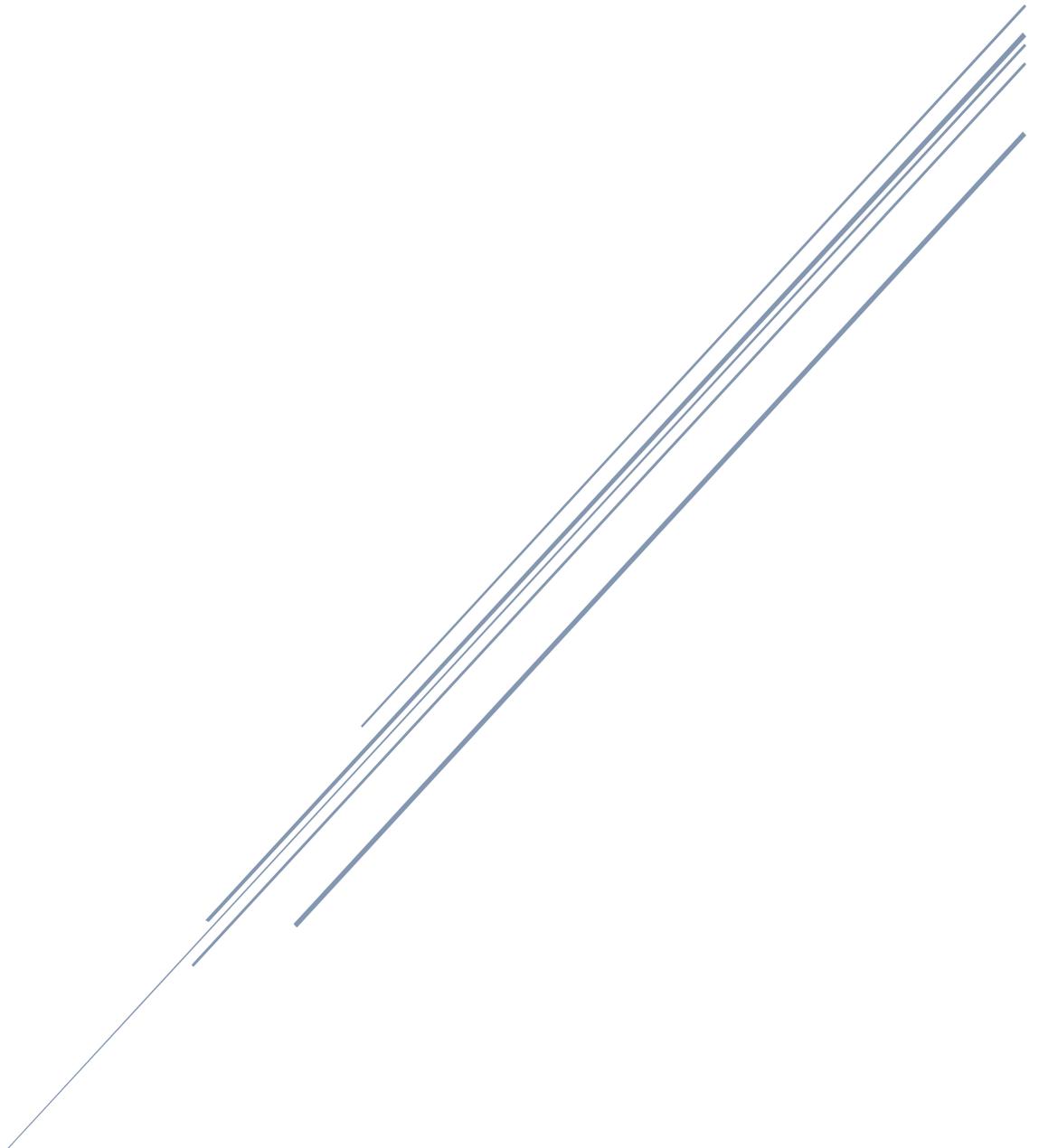


OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC VISION

Observations and Recommendations by the Oxfordshire
Futures Group of the Oxford Civic Society



