Cherwell District Council

Executive

7 March 2022

Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Statement of Community Involvement

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 and proposes an update to the Statement of Community Involvement.

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 Plan Reviews and Neighbourhood Plans.

1.0   Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

1.1   To approve the adoption of the revised Oxfordshire Plan Statement of Community Involvement (Appendix 2) and to note that the statement will be kept under regular review as the project continues.

2.0   Introduction

2.1   The accompanying report (Appendix 1) provides an update on the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan and proposes a revised Statement of Community Involvement.

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   Report Details

3.1   Please refer to Appendix 1.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

4.1 Executive is being asked to note the updated position on the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan. Executive is being asked to approve a revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) for the Plan.

5.0 Consultation

5.1 Councillor Colin Clarke - Lead Member for Planning.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 Officers consider the proposed Statement of Community Involvement to be robust and appropriate (recommendation 1.1 refers). An SCI is required to meet statutory requirements.

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 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:
Janet Du Preez, Service Accountant, 01295 221570
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Legal Implications

7.3 The Oxfordshire Plan must be prepared in accordance with the latest Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)[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 could render the plan vulnerable to challenge with a real risk that it could be quashed by the Courts

7.4 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.

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[1] Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004

7.5 Subject to the approval of the five Oxfordshire authorities, the revised SCI will be made publicly available on the Oxfordshire Plan website in advance of the next consultation stage at https://oxfordshireplan.org.

Comments checked by:
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Risk Implications

7.6 The main risk associated with not proceeding with publishing the updated SCI is that the Oxfordshire Plan process could be challenged 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.

Comments checked by:
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Equality & Diversity Implications

7.7 The updated Statement of Community Involvement outlines a commitment to engage and consult with our hard to reach groups and outlines potential mitigations to ensure those with additional needs are able to get involved and enable their voices to be heard. Throughout the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, Equalities Impact Assessments will be undertaken to ensure there is no discrimination or unfair disadvantage against any individuals or groups.

Comments checked by:
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Sustainability Implications

7.8 The recommendations do not raise any sustainability implications. Sustainability and tackling climate change will be key strands informing the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision:

Financial Threshold Met   No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

This report directly links to the strategic priorities from the Business Plan 2021/22:

- Housing that meets your needs
- Leading on environmental sustainability
- An enterprising economy with strong and vibrant local centres
- Healthy, resilient and engaged communities

Lead Councillor

Councillor Colin Clarke - Lead Member for Planning

Document Information
Appendix title and number
- Appendix 1: Executive Report prepared by the Central Plan Team
- Appendix 2: Statement of Community Involvement

Background papers
None

Reference Papers
Papers for the Oxfordshire Plan process are available at: https://oxfordshireplan.org

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