



To: Members of the Cabinet

Notice of a Meeting of the Cabinet

Tuesday, 21 July 2020 at 2.00 pm

Virtual

Please note that due to guidelines imposed on social distancing by the Government the meeting will be held virtually.

*If you wish to view proceedings please click on this [Live Stream Link](#)
However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yvonne Rees'.

Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive

July 2020

Committee Officer: **Sue Whitehead**

Tel: 07393 001213; E-Mail: sue.whitehead@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Membership

Councillors

Ian Hudspeth	Leader of the Council
Mrs Judith Heathcoat	Deputy Leader
Lawrie Stratford	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Public Health
Steve Harrod	Cabinet Member for Children & Family Services
Ian Corkin	Cabinet Member for Council Business & Partnerships
Lorraine Lindsay-Gale	Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services
Yvonne Constance OBE	Cabinet Member for Environment
David Bartholomew	Cabinet Member for Finance
Liam Walker	Cabinet Member for Highways Delivery & Operations
Mark Gray	Cabinet Member for Local Communities

*The Agenda is attached. Decisions taken at the meeting
will become effective at the end of the working day on
unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.
Copies of this Notice, Agenda and supporting papers are circulated
to all Members of the County Council.*

Date of next meeting: to be confirmed

Declarations of Interest

The duty to declare.....

Under the Localism Act 2011 it is a criminal offence to

- (a) fail to register a disclosable pecuniary interest within 28 days of election or co-option (or re-election or re-appointment), or
- (b) provide false or misleading information on registration, or
- (c) participate in discussion or voting in a meeting on a matter in which the member or co-opted member has a disclosable pecuniary interest.

Whose Interests must be included?

The Act provides that the interests which must be notified are those of a member or co-opted member of the authority, **or**

- those of a spouse or civil partner of the member or co-opted member;
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as husband/wife
- those of a person with whom the member or co-opted member is living as if they were civil partners.

(in each case where the member or co-opted member is aware that the other person has the interest).

What if I remember that I have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the Meeting?.

The Code requires that, at a meeting, where a member or co-opted member has a disclosable interest (of which they are aware) in any matter being considered, they disclose that interest to the meeting. The Council will continue to include an appropriate item on agendas for all meetings, to facilitate this.

Although not explicitly required by the legislation or by the code, it is recommended that in the interests of transparency and for the benefit of all in attendance at the meeting (including members of the public) the nature as well as the existence of the interest is disclosed.

A member or co-opted member who has disclosed a pecuniary interest at a meeting must not participate (or participate further) in any discussion of the matter; and must not participate in any vote or further vote taken; and must withdraw from the room.

Members are asked to continue to pay regard to the following provisions in the code that *"You must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself"* or *"You must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned....."*

Please seek advice from the Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting should you have any doubt about your approach.

List of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

Employment (includes *"any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain"*.), **Sponsorship, Contracts, Land, Licences, Corporate Tenancies, Securities.**

For a full list of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and further Guidance on this matter please see the Guide to the New Code of Conduct and Register of Interests at Members' conduct guidelines.

<http://intranet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/Insite/Elected+members/> or contact Glenn Watson on **07776 997946** or glenn.watson@oxfordshire.gov.uk for a hard copy of the document.

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

- guidance note opposite

3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 10)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2020 (**CA3**) and to receive information arising from them.

4. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

5. Petitions and Public Address

This Cabinet meeting will be held virtually in order to conform with current guidelines regarding social distancing. Normally requests to speak at this public meeting are required by 9 am on the day preceding the published date of the meeting. However, during the current situation and to facilitate these new arrangements we are asking that requests to speak are submitted by no later than 9am four working days before the meeting i.e. 9 am on Wednesday 15 July 2020. Requests to speak should be sent to sue.whitehead@oxfordshire.gov.uk together with a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9 am 2 working days before the meeting.

Where a meeting is held virtually and the addressee is unable to participate virtually their written submission will be accepted

Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

6. Oxfordshire Growth Board Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding (Pages 11 - 34)

Cabinet Member: Leader

Forward Plan Ref: 2020/097

Contact: Sue Halliwell, Director of Planning & Place Tel: 07500 109185

Report by Corporate Director – Place & Growth and Director of the Growth Board (**CA6**).

This report proposes a revised Terms of Reference (ToR) and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the Oxfordshire Growth Board, which requires approval by each of the Oxfordshire Council Cabinet. These are presented for consideration following a recent public review of the Growth Board's role and functions, which has helped to inform the revisions made.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to

(a) Approve the Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding at Annexes 1 and 2 respectively

(b) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and the Growth Board, to make minor amendments to these documents as required to support the operational efficiency of the Growth Board's work.

7. Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund: Preferred Scheme Alignments (Pages 35 - 82)

Cabinet Member: Highway Delivery & Operations

Forward Plan Ref: 2020/043

Contact: Aron Wisdom- Programme Lead (HIF 1) Tel: 07776 244856/Gavin Belcher, Senior Transport Planner Tel: 07557 082580

Report by Director of Growth and Economy (**CA7**).

The Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund (known as HIF1) project is a vital package of highway measures to enable sustainable growth in the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district areas as identified in relevant policy documents. Officers undertook a public consultation on the preferred options that were identified during the feasibility design process and in response to a previous consultation exercise. Cabinet is requested to approve the preferred route alignment of the HIF1 project to allow the preliminary design to progress. A funding agreement has now been signed with Government securing £218m of the £234m project costs.

Preferred alignments for the four schemes that constitute the HIF1 programme have

been informed by a detailed and multi-stage optioneering exercise to identify the appropriate interventions.

A public consultation exercise was undertaken in March/April 2020 to seek the views of local people on these preferred alignments so that, where appropriate, these comments could be incorporated into the preliminary design process. The consultation yielded many comments to be considered and the schemes themselves are predominantly supported by those responding.

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the preferred alignment for HIF1. This approval is being sought as a political mandate is required to ensure that due process is undertaken and officers are given authority to proceed on this basis.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- (a) ***Approve the identified preferred alignments as illustrated in Figure 1 as the basis to progress into the next stage of scheme design for the four schemes that constitute the Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure programme.***
- (b) ***Note the various optioneering exercises that have informed the preferred alignments set out in paragraphs 24 to 30.***
- (c) ***Note the findings of the recent consultation exercise set out in paragraphs 31 to 36 which sought the views of local people and other stakeholders to be taken into consideration in the next stage of design, yielding a predominantly positive response to the preferred scheme alignments.***

NB: Slight variations to alignments maybe required during the next design phase. Any significant changes would be brought back for decision or managed through the CPO process as necessary.

8. Housing Infrastructure Fund - A40 (HIF2) Public Report (Pages 83 - 98)

Cabinet Member: Environment

Forward Plan Ref: 2020/059

Contact: Hannah Battye, Growth Manager, Central Tel: 07808 573932

Report by Assistant Director for Growth & Place (**CA8**).

N.B. The report does not contain exempt information and is available to the public. Exempt information is contained in the confidential annexes at Item 12 below. In the event that any Member or Officer wishes to discuss the information set out in the Annex to Item 7, the Cabinet will be invited to resolve to exclude the public for the consideration of that Annex by passing a resolution in relation to that item.

Oxfordshire was successful in bidding for the Housing and Infrastructure Fund (HIF) for West Oxfordshire A40 Smart Corridor. The County Council has now met all the contract pre-conditions which enables the Grant Determination Agreement Heads of Terms to be agreed and the legal agreement drafted.

In agreeing the Head of Terms, the County Council will be signing up to receiving £102m to fund the improvements to the A40 corridor which will support additional housing within West Oxfordshire and wider economic benefits.

By accepting the funding and agreeing to deliver the infrastructure by April 2024, the Council will be taking on a level of financial risk if the programme goes off track or there is non delivery and these are outlined in the report. The County Council have forward funded the development of the HIF A40 scheme upto this point of approximately £800k which will be claimed from Homes England.

The scheme is also intrinsically linked to the Science Transit Local Growth Funded (LGF) scheme which is a business case being developed to be submitted to the Department of Transport. The County Council will have to fulfil a number of conditions relating to the LGF scheme to ensure that both elements are delivered together.

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- (a) Subject to the confirmation from Homes England that the contract pre-conditions have been met and due diligence has been completed to manage programme and financial risk to the Council, authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Environment to:
 - i) approve any final detailed amendments of the drafted Heads of Terms.***
 - ii) approve the Grant Determination Agreement (GDA).******
- (b) Subject to the satisfactory completion of recommendation (i) approve the inclusion of all three elements (identified in para. 4 and Appendix 1) of the programme into the Capital Programme and report the governance of these projects at a HIF2 programme level with an overall budget provision of £102m subject to the implementation of the grant determination agreement with Homes England.***
- (c) Note the draft Heads of Terms (Annex 1) that form the basis of grant determination agreement between Homes England and Oxfordshire County Council for West Oxfordshire Housing Infrastructure Fund Grant Award.***
- (d) Note the Assurance Framework (explained in para 27) which sets out the background to the Housing Infrastructure Funding process and establishes the approach to reporting and monitoring implementation.***

9. Treasury Management 2019/20 Outturn (Pages 99 - 116)

Cabinet Member: Finance

Forward Plan Ref: 2020/027

Contact: Tim Chapple, Treasury Manager Tel: 07917 262935

Report by Director of Finance (**CA9**).

The report sets out the Treasury Management activity undertaken in the financial year 2019/20 in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice. The report includes Debt and Investment activity, Prudential Indicator Outturn, Investment Strategy, and interest receivable and payable for the financial year.

Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report, and to RECOMMEND Council to note the Council's Treasury Management Activity in 2019/20.

10. Financial Monitoring Report - July 2020 (Pages 117 - 124)

Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Finance

Forward Plan Ref: 2020/091

Contact: Hannah Doney, Head of Corporate Finance Tel: 07584 174654

Report by Director of Finance (**CA10**).

The report is the first financial monitoring report of the 2020/21 financial year. It builds on the 'Estimated Impact of Covid-19 April 2020 to June 2020' report which formed annex D of the Business Management Report to Cabinet in May. The report sets out the financial monitoring position as at 31 May 2020 including the impact of Covid-19. The report also sets out the additional funding received to date to manage the financial pressures arising from Covid-19.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:

- (a) note the contents of this report***
- (b) to ask officers to identify plans to address the potential overspend in 2020/21 arising from COVID-19 and report back to the next meeting with recommendations for action.***

11. Forward Plan and Future Business (Pages 125 - 126)

Cabinet Member: All

Contact Officer: Sue Whitehead, Committee Services Manager Tel: 07393 001213

The Cabinet Procedure Rules provide that the business of each meeting at the Cabinet is to include "updating of the Forward Plan and proposals for business to be conducted at the following meeting". Items from the Forward Plan for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet appear in the Schedule at **CA11**. This includes any updated information relating to the business for those meetings that has already been identified for inclusion in the next Forward Plan update.

The Schedule is for noting, but Cabinet Members may also wish to take this opportunity to identify any further changes they would wish to be incorporated in the next Forward Plan update.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.

12. Exempt Item

Item 13

In the event that any Member or Officer wishes to discuss the information set out in the Annexes to Agenda Item 8 attached as Item 13, the Cabinet will be invited to resolve to

exclude the public for the consideration of those Annexes by passing a resolution in relation in the following terms:

"that the public be excluded during the consideration of the Annexes since it is likely that if they were present during that discussion there would be a disclosure of "exempt" information as described in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 and specified below the item in the Agenda".

NOTE: The report does not contain exempt information and is available to the public.

THE ANNEXES TO THE ITEM NAMED HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC AND SHOULD BE REGARDED AS 'CONFIDENTIAL' BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS ENTITLED TO RECEIVE THEM.

Item 14

It is RECOMMENDED that the public be excluded for the duration of item 14 (since it is likely that if they were present during that item there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and specified below in relation to that item and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information on the grounds set out in that item.

THE REPORT RELATING TO THE EXEMPT ITEM HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC AND SHOULD BE REGARDED AS STRICTLY PRIVATE TO MEMBERS AND OFFICERS ENTITLED TO RECEIVE THEM.

THIS ALSO MEANS THAT THE CONTENTS OF THE ANNEXES SET OUT AT ITEM 13 AND THE WHOLE REPORT AT ITEM 14 SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH OTHERS AND NO COPIES SHOULD BE MADE.

13. Housing Infrastructure Fund - A40 (HIF 2) - Exempt Annexes to Item 8 (Pages 127 - 144)

The information in this case is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed categories:

3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, in that a negotiation is ongoing and would prejudice the position of the authority in the process of that negotiation and the Council's standing generally in relation to such matters in future, to the detriment of the Council's ability properly to discharge its fiduciary and other duties as a public authority

The annexes containing exempt information under the above paragraph are attached.

14. Bicester Garden Town Capital Funding - Junctions Improvement (Pages 145 - 160)

Cabinet Member: Highway Delivery & Operations

Forward Plan Ref: 2020/060

Contact: Hannah Battye, Growth Manager, Central Tel: 07808 573932

Report by Assistant Director for Growth & Place (**CA14**).

The information in this case is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed categories:

3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, in that a negotiation is ongoing and would prejudice the position of the authority in the process of that negotiation and the Council's standing generally in relation to such matters in future, to the detriment of the Council's ability properly to discharge its fiduciary and other duties as a public authority

This proposal has been developed in partnership with Cherwell District Council (CDC) who will be taking a sister report through their formal governance process. For the purpose of this proposal CDC will be the accountable body for the funding, and OCC will be the delivery body for the schemes described.

The report details the proposed schemes and the current position on each.

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 16 June 2020 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 2.55 pm.

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Ian Hudspeth – in the Chair
Councillor Mrs Judith Heathcoat
Councillor Lawrie Stratford
Councillor Steve Harrod
Councillor Ian Corkin
Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale
Councillor Yvonne Constance OBE
Councillor David Bartholomew
Councillor Mark Gray

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Liz Brighthouse – Agenda Item 6

Officers: Yvonne Rees, Chief Executive; Claire Taylor, Corporate Director Customers and Organisation Development
Lorna Baxter, Director of Finance; Steve Jorden, Corporate Director of Commercial Development Assets and Investment; Deborah Miller, Law & Governance.

The Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting, and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda, reports and schedule, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

45/20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(Agenda Item. 1)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Liam Walker

46/20 MINUTES

(Agenda Item. 3)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 May 2020 were approved and signed as an accurate record.

47/20 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

(Agenda Item. 4)

Councillor John Howson had given notice of the following question to Councillor Yvonne Constance:

How many responses were received to the consultation on the Closure of Walton Street that ended on 29th May?

Councillor Constance replied:

As this consultation only closed recently the detail of responses received in all formats (online, via email, postal and as petitions) is still being analysed, therefore the full breakdown is not yet available, but I can confirm that we received 487 responses online, and have recorded 147 emails so far, the final number is not yet known. We have also received at least three petitions.

Supplementary Question:

That is a very significant response and demonstrates the depth of feeling on the issue. If I may, I would like to ask about something that has arisen from the consultation but was not a part of it.

Residents of Lekford Road have pointed out there is a 7.5 tonnes weight limit on their road. They would like to know how that weight limit is enforced and what further measures might be taken to prevent heavy vehicles using their road?

Reply:

I am very aware of 7.5 tonne weight limit on Lekford Road. St. Margaret's Road is the designated route for heavier HGV traffic. We are aware that there does seem to be greater use of Lekford Road and we have informed Trading Standards who are responsible for enforcement. We are working with Lekford Road residents who have agreed to carry out a further traffic survey in the hope that we can resolve the issue. We are not sure how we can stop heavy vehicles from using Lekford Road, but we are looking for a solution.

Councillor Howson replied:

The present signs are described by the government as in the Signs Giving Orders classification – the addition of ‘for access’ makes the issue more complicated, one solution could be to remove the ‘for access’ from the signs.

48/20 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda Item. 5)

The Chairman had agreed the following request to speak:

Item 6	Speaker
Item 6 – Oxfordshire County Council Post COVID Planning: Restart, Recover, Renew	Councillor Liz Brighthouse, Opposition Leader

The address is recorded at the item.

49/20 OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL POST COVID PLANNING: RESTART, RECOVER, RENEW

(Agenda Item. 6)

As set out under Rule 19(a) of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, this decision was exempt from Call-In as it was deemed urgent to enable the actions and proposals in the report to be implemented immediately without any delay, which is important given the fluid situation with covid guidance and the need to respond and adapt.

Cabinet had before it a report which set out Oxfordshire County Council's approach to post COVID-19 planning and recovery following the national period of lockdown and a prolonged period of operation within an emergency response context.

Councillor Liz Brighthouse explained that in moving forward from the past 5 months where Corona Virus had dominated the lives of people across the world, there was a need to build on the commitment of all those public sector workers who had given so much to treat and care for those suffering from the virus, those who had kept us safe, those who fed us and those who continued to educate our children or were just there as a friendly voice on the end of a phone. That goodwill must not be squandered, and we must recognise and mend the cracks in our public services which became so visible. Referring to the tragic death of George Floyd in the US which had prompted waves of protests across the world, in Oxfordshire despite the threat of COVID many people went onto the streets and into the Parks to call for an end to racism and discrimination against the black community. The BAME community had suffered disproportionately as a result of COVID and many children from that community will have fallen even further behind in their educational attainment.

She welcomed the statement from the Leader in relation to Black Lives matter and

believed that the approach in the document could pave the way to an Oxfordshire which was Inclusive, Diverse and Thriving. Many of the pillars were in place in the Corporate Plan and the Director of Public Health Report, although some of the objectives would need to be reprioritised. The suggestion to prioritise Health Checks in our BAME Communities was welcome as was work with vulnerable children and families. Revisiting and reprioritising needed to be undertaken urgently. It was important also to continue and learn from the work which was being done in Banbury as a result of the DPH report. Working together and with and not just for Communities had to be the norm.

The lockdown had changed working and travelling patterns. Inevitably some people would be going back into offices, but as this report considered, there was a need to ensure that the digital technology which had been developed was used and that innovative ways of delivering services took priority, to ensure that no one was digitally homeless. In education, children should have Chrome Books etc, and access to the internet. We had already considered how technology could be used to access and deliver services and that now needed to be accelerated. It was important that there was inclusive consultation with communities across the county. Everywhere was different and one size did not fit all but unless we have the tools of inclusivity, we will lose the opportunity to change the lives of the those suffering the most disadvantage. There was a need to be clear and accountable. That meant assurance that community engagement was taking place, collecting the evidence so that when outcomes could be properly scrutinised as we go forward. She sought assurance from the Leader for the above.

The financial impact on Local Government of the pandemic was still uncertain and there would need to be significant injections of money to reach the end of the year without a deficit which would have to be funded. The LGA was lobbying for additional funding. She questioned whether the Leader had been told how much of the £300m the Council would get for test and trace, and whether it would be enough to cover the actual cost?

The Leader had been very active in highlighting the problems associated with the infection control funds £7.3m. 75% was allocated to Oxfordshire Care Homes on bed numbers. She asked if the Leader was any further forward in securing this money and whether the county would lose almost £2m if the Government was not satisfied with the returns from the Care Homes about the expenditure of the 75%? We have received £27m of the £64m deficit. Whilst I accept there are at this point of time variables as to what we might receive. how confident is the Cabinet that Oxfordshire along with other local authorities will receive what is due to them?

At the beginning of this Pandemic Local Authorities were doing what they do best responding to need in their local communities we were testing and tracing which is the bread and butter of Public Health Authorities who regularly undertake this activity in relation to 100 notifiable diseases. That stopped and National Government stepped in and we know the catastrophic narrative which followed.

Today the officers of this Council, who I thank for all they have done throughout this awful time. have put in front of you a thought through deliverable report which will engage with other local authorities and stakeholders alongside our staff and their Trade Unions, our communities and all the people who live there. It will be overseen by robust

local Government Arrangements to deliver recovery for all our residents. We look forward to working with you to make this happen.

Councillor Ian Hudspeth thanked Councillor Brighthouse for her support and assured her that he felt it was very important to understand the impact of COVID, particularly on the BAME community and work to ensure that no one was losing out as recovery took place. In relation to test and trace, he believed they would receive about £2.9m which should be sufficient to ramp up the services they already had. There was a very good network working across the county, with all councils working together to make sure environmental health departments across the board were going to target areas of hotspots and clusters so that they could clamp down as quickly as possible. In relation to money for Care Homes, they had received 50% of funding and would receive a second tranche of funding if requirements and criteria's set by Government were met. Oxfordshire had already received £27m to meet the deficit, early estimates of the overall impact across the County, started off quite high, but as they were working through as to what the actuals might be, it was hoped that the figure would come down. However, there would still be a deficit and he would be lobbying as much as possible to try to ensure there was not a need to make cuts.

Councillor David Bartholomew, Cabinet Member for Finance assured Councillor Brighthouse in relation to Monitoring and Analysis. The finance team had done an exemplary job of monitoring the costs of COVID to the Council, together with modelling and projecting future impacts, including key financial considerations that they were reporting back to Government whenever appropriate. He cautioned that the challenges faced by local authorities should not be under-estimated, dealing with so many unknowns which would have an impact, such as social distancing, 2 meters or 1 meter made a huge difference on areas such as home to school transport, which would have a considerable financial impact on the Council. Everything possible was being done to model those scenarios, ensuring that Government is fully aware of the financial implications of COVID on the Council now, and going forward, being as far sighted as possible.

Councillor Ian Hudspeth, Leader of the Council thanked staff for tirelessly working so hard to continue to deliver services throughout the entire period. Staff who could not do their jobs from home had taken up jobs had been redeployed to take up other challenges in the Council. He emphasised that the Council would not be returning to the way it was, there was a need to give the best possible opportunity to rebuilt, reboot and restart the economy, making sure that those people who were not so fortunate were not overlooked after and to reduce inequalities. This was an opportunity to give assurances to stakeholders that planning was taking place now, standing up services to make sure if there is a local outbreak in Oxfordshire, the resources will be there to deal with it to ensure the safety of the community. The long-term future of Oxfordshire could look very different. Another area which was very important was local communities, with many groups opening up across the county, supporting each other, supporting the vulnerable and assisting the formal services. He hoped to retain that sense of community spirt going forward and particularly the local knowledge about the community the groups held. He was impressed by local response to getting thing restarted.

He emphasised that recovery was going to be about the short, medium and long term

around social, cultural, health, community and economic. In order to address impacts, there was a need to understand how to build a sustainable post COVID Oxfordshire, and to ensure that if a solution wasn't working, not to be afraid to try something else. The local authority had a role to set long term plans for the wellbeing and sustainability of communities, it was unknown what the impact would be of COVID on young people; interrupted education; recession for local businesses and people entering the job market and the changes that would come about as a result of social distancing; the funding of local authorities and loss of income. As such, OCC stood ready to work with the community, voluntary sector, business community, health and local authority partners to ensure the long term COVID response built on Oxfordshire's strengths to support those most impacted. He commended the report to the Cabinet and moved the recommendations, subject to recommendation 1.5 being changed from 'noting' to recognising and thanking' staff.

Councillor Ian Corkin, Cabinet Member for Council Business & Partnerships welcomed the report. The report by its nature was functional, and he emphasised the importance of remembering those who had lost their lives. Transformation was already in the DNA of the Council, and the response to COVID was to boost those efforts, with people being the key to that success. Over the past months, Customer Services had all been dispersed to work at home and all of the ambitious targets that had been set pre-COVID had been achieved, despite the fact that the team had taken on the responsibility for looking after the 14,000 shielding residents in Oxfordshire, receiving and making outward bounds calls to them.

ICT and digital had taken the important role of enabling the systems and hardware that we work with, together with bringing everyone's skill base up to a level to be able to work remotely. Going forward he would be looking at how they could embed the digital learning into how services could be delivered in the future. The Communications Team had been vital for keeping the public informed, and this would become more important as the Public Health Team took on more responsibility for local Test and Trace. The digital infrastructure, including super-fast broadband in the County, delivered with our partners had ensured the success of the last few months and teams were now working on ultra-fast Broadband for the future. The report showed that services could be adapted for the future He thanked all staff in his portfolio for the tremendous work of the past few months.

Councillor Judith Heathcoat, Deputy Leader of the Council supported the comments made by Councillor Hudspeth and Corkin made. All staff had made a superb effort for the residents of Oxfordshire in the delivery of services the Council was responsible for. We have not only helped locally but had been involved in National participation. HR staff had been working from home to ensure there had been no break in the provision they were required to provide. Trading standards had been effectively dealing with the despicable scams that had occurred during the lockdown period. The fire & rescue had also gone over and above their duties, not only looking after road collisions and fires, but undertaking activities which had increased the potential of bringing infection into their workplace and homes, with staff having to come back to the station and sterilise all their equipment each time they returned. When they were supporting the ambulance service the staff had been complimented on their driving skills, which was a wonderful testament to the staff. The Fire and Rescue Service had managed to maintain 89% on call availability, despite some of the Fire Fighters having to go into isolation because

there was a vulnerable member in their home or having COVID in their home, the service had whole-heartedly served the Community. She thanked all staff in her portfolio.

In relation to page 11 of the report, she noted that the Corporate Plan had in fact been revised as part of the 2020 Budget process and not 2016 as stated in the report.

Councillor Harrod, Cabinet Member for Children & Family Services added his thanks to all staff and particularly those in the Children's Services arena whom like others, had operated in extremely difficult circumstances. In terms of looking forward to the recovery, he was already seeing changes in the area in terms of service delivery, which could quite readily continue into the longer term, such as online consultations with young people on social media, therefore obviating the need for many face to face meetings with all the consequential negatives in travel, time, pollution and cost. He was very confident that the team would go on to develop many more new ways of delivering services to the residents of Oxfordshire as they moved forward.

Councillor Constance, Cabinet Member for Environment spoke to the area of Transport. Lockdown had created a unique position for Transport, as not only had the roads emptied, allowing the delivery and operations of road maintenance to make great strides, but most importantly those in cities had urged her to take note and learn and take advantage of the reduction in traffic air pollution and noise and the opportunities for pedestrians. They were listening and were looking to ensure what they planned and spent would benefit the whole County. They had undertaken a councillor survey to understand the priorities in their divisions. Government funding had presented them with the opportunity to make immediate starts. They had received £600,000 from the Active Travel grant which had allowed them to bring forward projects in the four weeks to be completed within the 8-week timeframe government required. Up to a further £2.4 million was expected. This sat within a much bigger programme of transport improvements and growth within transport provision across the whole of Oxfordshire. They had been working on improving cycle provision in Oxford city for many years and Access to Headington was just completing, works on the Botley Road had commenced on 26th May, and Cuttleslow and Wolvercote Roundabouts had seen improvements for cyclists.

They still expected to bring forward plans for a workplace parking levy and a congestion monitoring scheme, with consultation in the Autumn. Immediately, ahead of the major programmes in the active travel programme, they were hoping to introduce bus gates in central Oxford; 20 mph speed limits across the County; improved cycle provision in terms of storage and parking and cycle routes. The work would continue across the County.

Councillor Mark Gray, Cabinet Member for Local Communities added a huge vote of thanks to all those people in the County who had supported their local communities. Many thousands of people had supported the community by delivering medication, delivering food, setting up new food banks and a huge variety of activities all over the County. He had heard on Radio Oxford that 40,000 had been helped by a volunteer, which was about 6% of the population had been helped by a volunteer in the community.

The Council had been linking up the statutory and the voluntary services and he wanted to see this continue into the future. Currently, they were undertaking a piece of work with the local voluntary sector, looking at where the infrastructure money went, it was a substantial amount of money each year and he wanted to ensure they continued to work with those locally based community organisations.

Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services thanked the staff in schools. Throughout the whole period over 94% of schools had stayed open, providing teaching and care to the children of care workers and to those children who were deemed disadvantaged or vulnerable. They continued to do that work, though were now struggling bringing in the extra cohorts which was proving to be extremely difficult. The picture across the County was mixed, which was to be expected. The County Council's Education Service was continuing to work with all schools to help and support as much as they could. The service had been there throughout providing advice and interpreting the extensive guidance and documents coming from Government and would do all they could to foster the catch-up scheme which would hopefully be coming over the summer months. They had also applied for a lot of laptops for disadvantaged children, which were due to arrive shortly and would be distributed immediately.

She thanked staff, such as the Library Service who had taken up other areas of work during the pandemic including marshalling traffic and delivering registration documents. She was pleased to announce that the Registration Service was now open again for registering births, and they were now contacting all parents who had given birth prior to the 9th March. There was a huge backlog, but the service would be working hard to get through them as quickly as possible.

She welcomed and referred to the fantastic uptake of on-line Library and History Services.

Councillor Lawrie Stratford, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health added his thanks and referred to the excellent work carried out by the Adult Social Care Team and Public Health Team. These services had been dealing with people who were most vulnerable, such as older people those with mental health and addictions. He remained very positive that the 'good neighbour' attitude of communities pulling together to look after those most vulnerable in their area that had prevailed throughout the lockdown period could continue into the future to improve wellbeing for all.

RESOLVED: (nem con)

- 1.1 to note the contents of the report and endorse the approach to planning for recovery for the immediate, transitional and longer term as set out.
- 1.2 to request that officers continue to work within the Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TVLRF) framework with a specific place-based focus on the needs of Oxfordshire and its communities within that context.
- 1.3 to agree that the Joint Cherwell District and Oxfordshire County Council's Member Partnership Working Group co-ordinates all partnership related recovery work and that the current Transformation Cabinet Advisory Group

(CAG) expands its remit to include long term recovery planning as well as organisational change.

- 1.4 to note the financial impacts as set out and request that officers prepare financial and transformational plans which align with the council's policy response to COVID and its impacts. This should include refreshing the medium-term financial plan and savings targets, fully renewing the Council's corporate plan and undertaking consultation and impact assessments as required.
- 1.5 recognising and thanking the council's workforce had been key to the Oxfordshire response to the pandemic and to ask senior officers to ensure there are effective organisational development plans in place to engage, support and develop the workforce to address the short, medium and long-term consequences of COVID-19, including lessons learnt.

50/20 FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

(Agenda Item. 7)

The Cabinet considered a list of items (CA7) for the immediately forthcoming meetings of the Cabinet together with changes and additions set out in the schedule of addenda.

RESOLVED: to note the items currently identified for forthcoming meetings.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing

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Division(s): All

CABINET – 21 JULY 2020

OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING: COMMON REPORT TO COUNCIL CABINETS

Report by Corporate Director Planning and Growth

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to

- (a) Approve the Terms of Reference and Memorandum of Understanding at Annexes 1 and 2 respectively**
- (b) Delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and the Growth Board, to make minor amendments to these documents as required to support the operational efficiency of the Growth Board's work.**

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Revised Growth Board Terms of Reference.

Appendix 2: Revised Growth Board Memorandum of Understanding.

Introduction

2. This report proposes a revised Terms of Reference (ToR) and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the Oxfordshire Growth Board, which requires approval by each of the Oxfordshire Council Cabinets / Executive. These are presented for consideration following a recent public review of the Growth Board's role and functions, which has helped to inform the revisions made.

Background

3. The Oxfordshire Growth Board ('the Board') was established in 2014 as a Joint Committee¹ of the six councils of Oxfordshire, together with key strategic partners. It was set up to facilitate and enable joint working on matters concerning economic development, strategic planning and growth. The Board's establishment was premised on strengthening partnership arrangements across Oxfordshire for pragmatic working on key strategic issues. It has

¹ under s101 (5), 102 Local Government Act 1972 (LGA 1972) and s9EB Local Government Act 2000 (LGA 2000) and pursuant to the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.

successfully done this by overseeing the delivery of cross-county projects that the councils of Oxfordshire were seeking to deliver in a collaborative way – between local authorities, the Local Enterprise Partnership and wider partners and stakeholders².

