

Cherwell District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1 February 2022

Oxfordshire Plan – Summary of Responses from Regulation 18 Part 2 Consultation and Next Steps

Report of Assistant Director – Planning and Development

This report is public.

Purpose of report

This report provides an update on the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan, including a summary of the comments received during the recent consultation.

Once adopted, the Oxfordshire Plan will provide a high-level spatial framework to shape the future planning of the county up to 2050 and will sit alongside Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the summary results from the recent regulation 18 (part 2) consultation (Appendix 2);
- 1.2 To note (within Appendix 1) the revised scope of the Oxfordshire Plan, with clarification over its relationship to city and district Local Plans and supporting evidence base;
- 1.3 To note (within Appendix 1) the next steps of the Oxfordshire Plan process; and
- 1.4 To recommend to the Executive the adoption of the revised Statement of Community Involvement for the Oxfordshire Plan (Appendix 3). A report will be considered by Executive in March 2022.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The accompanying report (appendix 1) provides an update on the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan, and outlines the proposed roadmap covering the next stages of the Oxfordshire Plan preparation process, from engagement through to independent examination and adoption.

- 2.2 The report has been prepared by the Central Plan Team and is common to all Oxfordshire Authorities who are considering the same material in parallel.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Please refer to appendix 1.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Committee is being invited to note the updated position on the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan ahead of a report to Executive. This includes consultation feedback, revised scope and next steps. The Committee is also invited to consider a revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for the Plan and to recommend the SCI's adoption to the Executive.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 Councillor Colin Clarke - Lead Member for Planning.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 Recommendations 1.1 to 1.3 are to note the consultation results, the revised scope and next steps only. There are no alternative options. The Consultation Report (appendix 2) is required to meet regulatory requirements. The Committee can make recommendations to the Executive.
- 6.2 Officers consider the proposed Statement of Community Involvement to be robust and appropriate (recommendation 1.4 refers). An SCI is also required to meet statutory requirements. The Committee can make recommendations to the Executive.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The work programme review is assessing progress against the existing budget and will identify any financial implications from changes to the work programme and timeline
- 7.2 The next stages of the preparation process may incur additional costs to the overall Oxfordshire Plan budget, in respect of publicity, marketing, retention and extension of existing contracts, consolidation of web-based information, printing and commissioning of consultants to produce interim reports prior to the 'regulation 19' stage. However, efficiency savings can be achieved through the preparation of shared evidence, in-house technical studies, twin-tracked consultations and more efficient use of staff resources and expertise.

- 7.3 Wherever possible, costs associated with the preparation of joint evidence for the Oxfordshire Plan should be shared equally between city and district councils.

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

- 7.4 The Oxfordshire Plan must be prepared in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and Local Development Scheme (LDS)¹. It must also meet the requirements of the duty to cooperate set out in the Localism Act (2011) and the tests of soundness set out in the NPPF. Failure to demonstrate compliance with the requirements set out in the legislation would render the plan incapable of adoption
- 7.5 The SCI must be kept up-to-date and now needs to be updated to reflect the recent lifting of the coronavirus restrictions and progress on the plan to date. Subject to the approval of the five Oxfordshire Local Planning Authorities, the updated SCI (as drafted in appendix 2) will be formally adopted and made publicly available on the Oxfordshire Plan website.
- 7.6 The Local Development Scheme will need to be updated following completion of the work programme review referred to above.
- 7.7 Some of the key risks associated with the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan have been updated in the light of the recent regulation 18 (part 2) consultation (see appendix 4).

Comments checked by:

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Risk Implications

- 7.8 The main risk associated with not proceeding with publishing the updated SCI and Consultation Report is that the Oxfordshire Plan process could be criticised for not complying with appropriate regulations.

Control over risk: Officers have limited control over this risk.

Any risks will be managed as part of the operational risk register escalating to the leadership risk register as and when necessary. Risks associated with the Plan preparation process are presented at appendix 4.

Comments checked by:

Louise Tustian, Head of Insight and Corporate Programmes

¹ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004

Appendix 3: Statement of Community Involvement

Appendix 4: Risks associated with the next stages of the Oxfordshire Plan

Background papers

Background papers for the Oxfordshire Plan process are available at:

<https://oxfordshireplan.org>

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