Oxford Civic Society, December 2020

OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC VISION

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE OXFORDSHIRE FUTURES GROUP OF THE OXFORD CIVIC SOCIETY

Contents

1. Background	2
1.1. A Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire	2
1.2. Purpose of the Strategic Vision	2
2. Response of the Oxfordshire Futures Group of the Oxford Civic Society	3
2.1. Oxfordshire's challenges and opportunities	3
2.2. Outcomes for Oxfordshire	4
2.3. 'Good growth' in Oxfordshire	5
2.4. Guiding Principles	6
3. Summary of Recommendations	7
3.1. Introduction	7
3.2. The formulation and use of the Strategic Vision	8
3.2.1. Formulating the Strategic Vision should start with a challenge analysis	8
3.2.2. The next step would be to identify outcomes and outputs.	8
3.3. The proposed outcomes	9
3.3.1. Seven outcomes are too many	9
3.3.2. Outcomes are best presented with a single purpose and in the past tense	9
3.3.3. Outcome achievement needs to be measurable	9
3.4. Definition of 'Good Growth'	9
3.4.1. This good growth definition is not yet fit for purpose	9
3.4.2. The definition should justify growth	9
3.4.3. The definition should be specific about spatial growth	9
3.4.4. The definition should be specific to Oxfordshire	10
3.5. The Guiding Principles	10
3.5.1. Are they principles?	10
3.5.2. Implementing the principles	10
3.6. The Draft Strategic Vision	10
3.6.1. The Draft Strategic Vision should demonstrably be for Oxfordshire	10
3.6.2. The Strategic Vision is best phrased as impacts achieved	10
3.6.3. How ambitious should the Strategic Vision be?	10
3.6.4. Strategic Vision monitoring and updating should be synchronised with planning and budgeting schedules 10	
3.6.5. How can progress toward the Strategic Vision be measured	10
3.7. Political Strategic Visions and major omissions from the draft	11
3.7.1. Political Strategic Visions	11
3.7.2. Omissions from the Draft Strategic Vision	11

1. Background

1.1. A Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire

1. The Oxfordshire Growth Board intends to develop a Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire that sets out ambitions for the county and establishes a path for long-term change to secure the best possible future for Oxfordshire's residents. The public have been invited to give thoughts on whether the already identified outcomes, definition of "good growth" and set of guiding principles that underpin them, are the right ones for Oxfordshire. We are also asked to say how the Vision's progress can be measured, how ambitious the Strategic Vision should be and how fast the Strategic Vision can be reached. The report on the development of the Strategic Vision to the Oxfordshire Growth Board October 30th 2020¹, also included a draft Vision Statement – shown in **Box 1**.

2. The Growth Board Scrutiny Panel has added that there should be a strategic link between the Vision and what is happening with the Oxford to Cambridge Arc. Various Board Members also referred to the importance of Oxfordshire to the national economy and the importance of thinking strategically through the Vision to make sure the area remained in a favourable competitive position which included the need to consider infrastructure improvements. The inclusion of inclusivity, health and wellbeing and climate change was welcomed, although some of the Board felt that the Vision could potentially go further on these issues.

Box 1.: Oxfordshire Growth Board's Draft Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire

Enhanced well-being sits at the heart of our ambition.

We want Oxfordshire to thrive so that the lives of current and future generations are improved. To achieve this will require bold, innovative, collaborative and inclusive thinking with decisions and actions that deliver real and lasting change in ways that build resilience and enhance well-being.

To be well, we need the right environmental, social and economic conditions, underpinned by improved resilience, and built on a clear understanding that the different dimensions of well-being are intrinsically linked. By resilience we mean decarbonisation, tackling climate change and mitigating its impacts, securing a biodiverse natural environment, building community connectedness, better health, and improved educational attainment and skills that will support the jobs of the future. Our ambition is to utilise the unique opportunities and assets in Oxfordshire to accommodate growth sustainably, and shape healthy, resilient communities in which it is possible for all residents to thrive.

If we are successful, these are the outcomes that will have been achieved in Oxfordshire by 2050 the Vision Statement goes on to describe the outcomes described in paragraph 9 below in the main text.