4. On 24 September 2019, the Board agreed to carry out a formal review of its role and function to ensure that the most pragmatic and effective arrangements are in place to enable collaboration and delivery on Oxfordshire wide priorities. The review welcomed the views of the public, partners and councillors through several engagement exercises including workshops and an online survey; with over 250 contributions received.
5. The review found that there have been a series of unique successes and opportunities realised through the Growth Board collaboration and the duty to cooperate, including securing over £500m of investment in Oxfordshire in recent years. There were however areas identified for improvement concerning communication and the integration of environmental issues within the Board's work. On 28 January 2020, the Board requested that the recommended outcomes of the review be developed into more detailed proposals. A more comprehensive stage one report concerning progress against the outcomes of that review will be presented to the Growth Board on 28 July 2020.
6. The revised ToR and MoU for the Growth Board have been updated to take account of the conclusions from the review. These documents are matters for decision within the remit of each local authority Cabinet / Executive and are appended to this report for approval. Each local authority must agree to these amendments before they can take effect.
7. Before further progress is made in implementing the outcomes of the Growth Board review, it is critical that a robust baseline of core governance documents is agreed, on which further changes can build. Whilst the local, regional and national context continues to evolve concerning the role of Growth Boards and sub-regional governance structures across the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, there is, and there will continue to be, a need to keep these documents under regular review.
8. In this respect, the adoption of these documents represents stage one of two in implementing outcomes from the Growth Board review. Subject to the new purpose and ToR being agreed by all six local authorities, stage two will take a more detailed look at opportunities to update the Board's operating arrangements to reflect the increasing importance of protecting the environment and tackling climate change. This will include assessing how the Board interacts with emerging proposals for a Local Nature Partnership for Oxfordshire. Any recommended changes will be presented for agreement at the appropriate level.

Growth Board Terms of Reference

² As a Joint Committee, the Board may discharge executive functions if delegated to it by each constituent local authority, but each constituent authority retains the ability to exercise all executive and non-executive functions generally and specifically in relation to economic development including where applicable provision of housing, strategic spatial planning and strategic transport planning.

9. The Growth Board's revised ToR now have a clear purpose from the outset, with an emphasis on sustainable development, the pursuit of a zero-carbon future, and the oversight of delegated programmes of work within this remit as required. This includes amendments throughout to give a greater emphasis on sustainability in the Board's work, reflecting feedback received during the review. This is perhaps the most significant change in how the Board is organised, reflecting the specific importance of environmental preservation and tackling climate change in Oxfordshire's future. An early draft of this new purpose received positive feedback from some public contributors to the review, as well as formal support from the Board's cross-party and cross-authority Scrutiny Panel in January 2020. Once this new purpose receives the relevant approvals, it can be communicated more widely and integrated as a key element of ongoing work.
10. The name of the Growth Board has also been scaled back significantly in the ToR in favour of reference to the "Joint Committee." The review recognised that several public contributors were critical of the Board's name, often citing that it did not take account of the importance of sustainability and the environment.
11. When the previous ToR were last considered in April 2018, the ToR for the Advisory Sub-Groups and the Scrutiny Panel were still in development. Now that they have been established, the Board's ToR does not need to list the specific detail of how each of these external groups will operate. The revised ToR instead now summarise in general terms the role of these groups and redirects to the separate ToR that now exist. This provides flexibility to establish additional sub-groups as required by the Growth Board's work programme. Both the Advisory Sub-groups and the Scrutiny Panel are non-statutory and, whilst they are a critical component of the Board's work, they do not hold any formal decision-making powers.
12. Non-voting members have been renamed as associate members. This has been done in order to move away from voting terminology being a defining feature of their role. Instead, the associate status brings a parity of esteem between colleagues on the Board. The revised draft does however retain the distinction that associate members will not be able to vote on local authority matters.
13. Included in the new ToR is a provision to request a subscription fee from each member of the Board. This is to raise the visibility and transparency of the need for continued joint funding arrangements for the Board's work to be delivered. The Board currently has a spending pot for administrative costs of approximately £24k which has no current commitment to top up. Separately, approximately £118k in staffing costs are divided equally and recharged in arrears to all six local authorities each year. Subscription fees will enable a more formalised budgeting structure to exist for the Board's operations, and for budget approval to be recommended to each authority in February. This will bring greater visibility to the ongoing costs and improve our ability to plan for future budget rounds.

14. As required under the emerging Oxford to Cambridge Arc governance arrangements, provision has been included in the ToR for the Growth Board to appoint representatives to relevant bodies as required. It is anticipated that greater clarity will come forward in the next year about the precise implications of the emerging Arc concept, and the role of local authorities and the Board in that process.
15. Provision has been included in the new ToR for members to withdraw from the Board, which provides certainty around the process if this were to occur. Importantly, it specifies periods of notice which will allow enough time for withdrawal to take place, and for budget impacts to be assessed.

Memorandum of Understanding

16. The Memorandum of Understanding between Oxfordshire County Council and the Growth Board was established in April 2018. This is principally an operational document to support the administration of the Board's work. A revised version is included at Appendix 2 for agreement, which must also be agreed by each of the partner local authority Cabinets. The updated MoU provides greater operational clarity concerning the handling freedom of Information requests related to the Growth Board. Several minor changes have also been included to mirror the terminology and arrangements now included in the revised ToR for the Growth Board
17. The revised ToR and MoU for the Growth Board have been updated to take account of the conclusions from the review. These documents are matters for decision within the remit of each local authority Cabinet / Executive and are appended to this report for approval. Each local authority must agree to these amendments before they can take effect.
18. Before further progress is made in implementing the outcomes of the Growth Board review, it is critical that a robust baseline of core governance documents is agreed, on which further changes can build. Whilst the local, regional and national context continues to evolve concerning the role of Growth Boards and sub-regional governance structures across the Oxford to Cambridge Arc, there is, and there will continue to be, a need to keep these documents under regular review.

Exempt Information

19. None

Financial and Staff Implications

20. The introduction of a subscription fee will enable greater transparency and forward planning in the budgeting for the Growth Board's support arrangements. These are not new costs for the Board's management, but instead a clearer process by which budgeting can be undertaken. This report does not propose any changes to the costs associated with supporting the Board.

Equalities Implications

21. The amendments to the Growth Board's ToR include improvements to public participation ensure a clear and transparent process to engaging with Growth Board matters. Any activities supported through the Growth Board, including any funded schemes/programmes, will go through their own social and community impact assessments.

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Corporate Director for Planning and Growth

Background papers:

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Revised Growth Board Terms of Reference.

Appendix 2: Revised Growth Board Memorandum of Understanding.

Contact Officer: Susan Halliwell
July 2020

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Oxfordshire Growth Board Joint Committee Terms of Reference June 2020

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 Oxfordshire's growing economy is set to create challenges and opportunities for the County related to housing, infrastructure, public services and the environment. These issues will best be addressed through joined up planning between local councils which prioritises sustainable development and quality of life. Collective planning, where it makes sense to do so, will be the most effective means of minimising the unwanted impacts of a growing economy, whilst leveraging the maximum benefit from the opportunities it brings for our existing and future communities.
- 1.2 The Oxfordshire Growth Board ("Joint Committee") will:
- 1.3 Coordinate local efforts to manage economic, housing and infrastructure development in a way that is inclusive and maximises local social and environmental benefits;
- 1.4 Support the development of local planning policy that meets the UK Government's stated aim of net zero carbon by 2050, and contributes towards biodiversity gain whilst embracing the changes needed for a low carbon world; and,
- 1.5 Seek to secure funding in the pursuit of these aims and oversee the delivery of related work programmes delegated to it by the Joint Committee's constituent local authority members.

2.0 Membership

- 2.1 The Joint Committee's core membership includes the local authorities within Oxfordshire comprising, Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. Voting rights are reserved to local authority members only.
- 2.2 It also includes co-opted associate members from those organisations listed below:
 - Chair of OxLEP
 - Chair, Oxfordshire Skills Board
 - Universities Representative
 - OXLEP Business Representative-Bicester
 - OXLEP Business Representative-Oxford City
 - OXLEP Business Representative-Science Vale
 - Homes England Representative
 - DEFRA Agencies Representative
 - Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group Representative
- 2.3 When considering transport infrastructure matters, Network Rail and Highways England will have the right to attend as associate members.

- 2.4 As the Joint Committee is constituted to be able to discharge executive functions if delegated to it by the constituent authorities, then the appointed person must be from the Executive of the constituent authorities. There should be one member from each constituent authority.
- 2.5 Each constituent authority shall appoint a substitute (also being an Executive member). The substitute member shall have the same rights of speaking and voting at the meetings as the member for whom the substitution is made.
- 2.6 The Joint Committee, with the agreement of the local authority members, may co-opt other associate members to its membership where it is considered conducive to the effective consideration of any matter.
- 2.7 The Joint Committee may appoint representatives to the other outside bodies for which the Committee has membership.

3.0 Governance

- 3.1 The Oxfordshire Growth Board is a Joint Committee under s101 (5), 102 Local Government Act 1972 (LGA 1972) and s9EB Local Government Act 2000 (LGA 2000) and pursuant to the Local Authorities (Arrangement for the Discharge of Functions) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 3.2 Notwithstanding the above each constituent authority will retain all non-executive and executive functions generally and specifically in relation to economic development, housing provision, strategic spatial planning and strategic transport planning.
- 3.3 The Joint Committee will meet in public subject to the provisions of s100 LGA 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985. The Joint Committee will be hosted under local government arrangements and chairing will be rotated between the local authorities on an annual basis in line with the arrangements at 9.1.
- 3.4 The policy advice and support will be provided by the Joint Committee's Executive Officer Group (Chaired by the Growth Board Director), Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, reporting to the Chief Executive Group of the constituent authorities.
- 3.5 The resources and capacity required to deliver the Joint Committee's work programmes, and the work of any associated sub groups, will be agreed by the Chief Executive Group.

4.0 General functions

- 4.1 To facilitate and enable collaboration between local authorities and key partners to manage economic, housing and infrastructure development in a way that is inclusive and maximises local social and environmental benefits.

- 4.2 To facilitate strategic alignment of spatial, economic and infrastructure plans in a way that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable in order to safeguard Oxfordshire's unique historical, cultural and environmental character.
- 4.3 To facilitate collective engagement of Joint Committee Partners with other national, regional and sub-regional bodies on matters concerning infrastructure and strategic planning and where relevant, comment on wider proposals and decisions from national agencies, where these have a strategic impact on Oxfordshire.
- 4.4 To act as the voice of Oxfordshire to Government and other national and Sub National bodies to ensure Oxfordshire's infrastructure and housing needs are recognised in future investment priorities and funding.
- 4.5 To provide a strategic partnership forum for the identification and development of sustainable strategies and plans for Oxfordshire related to spatial planning, economic development, housing and transport.
- 4.6 To coordinate the prioritisation of funding from devolved funding sources for infrastructure schemes, where this funding is not already within the remit of the Local Transport Authority, to ensure that decisions are made in one place and supported by all relevant partners and stakeholders.
- 4.7 To oversee the delivery of detailed work programmes as delegated to the Joint Committee by the constituent authorities, as set out under specific functions at 5.0.
- 4.8 To bid for the allocation of resources and investment to support the above purposes.

5.0 Specific Functions

Strategic Planning

- 5.1 To oversee joint work on cross border issues to ensure partners meet the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate under S33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and wider national planning policy.
- 5.2 To assess whether strategic spatial planning, infrastructure and public services are integrated and delivered in a sustainable way, and to make recommendations to encourage this.
- 5.3 To monitor the production of collective spatial plan studies as determined by the Joint Committee (including the Oxfordshire Plan 2050).
- 5.4 To act as the voice of Oxfordshire in respect of the emerging Oxford to Cambridge Arc and to appoint representatives on behalf of the Joint Committee as required.

The Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal

- 5.5 To oversee and facilitate delivery of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal ("the Deal"), including:

- 5.6 To prioritise and allocate all funding from the Deal and from the Accountable Body to the body responsible for delivery of projects.
- 5.7 To approve and monitor the implementation of work programmes for the delivery of the Deal (including infrastructure, affordable housing funding and capacity funding).
- 5.8 To oversee the delivery of a productivity stream work programme to be delivered by OxLEP.
- 5.9 To monitor the production of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (under Section 28 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) and associated work programmes. The draft plan will be subject to examination and the adoption of the plan will require a decision by each constituent authority at key milestones.
- 5.10 To establish Advisory Sub Groups to oversee delivery of work programmes to meet the agreed milestones and targets set out in the Deal relating to Infrastructure, Affordable Housing and the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.
- 5.11 To receive and publish quarterly performance and finance monitoring reports as set out in the Deal Delivery Plan.
- 5.12 To seek agreement on alignment between national and regional and local funding streams in the fields of activity listed above and prioritise competitive funding bids made on behalf of the Joint Committee or where the bid process is Oxfordshire wide.

6.0 Voting

- 6.1 Only local authority Members (or their substitutes) shall be designated as voting members and shall be entitled to one vote on items of business considered by the Joint Committee, although members intend to agree matters on a unanimous basis where possible.
- 6.2 A majority vote shall be required. In the event of there being an equal number of votes for and against a particular proposition, a casting vote by the Chair may be exercised.

7.0 Quorum and Safeguard

- 7.1 The quorum for a meeting shall be four voting members.
- 7.2 Where the effect of a particular proposition, if adopted by the Joint Committee on a majority basis, would give rise to policy, contractual or financial implications for a constituent authority that it does not support, that authority may opt out of participation in that proposition in so far as it affects their authority before any vote is taken but this will not prevent the other parties proceeding with the proposition. In respect of other matters, all other voting will be on a normal majority basis.
- 7.3 Normal rules as to declarations of interest to be applied to local authority members in accordance with the respective Council's Code of Conduct.

8.0 Accountable Body

- 8.1 The Accountable Body for the Joint Committee is Oxfordshire County Council. It will provide Section 151 and Monitoring Officer roles to the Committee in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between Oxfordshire County Council and the Joint Committee.
- 8.2 The County Council's Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) will provide the Joint Committee with quarterly financial reports for funding that has been allocated directly to Oxfordshire County Council as the Accountable Body. These reports will provide the Joint Committee with an overview of the funds spent and funds committed against funds allocated.
- 8.3 For those programmes and funding streams where another local authority is the Accountable Body, the relevant Section 151 Officer will provide the financial and performance information to the County Council's Section 151 Officer, for integration into the quarterly reporting process.

9.0 Meetings

- 9.1 The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Joint Committee will be elected at the first meeting in each Growth Board year, which runs from 1 June to 31 May.
- 9.2 The Growth Board Director shall be responsible for convening meetings in consultation with the Chief Executive of the authority which holds chairing responsibilities.
- 9.3 Meetings shall usually be held six times each year. However, meetings may be called by the Chair, Monitoring Officer, Chief Executives Group, or any three voting members of the Joint Committee, in circumstances where business cannot be reasonably deferred to the next scheduled meeting.
- 9.4 Agendas and minutes will be published, and meetings held in public, in accordance with the requirements set out in the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985. A Forward Plan of items to be considered will be published online each month, and included with each agenda.
- 9.5 Public speaking procedures will be established in line with a separate protocol as agreed by the Joint Committee.

10. Advisory Sub Groups

- 10.1 The Joint Committee will establish Advisory Sub Groups to oversee specific work programmes or broader thematic areas as required. Sub groups, reporting into the Joint Committee, will be managed in accordance with separately published terms of reference as agreed by the Joint Committee.
- 10.2 The role, remit and membership of Advisory Sub Groups will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain flexible to the demands of ongoing and new programmes of work.

11. Scrutiny Arrangements

- 11.1 The Joint Committee will establish a non-statutory Scrutiny Panel with a cross party membership of councillors from each constituent local authority, with a role to review decisions and actions taken by the Joint Committee. The Scrutiny Panel, reporting into the Joint Committee, will be managed in accordance with separately published terms of reference as agreed by the Joint Committee.
- 11.2 The Scrutiny Panel will not be strictly constituted in accordance with the statutory provisions of the LGA 2000, and will therefore not impact on the statutory overview and scrutiny responsibilities of the constituent authorities under the LGA 2000.

12. Funding Contributions

- 12.1 The budget for the Joint Committee's administration will be endorsed no later than 1 December of the preceding financial year by the local authority membership of the Growth Board. The cost of meeting the expenditure planned in the budget shall, to the extent not met from other sources, be divided among all members of the Joint Committee, with discretion to vary fees between associate and local authority membership.
- 12.2 The budget endorsed by the Joint Committee will subsequently be recommended to each Local Authority member for approval during the February budget setting process.

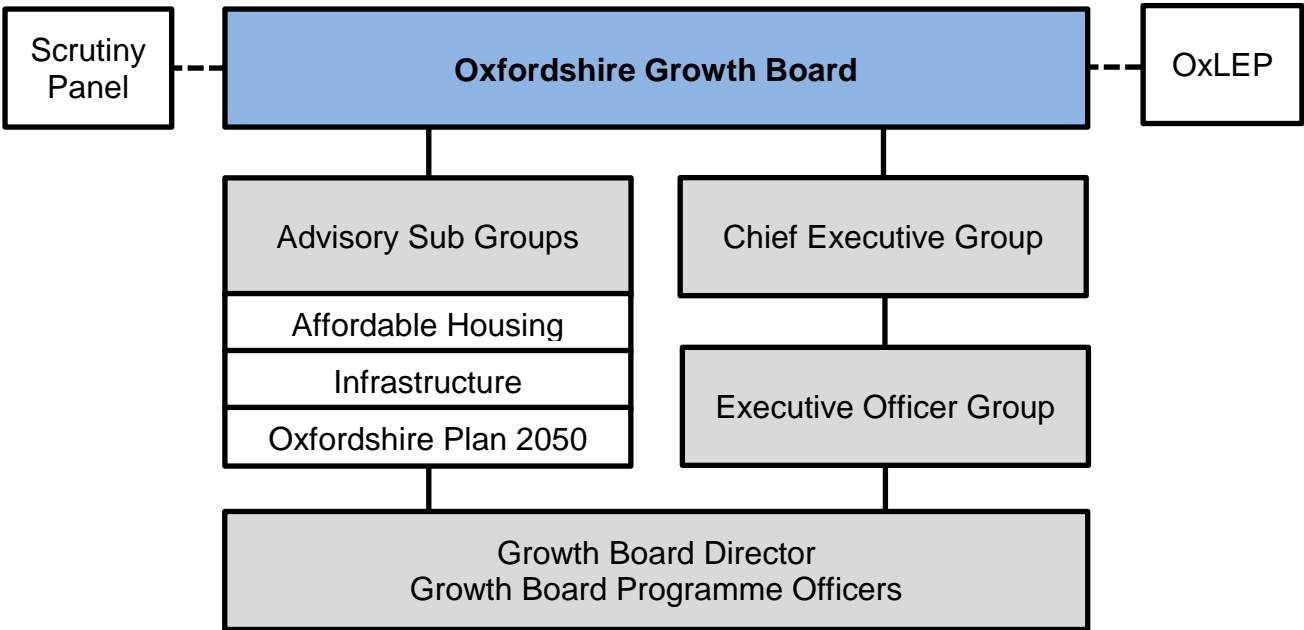
13. Withdrawal

- 13.1 If any member determines that they no longer require membership to the Joint Committee, they may give written notice to the Growth Board Chair and Director no later than 1st January preceding the financial year to which the budget will apply. Unless they withdraw that notice in writing, they shall cease to be a member from 1st April of that year. Any member which has not given due notice shall be obliged to pay its subscription for the next year.

14. General principles

- 14.1 These Terms of Reference will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure they remain fit for purpose and flexible to meet the requirements of ongoing and future work. Any changes to the Joint Committee's powers or functions will be a matter for each constituent authority to agree.
- 14.2 In adopting these terms of reference, members of the Joint Committee agree to support the purposes of the Joint Committee by ensuring that in their decision making, they:
- Collaborate and cooperate with each other
 - Are open and accountable to each other
 - Adhere to all relevant statutory requirements
 - Deploy appropriate resources
 - Act in good faith
- 14.3 These principles are not intended to be legally binding, and no legal obligations or rights shall arise from this.

Appendix 1 – Oxfordshire Growth Board High Level Governance (June 2020)



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Oxfordshire Growth Board Memorandum of Understanding June 2020

This memorandum of understanding is made by and between the Parties:

- i) Oxfordshire County Council of County Hall, New Road, Oxfordshire OX1 1ND ("OCC")
- ii) Oxfordshire Growth Board; a joint committee formed by Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.

The local authorities listed above comprising the county, city and district councils are together referred to as "the Parties" and each a "Party." Individual constituent members of the Growth Board are as each a "Council."

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Growth Board was established in 2014 and has the purpose of facilitating and enabling collaboration between Oxfordshire local authorities and other bodies operating in Oxfordshire in relation to economic, housing and infrastructure development.
- 1.2 OCC is the designated accountable body for the Growth Board providing Section 151 and Monitoring Officer related services to the Growth Board.
- 1.3 The Growth Board and OCC may change these arrangements by mutual agreement, and the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) shall be reviewed annually by the Growth Board and OCC to ensure it is accurate and complete.
- 1.4 The purpose of this MoU is to set out the respective roles and responsibilities of OCC acting as accountable body for the Growth Board and that of the Growth Board itself and therefore the Parties hereby agree the Scheme of Roles and Responsibilities set out in Section 6 hereto. This MoU also sets out commitments made in respect of existing joint programmes of work overseen by the Growth Board, and incorporates material elements of the formerly established Memorandum of Information Disclosure, which will cease in effect from the date of the signing of this document.
- 1.5 This MoU shall commence upon the date hereof and shall continue in effect until terminated by either Party.

2. Termination and Variation

- 2.1 Termination can be enacted by either Party upon giving six months' notice in writing to the other. In terminating this MoU the Parties shall comply with the requirements, if any, of Central Government and any other funding agencies.
- 2.2 If OCC cease to be the accountable body, it shall:
 - i) Continue to co-operate with the Growth Board and any successor accountable body and with all grantors to ensure a smooth transition; and
 - ii) Provide to the Growth Board or the new accountable body (where requested to do so by the Growth Board) all such invoices, receipts and other relevant records which are in its possession and which it holds in connection with its role of

accountable body. For the avoidance of doubt, documents will be retained in accordance with OCC's Corporate Retention Schedule Policy.

- 2.3 This MoU shall terminate automatically upon the disbanding of the Growth Board. In such case, OCC and the Growth Board shall complete all of their obligations concerning:
- i) Monies granted to or by the Growth Board;
 - ii) Other assets held by OCC on behalf of the Growth Board; and
 - iii) Any accounts required to be submitted to Central Government or to any other relevant funding organisation.
- 2.4 This MoU shall be varied in writing only by the mutual agreement of OCC and the Growth Board save that this shall not prevent the Growth Board from making amendments to its Governance and Working Arrangements. Where a variation of this MoU requires a change to be made to the Growth Board's governance and working arrangements, that change shall not come into effect until the governance and working arrangements have been duly amended in accordance with its requirements.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Growth Board is responsible for defining its strategic vision and overseeing delivery of the Growth Board priorities in accordance with any relevant funding arrangements.
- 3.2 The Growth Board will operate in accordance with:-
- i) Its Terms of Reference;
 - ii) This MoU;
 - iii) The guidelines provided by Central Government or any other body whose regulation controls the use of funds provided to the Growth Board; and
 - iv) Statutory requirements.
- 3.3 In addition, Growth Board members will
- i) where possible, work together to procure services to ensure best value is achieved;
 - ii) give assurance and commit to do everything reasonably possible to ensure the objectives and targets of jointly funded programmes (such as the Housing and Growth Deal) are met.
 - iii) once the Growth Board has determined funding allocations, take steps required to reflect those allocations within their budgets.
 - iv) accept that in certain circumstance spend relating to individual workstreams may be greater than the funding allocations. In these circumstances the source of additional funding will be clearly identified.
- 3.4 OCC will operate in accordance with:-
- i) Its Constitution;
 - ii) This MoU;
 - iii) Individual project collaboration agreements;
 - iv) The guidelines provided by Central Government or any other body whose regulation controls the use of funds provided to the Growth Board; and
 - v) Statutory requirements.

4 Financial Management Arrangements

- 4.1 The Growth Board is currently allocated public funding under a Housing and Growth Deal. Use of this funding, and any other future funding deals, must be undertaken in accordance with statute and the principles of democratic and financial accountability.
- 4.2 This requires there to be a public-sector body identified as the accountable body for audit and transparency purposes. Oxfordshire County Council is the accountable body for the Growth Board.
- 4.3 As the accountable body, OCC is held accountable for the Growth Board's funds in the same way that it is for its own funds. All funding received and expenditure incurred on behalf of the Growth Board will be subject to the same scrutiny. This means that OCC will administer any funds held on behalf of the Growth Board under its own accounting policies, financial procedure rules and contract procedure rules as set out in the Council's constitution to ensure that funds are applied and accounted for appropriately. This will be carried out under the direction of the Section 151 Officer.
- 4.4 OCC, as recipient of the Growth Board's grant allocations from Central Government in relation to the Housing and Growth Deal is responsible for compliance with the grant conditions which may include the obligation to repay, in whole or in part, grants in the event of non-compliance with grant conditions.
- 4.5 OCC will hold any funding it receives and all interest or income earned for and on behalf of the Growth Board and ensure that the money is not moved or converted to cash without specific instruction from the Growth Board.
- 4.6 OCC will consolidate the Growth Board's cash balances with its own cash balances and deposit the co-mingled funds in accordance with the OCC's Treasury Management Strategy. OCC will pay interest on the Growth Board daily cash balances based on the 'Average 7 Day Rate'.
- 4.7 Any infrastructure constructed or acquired by OCC acting on the Growth Board's behalf, will be accounted for as part of the Council's asset register in line with OCC's normal accounting procedures.

5 Provision of Services by OCC

- 5.1 OCC provide a range of services to the Growth Board. Those that are only incurred because of the requirement to have an accountable body are provided free of charge. These include Section 151 Officer time to provide advice and support to the Growth Board and relevant sub committees/groups with regard to the use of any public funds that are allocated to the Growth Board. This also includes Monitoring Officer time to provide advice in relation to legal matters.
- 5.2 In addition, OCC also provide the following chargeable services to the Growth Board:
 - i) Finance functions relating to the monitoring and reporting of total funding received and available to the Growth Board; the monitoring and reporting of programmes and schemes; the payment of funds to Growth Board delivery partners; the calculation of interest earned on funds received; the provision of financial information for internal and external audit requirements and the completion of relevant government financial returns

- ii) Internal Audit functions in regard to the governance arrangements between the Growth Board and the accountable body as well as use of public funds allocated to the Growth Board
 - iii) legal functions including preparation of funding agreements with regard to the use of any public funds that are allocated to the Growth Board and advice on state aid issues.
- 5.3 Chargeable and non-chargeable arrangements will be reviewed annually and if/ when the scale of accountable body responsibilities, managed resources or project portfolio resource requirements increase significantly. Where specific, additional work is required then these may be charged where mutually agreed.

6 Scheme of Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The Growth Board shall:

- i) make all decisions on the allocation of the Housing and Growth Deal (the Deal) grant funding agreed by Government as well as other funding for the purposes of the Housing and Growth Deal;
- ii) prioritise and allocate funding and be accountable for the delivery of projects funded by funding streams for which OCC is to act as accountable body including the Housing and Growth Deal;
- iii) monitor all activities financed by the Growth Board and ensure that all decisions are fully documented and recorded in writing;
- iv) agree robust and transparent assessment criteria against which funding will be allocated;
- v) ensure that projects are approved only after an appraisal has been carried out and that the separation of duties between project appraisal and project approval;
- vi) through agreed project plans, ensure appropriate timescales and operating practices are in place to support effective implementation of decisions made
- vii) following approval, request OCC to effect the payment of funding to the relevant organisations;
- viii) fulfil the client role vis a vis OCC as the accountable body and, in particular, give OCC clear and comprehensive instructions in relation to the performance by OCC of its roles and responsibilities as set out in paragraph 6.2 below;
- ix) Co-operate with and assist OCC acting in its role as accountable body in undertaking the day to day responsibility for financial matters.

6.2 OCC shall:

- i) provide support and assistance to the Growth Board to ensure both legal and financial probity in relation to the receipt and use of specific funding for which it acts as accountable body;
- ii) ensure decisions and activities of the Growth Board conform with legal requirements with regard to transparency, equalities, social value, environment, State Aid and procurement;
- iii) ensure that funds are used appropriately and advise the Growth Board on the procedures necessary to ensure formal compliance with any terms and conditions of funding or grant;
- iv) provide advice on proper and effective governance for overseeing the allocation and spend of the Growth Board funding;
- v) enter into funding agreements on behalf of the Growth Board for agreed funding streams;
- vi) enter into appropriate legal agreements or contracts with the relevant Growth Board member on behalf of the Growth Board once the project is approved by the

- Growth Board following a successful due diligence process;
- vii) ensure that the funding is passed on to the relevant Growth Board member without delay and in line with the conditions of the funding; where this is to be passed onto a third party it will be for the Growth Board member to action;
 - viii) submit the claims to the funding body and prepare and submit relevant documents for inspection by Central Government or external auditors as required;
 - ix) where the funding stream is working on a claim basis, ensure that the claimed funding is passed on to the relevant Growth Board member delivery partner without delay and in line with the conditions of the funding or loan agreements;
 - x) ensure that the Growth Board performance and financial systems are robust;
 - xi) provide details of all monies expended in accordance with the terms and conditions of funding;
 - xii) monitor approved projects during and after implementation in line with the agreed monitoring framework or as required by the funding body;
 - xiii) inform and keep the Growth Board informed of any grant funding allocations received and the procedures and recommended criteria for distributing the funding based on the funding body's requirements;
 - xiv) assist the Growth Board in identifying other sources of funding or to apply for these where commissioned by the Growth Board;
 - xv) ensure that the Growth Board adheres to its assurance framework in respect of maintaining the official record of Growth Board proceedings and holding copies of all relevant documents relating to funding; and
 - xvi) report and take appropriate action where it has reason to believe that the Growth Board, or anybody acting as its agent, is failing to
 - a) adhere to the terms and conditions of funding requirements or the funding or loan agreements;
 - b) comply with its governance and working arrangements or any statutory requirement;
 - c) provide a suitable standard of probity.

7 Audit

7.1 The Growth Board shall

- i) co-operate with and assist OCC in audit examinations relating to governance arrangements, use of public funds and all operating systems;
- ii) act upon all agreed management actions contained within the OCC's internal audit report;
- iii) report to OCC any financial irregularity or suspected irregularity in the use of any funding.

7.2 OCC shall

- i) maintain proper records, in accordance with its Constitution, of all monies received and disbursed for the Growth Board and make such records available for inspection by both internal and external regulators;
- ii) arrange regular audit examination of the Growth Board's activities with regards to use of public resources and, following each audit, present a report to the Growth Board with recommendations to strengthen their governance and management practices;
- iii) allow funding bodies to have access to all files and records of projects for which it acts as accountable body; and
- iv) supply, as necessary, completed statements of income, expenditure and disbursements to the Growth Board, funding organisations, Central Government and external auditor.

8 Recovery of funds

- 8.1 The conditions where funds will be recovered will be laid out in the initial funding or grant agreement. Where recovery of funds is at risk, the general stage of fund recovery will be as follows:
- i) Stage 1: OCC will send notice containing the reason for concern, outlining the potential fund recovery situation and giving time where appropriate for corrective action;
 - ii) Stage 2: If corrective action is not taken or is deemed insufficient to avoid fund recovery a further notice will be sent by OCC asking for the return of funds with a deadline for the return of the funds. In cases of particular difficulty OCC may accommodate a fund return payment plan of instalments over an agreed period of time. However, this must be agreed in writing and cannot be assumed;
 - iii) Stage 3: If funds are not returned within the set deadline then OCC may then instigate debt recovery procedures which may result in legal action being taken.
- 8.2 OCC will only take the step to recover funds from those Growth Board members it has a direct agreement with. In the case of a third party such as a subcontractor it would be up to the Growth Board member OCC is seeking funds from to determine and take any action they require to recover their losses from any third parties.
- 8.3 OCC does not wish to undertake stage 3 if at all avoidable but will do so in order to protect the public purse and ensure that public funding is being used appropriately.

9 Data Protection

- 9.1 The Parties hereto shall comply with their obligations under the EU General Data Protection Regulation EU 2016/679(GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and any subordinate legislation made under such Act together with any guidance and codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant government department in relation to such legislation in the performance of their obligations under this agreement.

