li>• A trial pedestrian-friendly scheme on Market Street (subject to County Council decision-making)</li> <li>• Improvements to Gloucester Green</li> <li>• The permanent improvement of a pedestrian area on St Michael’s Street.</li> </ul> <p>Furthermore, the Central Oxfordshire Movement &amp; Place Framework will generate design concepts for public realm schemes which the Council will use in order to negotiate s106 contributions from developers.</p> |

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|  |  | In general, businesses and other organisations are engaged regularly through monthly newsletters and at quarterly city centre meetings – known as Talk of the Town. |
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| 1) That the Council plans how it will work with those responsible for tourist travel to Oxford to be more environmentally sustainable.  | Yes | Please see answer to Recommendation 7.  |
| 2) That the Council revives its partnership with City Centre shops to provide a toilet scheme.  | Yes | Please see answer to Recommendation 15.   |
| 3) That the Council in its work with partners, pursues a renewed focus on attracting domestic tourists to Oxford.   | Yes | Please see answer to Recommendation 1. A focus on increasing overnight domestic tourists came out of the DMP. |
| 4) That the Council reviews and updates its responses to the recommendations made by the Tourism Review Group in light of the changes of Covid and the proposed Oxford Economic Strategy and City Centre Action Plan. | Yes | That is what this April 2024 Scrutiny Committee report and appendix are seeking to deliver.                   |