1.2. Purpose of the Strategic Vision

3. The Growth Board will ask, and work with, those preparing relevant strategic-level plans and programmes - such as the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the Oxfordshire Industrial Strategy - to consider how their work will deliver against this Strategic Vision. The Vision will be used to help create an agreed set of long-term, strategic economic, infrastructure and environmental priorities designed to deliver the outcomes that local people want. This collective approach will better position Oxfordshire to influence the priorities of other relevant organisations.

¹ Supplementary Papers, Oxfordshire Growth Board, Virtual meeting viewable by a weblink, on Friday, 30 October 2020

2. Response of the Oxfordshire Futures Group of the Oxford Civic Society

4. Although our response, observations and recommendations that follow are critical, it is intended that they are constructive and are those of a ‘critical-friend’. We would like to stress that we very much support the idea of formulating a Vision Statement for Oxfordshire. It enables much needed more focused and integrated development strategies in Oxfordshire.

2.1. Oxfordshire's challenges and opportunities

5. In our view, the starting point for formulating a Strategic Vision, and subsequent linked ambition-led plans and strategies, is agreement about what existing strategic challenges need to be addressed and what strategic challenges are likely to arise. In the background documents for this consultation, the Oxfordshire Growth Board has identified six key strategic challenges facing Oxfordshire. Phrased in this way (as they are in the report on the development of the Strategic Vision to the Oxfordshire Growth Board October 30th 2020) these are not challenges, they are neutral headings.

- *Health & Social Inequalities*
- *Our Natural & Built Environment*
- *Climate Change & Energy*
- *Housing Affordability & Access to Affordable Housing*
- *Economic Growth*
- *Transport & Digital Connectivity.*

6. The formulation of the Strategic Vision needs to be based on a detailed analysis of the challenges being faced and to be faced on which the subsequent Strategic Vision, outcomes, definition of good growth and guiding principles are based. Of course, many civic and special interest groups and private individuals have understandings of the challenges and there are many reports available on different types of challenges. But if the public is to give its thoughts on whether the already identified outcomes, definition of “good growth” and set of guiding principles that underpin them, are the right ones for Oxfordshire, we need to know much more about the Oxfordshire Growth Board’s collective detailed analyses of the challenges. The first question to be asked of consultees should be: “Is the perception of the challenges being, and to be faced, right for Oxfordshire?”

7. For example, what is the strategic challenge in respect of ‘Transport and Digital Connectivity’? In themselves they are merely means of communication. Presumably a key challenge is how to fulfil the needs of a much-increased future population without accompanying adverse transport-related impacts?

8. A detailed analysis would provide not just the headline challenges, but the multiple causes of the headline challenges. A causal analysis of this kind enables multiple responses to be identified, leading to responsive outcomes and outputs. Without a more detailed challenges-analysis of this kind as its starting point, responses to this consultation are very seriously constrained.

9. As the report to the Oxfordshire Growth Board also notes – *‘many factors impact on our lives and well-being, and there are strong and complex relationships between these challenges: from the links between the well-being of the natural and built environments and the well-being of individuals, communities and the economy; to the relationships between social and economic inequalities and*

OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC VISION

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE OXFORDSHIRE FUTURES GROUP OF THE OXFORD CIVIC SOCIETY

health; to the linkages between connectivity and climate change, the natural environment, economic productivity, physical and mental health, and community connectedness'. This is all true and it is why we need to see the detailed analysis before we can comment meaningfully on the provided outcomes, the definition of good growth and the guiding principles.