10 Publicity and Disclosure in Relation to Meetings

- 10.1 The Growth Board will operate in accordance with the publicity requirements applicable to a joint committee under Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972. Papers relevant to meetings of the Growth Board will be placed into the public domain in the normal way by the Party with administrative control of that joint committee in compliance with s100A to 100K (and Schedule 12A) of the Local Government Act 1972. In accordance with those provisions confidential information as defined in that Act will not be disclosed. Exempt information as defined in that Act may or may not be disclosed. It is acknowledged that under these provisions information is exempt if the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

11 Requests under Freedom of Information and Environmental Information

- 11.1 The Growth Board and the Monitoring Officers of the relevant Councils have developed a Protocol for Handling Freedom of Information and Environmental Information requests. This is based on the principle that the Growth Board itself and each member authority is a 'freedom of information authority' in its own right. The agreed Protocol (Annex 1 to the MoU) shall guide how the Board and the member authorities will handle requests relating to the work of the Growth Board.

12 Confidentiality

- 12.1 Each Party agrees not to unilaterally disclose any information identified by any Council as confidential information or exempt material (under the Local Government Act 1972) information unless required by law without giving notice of at least 14 calendar days to the Council or Councils who provided the confidential/exempt information. No confidential/exempt information will be disclosed without full consideration having been given to any objection made to its disclosure, unless disclosure is otherwise required by law.
- 12.2 Neither Party will use or disclose any confidential material provided by the other pursuant to this agreement otherwise than for the performance of their obligations under this agreement, save as may be otherwise agreed or required by law.
- 12.3 For the avoidance of doubt, confidential information shall not include (a) any information obtained from a third party who is free to divulge such information; (b) any information which is already in the public domain otherwise than as a breach of this agreement; or (c) any information which was rightfully in the possession of a Party prior to the disclosure by the other Party and lawfully acquired from sources other than the other Party.

13 Dispute resolution

- 13.1 If either Party has any issues, concerns or complaints about any matter in this MoU, they shall notify the other Party and the Parties shall then seek to resolve the issue by a process of consultation. If the issue cannot be resolved within a reasonable period of time, the matter shall be escalated to the Growth Board's Chair (or if the Chair is an OCC appointee, the Vice-chair) and OCC's Section 151 Officer (or if the dispute is between the Growth Board and OCC, one of the district/city council's Section 151 Officer) who shall decide on the appropriate course of action to take.
- 13.2 If either Party receives any formal inquiry, complaint, claim or threat of action from a third party they shall notify the other Party and co-operate with each other to respond, or take such action, as is appropriate and/or necessary

14 The Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999

- 14.1 The Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 shall not apply to this MoU but this does not affect any rights which are available apart from this Act.

15 Status

- 15.1 This MoU is not intended to be legally binding, and no legal obligations or legal rights shall arise between the Parties from this MoU. The Parties enter into the MoU intending to honour all their obligations.

16 Governing Law and Jurisdiction

- 16.1 This MoU shall be governed by and construed in accordance with English law.

This Memorandum of Understanding is agreed and signed by:

Signed for and on behalf
of Oxfordshire County Council by

.....

Signed for and on behalf
of Oxford City Council

.....

Signed for and on behalf
of Cherwell District Council

.....

Signed for and on behalf
of South Oxfordshire District Council

.....

Signed for and on behalf
of Vale of White Horse District Council

.....

Signed for and on behalf
of West Oxfordshire District Council

.....

Annex 1

FOI/EIR PROTOCOL – INFORMATION REQUESTS RELATING TO THE OXFORDSHIRE GROWTH BOARD

This process has been agreed by Oxfordshire's Monitoring Officers and the Growth Board managers. It provides a means of handling Freedom of Information and Environmental Information requests regarding the work of the Growth Board. Each member authority of the Growth Board and the Growth Board's officers themselves may be recipients of information requests.

This outline provides a legally compliant means of dealing with such requests while providing a degree of mutual consultation whilst also ensuring the identity of requesters is not disclosed to other members of the Growth Board. **Each authority will be responsible for responding to requests submitted to it. Authorities should not simply redirect requesters 'to the Growth Board'** but should answer the request on the basis of any information held by the receiving authority in relation to it.

Freedom of Information Teams should adopt the following principles and process:

1. Each of the county's principal councils, and the Growth Board, are **separate FOI authorities** in their own right. Requesters may therefore submit requests from time to time to any or all of the bodies, about the Growth Board partnership's work.
2. Should there be such an FOI or EIR request in relation to the Growth Board's work received by any of the authorities, then the **receiving body's FOI Team will notify each of the other bodies' FOI Teams**: for the purpose of consulting them about how the receiving authority intends to respond.
3. The original receiving body will **consider all representations** (which shall also be made at the earliest opportunity) received in discharging its statutory obligations. The requester's **name will not be disclosed** to the other authorities.
4. In the event of a disclosure of information in response to a request under the Environmental Information Regulations or the Freedom of Information Act, the **disclosing body shall notify all other Councils immediately** and shall provide an explanation of its decision-making process on request.
5. A similar process will then be followed if an Internal Review request is received; or an Information Commissioner referral.
6. This process is on the basis that, while each authority is an FOI authority in its own right, **consultation between authorities** on a proposed response does not breach that principle.

7. If all authorities receive the same request, then each must respond to it at its own relevant level of management. **Achieving a 'consistent' response can not be the primary aim.** While approaches can be discussed, it will be for each authority to 'sign off' its own responses. This will also be important if a request is referred to the Commissioner, who would be likely to ask how each authority addressed the response.
8. It should be borne in mind that **a requester can also ask for the 'metadata'** to any request, which would bring into frame any information shared between authorities in the consideration of a response.

NB The County Council will be acting as FOI advisers to the Growth Board.

Division(s): **Berinsfield & Garsington, Didcot East & Hagbourne, Didcot Ladygrove, Didcot West, Sutton Courtenay & Marcham, Hendreds and Harwell, Wallingford**

CABINET– 21 JULY 2020

Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund: Preferred Scheme Alignments

Report by Director of Growth and Economy

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to
 - (a) **Approve** the identified preferred alignments as illustrated in Figure 1 as the basis to progress into the next stage of scheme design for the four schemes that constitute the Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure programme.
 - (b) **Note** the various optioneering exercises that have informed the preferred alignments set out in paragraphs 24 to 30.
 - (c) **Note** the findings of the recent consultation exercise set out in paragraphs 31 to 36 which sought the views of local people and other stakeholders to be taken into consideration in the next stage of design, yielding a predominantly positive response to the preferred scheme alignments.

NB: Slight variations to alignments maybe required during the next design phase. Any significant changes would be brought back for decision or managed through the CPO process as necessary.

Executive Summary

2. The Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund programme (hereon in referred to as HIF1) is to fund £218m of a £234m package of measures (the remaining funding - circa £16m - will come from developer obligations) consisting of four separate but interdependent highways schemes:
 - (a) A4130 widening from Milton Interchange to a new Science Bridge by making it a dual carriageway;
 - (b) a new Didcot Science Bridge from the A4130 over the Great Western Railway Mainline into the Didcot 'A' Power Station site and re-joining the A4130 Northern Perimeter Road north of the Purchas Road/Hawksworth roundabout;
 - (c) a new river crossing and link road between the A4130 at Didcot and A415 at Culham, including two new bridges;
 - (d) a Clifton Hampden Bypass between the A415 at Culham Science Centre and B4015 north of Clifton Hampden.

3. The HIF1 programme will directly unlock 11,711 new homes and support the delivery of more than 17,000 new homes in total in the Didcot Garden Town area. The residential units are across 12 separate sites in and around Didcot in South Oxfordshire (SODC) and Vale of White Horse (VoWHDC) districts.
4. The HIF1 schemes are also essential for the economic and social prosperity of Science Vale UK, one of the first Enterprise Zones, in addition to other newer Enterprise Zones in the area. Whilst the HIF1 programme is based on future growth, the HIF1 infrastructure will also help to ameliorate the issues resulting from historic housing and employment growth.
5. In the recovery phase of COVID-19, ensuring that Oxfordshire is able to make a significant contribution to the growth of the national economy is of the utmost importance. The timely delivery of the HIF1 programme is fundamental to realising this aim.
6. Preferred alignments for the four schemes that constitute the HIF1 programme have been informed by a detailed and multi-stage optioneering exercise (see **Annex 1** for a detailed report). This includes the production of an Options Assessment Report to identify the appropriate interventions and subsequent public consultation, engineering, traffic modelling, and impact assessment work to identify the preferred alignments.
7. A public consultation exercise was undertaken in March/April 2020 (see **Annex 2** for the consultation details) to seek the views of local people on these preferred alignments so that, where appropriate, these comments could be incorporated into the next stage of the scheme design process. The consultation yielded many comments to be considered in the next stage of design and the schemes themselves are predominantly supported by those responding (see **Annex 3** for consultation response analysis).
8. This report sets out the steps taken to progress the HIF1 programme and Cabinet is recommended to approve the preferred alignments. This approval is being sought as a political mandate is required to ensure that due process is undertaken and officers are given authority to proceed.

Introduction

9. The HIF1 infrastructure is the cornerstone of the Science Vale transport strategy and helps to support employment and growth ambitions in neighbouring Oxford City. It will benefit a large swathe of Oxfordshire residents that are required to travel from or into the Science Vale area for work, shopping and leisure. The funding awarded will transform Didcot and the surrounding areas and will help deliver the Garden Town aspirations by forward funding essential highway infrastructure, which includes substantial improvements to pedestrian and cycle connectivity and will help to facilitate new and enhanced bus services.
10. The Didcot Garden Town HIF1 schemes are constituted of four key pieces of highway improvements: widening the A4130, Science Bridge, Didcot to Culham River Crossing and the Clifton Hampden Bypass. Although separate schemes, they must be delivered cohesively for their benefits to be fully realised.

11. Other priority areas such as community facilities, affordable housing, further walking and cycling infrastructure will be the focus of future bids and/or developer obligations that may not have been viable without HIF1 funding. Subject to the Cabinet resolution being sought, the County Council is committed to delivering the much-needed infrastructure and has already committed funding. In order to ensure HIF1 spend by Autumn 2024, the County Council cannot afford to pause or delay this programme.
12. OCC's Local Transport Plan: Connecting Oxfordshire 2015-2031 was agreed by full council in September 2015, following public consultation on the draft plan earlier that year. This includes HIF1 schemes as specific proposals in policies, SV2.6, SV2.13, and SV2.16 within the Science Vale Transport Strategy.
13. The Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) which formed part of the evidence base for the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 identified the requirement for significant highway infrastructure intervention in order to support the delivery of homes and jobs growth in the area.
14. Subsequently, the ETI produced to support the submitted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034 lends further weight to the need for these schemes. These ETIs were undertaken using the Oxfordshire Strategic Model (OSM).
15. The schemes are also included in the policies of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and Part 2 (adopted) and the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034 (submitted for examination). Both Local Plans include policies to safeguard land for these schemes and were consulted upon extensively with the public and through examination.
16. OCC held a consultation and public exhibitions in November 2018 to describe the need for these schemes, explain other options that were considered, and to show early indicative plans of the schemes. 307 responses were received. All information is available here: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcot. As previously noted, feedback from this consultation has helped to inform scheme design.
17. Without the HIF1 infrastructure, the County Council cannot ensure an efficient and safe highway network. Such are the current pressures on the network that the County Council, as the Highway Authority, has objected to planning applications for very small residential developments (single dwellings or extensions) with an identified traffic impact on the river crossing at Culham (comprised of Sutton Bridge and Culham Cut) on the grounds that traffic generated by these proposals would result in a severe impact on the highway network.
18. Four such applications have subsequently received planning committee refusals with the decisions then being tested at appeal. On each occasion, the Planning Inspectorate has upheld the decision of the local planning authority and dismissed the appeals due to the severe cumulative impact on the highway network as per Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
19. The HIF objectives are to:
 - (a) Directly unlock the delivery of 11,711 new homes in the area;

- (b) Of those homes directly unlocked, approximately 4,200 will be affordable;
 - (c) Support the delivery of an additional 6,000 new homes;
 - (d) Unlock thousands of new jobs across existing and new employment sites in the area and releases business rates from Enterprise Zones to be reinvested back into the local economy;
 - (e) Ensure the impact of additional housing on the transport network is acceptable;
 - (f) Provide for real mode choice by future proofing new infrastructure;
 - (g) Reduce congestion in the parishes surrounding Didcot to the north;
 - (h) Provide relief to the A34;
 - (i) Provide value for money to the public sector; and
 - (j) Support Didcot as a new and vibrant Garden Town
20. With the security of HIF funding, the County Council, together with its partners, can manage growth to enable residential and, importantly, commercial development in high tech sectors in the Science Vale area to progress, ensuring economic and jobs growth for residents of Oxfordshire.
21. To support delivery of the HIF1 programme of activity, Cabinet has previously authorised assembling land to support the scheme, including exercising compulsory purchase powers in the event that the land cannot be acquired by negotiation (23rd April 2019) along with adding the HIF1 programme to the capital programme following completion of a funding agreement (15th October 2019) with Homes England. The funding agreement was signed in late June 2020.
22. A further and more detailed report will be taken back to Cabinet to request a resolution to make and submit for confirmation to the Secretary of State for Transport a Compulsory Purchase Order specifically for the HIF1 schemes, with that process to run in parallel to ongoing negotiations with those parties with land interests. Powers of compulsory purchase, should they be required and confirmed, would only be used as a matter of last resort.

Key Issues

Results of Optioneering

23. OCC has undertaken an options assessment process following the Department for Transport's (DfT) [Transport Analysis Guidance \(WebTAG\) unit on The Transport Appraisal Process](#) (May 2018), which has resulted in the production of an Options Assessment Report (OAR) formed of two parts, completed in March 2018 and September 2019. This study was undertaken in order to establish the appropriate infrastructure to mitigate the traffic impact of the planned growth in the area.
24. In order to build on these assessments, various options were tested using the Didcot Garden Town Paramics microsimulation traffic model. Further background work undertaken to assess these schemes also includes a study to support the outline business case for the HIF1 bid to Government; a WebTAG Preliminary Environmental Impact Appraisal Report (December 2018).
25. Further details and a synopsis of the optioneering and evolution of each scheme are provided at **Annex 1**. These optioneering processes and resultant design choices

have been informed by feedback from a previous public consultation held in November 2018, numerous studies (including, but not limited to, the identification of physical, ecological, archaeological, geotechnical, and flooding constraints), modelling exercises (using both OSM and the DGT Paramics Model), and engagement with landowners, developers, and other key stakeholders.

26. In summary, the alignments of the A4130 Widening and Science Bridge schemes are constrained by existing, permitted, or planned development. The alignment of Science Bridge is dictated by requirements to safely avoid the electrification infrastructure on the Great Western Railway Mainline. In total, six different alignments have been considered for the Didcot to Culham River Crossing. A combination of desk-based assessment of various constraints, traffic modelling, stakeholder liaison, and public consultation has resulted in the identification of the preferred alignment. As with all the schemes, the alignment of the Clifton Hampden Bypass has been informed by the need to comply with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB). Further to this, the alignment of the bypass is informed by the need to retain appropriate access to Culham Science Centre, avoid a Thames Water treatment facility, and be as far from residential properties in the village as feasible, whilst still effectively achieving the scheme's purpose as a bypass.
27. Whilst the basic alignments have been set, further minor changes may be required due to geo-technical requirements, ground conditions, further stakeholder engagement etc.
28. Feasibility design work on all sections of the scheme is now complete. Land referencing and negotiations to acquire land by agreement wherever possible have commenced. The procedural elements for a potential Compulsory Purchase Order will run in parallel to those negotiations, with powers of compulsory purchase to be used as a matter of last resort. Modelling has demonstrated that the scheme, in its entirety unlocks the delivery of almost 12,000 new homes including more than 4,200 affordable homes, adds river crossing capacity, relieves congestion in local villages, provides much needed new and improved pedestrian and cycle infrastructure and provides relief to many of the area's congestion hotspots, including access to the Strategic Road Network (A34).
29. An overview of the resultant preferred scheme alignments is shown in Figure 1 below. The materials for the recently concluded consultation exercise are at **Annex 2**. These materials include more detailed scheme design drawing and further supporting information.

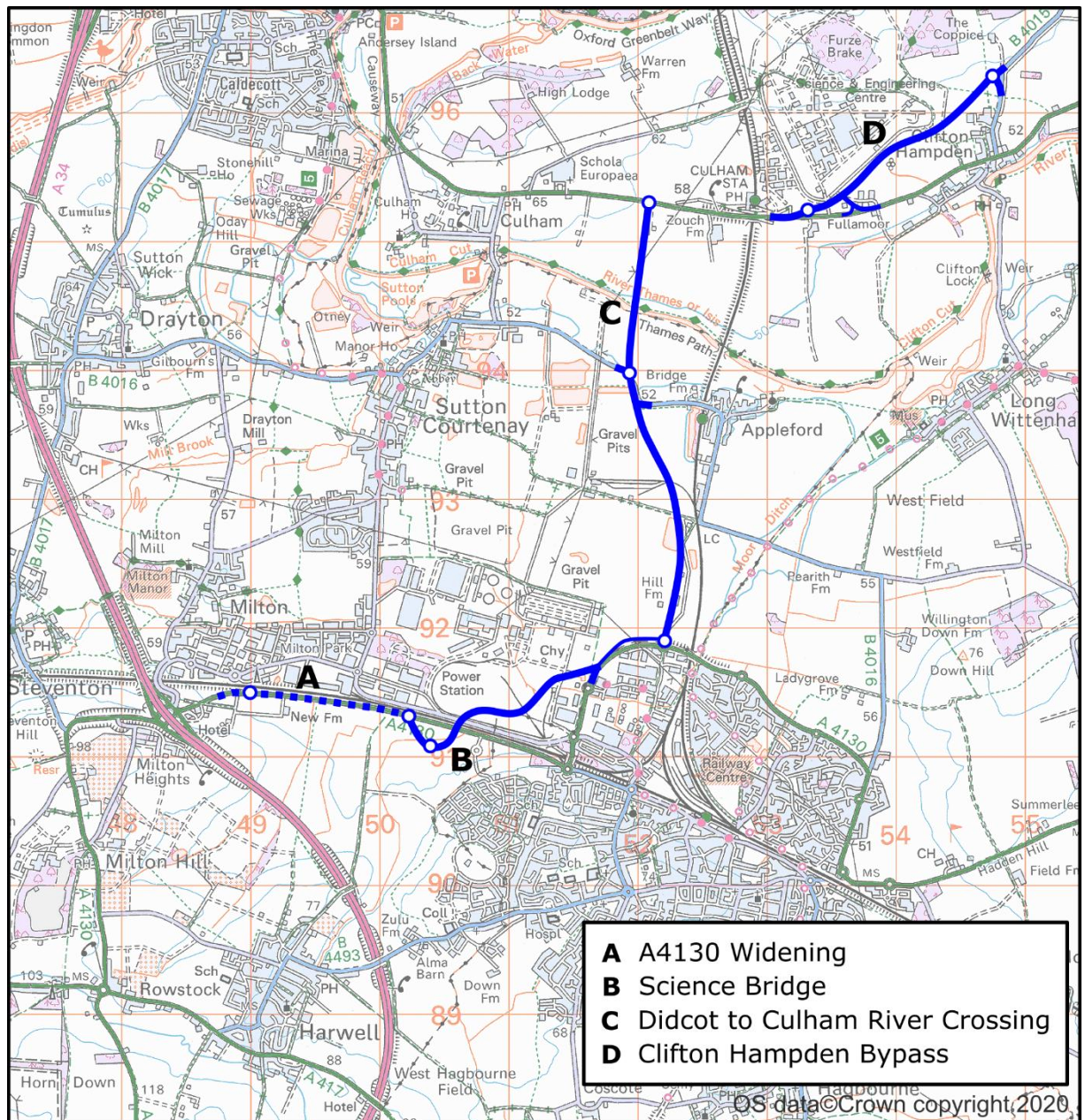


Figure 1: Preferred Scheme Alignments Overview

The Recent Public Consultation

30. In order to be able to incorporate, where appropriate, the comments and views of local people on these preferred alignments into the next stage of the scheme design process an extensive further round of public (non-statutory) consultation was undertaken, following the previous consultation exercise held in November 2018. This commenced on 20th March and finished on 30th April 2020.
31. A Consultation Analysis Report is appended (**see Annex 3**) and a summary of these results is provided below. In total 686 responses were received. This is a significant increase in response rate when compared to the previous consultation (307 responses received). This is in part related to the extensive engagement efforts undertaken.

32. Respondents were asked to provide comments in relation to each of the four schemes and for any general comments on the proposed package of infrastructure improvements as a whole.
33. The table below illustrates that the comments received have been overwhelmingly supportive of each of the four schemes and of the infrastructure package as a whole. Additionally, many design-related suggestions have been provided by the respondents, and where appropriate these will be considered in the next stage of design.

	Supportive	Objection	Suggestion	Question
Whole Infrastructure Package (general)	305	145	184	60
A4130 Widening	361	147	277	52
Science Bridge	272	86	167	57
Didcot to Culham River Crossing	334	241	273	72
Clifton Hampden Bypass	259	171	184	46
Total	1531	790	1085	287

34. In addition to the predominantly positive responses received to the consultation, there were also a number of objections received. These often related to the principle of whether the schemes should be delivered at all (a principle already well-established through existing planning and transport policy) rather than the detail of the schemes. Further to this, some objections related to the effects of traffic generated by the allocated and permitted development in the area and others related to matters beyond the scope of the schemes that formed the basis of the HIF1 bid to Government. However, as shown in the table above, for each of the four schemes, and the package as a whole, more supportive comments were received than comments of objection. Additionally, for each of the four schemes more suggestions were received than comments of objection, which demonstrates that respondents engaged with the primary purpose of the consultation which was to seek people's views on the detail of the preferred alignments. Comments will be considered and taken forward into the next stage of design, where appropriate.
35. Responses to many of these objections and queries are provided in the Frequently Asked Questions document, which can be found in the consultation materials within **Annex 2**. The responses to the consultation are set out in the spreadsheet and PDF embedded in **Annex 3**. In many cases, such as with local stakeholders, impacted landowners, parish councils, and other organisations, further engagement will be undertaken, where appropriate, to address the issues raised directly with the respondents.

Project Next Steps

36. **Preliminary and Detailed Design:** By approving the above preferred alignments, this allows the project to proceed from feasibility design into the preliminary design stage and onwards into detailed design. As the schemes are developed further, minor changes to their alignments may be necessary in response to various matters including topographical, geotechnical, ecological, and archaeological surveys.

Additionally, given their direct relationship to a number of existing and proposed developments and the land acquisition required for their delivery, further amendments may be necessary as a result of negotiations with these third parties. Throughout the preliminary and detailed design stages further engagement with local stakeholders will take place to ensure that, where appropriate, organisations and individuals are kept apprised of the scheme development and their views are considered in the subsequent iterations of design.

37. **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA):** One of the key next steps is an EIA which will be included in the planning application. This is a very detailed document that will include studies on air quality, noise, vibration, biodiversity, ecology, landscape and visual impacts etc. This will help inform future scheme design, including vegetation planting for visual and noise screening, biodiversity net gain etc.
38. **Planning Application:** The planning application submission and statutory consultation is programmed for winter 2021 (early next year). In addition to the statutory consultation process, we also intend to undertake further public engagement on the detail of the schemes as work progresses on them.
39. The current approved outline programme (based on latest delivery of the four individual programmes) highlights that the complete scheme is due to open to traffic in Autumn 2024.
40. The preferred route alignment will still be deliverable within the original £234m budget. The overall costs will be further refined when the preliminary design is completed. This will be reflected in future internal Business Cases, out of tolerance reports and through internal governance.

Communications

41. There have been several exhibitions held with the public and key stakeholders.
42. Further press releases and consultations will take place in the future as the scheme develops and the details become refined. A stakeholder management plan has been developed and will continuously be updated as the project progresses.

Financial and Staff Implications

43. Delay with the decision to agree the preferred alignments for HIF1 will result in delay to the programme. The likelihood is that the County Council will not be able to spend the HIF1 grant funding within the timeframe set by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), which could result in the revocation of the award of funds. The County Council has been spending funding at risk to maintain the programme. If the HIF1 programme cannot progress, this funding would not be recovered. All historic funding on HIF1, can be recovered as part of the grant determination agreement (contract).

44. Risks have been identified with appropriate mitigations in place and will be reported through the internal governance process.

Equalities Implications

45. The equalities implications of the HIF1 schemes will be assessed in the normal way as they are individually brought forward. These equalities implications will be considered in line with the Equality Act 2010 and through the completion of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) as part of the development of the HIF1 programme.
46. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), to which the County Council is also subject, places additional obligations on public sector bodies to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. Recognising and complying with these higher standards is required to discharge the PSED. In particular, steps must be taken to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share that characteristic.
47. Work towards this has already taken the form of considering the safety of all pedestrians, cyclists, and horse-riders through a Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessment & Review. This process has helped to ensure that the protected characteristics, particularly those of age and disability, are considered appropriately in the design of the schemes through the provision of suitable crossing facilities and segregated routes of a high standard along all of the schemes. Further to this, by facilitating new bus services and better access to urban and rural areas for non-motorised users, the needs of all people are being addressed. Reviewing the EqIA and the County Council's PSED will be a continuous process throughout the development of the schemes.

OWEN JENKINS

Director of Growth and Economy

Background papers: n/a

Annex 1: Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund:
Preferred Scheme Alignments – Optioneering Summary Report.

Annex 2: Consultation materials (Mar/Apr 2020).

Annex 3: Didcot Area Infrastructure Update Consultation Analysis Report: Summary of findings from the public consultation.

Contact Officer: Aron Wisdom

July 2020

Didcot Garden Town Housing Infrastructure Fund: Preferred Scheme Alignments – Optioneering Summary Report

Introduction

This report summarises the work that has led to the identification of the need for significant intervention in the highway network in Didcot and the surrounding area and the optioneering exercises that have subsequently been undertaken to identify the preferred alignments for the schemes that constitute the HIF1 programme.

Local Plan related studies

The Evaluation of Transport Impacts (ETI) which formed part of the evidence base for the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 identified the requirement for significant highway infrastructure intervention in order to support the delivery of homes and jobs growth in the area. As part of this exercise, an iterative approach was taken to infrastructure requirements to deliver the growth scenarios. In addition to other infrastructure requires (e.g. Relief to Rowstock, Harwell Link Road, Chilton Diamond Interchange, and Wantage Eastern Link Road), HIF1 was deemed as a minimum requirement within the district areas. The Inspector for the VoWHDC Local Plan highlighted in his report:

*'In relation to transport Oxfordshire County Council, as Highway Authority, commissioned the November 2014 Evaluation of Transport Impacts Study to Inform the Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031: Part 1. Following several earlier stages this report assessed the likely transport impacts of the plan's proposed 20,560 new homes and 23,000 additional jobs in the district, based on a range of different transport interventions and improvements (one of medium scale and two of large scale). The report concludes that the Stage 5 ETI mitigation package (which in essence comprises those transport improvements identified in the plan) would largely mitigate the impacts of the proposed new development in the district, albeit that some congestion issues would remain... I have borne in mind that the "starting point" situation for the Vale is as a district which very much suffers from traffic congestion.'*¹

Subsequently, the ETI produced to support the submitted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034 lends further weight to the need for these schemes. These ETIs were undertaken using the Oxfordshire Strategic Model (OSM).

OCC has undertaken an options appraisal process following the Department for Transport's (DfT) [Transport Analysis Guidance \(WebTAG\) unit on The Transport Appraisal Process](#) (May 2018), which has resulted in the production of an Options Appraisal Report (OAR) formed of two parts, completed in March 2018 and September 2019. This study was undertaken in order to establish the appropriate infrastructure to mitigate the traffic impact of the planned growth in the area.

The OAR Part 1 generated a number of options, including highway capacity improvement options, public transport options (bus and rail), and traffic management options. An EAST (Early Assessment and Sifting Tool, developed by the DfT) test was applied to these options resulting in the basic principles of the four schemes that now constitute HIF1 being identified

¹ REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION INTO VALE OF WHITE HORSE LOCAL PLAN 2031: PART 1, 30/11/2016, p.40-41, para. 150

as the most effective response to address the issues arising from the forecasted traffic growth.

The main issues that these schemes have been identified to address relate to congestion within the town centre, on the route from the town to the A34, congestion on the A34 itself, at Clifton Hampden, and on the existing crossings of the River Thames north of Didcot.

In line with the aforementioned DfT guidance, the OAR Part 2 built on the findings of Part 1 by undertaking a desk-based assessment of the relative merits and impacts of the options identified by considering various environmental, social, and economic impacts of the schemes. Following this assessment, it was concluded that only the identified preferred schemes have the potential to fully deliver the objectives.

In order to build on these assessments, various options were tested using the Didcot Garden Town Paramics microsimulation traffic model. This modelling assessment was reported in the Didcot HIF Option Appraisal (January 2019). Three scenarios were tested using the model. Option 1 included the full anticipated housing and employment growth and the full HIF1 package, Option 2 included some development and reduced HIF1 schemes and Option 3 included the full development and no HIF1 schemes. The assessment concurred with the findings of the OARs parts 1 and 2 and resulted in the refinement of many junction designs within the schemes in order to ensure that sufficient capacity was being provided to accommodate the growth.

Further background work undertaken to assess these schemes also includes a study to support the outline business case for the HIF1 bid to Government; a WebTAG Preliminary Environmental Impact Appraisal Report (December 2018).

A synopsis of the optioneering and evolution of each scheme is provided below. These optioneering processes and resultant design choices have been informed by public consultation feedback, numerous studies (including, but not limited to, the identification of physical, ecological, archaeological, geotechnical, and flooding constraints), modelling exercises (using both OSM and the DGT Paramics Model), and engagement with landowners, developers, and other key stakeholders.

A4130 Widening

The proposal includes the provision of a dual carriageway from approximately 250m east of Milton Interchange at the junction with Milton Gate eastwards for approximately 1.6km to the proposed eastern roundabouts connecting into the future development at Valley Park and the Science Bridge scheme.

Following feasibility studies, outline design and budget estimates were prepared for the A4130 Widening by Atkins in 2015. These were reviewed and further developed by AECOM in 2018. The outline design and the review were based on a 70mph design; however, further considerations and consultations have resulted in reclassifying it as an Urban Dual Carriageway with an intended speed limit of 40mph.

A four-arm roundabout near the western extent of the scheme is required to serve allocated commercial development to the south of the A4130 and the proposed North West Valley Park strategic housing allocation. As a result of developer discussions and to ensure compliance

with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), this has been redesigned to ascertain the most appropriate location and ensure appropriate safety and capacity.

Additionally, the link between the two roundabouts at the eastern extent of the scheme has been redesigned. This was initially proposed as a single carriageway road with flaring on the approaches to the roundabouts. However, further modelling work showed that to improve capacity it would be beneficial for this link to be a dual carriageway. These eastern roundabout junctions and link road are due to be directly delivered by the adjacent housing developer through future developer obligations.

Science Bridge

This scheme includes a road bridge connecting from the eastern extent of the A4130 Widening scheme over the A4130, the Great Western Railway Mainline, and Milton Road into the former Didcot A Power Station site. This continues as a link road through this site (which is to be redeveloped) and connects back into the A4130 north of the Purchas Road / Hawksworth roundabout. The link road in the former Didcot A Power Station site is expected to be delivered by the developer of that site secured through developer obligations.

A scoping and feasibility report were produced in 2014/15. It looked at various options of where to cross the railway line as well as alignment options to connect into the existing highway network. The alignment of the bridge itself is dictated by the need for appropriate clearance of Overhead Line Equipment (stanchions and gantries) associated with the electrification of the railway line.

The alignment and width of the road through the former Didcot A Power Station site will be designed to follow the standards set out in DMRB. Initially a roundabout was proposed along this link road for access to future development but has been removed in order to improve capacity and replaced by a priority T-junction.

Following further transport modelling work, the link road connects into the existing A4130, approximately 100 metres north of the Purchas Road / Hawksworth roundabout, whereas previously it was proposed to connect directly into the existing roundabout. This helps to improve capacity and give priority to the HIF1 schemes and the strategic traffic that will use it. This proposed alignment will be required to traverse the settling lagoons (on the RWE land adjacent to the Purchas Road / Hawksworth roundabout), which form part of the drainage system for the Didcot A and B sites and will require further design work and collaborative working with RWE nPower in order to identify the preferred design approach in this location.

