

Appendix 1 – Area Oversight Groups (AOG)

Draft Terms of Reference

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Following a commitment to focus the Growth & Economy service upon area-based for service delivery, new community programme oversight arrangements are being put in place. These will be referred to as Area Oversight Groups (AOG). This arrangement will build and improve on the format used for Bicester (BSOP) replacing it with the Central Area Oversight Group. New AOGs will be established for the South and North Areas. These groups will bring together community, business, and local council leaders to oversee the new Area Frameworks for each area.
- 1.2 Area Frameworks will comprise masterplans, infrastructure, and investment plans as well as clear communication protocols to guide local input and awareness of local planned growth and its delivery. This will enable local thought leadership and regular engagement to be part of developing and delivering long term plans for growth.
- 1.3 The Group will encourage effective linked working between local partner organisations with members of the development and business communities and other regional/national delivery partners such as Homes England to oversee delivery The Area Framework.
- 1.4 The AOG is not a decision-making body. Responsibility for decisions relating to programme delivery fall to the Cherwell District Council or in some cases Oxfordshire County Council or other delivery organisations. The AOG affords the opportunity for improved engagement, increased awareness, and direct influence over programme development.
- 1.5 The AOG may request, receive, and consider reports and advice from other stakeholders as it sees fit, as well as make recommendations to and ask questions of the Councils and to make representations/recommendations to the relevant democratic decision-making bodies of the local authorities.

2. Membership

2.1 Membership will include:

- Cherwell District Council
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Chair of the Town or Parish Council
- OxLEP
- Chamber of Commerce or other local business organisations

- Major local business leaders
- Developers
- Other organisations that are delivering or involved in elements of the Area Framework programme delivery

2.2 Membership will first be determined by the Council and annually reviewed by the AOG to consider membership renewal or new members as appropriate.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The AOG will:

- Meet four times a year, typically on a quarterly cycle
- Support and oversee the development of an initial Area Framework
- Check, challenge and oversee delivery of the Area Framework
- Seek that the Area Framework Delivery Programme is being delivered against targets and that any risks, issues and blockages are identified and, wherever possible, addressed
- Use its knowledge and experience to input to discussion and advise and make recommendations to the relevant decision-making bodies
- Receive regular reports and updates from the Area Programme Delivery Manager
- Act as advocate of the Area, the Area Framework by promoting its benefits with wider audiences, boards and groups of which Partnership members have membership
- Where appropriate, liaise with other areas of the district to ensure cross-boundary working to maximise benefit and funding efficiency
- Support programme delivery where it can through its collective abilities and networks.

3.2 The Chair will be the Leader of Cherwell District Council or as decided by the AOG board membership to allow rotation from time to time and is responsible for reviewing the agenda, facilitating discussion, and ensuring that recommendations are in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

3.3 The Area Programme Delivery Manager is responsible for ensuring arrangements and agendas for each meeting are in place and in accordance with these Terms of Reference.

3.4 The Area Programme Delivery Manager will be responsible for programme delivery and for updating the AOG on progress and risks at each of its meetings. An annual report of progress for the Area Framework will be reported which will include a performance review and review of active risk register.

4. Working methods

- 4.1 Meeting attendance will be by invitation only and organised by Cherwell District Council.
- 4.2 Meetings are to be held quarterly or as otherwise agreed and will not generally be open to the public.
- 4.3 Dedicated support for the AOG will aim to provide the finalised agenda and papers at least 5 working days in advance of each meeting. The meeting record, notes and actions log will be produced no later than 5 working days after the meeting.
- 4.4 Partnership membership and frequency of meetings may evolve to reflect changes and to ensure that they remain appropriate for the requirements of the programme. AOG terms of reference will be reviewed and agreed annually.
- 4.5 Meetings may be held virtually if necessary but will typically be in person and held at a convenient venue in the area being represented.