2.2. Outcomes for Oxfordshire

10. The outcomes provided for this consultation area as follows:

- *We will be the first generation to leave Oxfordshire's natural environment in a better state than that in which we found it. The natural environment will be more biodiverse, supporting social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.*
- *Oxfordshire will already be carbon neutral, and will be moving towards a carbon negative future, in which the County is removing more carbon than it emits each year.*
- *The population will be healthier and happier, inequalities will have been reduced, young people will feel excited about their future and the overall well-being of the population will have improved.*
- *The economy of Oxfordshire will be successful and sustainable, making the most of all our people and with quality places where people want to live and work.*
- *We will have energy efficient, well-designed homes, sufficient in numbers, location, type, size, tenure and affordability to meet the needs of our residents.*
- *Movement around Oxfordshire will be transformed, with greater connectivity and mobility in and between places in ways that enhance environmental, social and economic well-being.*
- *Our communities will be rooted and flourishing, with enhanced and lasting connectedness driven by individual and community action*

11. These outcomes cover the three pillars of development which we need to see in the Strategic Vision – the economy, the environment and inclusivity. So far so good. It would perhaps be best if there was just one outcome, covering all three pillars. At the most, just 3 outcomes, one for each pillar, could be used, which achieved together would achieve the Strategic Vision? The outcomes do not adequately cover all sectors, omitting, as examples, energy generation² and food production³. Transport related outcomes are understated and governance is only touched upon very lightly⁴.

12. It is preferable if the outcome is, or outcomes are, expressed in the past tense as already achieved, e.g., "Oxfordshire's carbon neutrality improved." Time frames can be added as can performance indicators and targets. Cause-and-effect links are not usual in outcome statements and outcome statements should not join two or more separate outcome statements to create a single outcome. There are many examples of this in the provided outcomes and the list needs to be edited.

² Is a system of interdependent, decentralized, smart heat and power grids, owned and managed locally part of a Strategic Vision? It could create employment, avoid volatile fossil fuel prices and contribute to climate change management? Oxford in 2065, Oxford To-day, 2015, Barbara Hammond (CEO Low Carbon Hub)

³ Responding to the challenges of culture changing fallout from the obesity epidemic (fat and sugar being treated warily) to disrupted harvest and trade systems / disrupted global supply chains, the production and consumption of food could change dramatically. Responses could include local production (along the Thames Valley) coupled with technology created foods and crops engineered to suit local soils and climatic conditions. Oxford in 2065, Oxford To-day, 2015, Tom Curtis, Partner 3Keel (which provides strategic advice on natural resources systems and supply chains).

⁴ In Oxfordshire and within the next 30 years major changes in governance arrangements are likely. Will Oxfordshire be made larger in the anticipated local government changes, incorporating parts of neighbouring authorities? Will unitary government be introduced at county or perhaps sub county level? Will local government finance arrangements be changed radically, including arrangements for social care and locally raised revenue?

OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC VISION

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE OXFORDSHIRE FUTURES GROUP OF THE OXFORD CIVIC SOCIETY

13. The outcomes do not appear to respond to Oxfordshire's specific strategic challenges and opportunities. Although the word 'Oxfordshire' is used, the outcomes could be for anywhere. They need to reflect the very special development context of Oxfordshire.

14. In the case of the outcome described in bullet point 6, we note that the 'transformation of movement' is not of itself the outcome. We'd also prefer accessibility as the objective rather than connectivity or mobility which tend to imply additional travel generation. A revised wording might therefore be: 'Enhanced accessibility to and within places in Oxfordshire in ways which contribute to economic, social and environmental well-being'. The performance indicators and targets would include digital connectivity and managed mobility.

15. For all the outcomes performance measures are needed and it must be possible to ascribe performance indicators and targets to outcomes. In the case of the outcomes provided this is not always possible (whether under 3 headings or not) as they are phrased in ways which are not measurable. Better stated outcomes with accompanying performance indicators and targets also help to indicate their prioritisation.

2.3. 'Good growth' in Oxfordshire

16. We are also asked to comment on the definition of good growth and if it is the right one for Oxfordshire. The definition provided is as follows.