Didcot to Culham River Crossing

This scheme includes a new river crossing and link road between the A4130 at Didcot and A415 at Culham. It includes two new bridges: one over the River Thames and one over the Hanson private railway sidings near Appleford level crossing. In 2015, five alignment options were identified by Atkins, as shown on the plan overleaf.

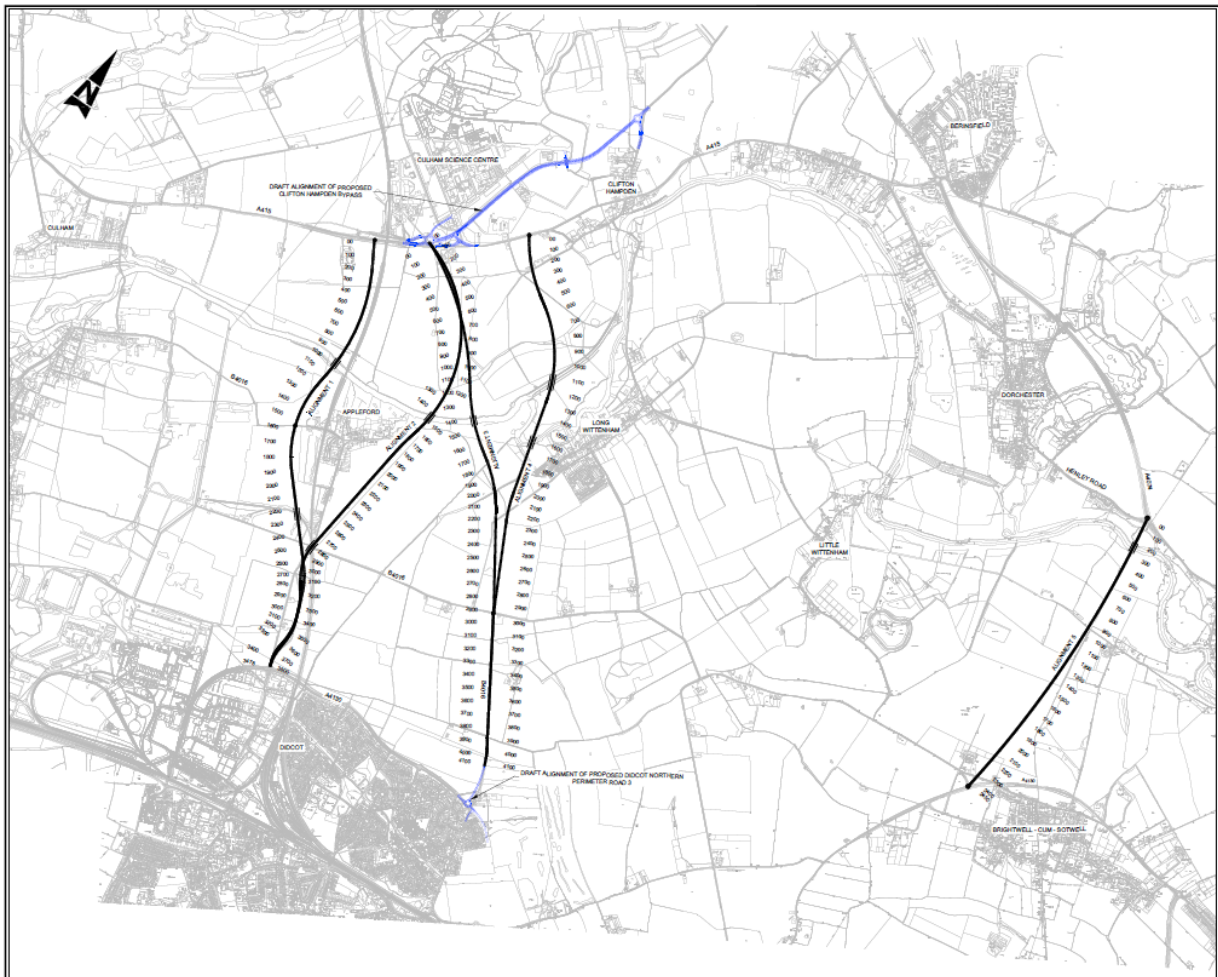


Figure 1: River Crossing alignment options identified in 2015

To address comments received from the Nov 2018 consultation and following further design work, a new preferred alignment has been identified, in red on the plan overleaf.

- It is further from residential properties
- It is further from Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- It utilises old mineral extraction and landfill areas for a significant proportion of the route, minimising the impact on agricultural land and areas that are sterilised from an archaeological perspective
- Traffic modelling, which predicts the likely road network performance in future years, shows the latest alignment performs better than others due to the larger distance between the northern roundabout and the proposed Clifton Hampden Bypass A415 roundabout
- Better serves future development sites e.g. Didcot Growth Accelerator Enterprise Zone (blue on map)

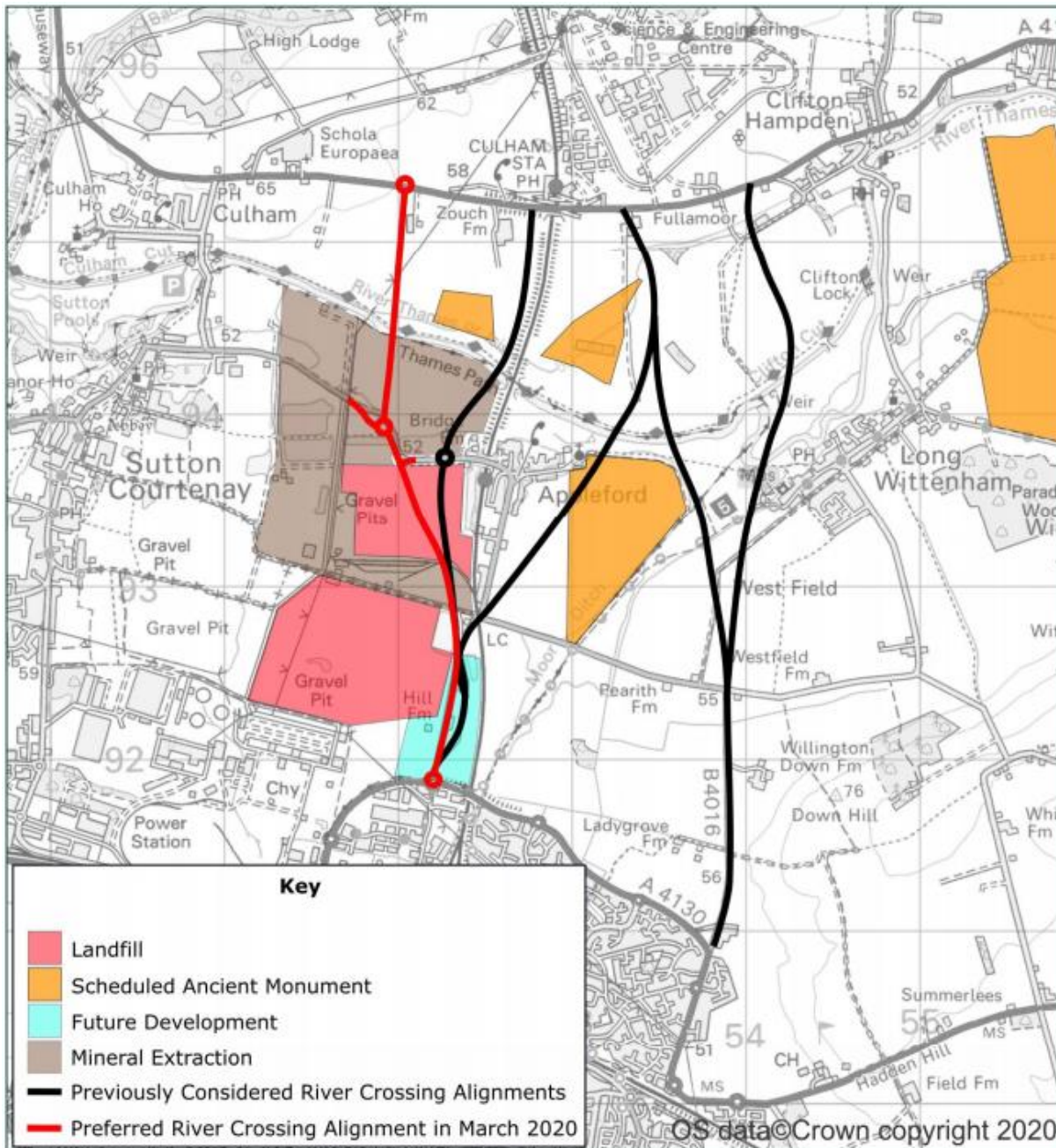


Figure 2: River Crossing alignment options – preferred alignment in red

Although building over old mineral extraction and landfill areas produces engineering challenges, officers believe that this is the optimum scheme for the reasons summarised above. Hanson and FCC Environment are liaising with officers, sharing their data on the subterranean conditions to help inform future design.

Clifton Hampden Bypass

This provides a road link between the A415 adjacent to the Culham Science Centre entrance and the B4015 north of the village of Clifton Hampden. Given the geographical location of Clifton Hampden (and onwards journeys on the B4105) and Culham Science Centre, there is only one logical alignment (to north-west of Clifton Hampden) that can deliver full benefits of a bypass.

In response to the public consultation undertaken by OCC in November 2018, this has been re-aligned so that it is further from residences around the outskirts of the village, whilst still meeting the requirements of DMRB. The plan below shows the original alignment in green, the alignment as currently proposed, and an alignment in red which is further from properties but would not meet DMRB requirements.

The alignment is also constrained by the need to connect in safely and appropriately to a roundabout with the B4015 and also to avoid, and maintain access, to the Thames Water treatment facility on the southern side of the proposed bypass. Officers are in liaison with Culham Science Centre regarding the access arrangements to that site.



Figure 3: Clifton Hampden bypass alignment options

Conclusion

Feasibility design work on all sections of the scheme is now complete following the optioneering exercises outlined in this summary report. As the schemes are developed further, minor changes to their alignments may be necessary in response to various matters including topographical, geotechnical, ecological, and archaeological surveys.

Additionally, given their direct relationship to a number of existing and proposed developments and the land acquisition required for their delivery, further amendments may be necessary as a result of negotiations with these third parties.

Welcome to the consultation

In March 2019 Government announced that Oxfordshire County Council's bid for £218 million from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) was successful. This is towards the £234 million cost of the infrastructure package for Didcot and surrounding areas, as shown on the map to the right. Although the funding for the transport improvements has been announced, Oxfordshire County Council is currently in the final stages of negotiating the details of the funding agreement with Government.

We have undertaken feasibility design work, leading to updated designs. The schemes are a mixture of improving existing roads and building new roads, all with high quality pedestrian and cycle infrastructure. These schemes are:

- A. A4130 Widening
- B. Science Bridge
- C. Didcot to Culham River Crossing
- D. Clifton Hampden Bypass

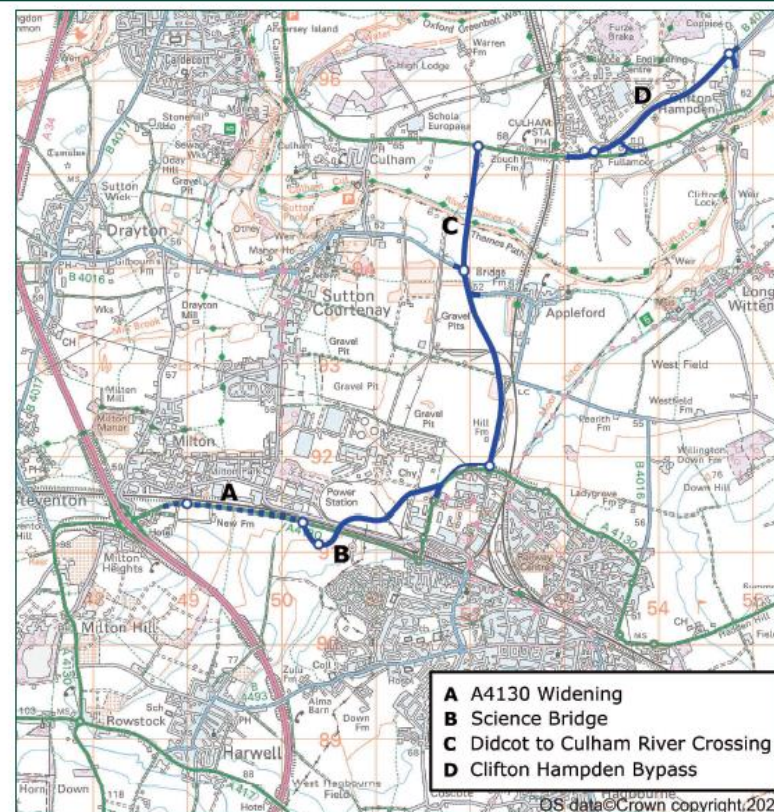
We are now sharing with you the latest scheme designs and asking for your comments, so we can consider them in later stages of design.

As part of this consultation, public exhibitions were planned across various locations in the local area over the last two weeks in March. Unfortunately, due to the advice from Government with respect to Coronavirus (COVID-19) these have been cancelled.

If you know anyone who does not have access to the internet and you think would be interested in this consultation, we would appreciate your help in telling them about it. They can call us on: 07392 318945 or 07833 401067 to discuss the proposals and request printed copies of the consultation materials.

Didcot and Surrounding Area Infrastructure Improvements Update

1



Scheme location plan

Policies and Previous Consultations

Oxfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan



The Local Transport Plan was agreed by full council in September 2015, following public consultation on the draft plan earlier that year.

It includes these schemes as specific proposals:

“SV 2.6 Delivering Science Bridge and widening of A4130

to provide relief to Manor Bridge and support/ enable development in the area including Didcot A, NE Didcot, Valley Park and NW Valley Park.”

“SV 2.13 Delivering improved Access to Culham Science Centre

(CSC) Phase 1 (new road from CSC entrance to the B4015 north of Clifton Hampden) to improve connectivity between Science Vale and the Eastern Arc of Oxford and direct access to CSC.”

“SV 2.16 Delivering improved Access to Culham Science Centre

(CSC) Phase 2 - new river crossing (between Didcot and CSC) to improve connectivity between Science Vale and the Eastern Arc of Oxford and direct access to CSC. This scheme also increases capacity for north/south movements across southern Oxfordshire and reduces pressure on the A34, whilst increasing network resilience across the Thames floodplain.”

November 2018 Consultation and Public Exhibitions



Oxfordshire County Council held a consultation and public exhibitions to describe the need for these schemes, explain other options that were considered but discounted, and to show early indicative plans of the schemes. 307 responses were received.

All information is available here:

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcot

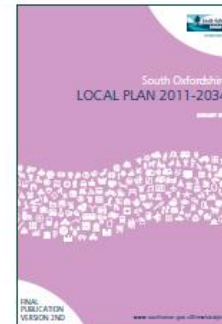
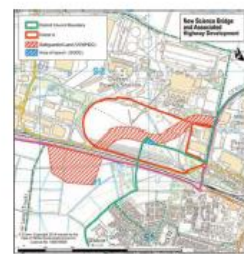
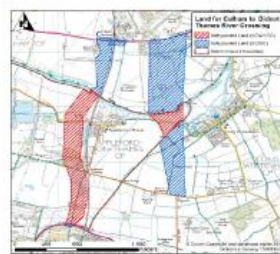
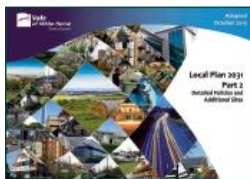
Policies and Previous Consultations



Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031

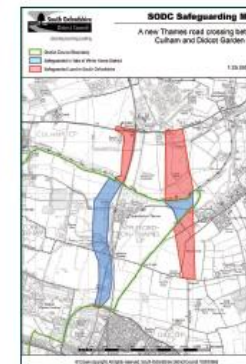
Part 1 and Part 2 (adopted)

These Local Plans include policies to safeguard land for future transport schemes, as seen in these maps. Local Plan Part 2 refined the River Crossing safeguarding, as seen in the amended map.



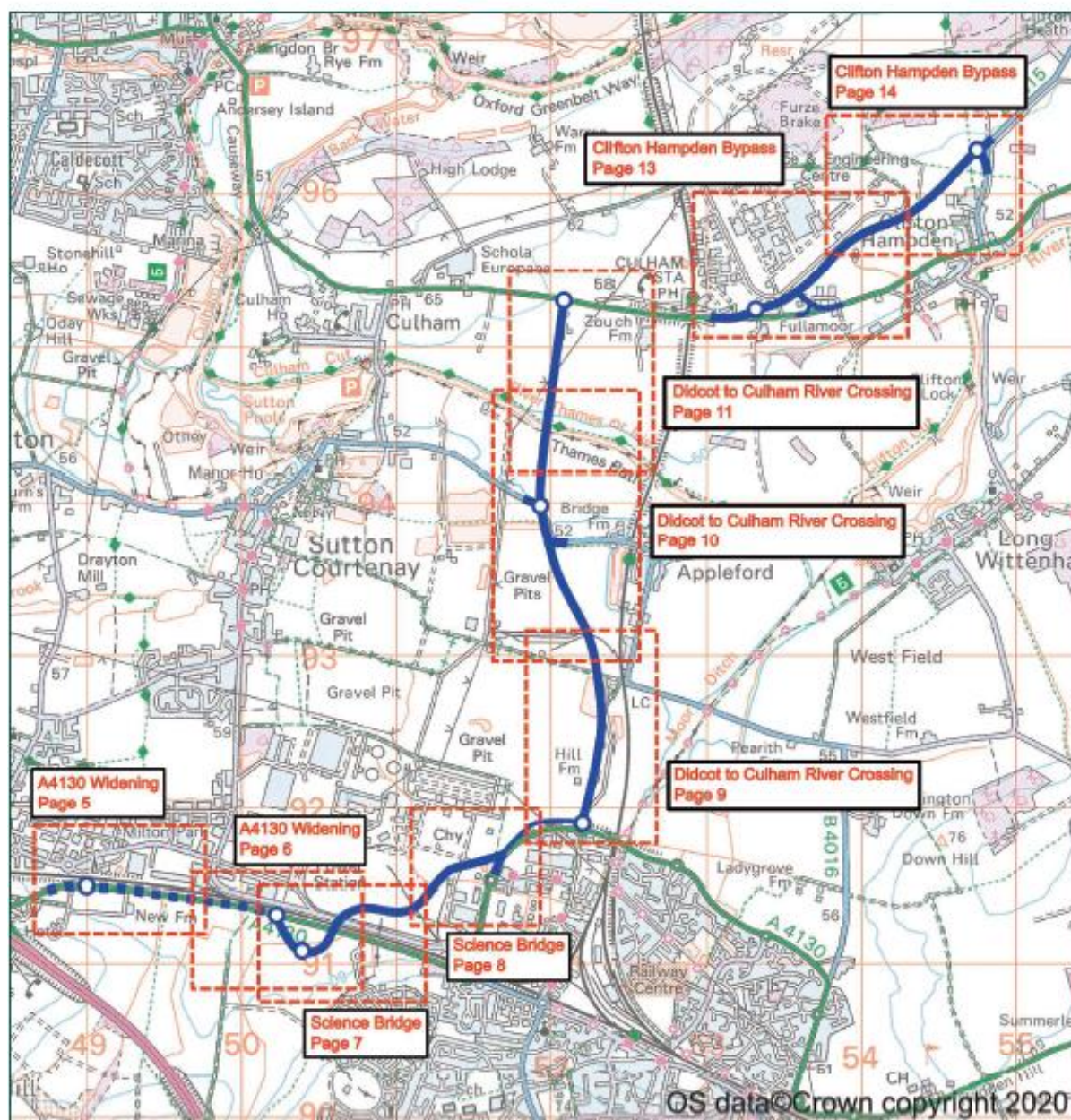
South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2034 (submitted for examination)

This submitted Local Plan proposes policies to safeguard land for future transport schemes, as seen in these maps. This Local Plan has not yet been examined and subsequently adopted, therefore these are not adopted policy as of March 2020.

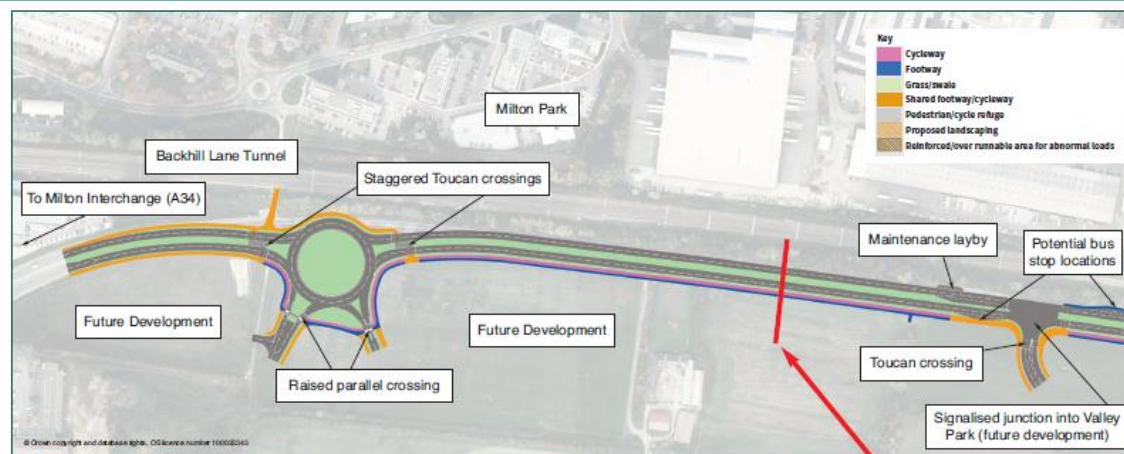


Indicative scheme plans

The following pages show the latest scheme designs for you to comment on. This map shows on which page each of the indicative scheme plans can be found.



Scheme A: A4130 Widening

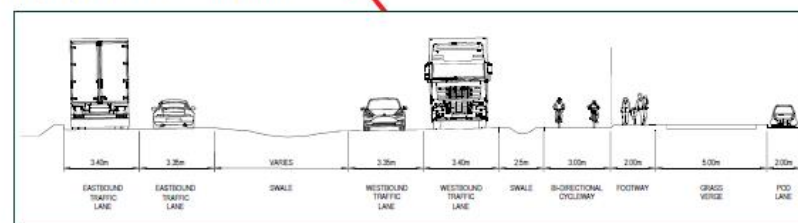


Indicative plan of A4130 Widening



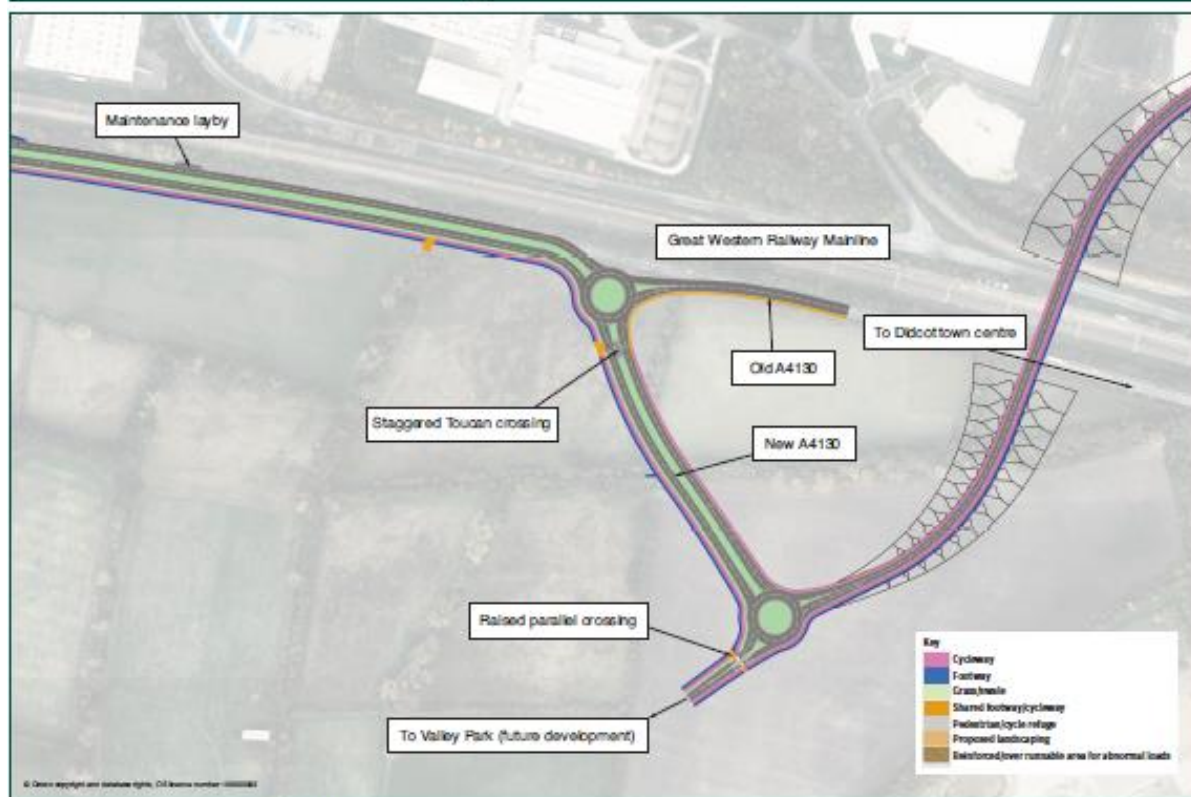
Artist's impression

Indicative cross-section



Note: the potential for the autonomous (self-driving) pod lane is to be considered in the next stages of design to future-proof the proposals.

Scheme A: A4130 Widening

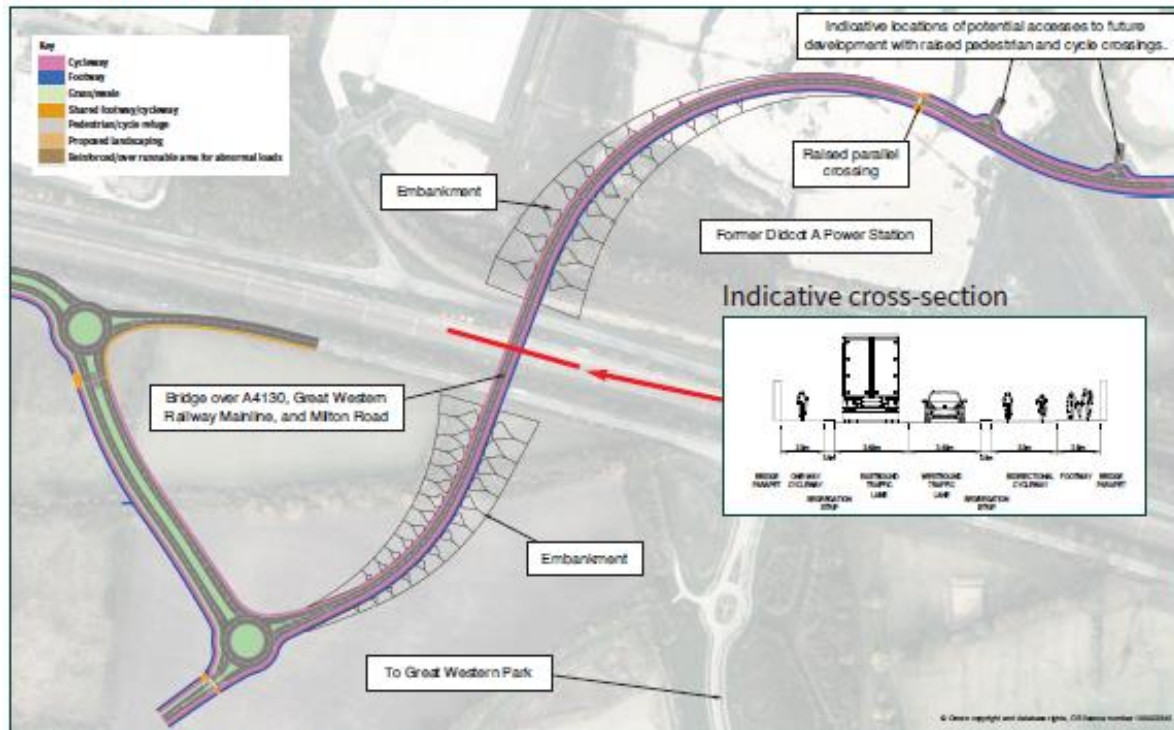


Indicative plan of A4130 Widening



Artist's impression

Scheme B: Science Bridge

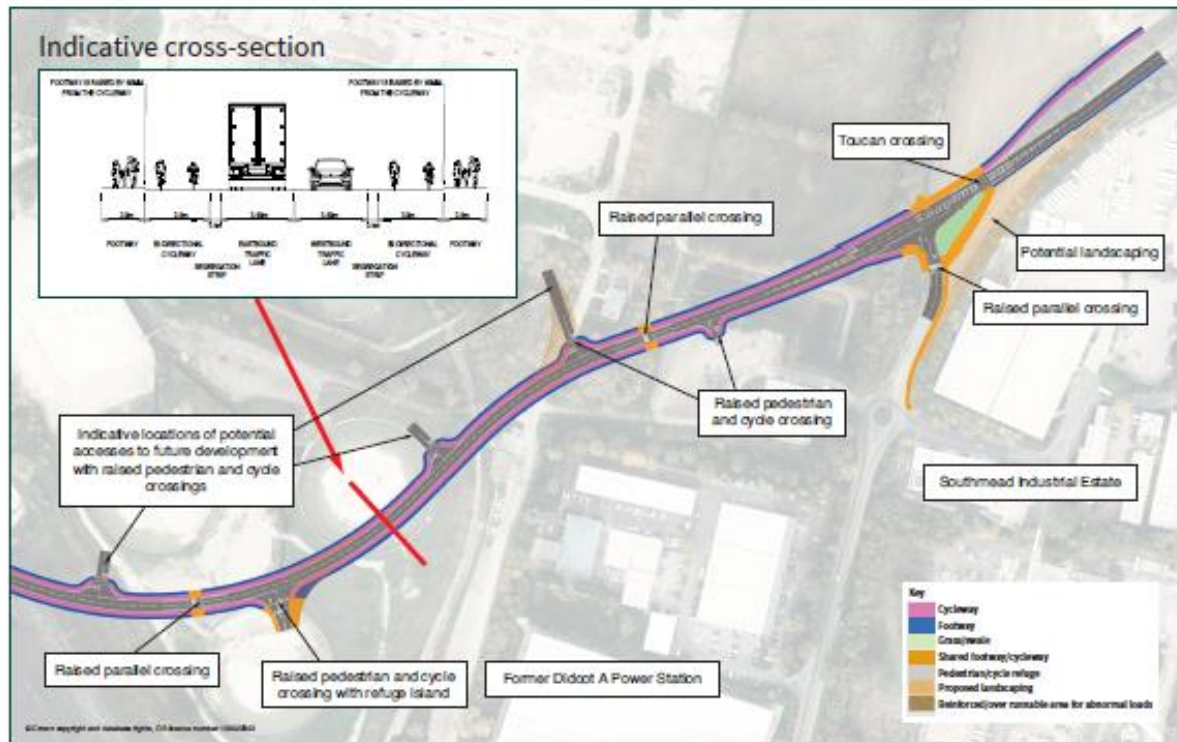


Indicative plan of Didcot Science Bridge



Artist's impression

Scheme B: Science Bridge

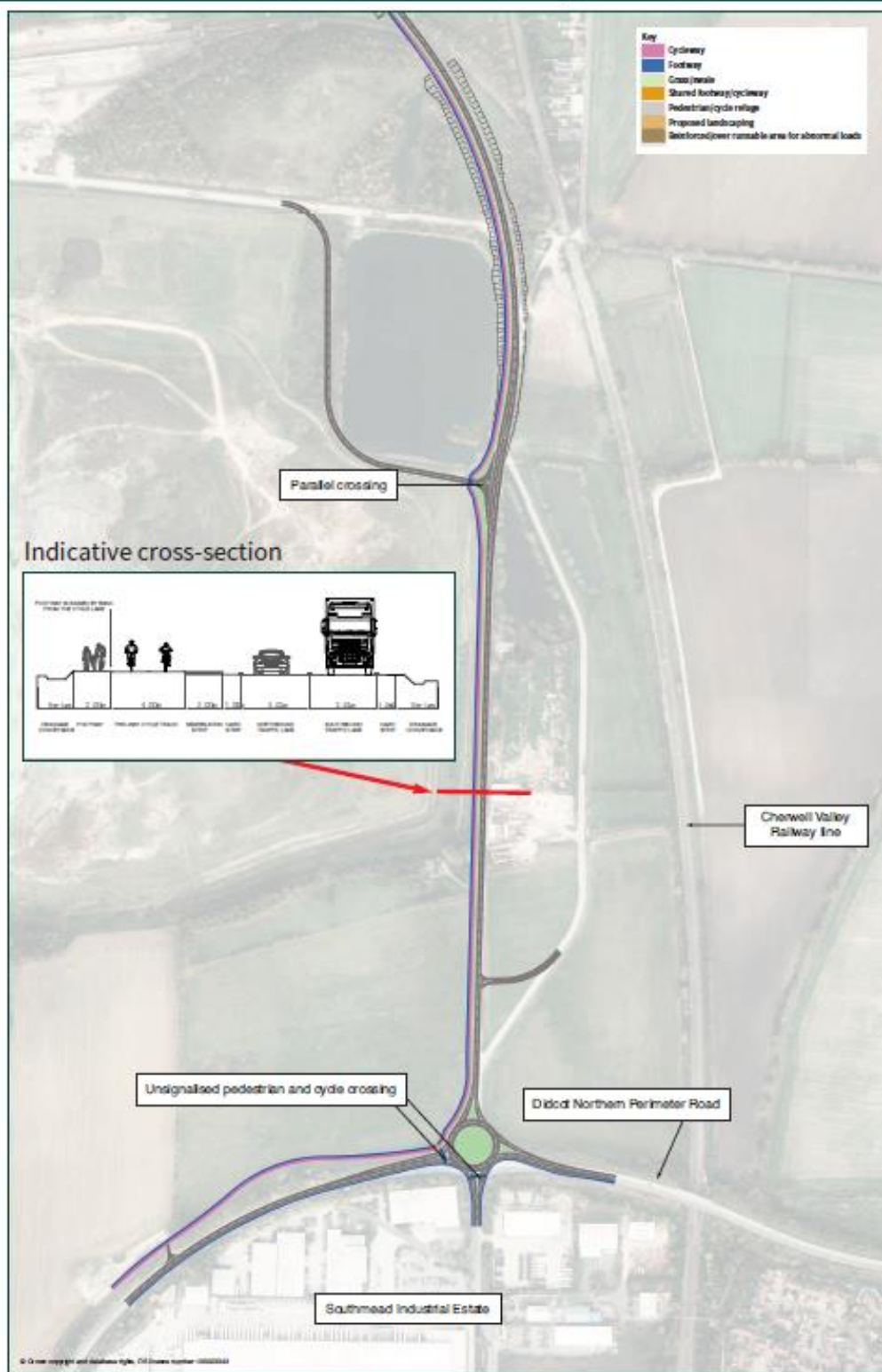


Indicative plan of Didcot Science Bridge



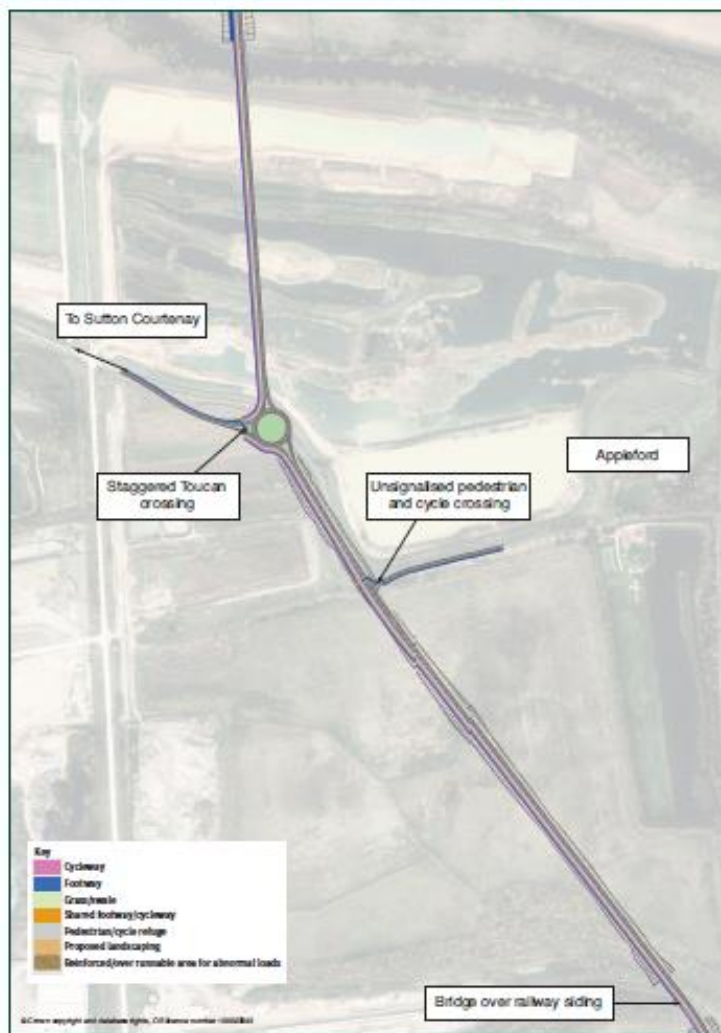
Artist's impression

Scheme C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing



Indicative plan of Didcot to Culham River Crossing

Scheme C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing

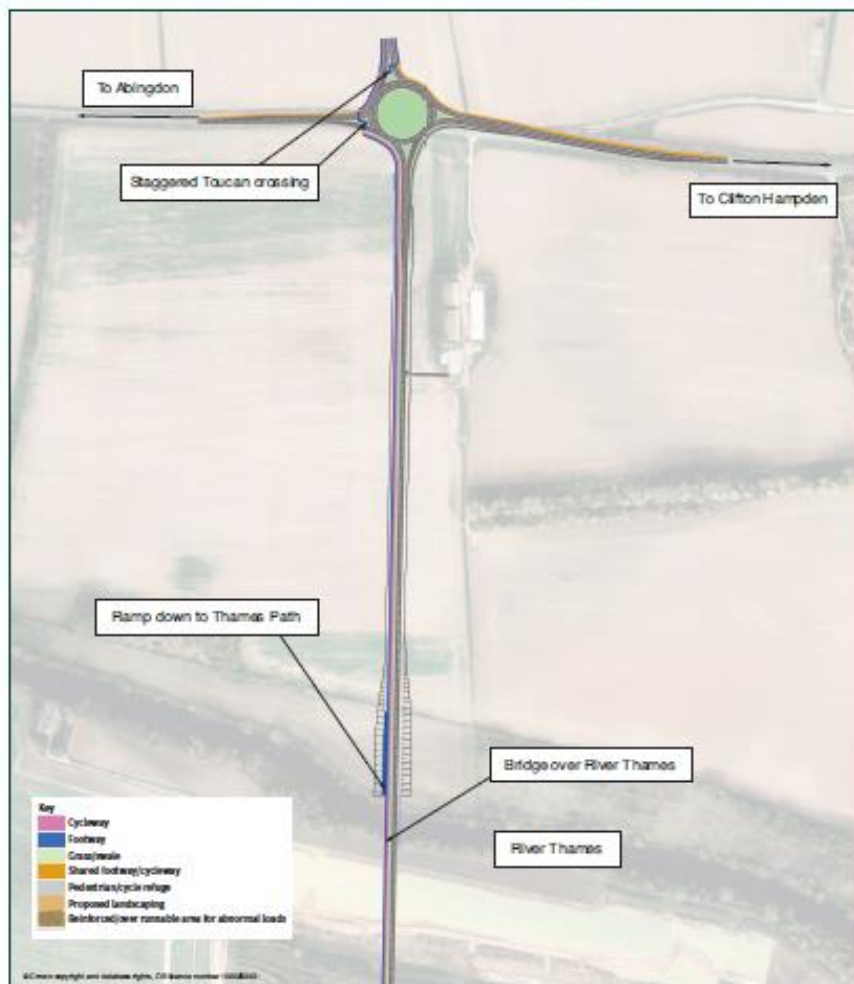


Indicative plan of Didcot to Culham River Crossing



Artist's impression

Scheme C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing

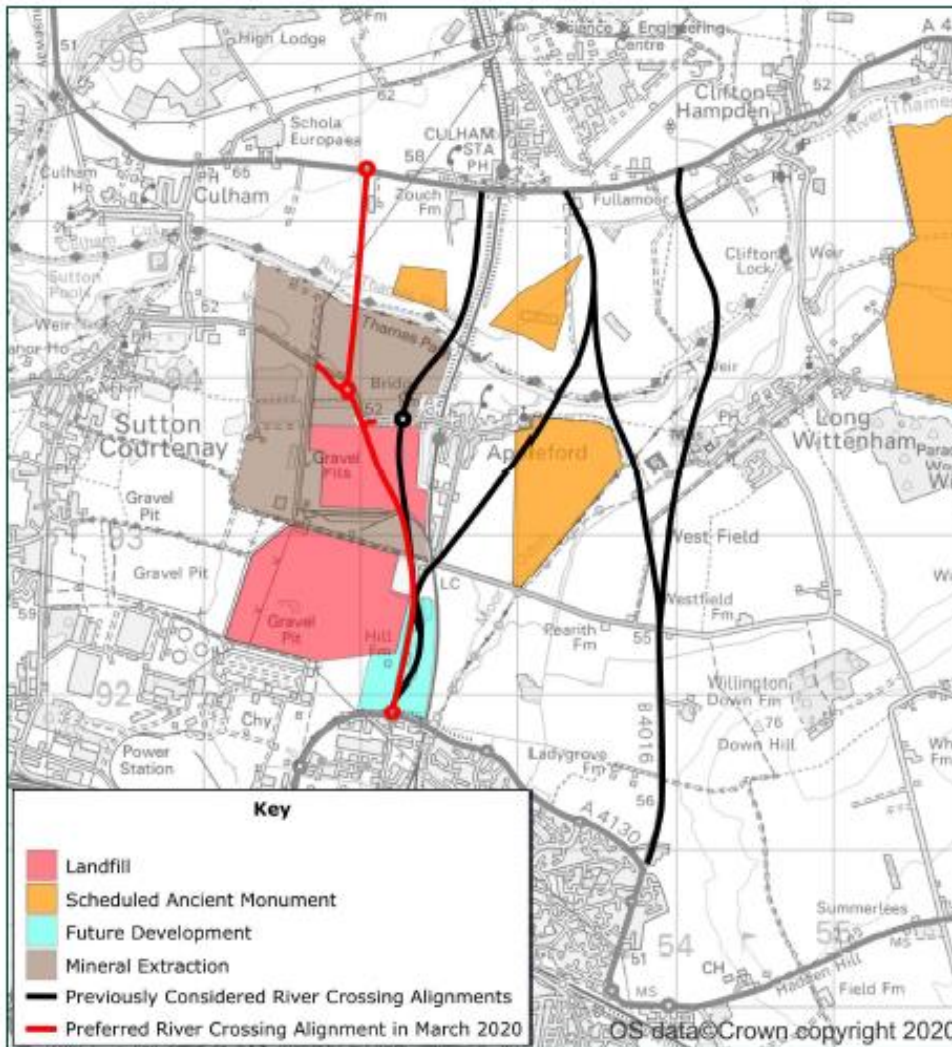


Indicative plan of Didcot to Culham River Crossing



Artist's impression

Scheme C: Didcot to Culham River Crossing – Overview of alignments considered



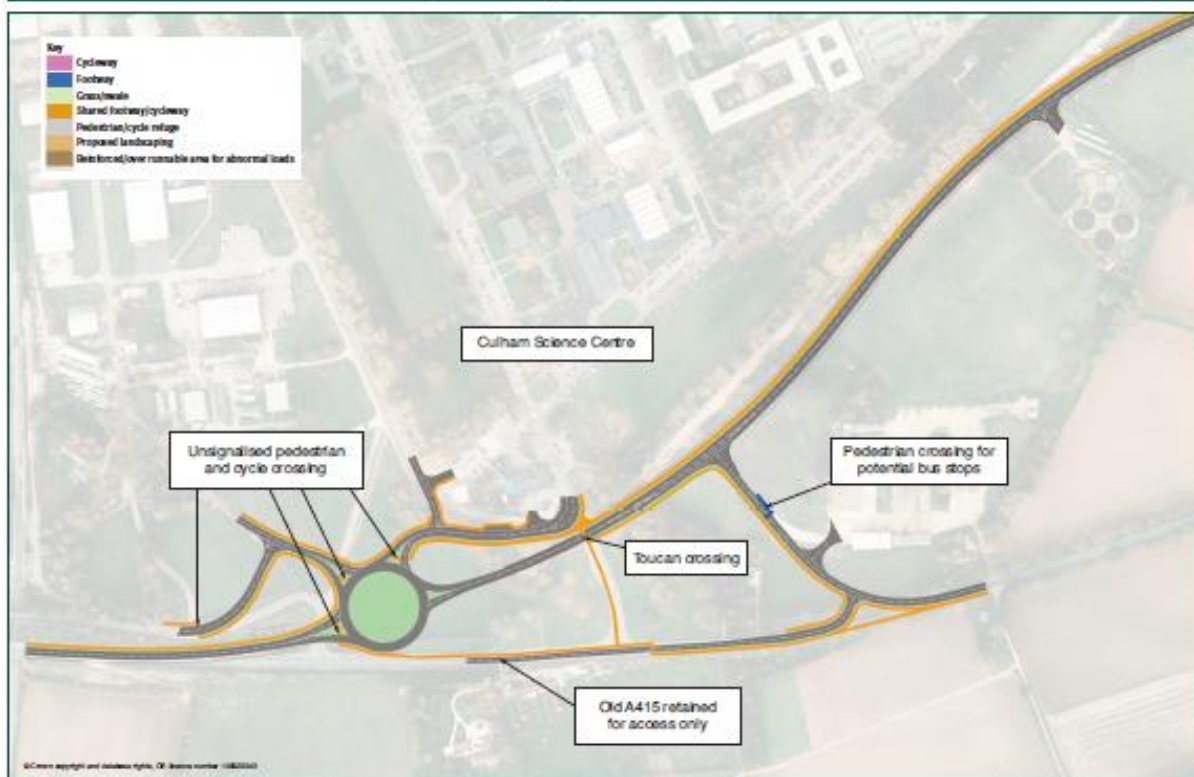
Plan illustrating some of the River Crossing alignment options considered

The black lines show some of the previously considered river crossing alignments. Additional information is available in the November 2018 consultation www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcot

To address comments received from the above consultation and following further design work, a new preferred alignment has been identified, in red:

- It is further from residential properties
- It is further from Scheduled Ancient Monuments
- It utilises old mineral extraction and landfill areas for a significant proportion of the route, minimising the impact on agricultural land
- Traffic modelling, which predicts the likely road network performance in future years, shows the latest alignment performs better than others due to the larger distance between the northern roundabout and the proposed Clifton Hampden Bypass A415 roundabout
- Better serves future development sites e.g. Didcot Growth Accelerator Enterprise Zone (blue on map)

Scheme D: Clifton Hampden Bypass

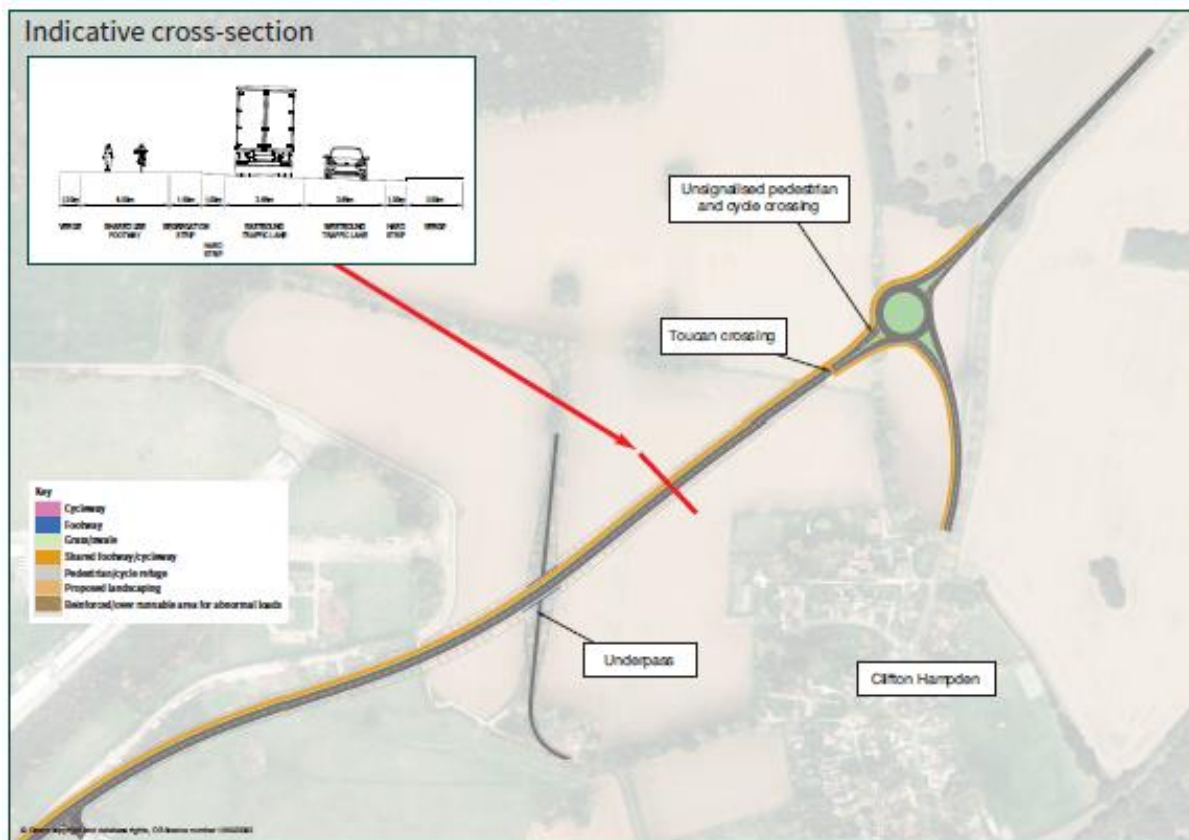


Indicative plan of Clifton Hampden Bypass



Artist's impression

Scheme D: Clifton Hampden Bypass



Indicative plan of Clifton Hampden Bypass



Artist's impression

Scheme D: Clifton Hampden Bypass - Overview of alignments considered

Multiple options were considered for this section of the network including (but not limited to):

- Changing the traffic signal timings at existing staggered junction
- Localised widening at existing staggered junction
- Southern bypass

Further information is available in the November 2018 consultation

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcot

A northern bypass was determined to be the preferred option as it was the only one to deliver satisfactory road network performance in future years. Through the latest design work we have investigated different alignment options to move the bypass further away from residential properties.

- Green: Previous alignment
- Red: Further from properties but does not meet Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) standards
- Blue: The new preferred alignment which is further from properties whilst still meeting DMRB standards



Plan showing alignment options considered for Clifton Hampden Bypass

Have Your Say

Thank you for viewing the online consultation.

Please share your views on the proposed schemes with us by filling in the online form at:
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcotupdate

The closing date for comments is **Thursday 30 April 2020 at 11:59pm**

If you have any questions or would like to discuss these proposals please email us at:
HIF1project@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Or call us on:
07392 318945 or 07833 401067

If you know anyone who does not have access to the internet and you think would be interested in this consultation, we would appreciate your help in telling them about it. They can call us on the telephone numbers above to discuss the proposals and request printed copies of the consultation materials.

Next Steps

Next stages of scheme design, to be informed by the comments received in this consultation and further survey work (including environmental, ecological, and archaeological)	Ongoing
Planning application submission including statutory consultation	Winter 2021
Compulsory Purchase Order submission	Spring 2021
Construction start	Summer 2022
Open to traffic	Spring 2024

Frequently Asked Questions

This document will be updated throughout the consultation to include new frequently asked questions as we receive them.

Date of this version: 24.04.2020

What are you asking me to comment on and why?

We are now sharing with you the latest scheme designs and asking for your comments, so we can consider them in later stages of design. We welcome all relevant comments on any aspects of the scheme designs, hence the open-ended questions on the feedback form.

In order to meet the funding terms set by Government we have to soon move into the next stage of scheme design, therefore if we do not consult now it will be too late to incorporate comments into the schemes. This consultation follows a previous consultation and public exhibition in November 2018. The principle of the schemes and land safeguarding for them has also formed part of the consultation processes associated with the adopted Oxfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan 2015-2031, the adopted Vale of White Horse District Council's Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and Part 2, and the submitted for examination South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plan 2011-2034.

Why is the consultation only happening online?

As a result of Government restrictions on social distancing in response to COVID-19, it was unfortunately not possible to hold the five public exhibitions that were scheduled for the last two weeks of March 2020. Due to the very tight timescales imposed by Government with respect to the terms of the funding ([via the Housing Infrastructure Fund](#)), it was necessary to continue with an online consultation in order to avoid delay to the project programme. When the planning application for the schemes is submitted, statutory consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the applicable planning legislation. There will also be ongoing liaison with key stakeholders and statutory bodies as the schemes progress as well as further non-statutory public consultations / exhibitions.

In light of the COVID-19 related restrictions on social distancing, what have you done to ensure local people can respond to the consultation?

This consultation was originally planned to last 4 weeks, which is usual for a non-statutory consultation such as this, but this duration was extended to 6 weeks to allow people more time to respond.

We are going above and beyond the usual steps taken in a non-statutory consultation; we are doing everything we can to reach as many people as we can in this unprecedented time, including:

- Sending letters to over 22,000 residences in the area
- Using an innovative virtual exhibition room with live chat function (we are the first council in the world to use this particular platform)
- Including phone numbers on all correspondence for people to call
- Directly contacting landowners with whom we have already been dealing
- Newspaper adverts in print (published each week during the consultation period)
- Newspaper adverts online (throughout the consultation period)
- Radio adverts (throughout the consultation period)
- OCC Facebook (17,800 people 'like' the OCC Facebook page)
- OCC Twitter (42,000 followers)
- OCC website
- Directly contacting OCC Councillors
- Directly contacting District Councillors

- Directly contacting Parish Councils
- Directly contacting major employment sites and asking them to disseminate to staff
- Sending printed versions of the materials to those who request them due to lack of internet access
- Extending the consultation – the usual period would be 3-4 weeks whereas this was for 6 weeks

How are you reaching people without access to the internet?

According to the [Office for National Statistics](#), 93% of households had access to internet in 2019, therefore the vast majority of people should be able to access the online consultation. However, we want to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be involved so we are also trying to reach people without internet, whilst adhering to Government's instructions regarding COVID-19:

- We are sending letters to over 22,000 residential properties in the area, which includes a telephone number for people to call
- Letters have been sent to all landowners with whom we have been in previous contact regarding land access for surveys
- Radio adverts about the consultation, including a telephone number for people to call
- Printed newspaper adverts, including a telephone number for people to call
- Parish Councils have been informed of the consultation and provided a telephone number to call

What major changes have you made since the last consultation?

In response to your feedback from the [previous consultation](#) in November 2018, Clifton Hampden Bypass has been re-aligned further from residences in the north of the village. The Didcot to Culham River Crossing has also been moved further west from residential properties in Appleford village. Following further transport modelling work, which forecasts the anticipated growth in traffic in future years, the link road through the Former Didcot A Power Station site is proposed to connect into the existing A4130 approximately 100 metres north of the Purchas Road/A4130/Hawksworth roundabout, whereas previously it was proposed to connect directly into the existing roundabout. The drawings now show more developed high-quality pedestrian and cycle facilities with varying types of road crossings.

Where is the money coming from?

The cost of these schemes is £234 million. £218 million of this comes from the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund and the rest has been secured through developer obligations in the area. Although the funding for the transport improvements has been announced, Oxfordshire County Council is currently in the final stages of negotiating the details of the funding agreement with Government.

Why are we building this infrastructure?

We are proposing to build new roads and improve existing roads because the highway network was not designed to cope with modern traffic levels. The housing and employment growth allocated in the adopted Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) and proposed in the submitted [South Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2034](#) requires a significant upgrade to the current network in order to help facilitate this growth.

As part of these improvements, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) is encouraging the use of sustainable travel modes through the provision of high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure. Future work on these schemes will also include examining how they connect to existing Public Rights of Way and other pedestrian and cycle routes in the area, including the National Cycle Network 5 route.

How is the land being obtained for these schemes?

OCC will primarily be attempting to obtain the land required through negotiation. However, should this not prove possible, OCC may be required to use its Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to acquire the land necessary to deliver the infrastructure.

How will this affect Golden Balls Roundabout and Nuneham Courtenay and why are there no proposals for these locations?

Through the Housing and Growth Deal, funding is available to investigate future changes to the Golden Balls Roundabout. Study work undertaken on this junction will also need to take into account the impact of traffic through Nuneham Courtenay on the A4074 and also align with [transport proposals in Oxford](#).

The funding announced by Government for the schemes being consulting on (£218 million) was as a result of a competitive bidding process against many other councils across the country. The £218 million is amongst the highest sums awarded (see the full list of 33 [here](#)). Including any other schemes as part of this package could have significantly reduced the chance of a successful bid. Additionally, there are currently no schemes designed for Golden Balls Roundabout and Nuneham Courtenay, so it would not have been possible to have included them in a bid where it is required that schemes are shown with robust costs.

How will this affect Appleford?

The Didcot to Culham River Crossing will alleviate some of the traffic passing through Appleford as it will provide a more direct alternative route across the River Thames and to Didcot. OCC will liaise with the parish council and local community in Appleford throughout scheme development.

Will this fix all the traffic issues in the area?

The network will still have a lot of traffic flowing through it due to existing traffic and expected growth, but it will flow a lot more smoothly as a number of pinch points will be removed, significantly reducing congestion.

Will construction traffic cause traffic disruption in Didcot?

There will be some disruption during construction but, through the implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan, this disruption will be minimised. The construction of the four schemes will also be carefully phased in order to avoid, where possible, works taking place simultaneously in multiple locations on the existing highway network.

Is the Northern Perimeter Road Phase 3 (NPR3) scheme part of this project?

No, NPR3 has been partially held up by progress on these schemes as it was necessary to establish how they would best fit with each other. Now that preferred alignments for these schemes have been identified, it will be possible to progress further design work on the NPR3 scheme. At present, the proposals for this scheme include a roundabout at the A4130/B4016 junction, a new road down to A4130 (roughly along the line of the boundary of the golf course), and a new roundabout on A4130 to the east of the Hadden Hill Retail Park / Tesco roundabout

Are the schemes safe?

A Road Safety Audit (RSA) Stage 1 has been carried out on every aspect of the schemes in their present stage of design. Where appropriate, recommendations from the RSA report will be incorporated into the next stage of scheme design. Further RSAs will be undertaken as necessary throughout the development of the schemes.

What about the impact on wildlife and the environment?

The impact on the environment, wildlife, and ecology will be investigated through an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to ensure any impacts are properly mitigated or avoided where possible in accordance with the applicable legislation. The EIA will also include, amongst other chapters, an Air Quality Impact Assessment and Noise Impact Assessment. As part of the landscaping strategy there is the potential for planting alongside some sections of the schemes. This will be investigated as work on the schemes continues.

Where will bus stops be located?

Proposed locations for bus stops have been identified on some parts of the schemes. The locations of other bus stops will be identified during the next stage of design through liaison with bus operators and other stakeholders.

What are the speed limits of these schemes?

The speed limits are proposed as follows:

- A4130 Widening: 40mph
- Science Bridge: 30mph
- Didcot to Culham River Crossing: 50mph
- Clifton Hampden Bypass: 60mph

Why are the pedestrian and cycle crossings different across the schemes?

The type of each pedestrian and cycle crossing depends on the nature of the environment, the anticipated usage, and proposed speed limit in each location. For example, the crossings on the A4130 are signal controlled (traffic lights), staggered toucan (pedestrians and cyclists) crossings due to the proposed speed limit (40mph) and the width of the road, whereas the crossings over most of the side roads onto the A4130 are proposed to be raised parallel crossings (zebra crossings that cyclists can also legally use) as these roads will have a lower speed limit (see Glossary section for further info on terminology). The next stages of design will further consider the appropriateness of each type of crossing, taking into account the comments received as part of this consultation and further Road Safety Audits.

Why does the 'Next Steps' section say that the planning application will be submitted in Winter 2021 and the CPO submission in Spring 2021?

The 'Next Steps' section is in chronological order. 'Winter 2021' refers to the early months of 2021, not the end of it.

Why is there a t-junction rather than a roundabout where the existing A4130 meets the new A4130?

One of the key aims of these infrastructure schemes is to provide a strategic route for traffic to travel around the periphery of Didcot and to encourage traffic to use the Science Bridge route, which is intended to form a new section of the A4130. This will reduce traffic movements at the Mendip Heights and Milton Road roundabouts, which are already very congested. One of the main ways this can be achieved is to discourage traffic from using the existing A4130 between the Mendip Heights and Purchas Road roundabouts by creating a priority t-junction instead of a roundabout where the existing A4130 meets the new A4130, thus giving priority to the peripheral route. The roundabout at the Collett access to the Southmead Industrial Estate will still remain and so provides easier access for HGV movements eastwards.

Glossary of terms

Hard Strip: an extension of the road surface alongside a carriageway, typically only required on faster roads and normally delineated by a painted white line.

Parallel Crossing: a type of 'uncontrolled' pedestrian and cycle crossing, i.e. without requirement to press a button to activate a green signal. This is similar to a Zebra crossing but is designed to allow both pedestrians and cyclists to use it (unlike a Zebra, which is for pedestrians only). In most locations these will be raised to make it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to use.

Toucan Crossing: a type of 'controlled' crossing, i.e. with the requirement to press a button and to wait for a green signal indicating that it is safe to cross. These are designed for use by both pedestrians and cyclists, whereas Puffin and Pelican crossings are for pedestrians only. In some locations, where the roads are wide, these will need to be staggered so that pedestrians and cyclists will be required to cross in two stages.

Reinforced/over runnable area for abnormal loads: this applies to two junctions on the link road through the former Didcot A power station site, which forms part of the Science Bridge scheme. This is to accommodate very long heavy goods vehicles that are occasionally required to transport equipment to and from the Didcot B power station site. These vehicles are accompanied by special safety escorts and usually take place at night to minimise disruption to the highway network.

Scheduled Ancient Monument: an archaeological site of national importance. These have special protections and any impacts on them must be minimised or mitigated in accordance with the relevant legislation.

Segregation Strip: a 'gap' that physically separates a footway or cycleway and the carriageway for safety purposes. This may be a paved or grass surface. Unlike a Hard Strip, a Segregation Strip is typically at the same level as the pedestrian/cycling provision, rather than at the same level as the carriageway.

Swale: a shallow trough running parallel to a carriageway for drainage purposes. These are typically covered in grass and are sometimes planted with reeds.