- *Be sustainable, focusing development in ways that enhance quality of place and at locations which enable people to live and work nearby, avoiding unnecessary travel in the first instance, but using opportunities to increase movement by sustainable and active modes of travel when needed.*
- *Be healthy and inclusive, with all development addressing inequalities and contributing positively to the overall health and well-being of Oxfordshire's communities, environment and economy.*
- *Be clean and green, placing the County at the leading edge of UK and global decarbonisation efforts by maximising all opportunities to significantly reduce Oxfordshire's carbon footprint, and increasing natural capital across the County.*
- *Embrace innovation based on our technology sectors and knowledge-intensive activity, and develop new innovative solutions for working, learning, mobility, health care, energy, sustainable design and improved public services.*
- *Facilitate efficient use of Oxfordshire's natural resources and land, with priority given to supporting a high-productivity economy.*
- *Build resilience to change, with growth planned in a way that can accommodate changes in technology, and in the way that people live and work, changing demographics, and global impacts, particularly climate and economic changes.*
- *Expect high-quality development which will have a positive impact on communities in terms of design, energy efficiency and public realm, utilises low impact building and construction methods and materials, and is properly supported by the necessary infrastructure. Everything we build or design in Oxfordshire will be fit for purpose in the world of 2050.*

17. Apart from the 4th bullet point these resemble the outcomes – incomplete, largely unmeasurable and appropriate everywhere. But and as exemplified only in bullet point 4, Oxfordshire has distinguishing economic, environmental and social features. This good growth definition needs to be much more place-specific. It needs to speak about Oxfordshire, not about generalised good intentions. It absolutely needs to speak about Oxfordshire's specific strategic challenges and opportunities. The definition of growth is very disappointing, especially as there are so many growth

OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC VISION

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE OXFORDSHIRE FUTURES GROUP OF THE OXFORD CIVIC SOCIETY

sceptics in the county. A definition of good growth in Oxfordshire needs first to justify growth: good growth is justifiable growth. It is another list of generalised good intentions. The report to the Oxfordshire Growth Board says that the definition of 'good growth' forms the basis for a set of Guiding Principles – it cannot do this, phrased as it is.

18. Currently, Oxfordshire has a strong economy and the aim in recent years has to been to ensure that the economy is sustainable by promoting the county as a centre of innovation, benefiting from the activities of the University of Oxford, but, importantly, not entirely relying on it. The county contributes positively to the national economy and if developed and sustained the county's contribution can benefit other parts of the country. This is part of the argument to justify good growth.

19. It is the spatial and environmental implications of growth that most concerns many of the Oxfordshire growth sceptics: should this statement of good growth include not only why Oxfordshire growth is appropriate, but also what level of growth is manageable and how the physical requirements of growth can be located and connected without risk to the environment and Oxfordshire as a place?

20. The good growth in Oxfordshire definition does not mention Oxfordshire's prime assets which include the unique comparative and competitive advantages of a developed and dynamic knowledge-based economy with a world leading University and a world-famous heritage-rich City, areas of outstanding natural beauty and so much more. Nor does it reflect the current particular (and unusual) demographic characteristics of the city of Oxford and Oxfordshire which will have a bearing on the Strategic Vision, along with a Strategic Vision of the likely demographic characteristics of new populations coming into Oxfordshire.

21. As with the outcomes, the definition of good growth would have much more meaning if it was shown how these good intentions apply to the unique place of Oxfordshire. A strategic vision which is made up of abstract wishes is not helpful. A Strategic Vision for a place which reflects the particular characteristics of the place is more likely to be useful.

2.4. Guiding Principles

22. The report to the Oxfordshire Growth Board says that all the Guiding Principles articulate how Oxfordshire will change as a place over the next 30 years and all will shape our overarching approach. It notes that individual Guiding Principles have not been weighted: *'Rather, because we are seeking to drive improvements to environmental, social and economic well-being in ways which build resilience, and because most of our Guiding Principles are relevant to more than one of our goals, the Guiding Principles form an inter-related set of equally important ground rules'*.

23. As noted already, before being able to set outcomes, definitions of good growth, or guiding principles it is essential to have detailed knowledge of the development challenges being faced in the county. But, as noted, no details are provided of the analysis of the development issues facing Oxfordshire now and over the next 30 years. It is assumed that information and analyses have been accumulated in the current and recent preparation of the various strategic plans in the county. The Local Industrial Strategy, Oxfordshire 2050 Plan, Oxfordshire Infrastructure Strategy and its current update, Local Transport and Connectivity Plan 5, Rail Corridor Study and others. Have the evidence bases been coordinated and are they compatible? Is a consolidated evidence base available? Could a consolidated evidence base be available which can accommodate constant updates as new evidence becomes available? Will the evidence bases (consolidated or not) be used in the new modelling

OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC VISION

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE OXFORDSHIRE FUTURES GROUP OF THE OXFORD CIVIC SOCIETY

currently being developed in the County and can this modelling support the development of responses to the challenges e.g., help to identify outcomes?