ANNEX 3

Didcot Area Infrastructure Update Consultation Analysis Report: Summary of findings from the public consultation

1. Background

- 1.1. Oxfordshire County Council undertook a public consultation to update local people on the proposed package of infrastructure improvements in Didcot and the surrounding areas. The four infrastructure improvement schemes consulted on are:
 - A4130 widening from A34 Milton Interchange towards Didcot
 - A new “Science Bridge” over the A4130, Great Western Railway Mainline and Milton Road into the former Didcot A Power Station site, back to the A4130 near Purchas Road
 - A new Didcot to Culham River Crossing between the A4130 Northern Perimeter Road at Didcot and A415 near Culham Science Centre
 - A new Clifton Hampden Bypass between A415 near Culham Science Centre and B4015 Oxford Road north of the village
- 1.2. A public consultation ran for six weeks from Friday 20th March to Thursday 30th April. As a result of Government restrictions on social distancing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible to hold the five public exhibitions that were scheduled for the last two weeks of March 2020. Due to the very tight timescales imposed by Government with respect to the terms of the funding, it was necessary to continue with an online consultation in order to avoid delay to the project programme
- 1.3. However, to address this OCC undertook additional measures to ensure that as many people as possible were aware of the consultation and were able to access the information. This included sending letters to approximately 22,000 residences in the area, using an innovative virtual exhibition room with live chat function, promoting telephone numbers of officers available to answer questions, and sending printed versions of the materials to those without internet access. This was all in addition to the standard means of engagement (newspaper adverts, press releases, electronic mailouts, OCC website etc).
- 1.4. These methods of promoting the consultation are listed in table 5.1. In total, 686 consultation responses were received.
- 1.5. In addition to the wider consultation, a Walking, Cycling, and Horse-Riding Assessment & Review is being undertaken to ensure that the schemes are developed with these users in mind. This has involved an interrogation of the scheme designs in their current guise with respect to their impact on and provision for pedestrians, cyclists, and horse-riders. This interrogation has yielded a number of opportunities for improvements. As part of this process a questionnaire was also sent to 24 stakeholders representing 14 different organisations and interest groups, including OCC officers responsible for Public Rights of Way, public health, and active travel. Seven questionnaires

were completed and returned to the project team. These will be reviewed, and along with the suggestions received through the wider consultation, will be considered in the next stage of design.

2. Response Method

2.1. Table 2.1 indicates the method by which responses were provided.

Table 2.1: Response method

Response Method	No. of responses	% of responses
Questionnaire via online consultation	611	89
Questionnaire via post	13	2
Responses received via email	50	7
Responses received via live chat	4	1
Responses received via phone	8	1
Total	686	

3. Respondent type

3.1. The profile of respondents is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Respondent type

Profile of respondents	No. of responses	% of responses
Individual	629	92
Representative of a business/group/organisation	43	6
Councillor	14	2
Total	686	

4. Live or work in Didcot or the surrounding area

4.1. Respondents were asked whether they lived or worked in Didcot or the surrounding area. This is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Live or work in Didcot or the surrounding area*

Live or work in Didcot or the surrounding area	No. of answers given	% of answers
Live in Didcot	267	33
Live in surrounding area	307	37
Work in Didcot	50	6
Work in surrounding area	187	23
None of the above	8	1
Prefer not to say	1	0
Total	820	

***NB:** In total, there were 78 respondents who did not provide an answer to this question. The table above is based on 608 respondents. Multiple answers were allowable.

Those who responded via the online consultation and responded as a representative of a business/group/organisation or as a councillor were not asked this question. However, these respondents were able to answer the question when filling in a hard copy.

In addition, those who provided comments via email/phone call/live chat were not asked this question. However, where possible this information has been extracted from the response.

5. How people heard about the consultation

- 5.1. Respondents were asked by which method they heard about the consultation. This is shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Method of how people heard about the consultation*

Method	No. of answers given	% of answers
Letter (as a local resident)	340	55
Letter (as a named landowner)	6	1
Newspaper advert (in the paper)	15	2
Newspaper advert (online)	3	0
Radio advert	8	1
OCC Facebook	21	3
OCC Twitter	7	1
OCC website	14	2
OCC email	25	4
From your parish council	32	5
From your employer	23	4
Word of mouth	82	13
Other	43	7
Total	619	

***NB:** There were 181 respondents who did not provide a response. The table above is based on 505 respondents and multiple answers were allowable.

6. Scheme specific / general questions

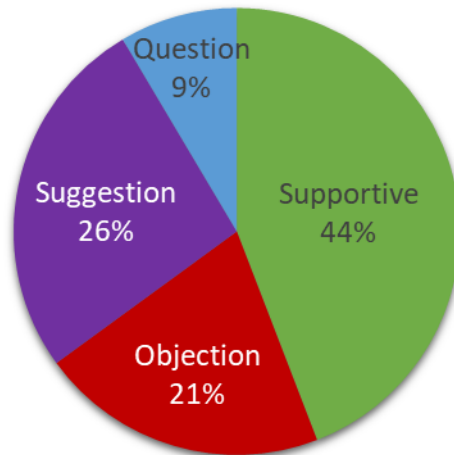
- 6.1. Respondents were asked to provide any comments in relation to each of the four schemes and for any general comments on the proposed package of infrastructure improvements as a whole. Open-ended comments boxes were provided for each of the five questions. Responses for each question have been analysed and then grouped into common themes. It should be noted that each comment may have been classified in multiple ways, for instance a respondent may have articulated a clear objection but also

simultaneously suggested ways to improve the schemes in the same comment. Therefore, the figures presented in the analyses below do not simply represent the absolute total number of comments received, rather they capture all of the elements of each respondents' comments.

- 6.2. The table and charts below and overleaf illustrate that the comments received have been overwhelmingly supportive of each of the four schemes and of the infrastructure package as a whole. Further to this, many design-related suggestions have been provided by the respondents, and where appropriate these will be considered in the next stage of design. The five pie charts illustrate the responses received to each of the five questions, therefore the first chart relating to the 'Whole Infrastructure Package' is not a summary of the total responses, but the breakdown of the question pertaining to general comments about the whole package of schemes.
- 6.3. In addition to the predominantly positive responses received to the consultation, there were also a number of objections received. These often related to the principle of whether the schemes should be delivered at all (a principle already well-established through existing planning and transport policy) rather than the detail of the schemes.
- 6.4. Further to this, some objections related to the effects of traffic generated by the allocated and permitted development in the area and others related to matters beyond the scope of the schemes that formed the basis of the HIF1 bid to Government. Responses to many of these objections and queries are provided in the Frequently Asked Questions document, which can be found in the consultation materials within **Annex 2**.
- 6.5. All of the responses received are reproduced in full in the embedded spreadsheet file and PDF on page 44. Some elements of the responses have been redacted to remove personal or sensitive details where necessary. In many cases, such as with local stakeholders, impacted landowners, parish councils, and other organisations, further engagement will be undertaken, where appropriate, to address the issues raised directly with the respondents.

	Supportive	Objection	Suggestion	Question	Total
Whole Infrastructure Package (general)	305	145	184	60	694
A4130 Widening	361	147	277	52	837
Science Bridge	272	86	167	57	582
Didcot to Culham River Crossing	334	241	273	72	920
Clifton Hampden Bypass	259	171	184	46	660
Total	1531	790	1085	287	3693

Whole Infrastructure Package



A4130 Widening



Science Bridge



Didcot to Culham River Crossing



Clifton Hampden Bypass



- 6.6. Tables detailing the results of the thematic analysis of the responses are provided below along with commentary on this analysis for each question.
- 6.7. **Whole Infrastructure Package (General):** Of the 694 comments received in relation to the package of schemes as a whole, 305 were supportive. 137 of these were supportive comments for the scheme with no specific

reasoning provided, 70 related to the positive effect that the schemes would have on alleviating traffic-related issues. 34 comments were received in praise of the cycling infrastructure, and 21 in praise of the pedestrian provision. Of the comments raising objections (145), the main concerns related to traffic impacts (38) and environmental / archaeological / historical issues (32). Suggestions mostly related to the cycle infrastructure (47) and the highway design (43).

- 6.8. **A4130 Widening:** In total 837 comments were received, of which 361 were supportive and 147 were in objection. The issues that drew the most comments whether positive, negative, or providing suggestions related to traffic impacts, environmental / archaeological / historical concerns, cycle infrastructure, pedestrian infrastructure, and highway design. In most cases the positive comments outweighed the negative, except with environmental / archaeological / historical concerns where more objections were received (28 versus 5) and highway design (22 versus 21).
- 6.9. **Science Bridge:** This scheme prompted the fewest comments with 582 in total. 272 were positive and only 86 were negative. As with the A4130 Widening, the most objections related to environmental / archaeological / historical matters (21). Many positive comments were received relating to cycle (35) and pedestrian (20) provision, with even more suggestions for these matters; 41 and 21 respectively. A further 42 suggestions were received relating to highway design.
- 6.10. **Didcot to Culham River Crossing:** This scheme had the largest number of comments relating to it with 920 in total. This scheme had the smallest disparity between positive (334) and negative (241) comments, although this still equates to a difference of 10 per cent. The matters of most concern amongst the objections related to traffic impacts (44), environmental / archaeological / historical impacts (62), highway design (51), and impacts on surrounding villages / towns / junctions (42).
- 6.11. **Clifton Hampden Bypass:** A total of 660 comments were received in relation to this scheme, of which 259 were in support and 171 in objection. The main subjects of support related to traffic impacts (63), cycle infrastructure (19), pedestrian infrastructure (12), and impacts on villages / towns / junctions (13). The main subjects of objection were similar, with 31 relating to traffic impacts, 18 for cycle provision, 15 for pedestrian provision, and 19 for impacts on villages / towns / junctions. Additionally, 35 objections related to environmental / archaeological / historical issues and 24 to highway design. Many suggestions were also received in respect of cycle (33), pedestrian (23), and highway (52) elements of the scheme design.

Whole Infrastructure Package (General)	Support / Positive	Object / Negative	Suggestion / Consideration	Question
General (no specific reasoning)	137	10	0	0
Traffic Impacts	70	38	12	11
Environmental / Archaeological / Historical	5	32	19	12
Autonomous Vehicles / Pods	3	1	0	1
Cycle Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	34	10	47	8
Pedestrian Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	21	8	12	3
Highway Design (including speed limits, weight restrictions, junctions, roundabouts)	9	13	43	8
Bus Infrastructure (including bus lanes, bus stops, bus services)	1	4	15	1
Onward cycling connections	2	3	16	5
Impact on other villages / towns / junctions	5	17	9	4
Safety	3	1	4	0
Construction	3	4	4	3
Economic	6	2	1	2
Other	6	2	2	2
Total	305	145	184	60

A4130 Widening	Support / Positive	Object / Negative	Suggestion / Consideration	Question
General (no specific reasoning)	143	4	0	0
Traffic Impacts	69	26	8	9
Environmental / Archaeological / Historical	5	28	24	3
Autonomous Vehicles / Pods	9	3	6	5
Cycle Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	64	23	63	8
Pedestrian Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	37	18	35	5
Highway Design (including speed limits, weight restrictions, junctions, roundabouts)	21	22	69	9
Bus Infrastructure (including bus lanes, bus stops, bus services)	1	1	12	0
Onward cycling connections	2	0	6	1
Impact on other villages / towns / junctions	3	9	5	0
Safety	5	3	13	1
Construction	0	2	6	2
Public Rights of Way	0	1	2	1
Other	2	7	28	8
Total	361	147	277	52

Science Bridge	Support / Positive	Object / Negative	Suggestion / Consideration	Question
General (no specific reasoning)	122	4	0	0
Traffic Impacts	70	13	4	9
Environmental / Archaeological / Historical	2	21	14	5
Autonomous Vehicles / Pods	0	0	4	1
Cycle Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	35	9	41	6
Pedestrian Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	20	7	21	3
Highway Design (including speed limits, weight restrictions, junctions, roundabouts)	12	12	42	20
Bus Infrastructure (including bus lanes, bus stops, bus services)	1	2	5	0
Onward cycling connections	0	1	7	2
Impact on other villages / towns / junctions	6	6	3	1
Safety	2	1	4	1
Construction	0	0	5	1
Public Rights of Way	0	0	0	1
Economic	2	1	0	1
Other	0	9	17	6
Total	272	86	167	57

Didcot to Culham River Crossing	Support / Positive	Object / Negative	Suggestion / Consideration	Question
General (no specific reasoning)	136	1	0	0
Traffic Impacts	81	44	9	4
Environmental / Archaeological / Historical	15	62	38	13
Autonomous Vehicles / Pods	0	1	2	0
Cycle Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	35	8	36	9
Pedestrian Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	16	3	20	5
Highway Design (including speed limits, weight restrictions, junctions, roundabouts)	22	51	80	23
Bus Infrastructure (including bus lanes, bus stops, bus services)	0	0	8	1
Onward cycling connections	1	5	20	6
Impact on other villages / towns / junctions	22	42	14	3
Safety	5	7	4	1
Construction	0	1	4	1
Public Rights of Way	0	1	7	0
Economic	0	0	1	0
Other	1	15	30	6
Total	334	241	273	72

Clifton Hampden Bypass	Support / Positive	Object / Negative	Suggestion / Consideration	Question
General (no specific reasoning)	130	4	0	0
Traffic Impacts	63	31	5	11
Environmental / Archaeological / Historical	6	35	22	6
Autonomous Vehicles / Pods	0	0	2	0
Cycle Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	19	18	33	3
Pedestrian Infrastructure - Scheme Design (including crossings)	12	15	23	1
Highway Design (including speed limits, weight restrictions, junctions, roundabouts)	8	24	52	14
Bus Infrastructure (including bus lanes, bus stops, bus services)	0	0	8	1
Onward cycling connections	0	2	10	1
Impact on other villages / towns / junctions	13	19	5	4
Safety	5	13	4	0
Construction	0	0	1	1
Public Rights of Way	2	1	3	2
Economic	0	0	0	1
Other	1	9	16	1
Total	259	171	184	46

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Division(s):

CABINET - 21 JULY 2020

WEST OXFORDSHIRE (A40 SMART CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS) HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (HIF2)

Report by Corporate Director Planning & Growth

Recommendation

1. Cabinet are RECOMMENDED to: -

- (a) Subject to the confirmation from Homes England that the contract pre-conditions have been met and due diligence has been completed to manage programme and financial risk to the Council, authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Environment to:
 - i) approve any final detailed amendments of the drafted Heads of Terms.**
 - ii) approve the Grant Determination Agreement (GDA).****
- (b) Subject to the satisfactory completion of recommendation (i) approve the inclusion of all three elements (identified in para. 4 and Appendix 1) of the programme into the Capital Programme and report the governance of these projects at a HIF2 programme level with an overall budget provision of £102m subject to the implementation of the grant determination agreement with Homes England.**
- (c) Note the draft Heads of Terms (Annex 1) that form the basis of grant determination agreement between Homes England and Oxfordshire County Council for West Oxfordshire Housing Infrastructure Fund Grant Award.**
- (d) Note the Assurance Framework (explained in para 27) which sets out the background to the Housing Infrastructure Funding process and establishes the approach to reporting and monitoring implementation.**

Executive Summary

2. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) submitted a business case for HIF2 in March 2019. In November 2019 it was announced that the bid had been successful (subject to contract) in securing £102m of grant funding towards a forecast £153.2m package of transport improvements proposed along 10.8km the A40 corridor between Witney and Duke's Cut (North Oxford).
3. The HIF2 will not only expediate infrastructure delivery but directly unlock 4,813 new homes (including 2,222 affordable homes) and support the delivery of more than 10,000 new homes in total in the West Oxfordshire area committed through the Local Plan 2031. HIF2, in conjunction with the County Council's wider transport strategy, is required to resolve current severe congestion and future-proof the highway infrastructure along the A40 corridor in the long term.
4. A schematic plan of the A40 corridor's programme and its related housing is included at Appendix 1. In summary, the HIF2 scheme includes three key highway enhancement elements:
 - a) Element 1: A40 dual carriageway between Witney and Eynsham (3.2km)
 - b) Element 2: A40 westbound bus priority lane (7.0km)
 - c) Element 3: A40 capacity and connectivity Improvements at Duke's Cut canal and railway bridges (0.6km).
5. The related Science Transit scheme (Local Growth Funded, DfT) includes:
 - a) Park & ride at Eynsham
 - b) A40 East bound bus priority Lane.
6. The primary focus of HIF2 is the provision of additional highway space, connectivity and infrastructure to encourage/facilitate modal shift encouraging more sustainable forms of travel to meet our zero carbon transport network ambitions such as public transport, walking and cycling connectivity, and the delivery of wider health and place shaping benefits in line with the Council's key priorities.
7. HIF2 funding will add to the £36.2m of Local Growth Funding that has been secured from the Department of Transport and Developers towards the first phase of the package of A40 corridor improvements. This phase known as Science Transit is interdependent with the delivery of HIF2. There is currently an estimated funding gap to deliver the Science Transit Scheme, although it is anticipated that this will be resolved in the coming months through securing additional funding sources and efficiencies in the programme. Further detail is outlined in para 32 and detailed in Annex 2

8. There are a range of current issues and risks associated with the delivery of the A40 corridor programme which are being actively managed. Whilst a number of these can be considered as reflective of the scale and complexity of the programme being undertaken, matters such as HIF2 contract conditions and the interdependence between the Science Transit and HIF2 projects are of particular note.
9. The grant funding will need to be spent by March 2024. Since the funding announcement, OCC has been in negotiations with Homes England (on behalf of MHCLG) regarding the HIF2 Heads of Terms and the draft Grant Determination Agreement (GDA). Contract discussions are proceeding well, with much of the detail resolved through the HIF 1 discussions. This potentially allows OCC to enter the HIF2 contract in August 2020.

Background

10. The A40 Smart Corridor is the second phase of the overarching A40 Strategy. The scheme includes three key highway enhancement elements:
 - a) Element 1: A40 dual carriageway between Witney and Eynsham (3.2km)
 - b) Element 2: A40 westbound bus priority lane (7.0km)
 - c) Element 3: A40 capacity and connectivity Improvements at Duke's Cut canal and railway bridges (0.6km)
11. The HIF scheme will mitigate the increased transport demand generated by housing growth by increasing the highway capacity of the route between Witney and Eynsham, while providing a high-quality, congestion-free public transport alternative for travel between Eynsham and Oxford. Interchange would be made possible at Eynsham Park & Ride, part of the A40 Science Transit 2 Scheme.

A40 Smart Corridor Linkages to Housing Delivery and Sustainable Travel

12. Element 1 A40 dual carriageway will extend the capacity increase provided by the existing A40 Dual Carriageway (Witney Bypass) further east from Witney to Eynsham. Witney is the largest town in West Oxfordshire and a key retail and services destination for neighbouring settlements. This element directly supports housing growth at Site 1 North Witney and Site 2 East Witney. Widening the single carriageway to dual carriageway will significantly increase highway capacity for all modes of transport and provide access to the transport interchange hub at Eynsham Park & Ride site, where fast bus services to Oxford city centre, Oxford Hospitals and key employment sites can be accessed. This Element also provides more capacity for local trips between Witney and Eynsham, including a shared pedestrian and cycle lane, which will enable residents at the Eynsham sites

(Sites 3 and 4) to easily access local employment, retail and services in Witney.

13. Elements 2 and 3 provide much needed capacity enhancements and the provision of a congestion free alternative for local traffic on the A40 between Eynsham and Oxford, through improving public transport capacity. Currently, the A40 serves a premium bus route corridor, carrying over 2m passengers per year, the scheme will increase capacity to accommodate growth in passenger trips. The improvements directly serve Site 3 Oxfordshire Cotswold Garden Village and Site 4 West Eynsham. This part of Oxfordshire has some of the highest levels of “out-commuting” in the county, over 20,000 West Oxfordshire residents commute to destinations outside of the District for work, the highest proportion of which at over 7,500 people commute to Oxford City. This means there is a high level of dependency on the A40 corridor, and the HIF proposals, to access a growing job market in Oxford.
14. Elements 2 and 3 complete the dedicated bus lanes in both directions (started by A40ST2) to provide a high frequency, fast and reliable public transport alternative to the car for trips between West Oxfordshire and Oxford. For these benefits to be fully realised, both Elements 2 and 3 need to be delivered together. If only one of these Elements were provided, then buses would be forced to merge with car traffic and share the road with cars for part of their journey between Eynsham and Oxford. This would significantly reduce the attractiveness of the public transport offer, which is why OCC believes both elements are needed to ensure the scheme is viable.
15. In the absence of HIF funding, the four Local Plan Housing sites at Witney and Eynsham, would not be supported by the essential infrastructure to mitigate the transport impact of growth. These homes, and HIF funding, contribute to the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal commitment to support the delivery of 100,000 homes by 2031, without HIF this objective would be placed at risk, as WODC would have to consider the use of planning conditions to halt housing delivery until certainty around infrastructure funding could be secured.
16. A failure to give road users choices of travel and better journey time reliability would lead to County Council objections to planning applications that increase traffic on the A40 corridor in the West Oxfordshire area, most noticeably those which are dependent on the HIF 2 infrastructure. This infrastructure enhances the network whilst providing those wider opportunities for users of the A40 corridors to travel by alternative modes. This in combination with the completion of the Local Transport and

Connectivity Plan, to be adopted in 2021 will strategically manage travel along the A40 corridor moving forward.

17. The four development sites listed in Table 1 were identified as ‘dependent’ on the A40 improvements coming forward. All the dependent sites relate to West Oxfordshire District Council’s (WODC) adopted Local Plan 2031 and benefit from adopted site status. An Area Action Plan is in development for the Oxfordshire Cotswold Garden Village with an examination scheduled in Winter 2020. A development brief for West Eynsham is also in production and is scheduled for completion in August 2020. Both policy documents rely on the HIF 2 infrastructure being secured for support from OCC.

Table 1: HIF2 dependent sites

Site	Site Name	Homes	Current Status
1	Oxfordshire Cotswold Garden Village	2,200	In Planning (Application Submitted)
2	West Eynsham	750	Discussions with developers underway. Not yet in planning
3	East Witney	450	In Planning (Pre-Apps)
4	North Witney	1,400	Partly in Planning (2 live apps)

Progress to date

18. While the contract with Homes England has not been signed there has been significant progress to date. Mobilisation work has started on feasibility design to establish a realistic programme and ensure that the scheme can progress to meet the delivery deadline. The delivery programme for the A40 scheme is challenging although forecasts indicate delivery meeting the March 2024 funding window. However, there remain a number of risks to meeting this deadline which include the Science Transit scheme, further COVID-19 matters, delays in the land acquisition and Compulsory Purchase Order process. The programme will go through a review looking at efficiencies so more time can be made available at the beginning of the programme to mitigate any planning or CPO issues and seek to avoid any expenditure outside of the funding window or cost overruns. It is anticipated the review work will be completed by August 2020. Further detailed impact of the risk is outlined in Annex 2.
19. The main focus of recent activity has, with Homes England and DfT’s verbal agreement, been looking at the most efficient and effective way in delivering the HIF scheme. This has included looking at the Local Growth

Funded (LGF) Science Transit scheme, which forms the first stage of the A40 improvements, to consider if it can be integrated to enhance the overall design solution and provide more effective cost/ operational delivery. At present the HIF2 and LGF schemes are separately funded projects and will be delivered on separate timeframes. Work is underway to demonstrate that there are efficiencies and ways of minimising disruption on this single main arterial road between Eynsham and Duke's Cut by combining the delivery of the projects.

20. All activity along the A40 corridor as illustrated through Appendix 1, is now being taken forward through a co-ordinated approach in terms of resources and delivery approach. Once evidenced that there are clear benefits from integration, these two projects will be taken forward as a single scheme for delivery.

HIF Grant Determination Agreement Negotiations and Implementation

21. Since December 2019, officers have been in negotiations with Homes England on the Heads of Terms for HIF2 which form the basis of the Grant Determination Agreement (GDA) (contract) with Government. The GDA defines each specific project, their funding and what will be delivered and monitored. This has also involved tri-partite discussions with DfT, Homes England and OCC as several conditions (pre and post contract) relate to the Science Transit scheme.
22. A draft GDA was provided to OCC on 26th June 2020. Receipt confirmed that the fundamental elements of the HIF1 GDA drafting was translated to the HIF2 GDA and by default the extent of further negotiations necessary to complete the GDA has been narrowed.
23. The HIF2 Heads of Terms (Annex 1) remain draft and will be finalised with Homes England as part of concluding the GDA. In addition to the general conditions seen in HIF1, conditions and clauses also relate to a successfully submitted LGF bid which is fundamental to the delivery of the HIF2 programme. This presents a risk to the timing of entering the contract and the wider delivery of HIF2, whilst significant these are being managed (see Key Issues below).
24. Another common theme relates to delivery of HIF infrastructure and new homes and their related milestones. In the unlikely event that these key milestones are missed and cannot be renegotiated with Homes England (a general default), or OCC have acted improperly in spending the funding or delivering the infrastructure (a fundamental default), then Homes

England have the ability to stop further payments and in the latter event, clawback the funding already received.

25. The likelihood of a fundamental default occurring is considered extremely low. The likelihood of a general default occurring is also considered low and further mitigation measures can be taken to manage the risk.
26. Implementation of a number of conditions also require a close partnership with West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) to monitor and ensure delivery of the housing associated with HIF2. Other conditions relate to procurement, land acquisition, planning permissions, funding profiles and mechanisms and a number of general conditions and performance obligations. HIF funding will be available for the period commencing on the satisfaction of the various conditions precedent and until 31st March 2024.
27. Once the GDA has been agreed, its implementation will sit within requirements set through the HIF Assurance Framework. This establishes the checks and balances for HIF projects, providing the necessary oversight and transparency to MHCLG illustrating accountability between local and central government. In addition to setting the background and approach to securing and spending HIF funding, it also includes requirements such as regular reporting, an annual performance review and a robust approach to monitoring and evaluation.

Key Issues

Linkages with the Science Transit scheme funded from Local Growth Fund (LGF)

28. One of the key challenges has been programme delays in relation to the related submission of the Department of Transport (DfT), LGF business case.
29. The A40 Park and Ride and Eastbound Bus Lane scheme needs to gain planning consent prior to the LGF business case submission to DfT. However, there have been delays to the planning process due an objection from the Environment Agency and their requirements for enhanced flood modelling and mitigation along the A40. This has increased the timescales for the planning application determination and has resulted in a delay in the programme.
30. The expected resolution for the EA objection is 3 months once the enhanced modelling has been completed. The technical team are working through the further enhancement options and senior management are engaging with the Environment Agency to see what can be done to release the objection and permission to be granted sooner. Should these

enhancements be accepted it is forecast that the determination of the planning application could occur in March 2021 following submission and further information to the Local Planning Authority.

31. In the meantime, discussions are ongoing with the DfT regarding submission of the business case. DfT recently clarified the approach to be followed to secure funding which has increased both time and submission requirements than those previously programmed. The additional information for the business case is being incrementally submitted and approved in parallel with the planning determination and getting a tender price. This will mean that there will be an agreement on the DfT full business case in principle subject to the planning approval and tender price. The latest estimates indicate that this may be June 2021.
32. A second key issue related to the LGF Science Transit scheme is linked to forecast cost and funding. The cost estimate will exceed the previous outline business case financial forecast by £15m. This is partly due to delays in the determination of the planning application and partly due to the approach used to price the project for the initial business case. Funding to cover the shortfall is being sourced and officers are satisfied that all funding can be sourced from third parties and/or from the OCC capital programme to cover the gap. Alongside funding sources, efficiencies are being looked at through the programme and procurement routes. Further information is outlined in Annex 2.
33. DfT have formally confirmed that Her Majesty's Treasury has extended the funding period for LGF infrastructure programme, which applies to the LGF Science Transit scheme, to March 2022. This is subject to Ministers announcing a positive funding decision on the final business case and, that OCC have entered into contracts to deliver the whole of the scheme.
34. These matters reflect the complexity of delivering a programme of improvements across a single transport corridor using different funding streams from different funders. That said both issues risk delaying entering into the HIF 2 contract with Government and are resulting in financial and programme risk to OCC. The need for the LGF business case to be in place is considered further below.

Draft Heads of Terms and Grant Development Agreement

35. The draft Heads of Terms and GDA are the subject of ongoing confidential negotiations between the County Council and Homes England / Ministry of Homes, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). An area of

particular focus is to satisfy all preconditions to enable OCC and Homes England/ MHCLG to get into contract as soon as possible.

36. There are a number of key financial matters that require consideration which relate to cashflow, repayment of monies, programme delivery, cost overruns and scheme costs that may unavoidably go beyond post-March 2024. At this time, these are not considered insurmountable.
37. Issues outlined in para. 28 -34 relating to the submission of the LGF business case to DfT are reflected in the GDA. However, through negotiation with Homes England, officers have agreed that the conditions be post signing which will mitigate the risk of not being able to enter into the agreement until the LGF is resolved. Homes England in agreeing to this approach, will only allow draw down of funds following approval of the LGF business case. This point continues to be negotiated with Homes England. An update on this matter can be provided to the meeting.
38. To minimise risk to OCC, officer discussions are progressing positively with senior officers in WODC to put together a back to back agreement with the GDA that will pass any obligations which correspond to the local planning authority relating to securing housing delivery, monitoring numbers of completed houses and HIF funding recovery mechanism which needs to be secured through the planning process. It is understood that WODC will be required in due course to seek member approval to enter into the agreement. This risk will be monitored as discussion progresses with WODC. This activity reflects the wider commitment made by WODC in support of the bid for funding.

Failure to Sign the General Development Agreement

39. Should the HIF2 grant determination agreement not be signed, this strategic infrastructure cannot be delivered. As set out above, the implications arising from this are significantly adverse at both the local, sub-regional and national level. Expediting these discussions are critical to completing negotiations by August 2020.

Programme

40. Due to the strict funding window set out in the criteria for the HIF2 funding, a defined programme and meeting the tight critical paths is paramount. Key milestones will be refined within the programme as greater detail and

certainty is provided. There is currently work underway to consider the integration of the Science Transit scheme and elements of HIF2 which will not only provide time saving, reduce highway network disruption but also provide cost efficiencies. This work is to conclude in August 2020.

41. During programme mobilisation there have been some delays in commencing feasibility design work due to contractual processes, officers have been working through contractual challenges with the supply chain and these have now been resolved to move forward.

42. The interim forecast programmed key milestones are set out in the table below:

Activity	Date
Land access granted for surveys	March 2020
Ecology Surveys	March 2020 – December 2020
Feasibility design	March 2020 – April 2021
Integrated Programme & review completed	August 2020
HIF Funding agreement signed (subject to DfT/HE discussion and OCC approval)	August 2020
LGF Full Business Case information submitted	August -November 2020
Prelim design (incl. other surveys)	March 2021 – August 2021
Detailed design	Dec 2021 – May 2022
Bus Lanes planning application LGF Science Transit 1 (submission / decision)	November 2020 - March 2021
LGF Submission of business case (inc. planning and price)	April 2021
LGF Business case approved	June 2021
Dual Carriageway planning application	June 2021 – Oct 2021
CPO (submission / decision/ JR period)	Aug 2021 – Dec 2022
Construction start / finish (incl. mobilisation)	July 2022 – March 2024 (Based on Private Treaty Sale. Jan 2023 – March 2024 (If CPO is to be implemented)

43. COVID-19 has to date had limited impact on the timescales of the programme but current predictions is that these can be mitigated by making efficiencies in the programme. The key risks associated with these current milestones are outlined in the Annex 2 in detail.

44. Below are the key areas of risk identified:
- a) COVID-19
 - b) Securing land
 - c) Timing of the ecology surveys
 - d) Combining the HIF and Science Transit scheme
 - e) Planning approval
 - f) Structural assessments and condition of Dukes Cut

Budgetary Implications

45. The current HIF2 approved programme spend is £0.8m (forward funded by OCC). To date expenditure of £0.6m has been incurred and it is forecasted that to progress to the end of feasibility, a total of £1.7m is required, £0.9m more than approved to date. This funding covers both business case development and the feasibility activity underway. This budget is covered through the capital reserve.
46. Due to tight timescales and keeping to the agreed end date of 2024, there is a need to complete feasibility and progress planning and land acquisition discussions. The additional estimated spend of £0.9m will be required at risk over and above the current approved budget. A business case has been prepared and it will be necessary for it to be signed off to release funding for the work and the programme to proceed beyond August 2020.
47. As currently set out within the draft Heads of Terms, once the contract between Homes England and OCC has been completed, all funds spent to develop schemes (and as part of HIF bid) including forward funding elements (e.g. design and land acquisition) can be reclaimed in one lump sum. Officers are still seeking to follow this approach even if the LGF pre-conditions are moved to post contract, however at present expenditure (including funding already spent by OCC of £0.6m) will not be available until the LGF approval has been given by Department of Transport. As this is currently forecast to be June 2021, this places the cost of feasibility (£1.7m - as above) and further programmed activity associated with prelim/ detailed design (£3.2m – bringing total spend to £4.9m) at risk. Officers continue to discuss this point with Homes England.
48. Once the initial payment to reclaim of historic costs is made to OCC, funding will thereafter be released following completion activity against a set of milestones. Homes England will not have the 'ability to recover funding already spent' unless 'in respect of a events of Fundamental Default' as per current draft Heads of Terms.
49. Therefore, once a contract is signed, the financial risk can be managed through the GDA. Entering the GDA remains the priority as this reduces both financial and reputational risks to OCC.
50. The other financial risk for HIF2 is that the initial cost estimate, though containing an optimism bias, has not yet been developed beyond the

phase of the business case submission. Land assembly costs and the costs of significant structural maintenance or reconstruction work for the at Dukes Cut bridges if required could lead an increase in scheme costs beyond HIF2s allocated funding.

51. There is a residual financial risk if the delivery of the infrastructure programme goes beyond the funding window of March 2024 and the Council would not be able to draw down further funding. There is no OCC funding or secured s106 allocated to the infrastructure programme so no further funding is available beyond March 2024. The likelihood of this risk materialising is low based on the interim programme; this position will be qualified further following the completion of an integrated LGF/ HIF2 programme and cashflow by appointed consultants. This is anticipated in July /August 2020. Further information on the LGF funding is outlined in Annex 2

Legal Implications

52. Throughout the contract negotiations, the Legal Team has been involved and advised officers, this has informed the negotiation of the Heads of Terms to date. Homes England and the County Council will be responsible for their own legal costs although this may be recouped post-contract from the HIF funds.
53. OCC officers have met and discussed with WODC the use of a formal agreement to collaborating and supporting the delivery of housing as set out within the HIF2 bid. Heads of Terms for the agreement are in preparation and will soon be shared with WODC. Although not a contractual requirement by Homes England, this will, if secured, share the risk with the District and support monitoring and delivery of the outcomes of the funding.

Equalities Implications

54. The programme will continually be assessed to make sure that all customers are being taken into consideration in consultation design and construction. The team of specialists will be using government guidance to ensure no highway user is disadvantaged by the scheme.

Risk Management

55. A risk register has been maintained as part of the project plan. The main risk to the delivery of the schemes is delay to the programme. The funding must be spent by March 2024. Unlike in HIF 1 Didcot Garden Town,

Homes England have informed OCC that there is no possibility at this time of extending the funding period beyond March 2024. OCC is currently requesting confirmation of this in writing.

56. The likelihood of the risk materialising is low based on the interim programme; this position will be qualified further following the completion of an integrated LGF/ HIF 2 programme and cashflow by appointed consultants. This work will consider reviewing a range of activities including planning/ design, procurement, land assembly and accelerated construction. This is anticipated by August 2020.
57. Any delay to the programme will see the County Council fail to meet this deadline. This risk and the others identified on the Risk Register are being managed by officers working closely with the professional services commissioned by OCC to deliver this scheme.
58. Emerging risks will be escalated through the capital governance process to ensure that the Leadership Team are aware of issues and risks arising and impact on the Council.
59. COVID-19 currently poses an unquantifiable risk to the future delivery programme and OCC's ability to meet the March 2024 funding deadline given its potential to detrimentally impact all phases of the scheme. The COVID-19 impacts will be closely monitored and implications on programme reported.
60. A financial risk to OCC remains until a signed contract with MHCLG via Homes England is secured. This can be minimised through negotiation and refining the contract terms.
61. Any delays in securing the Science Transit funding from Department for Transport will have knock on securing and drawing down the HIF funding. This risk is being minimised by seeking to have high level management discussions with DfT and ensuring that the full business case will be approved in line with the HIF timescales for delivery. Members will be kept updated on progress.
62. Further details on the programme risks are outlined in Annex 2

Communications

63. HIF2 has a comprehensive stakeholder management strategy in place, along with a consultation and engagement strategy.
64. The HIF2 schemes have been consulted upon to varying degrees since 2015/16:
 - a) WODC Local Plan (Reg 18/19) consultation
 - b) OCC A40 Corridor Strategy – Public Consultation (2015/16)
 - c) OCC A40 Park and Ride/Bus Lanes Scheme – Public Consultation (Dec 2018/Jan 2019)

- d) OCC key stakeholder engagement has occurred since 2015/16 and through the business case and bid development.

65. Recent key stakeholder engagement has been taking place since the HIF2 funding announcement. Key community leaders in Witney, Eynsham, Hanborough and Kidlington have been engaged between December 2019 and March 2020 with and these discussions will continue framed through the consultation and engagement strategy.

Key Dates

66. Forthcoming key dates (subject to COVID-19 and a programme review) are set out at para. 42 above. In addition, the HIF 2 Funding Agreement is targeted for an August 2020 completion, subject to DfT/ HE discussions.

ERIC OWENS

Assistant Director for Growth and Place

Annexes (Attached at Item 13 to this agenda):

Annex 1: Grant Determination Agreement Heads of Terms

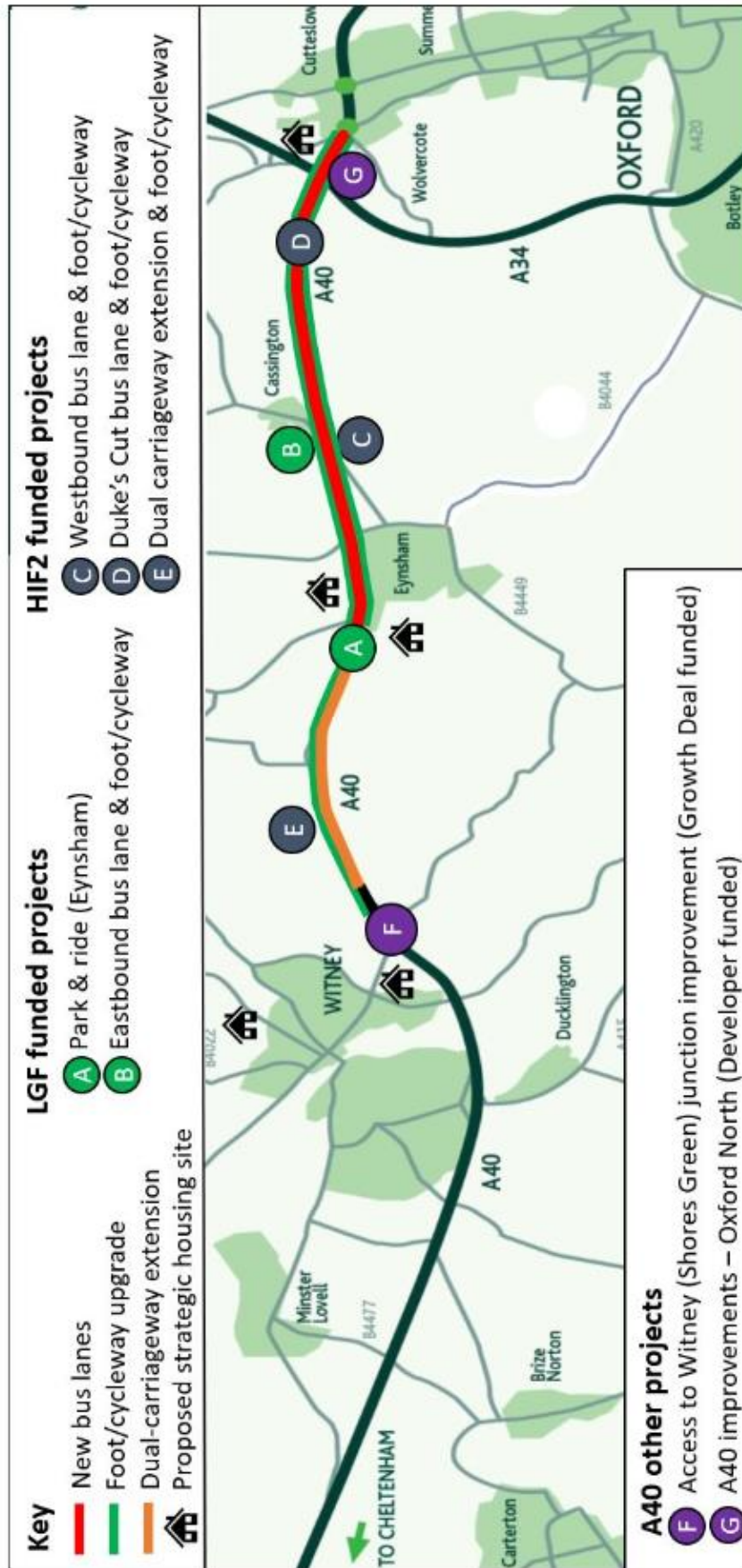
Annex 2: Additional Information

Contact Officers: Hannah Battye, Head of Infrastructure Delivery

Ashraf Hussain, Programme Lead

July 2020

A40 Corridor Strategy and Improvement Projects



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Division(s): N/A

CABINET – 21 JULY 2020

TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN 2019/20

Report by Director of Finance

RECOMMENDATION

1. **Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to note the report, and to RECOMMEND Council to note the Council's Treasury Management Activity in 2019/20.**

Executive Summary

2. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA's) 'Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2017' requires that the Council and Audit & Governance Committee receives an updated report on Treasury Management activities at least twice per year. This report is the second report for the financial year 2019/20 and sets out the position as at 31 March 2020.
3. Treasury management is defined as: "The management of the local authority's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."
4. At 31 March 2020, outstanding debt totalled £341m and average interest paid on long-term debt was 4.43%. The Council repaid £2m of maturing PWLB loans during the year. No new borrowing was arranged during 2019/20. The Council's debt financing position for 2019/20 is shown in Annex 1.
5. The Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20 was based on an average base rate forecast of 0.88% (0.75% from April 2019 to September 2019, then 1.00% from October 2019 to March 2020). The budget for interest receivable assumed that an average interest rate of 0.98% would be achieved. The average daily balance of temporary surplus cash invested in-house was £374m in 2019/20.
6. The Council achieved an average in-house return for the year of 0.91%, producing gross interest receivable of £3.475m. In relation to external funds, gross distributions totalling £4.378m were realised in year, bringing total investment income to £7.853m. This compares to budgeted investment income of £6.170 m, giving a net overachievement of £1.683m.
7. At 31 March 2020, the Council's investment portfolio of £443.260m comprised £302.500m of fixed term deposits, £14.800m in notice accounts, £35.986m at short term notice in money market funds and £89.974m in pooled funds with a variable net asset value. Annex 4 provides an analysis of the investment portfolio at 31 March 2020.

Treasury Management Activity

Debt Financing & Maturing Debt

8. The Strategy for Long Term Borrowing included the option to fund new or replacement borrowing up to the value of £50m through internal borrowing to reduce the Council's exposure to credit risk and reduce the cost of carry (difference between borrowing costs and investment returns) whilst debt rates remained higher than investment interest rates.
9. The Council is able to borrow from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) or through the money markets. However, as the Council was able to undertake internal borrowing no new borrowing was arranged during 2019/20.
10. At 31 March 2020, the authority had 55 PWLB loans totalling £291.383m, 9 LOBO¹ loans totalling £45m and one £5m money market loan. The average rate of interest paid on PWLB debt was 4.51% and the average cost of LOBO debt in 2019/20 was 3.94%. The cost of debt on the money market loan was 3.95%. The combined weighted average for interest paid on long-term debt was 4.43%. The Council's debt financing position for 2019/20 is shown in Annex 1.
11. In October 2019, the PWLB increased all of their standard borrowing rates by 1.00%
12. The Council continues to qualify for the Certainty Rate on PWLB loans, offering a 0.20% discount on the Standard Rate (currently gilts plus 2.00%). Qualification is based on provision of additional information on long-term borrowing and associated capital spending plans.
13. The Council repaid £2m of maturing PWLB loans during the year. The weighted average interest rate payable on the matured loans was 2.350%. The outturn for Interest Payable in 2019/20 was £15.2m which is in line with the budget in the Medium Term Financial Plan. The details are set out in Annex 2.

Investment Strategy

14. Security and liquidity of cash was prioritised above the requirement to maximise returns. The Council used fixed deposits, call accounts, notice accounts, money market funds and pooled funds to deposit its in-house cash surpluses during 2019/20. The Council continuously monitored credit quality information regarding the institutions on the Council's approved Lending List.
15. As a direct result of the increase in PWLB lending rates, inter local authority lending rates also increased. To take advantage of these inflated rates, the long term lending limit for 2019/20 was increased during the year from £150m to £180m.
16. During 2019/20 the Council limited the exposure to banks by lending to local authorities. At 31 March 2020 the Council had £64m of long-term fixed deposits (deposits over 364 days), all of which were placed with local authorities. The aim was to maintain a high level of security and manage exposure to interest rate and counterparty risk.

¹ LOBO (Lender's Option/Borrower's Option) Loans are long-term loans which include a re-pricing option for the bank at predetermined intervals.

17. The inter local authority lending market is beneficial to both the lender and the borrower. The lender is able to benefit by having access to high security deposits. The borrower is able to secure short to medium term cash at a borrowing cost that is lower than available through PWLB or other money market participants.
18. The weighted average maturity of all deposits at 31 March 2020, including money deposited in short-term notice accounts, was 193 days (compared with 181 days during 2018/19). This comprised £302.500m fixed deposits with a weighted average maturity of 214 days, £14.800m in notice accounts with a weighted average maturity of 95 days and £35.986m invested in money market funds and call accounts with same day liquidity. The increase in weighted average maturity was a strategic decision to take advantage of inflated longer term lending rates.
19. The 2019/20 Treasury Management Strategy allowed for 50% of the total portfolio to be help in Strategic Pooled funds. During the year, the Council maintained the investment in Strategic Pooled Funds. These funds are all income producing. As the value of the funds can fluctuate, these investments are treated as long term.

The Council's Lending List

20. The Council's in-house cash balances are deposited with institutions that meet the Council's approved credit rating criteria. The approved Lending List is regularly updated during the year to reflect changes in bank and building society credit ratings. Changes are reported to the Cabinet on a regular basis as part of the Financial Monitoring & Business Strategy Delivery reports. The approved lending list may also be further restricted by officers, in response to changing conditions and perceived risk. Annex 3 shows the amendments incorporated into the Lending List during 2019/20, in accordance with the approved credit rating criteria and additional temporary restrictions.

Investment Outturn

21. The average daily balance of temporary surplus cash invested in-house was £374.200m in 2019/20. The Council achieved an average in-house return for the year of 0.91%, producing gross interest receivable of £3.747m. Temporary surplus cash balances include: developer contributions; council reserves and balances; trust fund balances; and various other funds to which the Council pays interest at each financial year end, based on the average three month London Interbank Bid (LIBID) rate.
22. During 2019/20 the average three month LIBID rate was 0.64%. The Council's average in-house return of 0.91% exceeded this benchmark by 0.27%. The average in-house return was 0.07% lower than the rate of interest of 0.98% assumed in the budget. The budgeted forecast was for UK Base Rate to rise from 0.75% to 1.00% in October 2019, however the Monetary Policy Committee maintained rates at 0.75% until March, and then reduced rates to 0.25% and 0.10% on 11th March and 19th March respectively as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic.
23. The Council operates a number of instant access call accounts and money market funds to deposit short-term cash surpluses. During 2019/20 the average balance held on instant access was £60.237m.

24. In response to the increased inter local authority lending rates and the increase in longer term lending limit during 2019/20 from £150m to £180m, the treasury team were able to secure longer term deposits ranging from 1 to 3 years, with annual interest of 1.60% to 1.90%.
25. During 2020/21, after a detailed analysis of cashflow, long term lending limits for 2020/21 were increased from £200m to 215m and 2021/22 from £170m to £175m. These increases have allowed the treasury team to secure circa £100m of long term loans with an average interest rate of 1.53% and an average maturity of 2.19 years. As a result, the budget for interest for in house investments for 2020/21 has already been exceeded by £0.500m and £1.423m of the £2,027m budget for 2021/22 is already guaranteed.
26. Gross distributions from pooled funds totalling £4.378m were realised in year, bringing total investment income to £7.853m. This compares to budgeted investment income of £6.170m, giving a net overachievement of £1.683m. The overachievement in income received was due to a combination of higher than forecast average cash balances and higher than forecast distributions from pooled funds.
27. As at 31 March 2020 the total value of pooled fund investments was £89.974m. This represents a book value loss of £11.031m. The loss was a direct result of global investment market contractions as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. Under accounting regulations, gains and losses are recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account but are reversed out to an unusable reserve. This ensures that variations in value do not impact the general fund until the point at which fund units are sold.
28. As of 31st May 2020, the external funds have partially recovered some of their book losses and are valued at £93.860m.
29. At 31 March 2020, the Council's investment portfolio of £443.260m comprised £302.500m of fixed term deposits, £14.800m in notice accounts, £35.986m at short term notice in money market funds and call accounts and £89.974m in pooled funds with a variable net asset value (VNAV). Annex 4 provides an analysis of the investment portfolio at 31 March 2020.
30. The council's Treasury Management Strategy Team regularly monitors the risk profile of the Council's investment portfolio. An analysis of the credit and maturity position of the portfolio at 31 March 2020 is shown in Annex 4.

Prudential Indicators for Treasury Management

31. During the financial year, the Council operated within the treasury limits and Prudential Indicators set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Report. The outturn for the Prudential Indicators is shown in Annex 5.

External Performance Indicators and Statistics

32. The Council's treasury management advisors Arlingclose also benchmark the Council's investment performance against its other clients on a quarterly basis. The results of the quarter 4 benchmarking to 31 March 2020 are included in Annex 6.
33. The benchmarking results show that the Council was achieving higher than average interest on deposits at 31 March 2020 with lower than average credit risk, when compared with a group of 137 other local authorities. This has been achieved by placing deposits over a longer than average duration with institutions that are of higher than average credit quality.
34. Oxfordshire had a higher than average allocation to local authority deposits when compared with other local authorities in the benchmarking exercise. Oxfordshire also had a notably lower than average exposure to money market funds, call accounts and the Debt Management Office's deposit account, and a higher than average exposure to Strategic Pooled Funds. This is consistent with the approach set out in the Treasury Management Strategy

Financial and Legal Implications

35. This report is mostly concerned with finance and the implications are set out in the main body of the report.
36. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report save for the need for ongoing collaborative working between the S.151 Officer and the Monitoring Office. CIPFA guidance promotes the need for consultative working and collaboration between these respective roles to promote good organisational governance

LORNA BAXTER
Director of Finance

Annexes:

Annex 1	Debt Financing 2019/20
Annex 2	Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) Maturing Debt
Annex 3	Lending List Changes
Annex 4	Investment portfolio 31/03/2020
Annex 5	Prudential Indicators Outturn
Annex 6	Benchmarking

Contact officer: Tim Chapple
Telephone Number: 07917 262935

July 2020

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DEBT FINANCING 2019/20

	£'m
DEBT PROFILE	
1 PWLB	293.38
2 Money Market LOBO loans	45.00
3 Other Long term loans	5.00
4 Temporary Loans	0.00
5 Internal Balances	9.35
6 ACTUAL DEBT AT 01.04.19	352.73
7 Government Supported Borrowing	9.35
8 Unsupported Borrowing	0.00
9 Borrowing in advance	0.00
10 Repayments -minimum revenue provision	-9.35
11 TOTAL DEBT AT 31.3.20	352.73
DEBT REPAID	
12 PWLB Normally Maturing Loans	2.00
13 Early debt repayments	0.00
14 Total Debt Repaid	2.00
NEW EXTERNAL BORROWING	
15 PWLB New Borrowing	0.00
16 PWLB Replacement following Early Repayment	0.00
17 LOBO New Borrowing	0.00
18 Money Market New Borrowing	0.00
19 Total External Borrowing	0.00
YEAR END DEBT PROFILE	
21 PWLB	291.38
22 Other Long Term Loans	50.00
23 Temporary Loans (External)	0.00
24 Internal Balances	11.35
25 TOTAL YEAR END DEBT	352.73

Line

- 1-6. This is a breakdown of the Council's debt at the beginning of the financial year (1 April 2018). The PWLB is a government agency operating within the Debt Management Office. LOBO (Lender's Option/ Borrower's Option) loans are long-term loans, with a maturity of up to 60 years, which includes a re-pricing option for the bank at predetermined time intervals. Internal balances include provisions, reserves, revenue balances, capital receipts unapplied and excess of creditors over debtors.
7. 'Government Supported Borrowing' is the amount that the Council can borrow in any one year to finance the capital programme. This is determined by Central Government, and in theory supported through the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) system.
8. 'Unsupported Borrowing' reflects Prudential Borrowing taken by the authority whereby the associated borrowing costs are met by savings in the revenue budget.
9. 'Borrowing in Advance' is the amount the Council borrowed in advance during 2019/20 to fund future capital finance costs.
10. The amount of debt to be repaid from revenue. The sum to be repaid annually is laid down in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, which stipulates that the repayments must equate to at least 4% of the debt outstanding at 1 April each year.
11. The Council's total debt by the end of the financial year at 31 March 2020, after taking into account new borrowing, debt repayment and movement in funding by internal balances.
12. The Council's normal maturing PWLB debt.
13. PWLB debt repaid early during the year.
14. Total debt repaid during the year.
15. The normal PWLB borrowing undertaken by the Council during 2019/20.
16. New PWLB loans to replace debt repaid early.
17. The Money Market LOBO borrowing undertaken by the Council during 2019/20.
18. The Money Market Fixed Rate borrowing undertaken by the Council during 2019/20.
19. The total external borrowing undertaken.
- 20-25. The Council's debt profile at the end of the year.

Long-term debt Maturing 2019/20**Public Works Loan Board: Loans Maturing in 2019/20**

Date	Amount £m	Rate %	Repayment Type
13/07/2019	0.5	2.350	EIP
13/01/2020	0.5	2.350	EIP
31/07/2019	0.5	2.350	EIP
31/01/2020	0.5	2.350	EIP
Total	2.0		

Repayment Types

Maturity – Full amount of principal is repaid at the final maturity date

EIP – Equal Instalments of Principal are repaid every 6 months until the final maturity date

Lending List Changes during 2019/20

Lending limits & maturity limits changed from 1 April 2019

	01/04/2019		31/03/2020	
	Lending Limit	Maximum Maturity	Lending Limit	Maximum Maturity
Federated Cash Funds	£12,	n/a	£20m	n/a
Coventry Building Society	£15m	6 months	£15m	100 Days
Development Bank of Singapore	£25m	13 months	£25m	6 months
Overseas Chinese Banking Corp	£25m	13 months	£25m	6 months
United Overseas Bank	£25m	13 months	£25m	6 months

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO 31/03/2020

Fixed term deposits held at 31/03/2020

Counterparty	Principal Deposited (£)	Maturity Date
London Borough of Croydon Council	£5,000,000	03/07/2020
Lancashire County Council	£5,000,000	21/09/2020
Monmouthshire County Council	£5,000,000	13/11/2020
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	£5,000,000	27/11/2020
Liverpool City Council	£5,000,000	20/07/2020
Spelthorne Borough Council	£4,000,000	02/07/2021
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council	£3,500,000	09/07/2020
Darlington Borough Council	£5,000,000	29/01/2021
Uttlesford District Council	£2,500,000	06/07/2020
Thurrock Council	£5,000,000	20/05/2020
Blackpool Council	£5,000,000	30/06/2020
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	£5,000,000	06/07/2020
Suffolk County Council	£5,000,000	30/07/2020
Slough Borough Council	£7,000,000	30/04/2020
Blackpool Council	£7,000,000	31/07/2020
West Dunbartonshire Council	£6,000,000	21/10/2020
Lancashire County Council	£5,000,000	18/11/2020
Surrey County Council	£5,000,000	22/05/2020
Lancashire County Council	£5,000,000	29/05/2020
Thurrock Council	£10,000,000	02/04/2020
West Dunbartonshire Council	£5,000,000	26/06/2020
Thurrock Council	£10,000,000	14/10/2020
Thurrock Council	£5,000,000	09/10/2020
London Borough of Croydon Council	£10,000,000	25/10/2021
Australia and New Zealand Banking Group	£5,000,000	08/04/2020
Spelthorne Borough Council	£10,000,000	02/11/2020
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council	£5,000,000	08/10/2020
London Borough of Croydon Council	£5,000,000	06/12/2021
Warrington Borough Council	£10,000,000	14/10/2021
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	£5,000,000	16/06/2020
Warrington Borough Council	£5,000,000	17/12/2020
London Borough of Hillingdon Council	£2,500,000	26/10/2020
London Borough of Southwark Council	£10,000,000	16/09/2020
Kingston Upon Hull City Council	£7,000,000	02/07/2020
Blackpool Council	£5,000,000	22/06/2020
London Borough of Waltham Forest Council	£5,000,000	28/10/2020
Monmouthshire County Council	£5,000,000	24/06/2020
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	£5,000,000	12/06/2020

Police & Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire	£5,000,000	16/07/2020
Conwy County Borough Council	£5,000,000	08/06/2020
Eastbourne Borough Council	£3,000,000	26/05/2020
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	£5,000,000	25/06/2020
Woking Borough Council	£5,000,000	13/01/2021
West Dunbartonshire Council	£5,000,000	08/06/2020
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	£5,000,000	03/01/2023
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	£5,000,000	21/09/2020
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	£5,000,000	03/08/2020
Cambridgeshire County Council	£5,000,000	09/01/2023
Wokingham Borough Council	£5,000,000	10/02/2022
Wokingham Borough Council	£5,000,000	23/03/2022
Northumberland County Council	£5,000,000	30/01/2023
Birmingham City Council	£5,000,000	30/04/2020
London Borough of Havering Council	£10,000,000	15/04/2020
Sedgemoor District Council	£5,000,000	17/04/2020

Money Market Funds

Counterparty	Balance at 31/03/20 (£)	Notice period
Aberdeen Liquidity Fund	12,330,000.00	Same day
Federated Sterling Liquidity Funds	5,340,000.00	Same day
Legal & General Sterling Liquidity Fund	7,748,515.72	Same day
Total	25,388,515.72	

Notice / Call Accounts

Counterparty	Balance at 31/03/20 (£)	Notice period
Barclays 100 Day Notice	14,800,000.00	100 days
Barclays Current	445,116.26	Same day
Handelsbanken	10,104,611.52	Same day
Total	25,349,727.78	

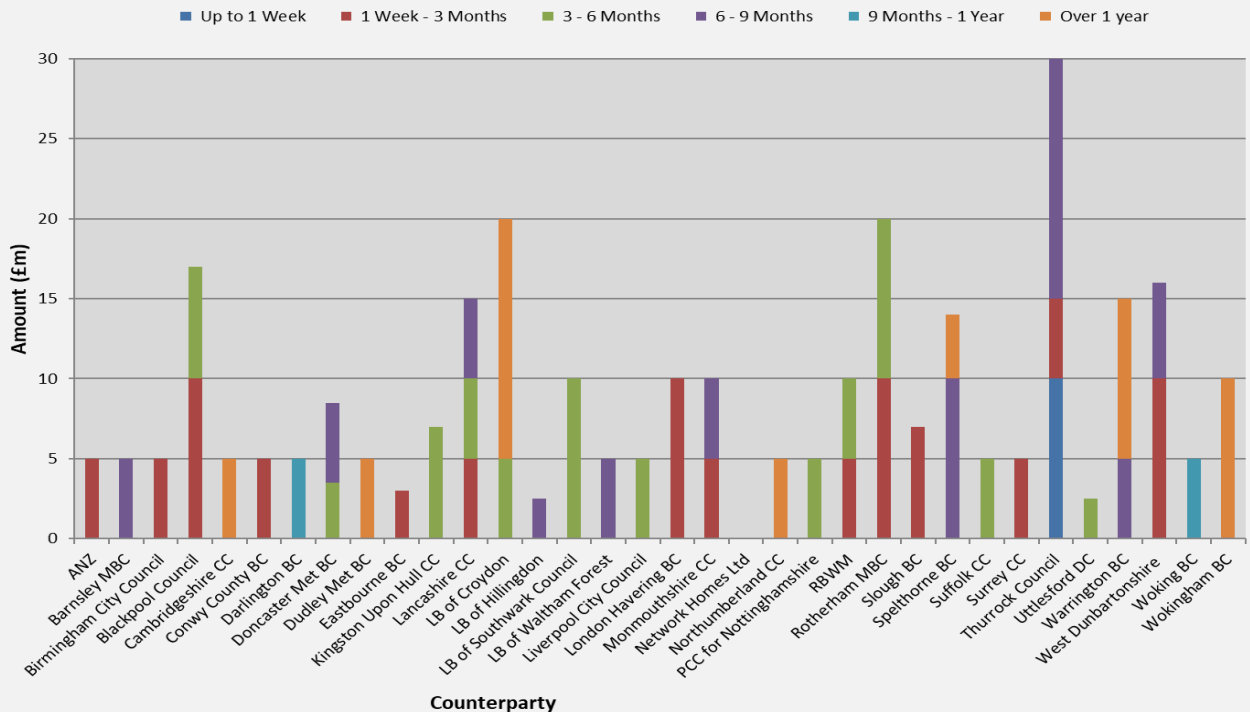
Strategic Bond Funds

Fund	Balance at 31/03/20 (£)	Notice period
Threadneedle strategic bond fund (income)	12,315,060.86	4 days
Threadneedle Global Equity Income Fund	11,061,590.08	4 days
Kames Diversified Income	8,546,585.41	4 days
Investec Diversified Income	9,066,640.87	4 days
M&G Strategic Corporate Bond Fund	11,632,073.40	4 days

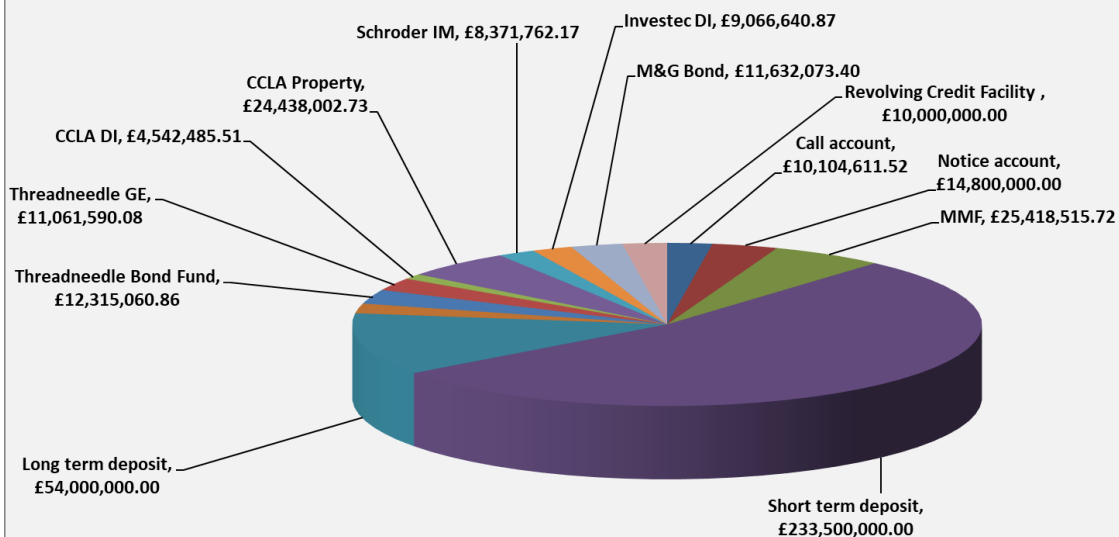
Schroder Income Maximiser	8,371,762.17	4 days
CCLA Diversified Income Fund	4,542,485.51	4 days
Total	75,660,699.37	
Property Funds		
Fund	Balance at 31/03/20 (£)	Notice period
CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund	24,438,002.73	Monthly
Total	24,438,002.73	