24. The guiding principles which we are asked to assess for usefulness in setting out a Strategic Vision for Oxfordshire are as follows:

- *Guiding Principle 1: We will reduce the impacts of climate change*
- *Guiding Principle 2: We will improve our overall health and well-being and reduce inequalities*
- *Guiding Principle 3: We will enhance our natural capital assets*
- *Guiding Principle 4: We will reflect our distinctive and diverse qualities*
- *Guiding Principle 5: We will deliver homes that meet the needs of current and future generations*
- *Guiding Principle 6: We will embrace technological changes*
- *Guiding Principle 7: We will create the conditions to support an inclusive, successful and sustainable economy based on world-leading innovation.*
- *Guiding Principle 8: We will expect high-quality development*
- *Guiding Principle 9: We will maximise the benefits of strong collaboration*
- *Guiding Principle 10: We will help people to help each other by supporting communities and individuals to achieve positive change for themselves*
- *Guiding Principle 11: We will proactively and positively engage and collaborate beyond Oxfordshire*

25. Unfortunately, this list is another set of good intentions. Where would these guiding principles not be generally accepted. Would principles which are relevant to the key challenges in Oxfordshire not be more useful? The principles are not comprehensive - there is no principle addressing the 'transport' challenge (c.f. Guiding Principle 5 re homes). Should there be? For example: We will safeguard and promote accessibility whilst diminishing the adverse effects of transport

26. Indeed, it is arguable that they are not principles (defined as fundamental truths or propositions that serve as the foundation for a system of belief or behaviour or, as in this case, for a chain of reasoning). For example, 'We will reduce the impacts of climate change' is not a principle. The principle involved here is that 'reduction of climate change impact is essential'.

27. The means of implementing the guiding principles is also described in the consultation documents, but in terms of intentions, not methods and are not measurable.

3. Summary of Recommendations

3.1. Introduction

28. In 2015, Oxford To-day, the University Magazine carried a special article on Oxford in 2065, with a very distinguished set of contributors – Professor Steve Rayner⁵ on Governance, Lord Drayson⁶ on Transport, Tom Curtis on Food, Barbara Hammond on Energy amongst distinguished others. It notes that in 2065 there will no doubt be wisteria, good beer in the pubs and college silver. And yet,

⁵ The late Professor Rayner was James Martin Professor of Science and Civilization and Co-Director of the Oxford Programme for the Future of Cities.

⁶ Lord Drayson is Chief Executive of Drayson Racing Technologies. From 2003-5 Lord Drayson was Entrepreneur-in-Residence at the Oxford Said Business School and was a Minister of State from 2007 to 2010.

OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC VISION

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE OXFORDSHIRE FUTURES GROUP OF THE OXFORD CIVIC SOCIETY

it continues, Oxford is already dystopian in significant ways, with gridlocked roads, wildly expensive and inefficient housing, dysfunctional governance and the lack of a far-sighted vision for the city.

29. This consultation is welcome as it can ensure a far-sighted vision, not only for the city, but for the county as a whole. Our comments are made in earnest – the city is certainly still dystopian in many ways and the county has many rural development challenges which are difficult to address. We have many strategic plans in preparation but we have no confidence that these plans are adequately synchronised or coordinated. A Strategic Vision is a good way to encourage synchronization and coordination.

30. Our observations and recommendations are predominantly on the method of introducing a Strategic Vision and are based on worldwide experience of this kind of strategic planning tool. The time to introduce this Strategic Vision is designed to be very short. We suggest that it is too short and it is too important to rush it as planned currently. We recommend that before a Strategic Vision is made public the outcomes, good growth definition and guiding principles are tested against a challenges analysis and results analysis as suggested throughout this consultation response. This would enable a Strategic Vision to be drafted along with revised outcomes, good growth definitions and guiding principles and the whole package could be put out for a final consultation. The timing of this would depend on the availability of professional staff in the county, districts, city, OxLEP and others, including, we hope, those with relevant skills in the two Oxford based universities.

3.2. The formulation and use of the Strategic Vision

31. We are critical of the design of the formulation and use of the Strategic Vision. We argue that with the limited information available about the challenges facing Oxfordshire, the consultation is not meaningful. We also suggest that building a Strategic Vision from existing outcomes and other statements is not logical. The outcomes should be designed to achieve the Strategic Vision. The consultation is asking the consultees to use the already identified outcomes to design the Strategic Vision. Put simply – that is working backwards. The challenges-analysis comes first, this enables the Vision Statement, which in turn enables the outcomes which in turn enable the outputs (and hence the activities, services and investments to achieve the outputs).

3.2.1. Formulating the Strategic Vision should start with a challenge analysis

32. This would identify the development challenges to be addressed. Importantly it would also define the nature and underlying causes of the core challenges and it clarify the effects of the challenges. The challenge-analysis would be followed by a results analysis. This would identify improvements that may be made within a given time frame (e.g., 30 years) and determine the scope of the proposed Strategic Vision. This analysis not only looks back at the challenges being faced, but also looks forward to challenges likely to be faced, with bold, innovative, collaborative and inclusive thinking. Only at this point is it possible to formulate a Strategic Vision Statement.

3.2.2. The next step would be to identify outcomes and outputs.

33. The outcomes are the achievements needed to realise the Strategic Vision. The outputs are the activities needed to achieve the outcomes. Taken together they are key components of development strategies within the county.

3.3. The proposed outcomes

34. It would be preferable if consultees could see the information available which justifies the formulation of the outcomes. There is of course a large amount of information available on the challenges facing Oxfordshire, but consultees need access to the collective information and analyses. Simply put, we need an explanation of how the outcomes have been formulated.

3.3.1. Seven outcomes are too many

35. Often only one outcome is used to describe the immediate and direct benefits from using or applying outputs. At least the seven could be reduced to three, under the headings economic, environmental and social? Governance (including local authority finance) could also be accommodated under these headings. Together the outcomes need to be achieved in the plan period.

3.3.2. Outcomes are best presented with a single purpose and in the past tense

36. Also, it is preferable if the outcome is, or outcomes are, expressed in the past tense as already achieved, e.g., "Oxfordshire's carbon neutrality improved." Time frames can be added. Cause-and-effect links are not usual in outcome statements (see outcome bullet point 3 for example) and outcome statements should not join two or more separate outcome statements using "and" to create a single outcome. There are many examples of this in the provided outcomes and the list needs to be edited.

3.3.3. Outcome achievement needs to be measurable

37. The outcomes need to be measurable with performance indicators identified and performance targets established against baselines for each indicator. This addresses the Oxfordshire Growth Board's supplementary question about how progress with achieving the Strategic Vision can be measured. Outcomes and outputs should be identified which are measurable – indicators for each outcome and output should be readily identifiable and data should be available which allows baselines and targets to be set.

3.4. Definition of 'Good Growth'

3.4.1. This good growth definition is not yet fit for purpose

38. The report to the Oxfordshire Growth Board says that the definition of 'good growth' forms the basis for a set of Guiding Principles – it cannot do this, phrased as it is.

3.4.2. The definition should justify growth

39. The good growth definition needs to speak about Oxfordshire's specific strategic challenges and opportunities. A definition of good growth in Oxfordshire needs first to justify growth (as good growth is justifiable growth).

3.4.3. The definition should be specific about spatial growth

40. Should this statement of good growth include not only why Oxfordshire growth is appropriate, but also what level of growth is manageable and how the physical requirements of growth can be located and connected without risk to the environment, inclusivity and Oxfordshire as a place?