Investment portfolio risk profile at 31/03/20

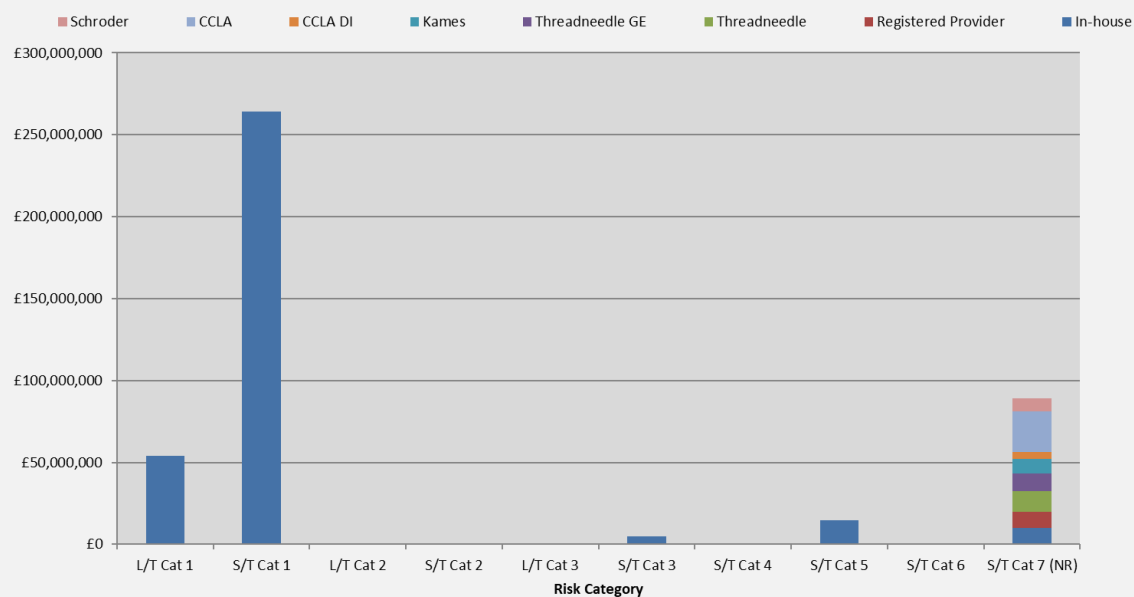
Fixed Deposit Maturity Profile as at 31.03.2020



Total Combined Portfolio as at 31.03.2020



Risk Profile - Total Combined Portfolio as at 31.03.2020



Risk Category	L/T rating	S/T rating
1 (Including Local Authorities)	AA+, AA	F1+
2	AA-	F1+
3	AA-	F1+
4	AA-	F1+
5	A+, A	F1
6	A	F1

Based on Fitch Ratings

Prudential Indicators Outturn 31 March 2020**Authorised and Operational Limit for External Debt**

Authorised Limit for External Debt	£400,000,000
Operational Limit for External Debt	£385,000,000
Actual External Debt at 31 March 2019	£365,382,618

Fixed Interest Rate Exposure

Fixed Interest Net Borrowing limit	£350,000,000
Actual at 31 March 2019	£55,882,618

Variable Interest Rate Exposure

Variable Interest Net Borrowing limit	0
Actual at 31 March 2019	- £8,683,240

Sums Invested over 364 days

Total sums invested for more than 364 days maximum limit	£85,000,000
Actual sums invested for more than 364 days at 31 March 2019	£54,000,000

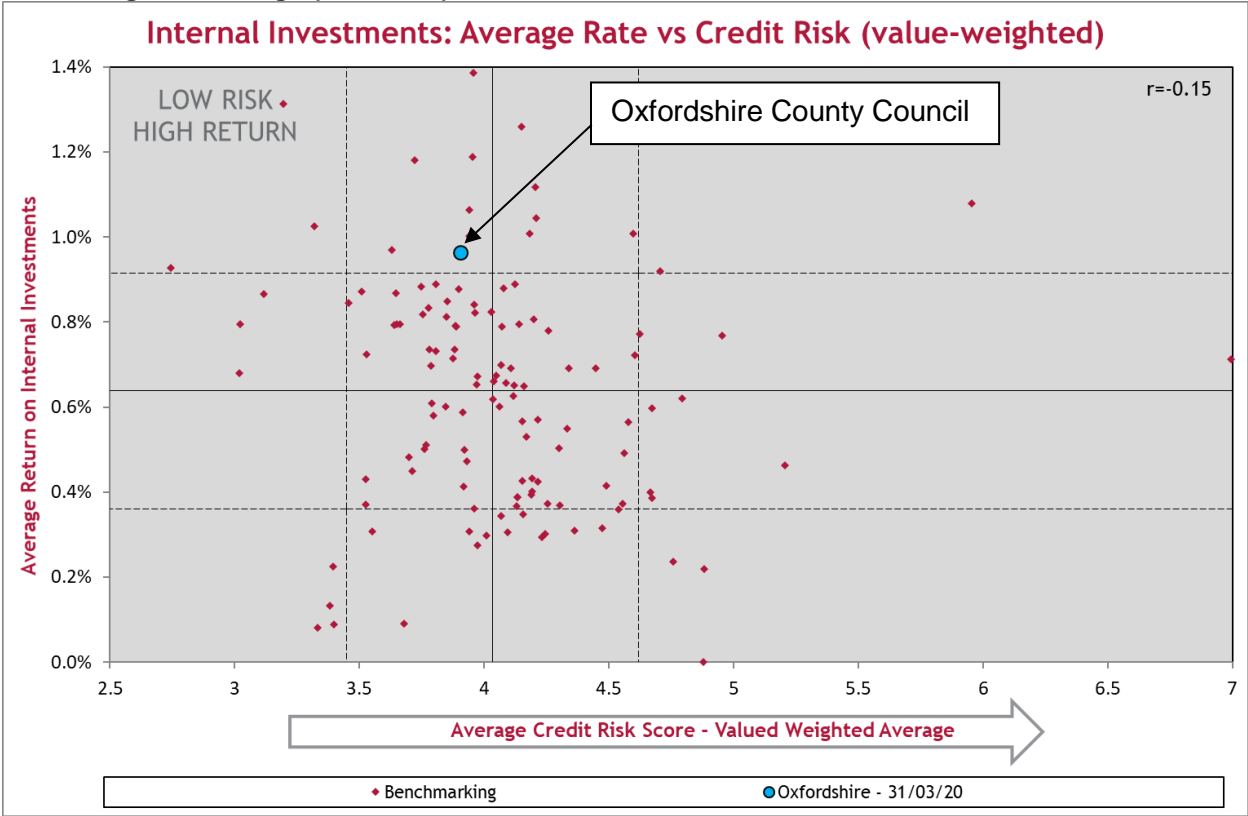
Maturity Structure of Borrowing at 31/03/18

	Limit %	Actual %
From 01/04/18		
Under 12 months	0 - 20	10.55
12 – 24 months	0 - 25	7.91
24 months – 5 years	0 - 35	9.37
5 years – 10 years	5 - 40	23.84
10 years +	50 - 95	51.67

The Prudential Indicators for maturity structure are set with reference to the start of the financial year. The actual % shown above relates to the maturity period remaining at 01/04/19 on loans still outstanding at 31/03/20.

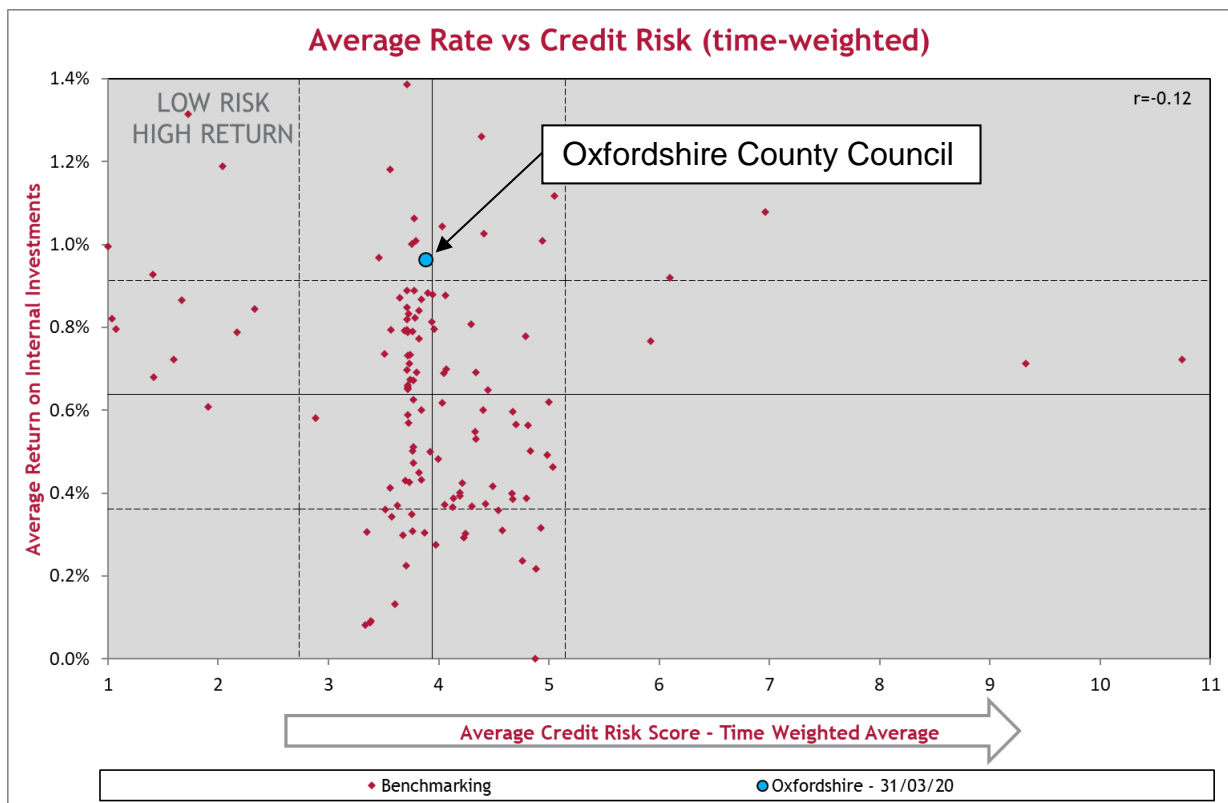
Benchmarking

Value weighted average (all clients)



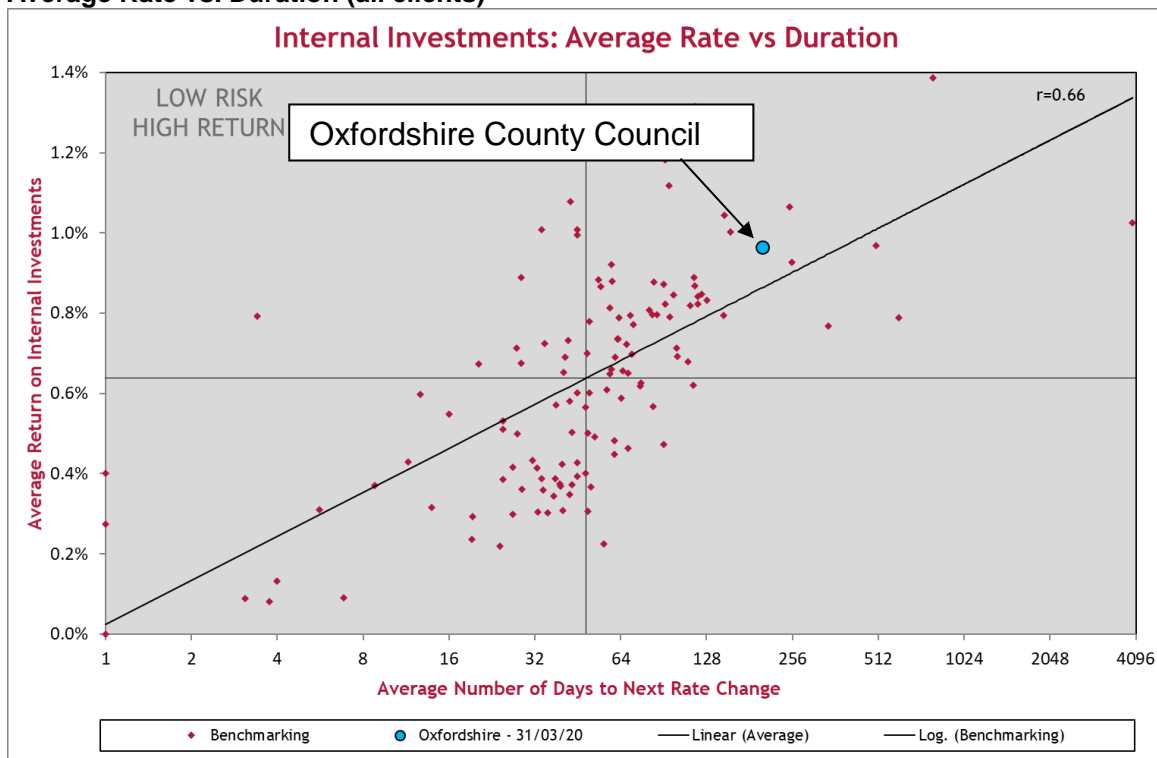
Oxfordshire County Council achieved a higher interest rate compared to the average achieved by all Arlingclose clients, whilst maintaining lower than average value weighted credit risk as at 31/03/2020.

Time weighted Average (all clients)



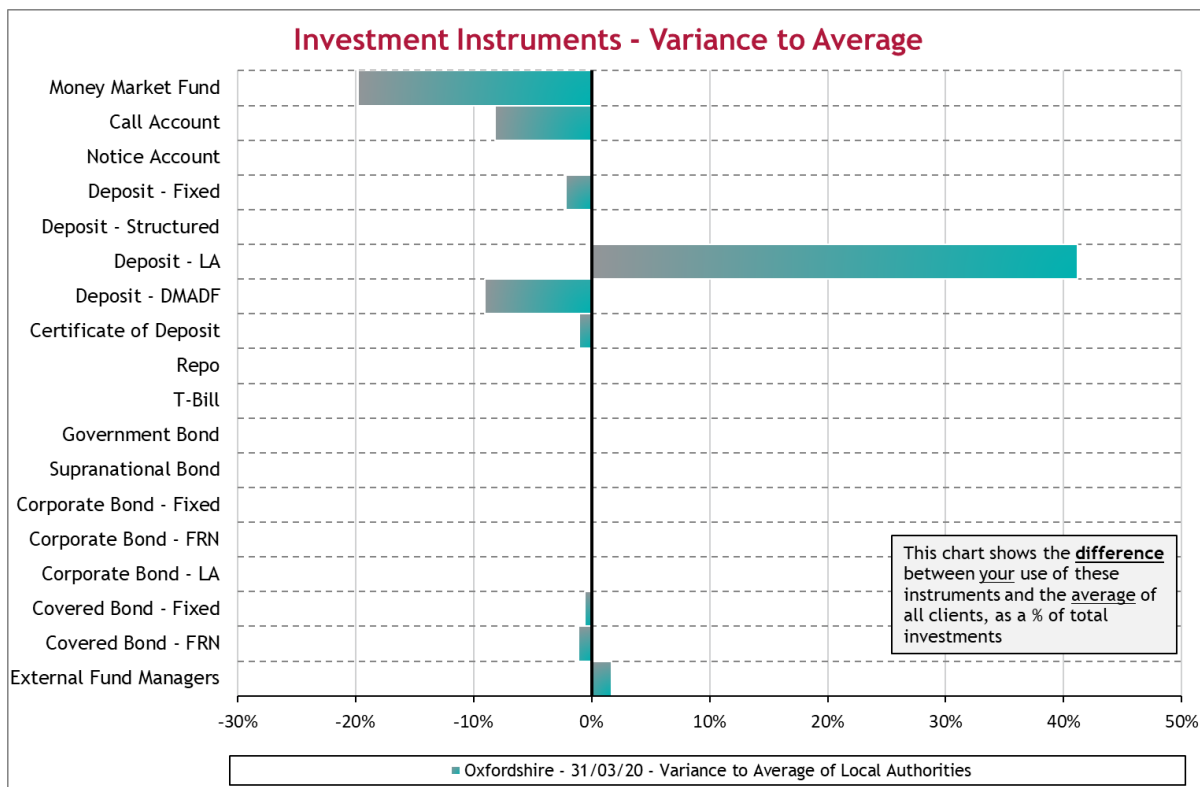
Oxfordshire County Council achieved a higher interest rate compared to the average achieved by all Arlingclose clients, whilst maintaining a just below average time weighted credit risk as at 31/03/2020.

Average Rate vs. Duration (all clients)



This graph shows that at 31/03/2020 Oxfordshire County Council achieved a higher than average return by placing deposits for longer than average duration.

Investment Instruments – Variance to Average of Local Authorities (all clients)



This graph shows that, at 31/3/2020, Oxfordshire County Council had notably higher than average allocations to local authority deposits when compared with other local authorities. Oxfordshire County Council also had notably lower exposure to money market funds, call accounts and Debt Management Office deposits.

CABINET – 21 JULY 2020

FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

Report by Director of Finance

Recommendation

The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- (a) note the contents of this report
- (b) to ask officers to identify plans to address the potential overspend in 2020/21 arising from COVID-19 and report back to the next meeting with recommendations for action.

Executive Summary

1. The first quarter of the Business Management Report which incorporates the financial position for the Council is due to be reported to Cabinet in September. Given the exceptional circumstances and the significant financial impact of Covid-19, this report sets out the forecast financial position based on the position at 31 May 2020.
2. Based on the position at 31 May 2020, an in year overspend of £24.0m is forecast. This position comprises a breakeven forecast for services on business as usual activities and a forecast overspend of £24.0m relating to additional costs and loss of income in response to Covid-19, taking into account grant funding received to date.
3. The forecast of costs and lost income relating to Covid-19 reflects actuals in April and May and the forecast impact of recovery over the remainder of the financial year. The forecast is consistent with the latest update provided to MHCLG on 19 June 2020.

Summary	Latest Budget £'m	Forecast Outturn £'m	Forecast Variation £'m	BAU Variation £'m	COVID-19 Variation £'m
Directorate Total	472.964	514.493	41.529	0.800	40.729
Corporate Financing	2.741	12.141	9.400	-0.800	10.200
Additional Funding	0.000	-26.926	-26.926	0.000	-26.926
Total	475.705	499.708	24.003	0.000	24.003

Introduction

4. This report is the first financial monitoring report of the 2020/21 financial year. It builds on the 'Estimated Impact of Covid-19 April 2020 to June 2020' report which formed annex D of the Business Management Report to Cabinet in May and is based on actual expenditure incurred and income lost in April and May 2020.
5. In arriving at the in year forecasts the following assumptions have been applied:
 - Phased restart of economy from June to August based on Government decisions to mid June (e.g. re-opening of high streets, registration of births)
 - An assumed full restart of the economy and education sector from September (e.g. re-opening of all businesses and full return to schools)
 - Assumption that full economic rebound does not happen before end of financial year
 - Assumption that support to some providers will continue to the end of October in line with the new Procurement Policy Notice (PPN 04/20)
6. Applying these assumptions generates a forecast pressure of £50.9m for 2020/21. This is a combination of additional costs and loss of income arising from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Council services. This is partially met by Covid-19 LA support grant funding available in 2020/21 of £26.9m. This reduces the in year pressure to £24.0m.
7. Very real concerns have been expressed across the sector that the funding provided so far is nowhere near enough to enable local authorities to sustain their response to the pandemic. And whilst the Government has "made a commitment to support all authorities with the additional cost pressures from the extra work" and acknowledged the need to support councils for the 'irrecoverable losses in income', we await to hear when further funding will be provided, and whether this will be sufficient to meet our needs.
8. An update from the Government on further funding commitments was announced by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government Robert Jenrick on 2 July. Details of the funding are not yet available. It is not expected that the additional funding will be sufficient to meet the forecast gap of £24.0m in totality. Therefore, it is recommended that officers identify options to address the financial position in 2020/21 and report back to the Cabinet at its next meeting in August.
9. There is a net overspend of £0.8m forecast for Directorate budgets for business as usual activity (BAU). Variations are classified as BAU where they do not directly relate to the Council's response to Covid-19 or the impact of recovery plans. This is offset by the application of £0.3m from the contingency budget held in Strategic Measures and a forecast overachievement of interest income on internally managed investment returns of £0.5m. At this stage it is assumed that the remaining contingency budget of £4.5m will be used in full for BAU activity.

Directorate	2020/21			BAU Variation £'m	COVID-19 Variation £'m
	Latest Budget £'m	Forecast Outturn £'m	Forecast Variation £'m		
Children's Services	130.674	145.208	14.534	3.000	11.534
Adults Services	194.047	206.947	12.900	-1.900	14.800
Public Health*	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Communities	89.006	95.276	6.270	0.000	6.270
Customers and Organisational Development	26.588	31.913	5.325	0.000	5.325
Commercial Development, Assets and Investment	32.649	35.149	2.500	-0.300	2.800
Directorate Total	472.964	514.493	41.529	0.800	40.729
Strategic Measures	-1.850	1.550	3.400	-0.800	4.200
Contribution to Reserves for Collection Fund losses	0.000	6.000	6.000	0.000	6.000
Additional funding	0.000	-26.926	-26.926	0.000	-26.926
Planned Contribution to balances	4.591	4.591	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total	475.705	499.708	24.003	0.000	24.003

*Net zero budget after ringfenced Public Health grant £31.239m

- There are further risks to the forecasts for service delivery such as the possibility of a second period of lockdown, either nationally or locally, to respond to a second peak in Covid-19 cases. This scenario is difficult to model as this would impact different services to different degrees with some services forecasting higher costs in the recovery phase than the response phase.

Directorate Forecasts

Children's Services +£14.534m

- There is a forecast net overspend reported on BAU of £3.0m. Within this, Corporate Parenting is forecast to overspend by £3.3m. The overspend is due to the ongoing costs of growth experienced in 2019/20.
- The impact of Covid-19 on Children's Social Care is very difficult to model. It is broadly accepted that there will be a surge in referrals as schools return but the impact will depend on the size of the demand, the market reaction, and the timing of the surge. It is likely that the main impact in year will be on assessments and staffing. While some cases are accelerated quickly, in the majority of cases there is a lead time of 12 to 18 months before costly and long term interventions are put in place meaning that some of the financial impact will not be seen until next financial year but could have a budgetary impact for 10 to 15 years. Taking account of the factors outlined above, the in year forecast of additional cost has been assessed as £8.0m.
- The current forecast does not include cost pressures relating to Home to School Transport for additional journeys as it is currently assumed that school journeys will return to pre-Covid patterns. However, there is a risk that on-going social distancing measures in the Autumn term could result in reduced capacity on buses and /or staggered start times which would have a significant impact on the budget, potentially doubling the spend at a cost of £7.0m per term.

14. The High Needs Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget is forecast to overspend by £11.0m. This overspend will be transferred to the High Needs DSG reserve at year end. The variance relates to existing young people and an expected growth in demand for Education Health and Care Plans and support for the current year based on the currently announced High Needs DSG funding. This is in addition to the existing deficit brought forward for High Needs DSG of £11.2m.
15. A forecast overspend of £2.0m is included for Early Years provision to reflect additional payments to providers. This is included within the Covid-19 forecast although it is possible that this will be met from the Early Years DSG budget and will not be a pressure on the General Fund.

Adult Services +12.9m

16. The Adult Services forecast includes a BAU forecast underspend of £1.8m relating to pooled budgets with the Clinical Commissioning Group. The underspend relates to lower levels of activity which may not be sustained as the financial year progresses.
17. The Council has provided additional payments to providers to help them manage additional costs including the purchase of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). A 10% uplift has been agreed to be paid to providers in April, May and June. The forecast includes the retention of a sustainability fund to support providers after a withdrawal of the uplift. Further costs are included in the forecast for the additional cost of paying home support providers based on planned hours rather than actual hours of care delivered. In total, the forecast of additional costs is £9.5m.
18. The forecast also includes a pressure of £1.2m for the non-delivery of savings relating to review of packages and placements which has been delayed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Public Health =£0.0

19. A breakeven position is reported for Public Health.

Communities +£6.2m

20. The business as usual activity within the Communities directorate is forecast to breakeven.
21. There is a forecast overspend of £6.2m relating to the impact of Covid-19. Of this forecast, £3.5m relates to loss of income from parking, permits and other network charges. It is assumed that losses experienced in April and May will continue through to August and then return to 75% for the remainder of the year.
22. Other pressures within the directorate include loss of income from the 'spare seat scheme' in the Autumn Term , and loss of income to the Integrated Transport Unit.)

23. The forecast includes additional costs of £0.1m to open the Household Waste Recycling Centres, including additional signage, and a change in waste disposals resulting in additional costs of £0.3m.
24. A forecast overspend of £0.3m is included for additional staff costs to ensure sufficient firefighter coverage is retained.

Customers and Organisational Development +£5.3m

25. The business as usual activity within the Customers & Organisational Development directorate is forecast to breakeven.
26. A forecast £0.1m overspend on Customer Service Centre reflects the costs of temporarily increasing the operating hours in response to Covid-19 pandemic. A small loss on income in relation to 'Blue Badge' services is also included.
27. The forecast for the Coroners Service includes £3.5m for the costs of establishing an additional temporary place of rest facility.
28. A forecast £0.3m overspend in the Library Service reflects loss of income due to the closure of libraries in response to Covid-19. Additional costs have also been incurred to enhance the online lending offerings.
29. A forecast £0.5m overspend in the Music Service reflects the loss of income due to the cessation of music lessons in response to Covid-19.
30. £0.8m overspend in the Registration Service reflects the loss of income due to cessation of all ceremonies and other Registration services in response to Covid-19.

Commercial Development, Assets and Investments +£2.9m

31. The business as usual activity within the Commercial Development, Assets and Investments directorate is forecast to breakeven.
32. The Covid-19 forecast includes £2.0m for the purchase of PPE (increased from £1.3m in the figure reported in May). This forecast is subject to change depending on the volume of PPE required by providers and for the Council's own staff in the recovery phase.
33. The forecast also includes £0.7m loss of income relating to the provision of school meals. In reaching this figure it is assumed that there will be a tapered recovery during the Autumn term.

Corporate Financing

34. The Strategic Measures forecast includes assumptions about delayed delivery of service redesign savings which are held corporately. This slippage is expected to create an in-year pressure of £3.8m
35. There is a pressure of £0.8m relating to lower than budgeted returns from externally managed funds. However, this is partly offset by a forecast overachievement of £0.5m from internally managed investments.
36. The Contingency budget of £4.8m is assumed to be fully committed at year end, including £0.3m to offset the net directorate overspend.
37. The forecast includes real cash losses in 2020/21 to the Collection Fund, estimated at £6.0m across the City and District Councils. The collection fund losses arise primarily from an increase in claims for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS). The statutory accounting treatment for Council Tax means that losses will impact the Council in 2021/22 through the Collection Fund which could move from a surplus position to a deficit position. However, as these losses are occurring in 2020/21 it is appropriate to plan to manage the impact in the current year.
38. The Council has received additional unringfenced grant funding of £27.2m. Of this £0.3m was utilised in 2019/20. The remaining £26.9m is available in 2020/21 to help meet the costs associated with Covid-19.

Further Funding Announcements

39. Since the last report considered by Cabinet in May, the following funding announcements have been made:
 - a. On 15 May, the Department for Health and Social Care announced a £600 million Infection Control Fund to tackle the spread of COVID-19 in care homes. The funding is provided to help care homes cover the costs of implementing measures to reduce transmission. It is required to be passed onto all care homes, not just those with whom the local authority purchases beds from. In Oxfordshire, there are 123 care homes registered to provide support for adults and older people, providing care for approximately 5,400 people. Oxfordshire County Council purchases approximately one third of these beds, the remainder are purchased primarily by people who fund their own care. The Council will receive £7.3m, 75% of the total funding must be passed to providers based on the number of beds and the remaining 25% is determined locally.
 - b. On 22 May, the Department for Health and Social Care announced £300 million for local authorities to support new test and trace service. Each local authority will be given funding to develop tailored outbreak control plans, working with local NHS and other stakeholders. These plans will focus on identifying and containing potential outbreaks in places such as workplaces, housing complexes, care homes and schools. In two tier areas, this grant is conditional on upper tier authorities working closely

with their lower tier partners and ensuring those partners are given opportunities to deliver the outcomes this grant is meant to support where delivery by those partners would be the most efficient and cost-effective means of delivery. The Council's share of this funding is £2.8m.

- c. On 23 May, the Transport Secretary Grant Shapps announced £283m new funding to protect and increase transport services, level up infrastructure and regenerate local economies after Covid 19. Allocations from the first tranche of funding were announced on 27 May. Oxfordshire's allocation is £0.6m This funding is for immediate measures to help with the easing of lockdown and to address the short-term need to get people back to work, school, shopping and leisure by sustainable means and at a safe social distance. It does, however, come with clear and strict criteria: the measures must be started within 4 weeks and completed within 8 weeks; and, if not compliant, the funding will be clawed back.
- d. A further update was announced on 2 July. This included a further £500m of funding to local authorities plus a scheme to reimburse councils for a proportion of losses of fees and charges. Details of these allocations are not yet available.

Procurement Policy Note - Supplier relief

- 40. The Cabinet Office has published a new 'Procurement Policy Note (PPN) – Recovery and Transition from COVID-19' (PPN 04/20) which is valid from 1 July until 31 October 2020. The guidance builds on what councils are already doing (supported by PPN 02/20 effective from April to 30 June 2020) to support local suppliers, so that they can continue to deliver the critical services communities need.
- 41. The note advises that councils should now start to plan with suppliers how to exit any contractual supplier relief they may have in place and move to a new, sustainable, operating model. Councils should start to review their contracts and determine whether it is still appropriate to provide the contractual supplier relief measures set out in PPN 02/20, whilst also considering those who may not have relief, but require it going forward

LORNA BAXTER

Director of Finance

Contact Officer: Hannah Doney, Head of Corporate Finance (Deputy Section 151)

Tel: 07584174654

July 2020

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Division(s): N/A

CABINET – 21 JULY 2020

FORWARD PLAN AND FUTURE BUSINESS

Items identified from the Forward Plan for Forthcoming Decision

Topic/Decision	Portfolio/Ref
Cabinet, 15 September 2020	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Management & Monitoring Report - Quarter 1 - April - June and July 2020 To note and seek agreement of the report. <p>Joint Responsibility: Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance.</p>	Cabinet, Deputy Leader of the Council 2020/063
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Report and Staffing Data - Quarter 1 - April - June 2020 Quarterly staffing report providing details of key people numbers and analysis of main changes since the previous report. 	Cabinet, Deputy Leader of the Council 2020/065
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Needs Funding Uplift for Mainstream and Special Schools To seek agreement to the uplift in High Needs funding. 	Cabinet, Education & Cultural Services 2020/098
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bicester Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) To seek approval of the Bicester Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) including its walking and cycling network plan, policies and targets (final draft following consultation). 	Cabinet, Environment 2020/068
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital Programme Monitoring Report - June 2020 Financial report on capital spending against budget allocations, including any necessary capital programme approvals. 	Cabinet, Finance 2020/026
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service & Resource Planning Report - 2021/22 - September 2020 To provide background and context to the service and resource planning process for 2021/22. 	Cabinet, Finance 2020/064

Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services, 9 September 2020

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expansion of John Watson School
To seek approval of a statutory proposal to expand John Watson School. | <p>Cabinet Member
for Education &
Cultural Services,
2020/066</p> |
|---|---|

Cabinet Member for Environment, 17 September 2020

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ North Hinksey: North Hinksey Lane and Lime Road - Proposed Waiting Restrictions
To seek approval of the proposals. | <p>Cabinet Member
for Environment,
2019/133</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chesterton - Alchester Road - Proposed Waiting Restrictions
To seek approval of the proposals. | <p>Cabinet Member
for Environment,
2020/087</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Banbury: A361 South of Banbury - Proposed Prohibition of Motor Vehicles on Section of Road Superseded by New Road Layout
To seek approval of the proposals. | <p>Cabinet Member
for Environment,
2020/069</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bloxham: A361 and Bloxham Grove Road - Proposed Extension of 30mph Speed Limit
To seek approval of the proposals. | <p>Cabinet Member
for Environment,
2020/032</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cropredy: Proposed Extension of 30mph Speed Limit on Village Roads
To seek approval of the proposals. | <p>Cabinet Member
for Environment,
2020/071</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oxford: Castle Street, Norfolk Street and Speedwell Street (West) - Access for Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles
To seek approval of the proposals. | <p>Cabinet Member
for Environment,
2020/058</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eynsham: High Street and Other Locations - Proposed Waiting Restrictions
To seek approval of the proposals. | <p>Cabinet Member
for Environment,
2020/040</p> |

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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