OXFORDSHIRE STRATEGIC VISION

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE OXFORDSHIRE FUTURES GROUP OF THE OXFORD CIVIC SOCIETY

3.4.4. The definition should be specific to Oxfordshire

41. The good growth in Oxfordshire definition does not mention Oxfordshire's assets and its demographic characteristics which distinguish it from other places. The good growth definition needs to speak specifically about Oxfordshire.

3.5. The Guiding Principles

3.5.1. Are they principles?

42. It is arguable that they are not principles (defined as fundamental truths or propositions that serve as the foundation for a chain of reasoning).

3.5.2. Implementing the principles

43. The means of implementing the guiding principles is described in terms of intentions, not methods and are not measurable.

3.6. The Draft Strategic Vision

3.6.1. The Draft Strategic Vision should demonstrably be for Oxfordshire

43. It needs to be Oxfordshire specific. It is a collection of good intentions with which few could disagree, but it is not what is needed if the Strategic Vision is to truly identify outcomes and outputs which are effectively the development strategies which will create the Oxfordshire of 2050.

3.6.2. The Strategic Vision is best phrased as impacts achieved

43. The draft Strategic Vision should be phrased as impacts achieved, e.g., "income, jobs, and businesses increased," and include the change word at the end of the sentence.

3.6.3. How ambitious should the Strategic Vision be?

44. Care is needed not to set too high a level for the Vision Statement. Whilst not wanting to curb ambition, it is not helpful to include in the Vision Statement changes which are far beyond the capacity of local authorities and stakeholders to achieve.

3.6.4. Strategic Vision monitoring and updating should be synchronised with planning and budgeting schedules

45. The timing of Vision Statements should be linked to strategic planning and budgeting cycles, with intermediate opportunities for updating the Vision Statement, outcomes and outputs, good growth definitions and guiding principles. One of the advantages of using a Vision Statement is that it can encourage synchronisation of planning and budgeting cycles and coordinating implementing strategies.

3.6.5. How can progress toward the Strategic Vision be measured

46. As noted throughout our comments, the achievement of the Strategic Vision is through the achievement of the outcomes and these need to be measurable with indicators for which good quality data is available and baselines and targets can be set. The outputs leading to the outcomes can also be measured in this way.

3.7. Political Strategic Visions and major omissions from the draft

3.7.1. Political Strategic Visions

47. Despite what has been said in paragraph 43 above, a Strategic Vision should not shy away from challenges which are very political. As an example, in Oxfordshire and within the next 30 years major changes in governance arrangements are likely.

48. This kind of issue should not be ignored (as they largely are, in this consultation). They could be anticipated and the Vision Statement, outcomes, good growth definition and guiding principles can state what is desired (e.g., enhanced democratic accountability). They can also be included in a section of the Vision Statement which states risks associated with the Vision Statement and assumptions underpinning the Vision Statement. This consultation does not suggest the inclusion of either of these. We recommend that such sections are included.

3.7.2. Omissions from the Draft Strategic Vision

49. The outcomes, good growth definitions and guiding principles are not comprehensive (perhaps as a result of not being sources from a comprehensive assessment of challenges being faced and likely to be faced). It is highly likely that there will be radical changes in, as examples, transport, energy provision and distribution and food production. Notes on these have been included in the main text. As requested by the Growth Board Scrutiny Panel, reference also needs to be made to the Oxford to Cambridge Arc. Specific recommendations for transport guiding principles, made by the Transport Group of the Oxford Civic Society, include:

- We will safeguard and promote accessibility whilst diminishing the adverse effects of transport
- We will manage the location and design of new development including supporting facilities so as to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, and to promote the use of shared and active modes.
- We will support improvements in digital connectivity which enable an increasing proportion of activities to be undertaken virtually, reducing the costs and adverse effects of physical transport.
- We will also facilitate the shift to electric vehicles which will further reduce carbon emissions, air and noise pollution.
- We will continue to manage road space to give priority to the needs of sustainable modes.
- Over time we expect to manage the introduction of autonomous vehicles so as to improve the overall efficiency and safety of traffic movement and reduce inequalities amongst people and places otherwise experiencing limited accessibility